



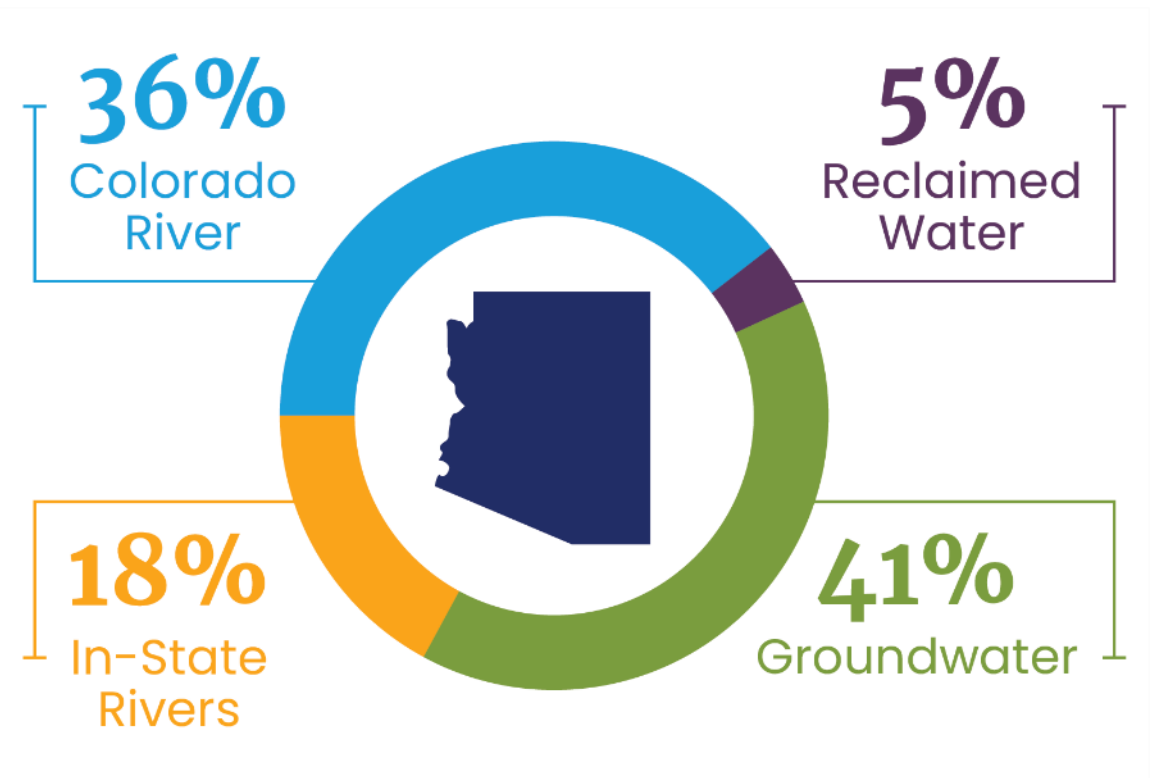
Arizona Association of Women in Water and Agriculture

May 28, 2026

Brenda Burman
General Manager

YOUR WATER. YOUR FUTURE.

Arizona Water Sources



Colorado River Basin

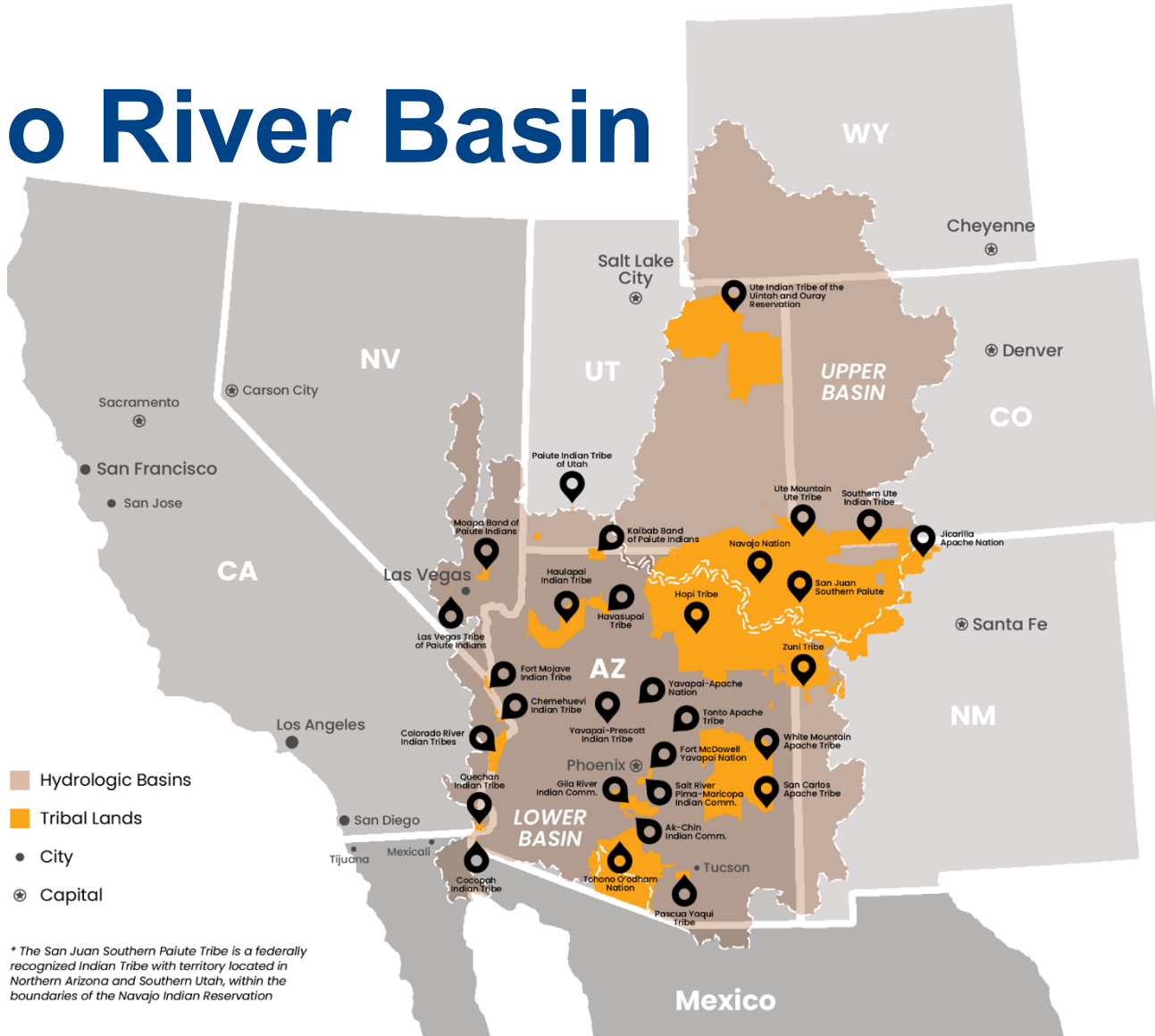
- Supplies water to 43 million people
- Provides water to Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Phoenix, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Denver
- Includes 30 Tribes (22 in Arizona)
- Irrigates ~5 million acres of farmland
- Includes 60 million acre-feet of storage capacity
- Generates clean hydropower for the Western power grid
- Supports National Parks, wildlife refuges, recreation areas and monuments



Tribes in the Colorado River Basin

30 Colorado River Basin tribes

22 in Arizona



- Hydrologic Basins
- Tribal Lands
- City
- Capital

** The San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribe with territory located in Northern Arizona and Southern Utah, within the boundaries of the Navajo Indian Reservation*

Law of the River

1922 – Colorado River Compact
1928 – Boulder Canyon Project Act
1944 – Mexican Water Treaty
1948 – Upper Colorado River Basin Compact
1956 – Colorado River Storage Project Act
1964 – AZ v. CA US Supreme Court Decision
1968 – Colorado River Basin Project Act
1970 – Coordinated Long-Range Operation of Colorado River Reservoirs

1992 – Grand Canyon Protection Act
2004 – Arizona Water Settlements Act
2005 – Multi-Species Conservation Program
2007 – Colorado River Interim Guidelines
2017 – Minute 323 to the Mexican Water Treaty
2019 – Drought Contingency Plan (DCP)
2021 – 500+ Plan
2023 – Lower Basin interim proposal
2024 – Minute 330 to the Mexican Water Treaty

Citations:

[CAP - https://www.cap-az.com/about/history-of-cap/law-of-the-river/](https://www.cap-az.com/about/history-of-cap/law-of-the-river/)

[Reclamation - https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/pao/lawofrvr.html](https://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/pao/lawofrvr.html)

1922 - Colorado River Compact

First agreement to legally connect the Colorado River Basin states

Designated 7.5 maf to the Upper Basin and 7.5 maf mainstem water to the Lower Basin

Creates obligation for the Upper Basin to send at least 75 maf to the Lower Basin for any period of 10 consecutive years

Obligation to Mexico shared equally between basins



Colorado River Compact - 1922

Article III:

(a) There is hereby apportioned from the Colorado River System in perpetuity to the Upper Basin and to the Lower Basin, respectively, the exclusive beneficial consumptive use of 7,500,000 acre-feet of water per annum, which shall include all water necessary for the supply of any rights which may now exist.

(b) In addition to the apportionment in paragraph (a), the Lower Basin is hereby given the right to increase its beneficial consumptive use of such waters by one million acre-feet per annum.

Colorado River Compact - 1922

Article III:

(c) If, as a matter of international comity, the United States of America shall hereafter recognize in the United States of Mexico any right to the use of any waters of the Colorado River System, such waters shall be supplied first from the waters which are surplus over and above the aggregate of the quantities specified in paragraphs (a) and (b); and if such surplus shall prove insufficient for this purpose, then, the burden of such deficiency shall be equally borne by the Upper Basin and the Lower Basin, and whenever necessary **the States of the Upper Division shall deliver at Lee Ferry water to supply one-half of the deficiency** so recognized in addition to that provided in paragraph (d).

(d) The States of the Upper Division **will not cause the flow of the river at Lee Ferry to be depleted below an aggregate of 75,000,000 acre-feet for any period of ten consecutive years** reckoned in continuing progressive series beginning with the first day of October next succeeding the ratification of this compact.

1956 – Colorado River Water Storage Project Act

By the mid 1950s it was determined that, in the Upper Basin, a series of dams and reservoirs on the Colorado River and its tributaries would be necessary to regulate flows and ensure compliance with the 1922 Compact.

Authorized construction of Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP):

- Aspinall Unit
- Flaming Gorge Unit
- Navajo Unit
- Glen Canyon Unit

Compact Compliance

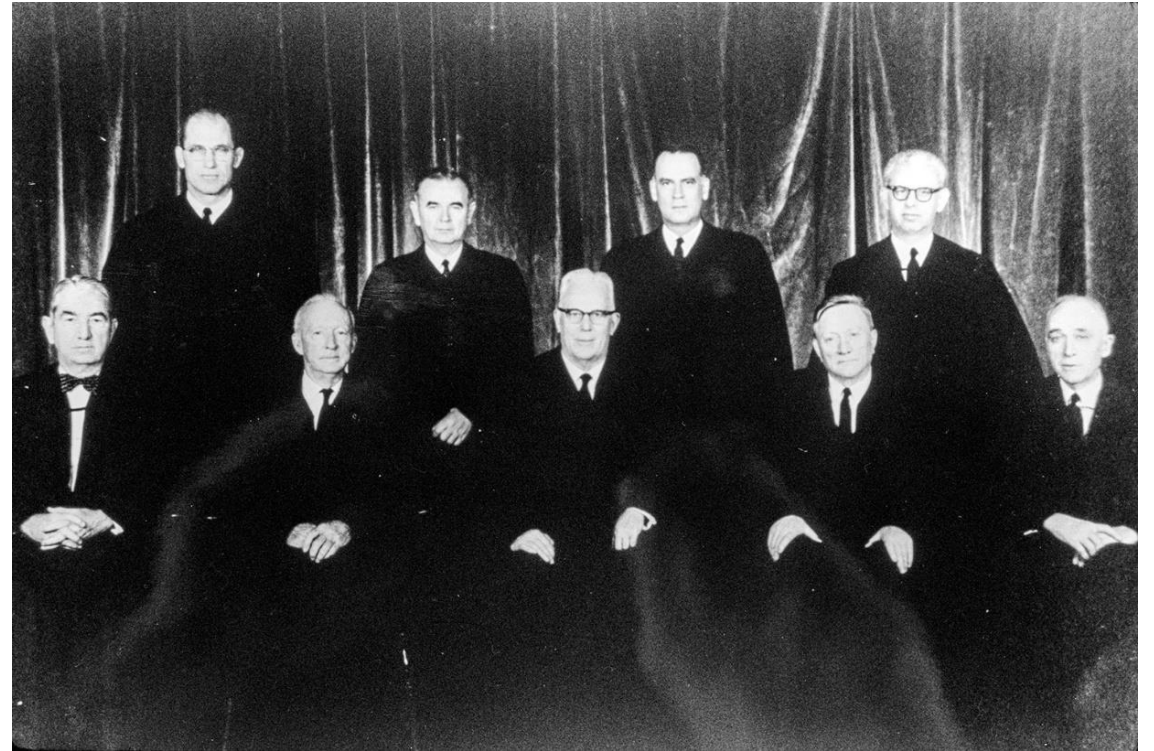
1956 Colorado River Storage Project Act §620m

“In the operation and maintenance of all facilities, authorized by Federal law and under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, in the basin of the Colorado River, **the Secretary of the Interior is directed to comply with the applicable provisions of the Colorado River Compact**...in the storage and release of water from reservoirs in the Colorado River Basin.”

1964 – U.S. Supreme Court Decree: Arizona v. California

After a decade of deliberation, Supreme Court's opinion favored Arizona, upholding its designated 2.8 maf/yr share of mainstem Colorado River water

Decision effectively established the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as the Lower Basin “water master”



1968 – Colorado River Basin Project Act

Authorized the Bureau of Reclamation to fund and construct Central Arizona Project

In times when 7.5 maf is not available in the system, created a 1968 priority in the Lower Basin for CAP water

Directed the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to develop a plan for augmenting the Colorado River supply



Compact Compliance

1968 Colorado River Basin Project Act §601(c)

“All Federal officers and agencies are directed to comply with [the Colorado River Compact]...in the storage and release of water from all reservoirs and in the operation and maintenance of all facilities in the Colorado River system under the jurisdiction and supervision of the Secretary...”

Colorado River Operations Through 2026

2007 Interim Guidelines

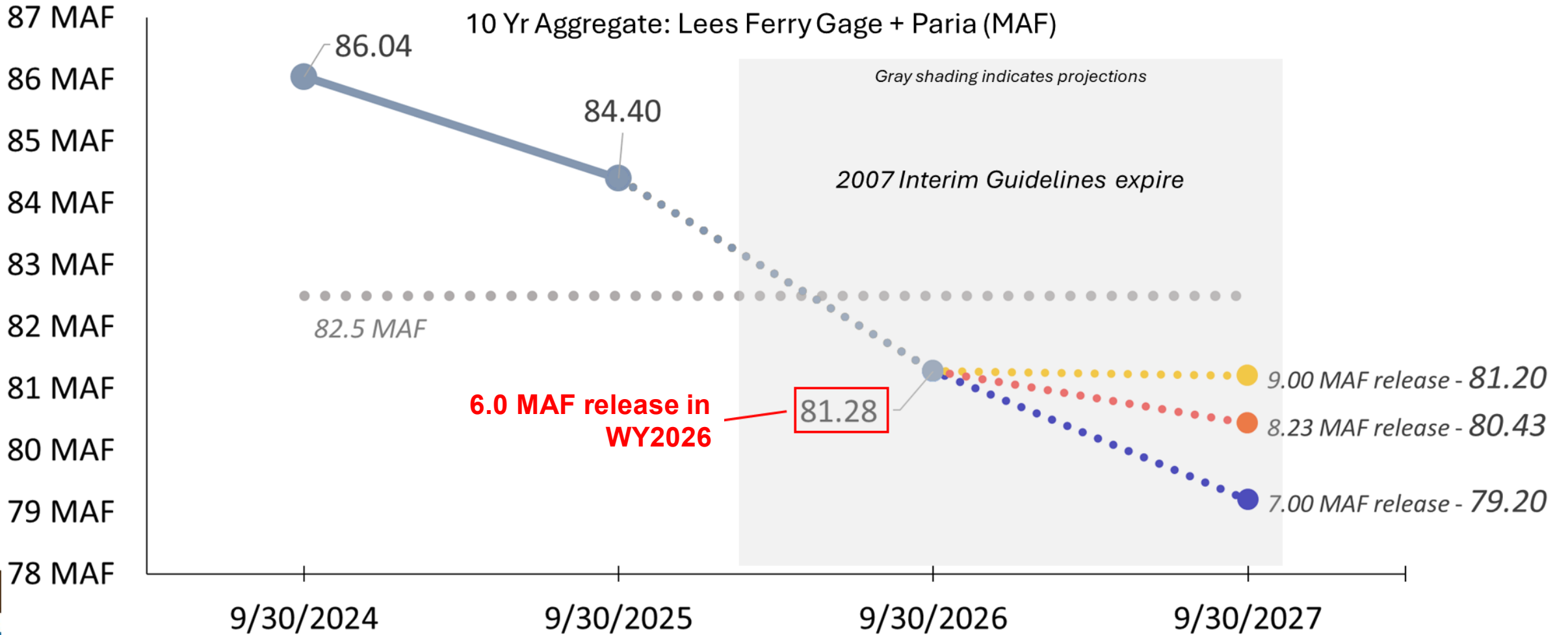
- Established a shortage framework for the Lower Basin based on elevations in Lake Mead
- Incentivized storage of water in Lake Mead
- Coordinated operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead
- 20-year term – 2007-2026 (**2019 Drought Contingency Plan** was an overlay due to declining reservoirs)



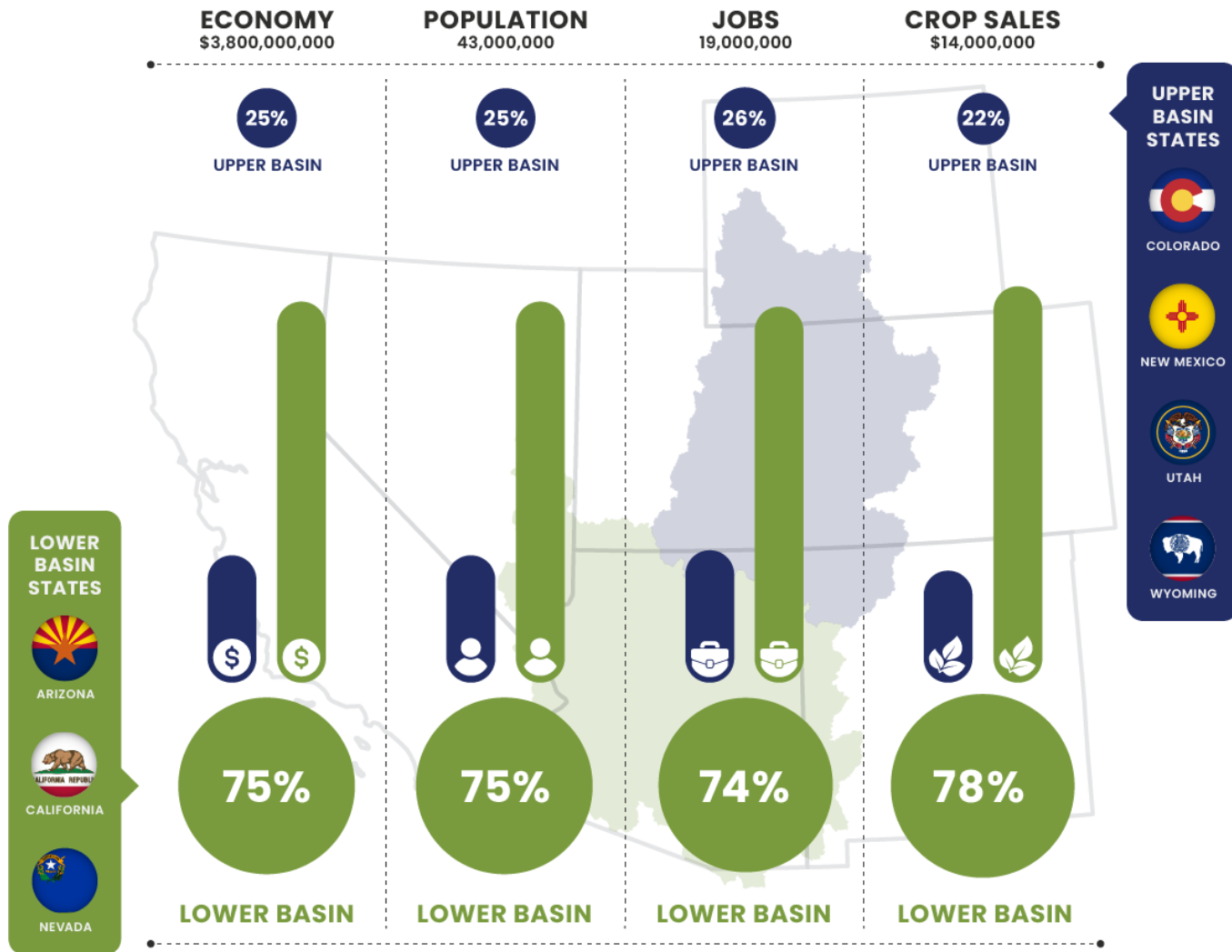
United States Actions in 2026

- Planning for Upper Initial Units releases triggered in the July 2025
- In November 2025, reduced monthly releases from Glen Canyon Dam by ~600k acre-feet a month
- In April 2026, the United States determined that it would release up to 1 maf to 660 kaf from Flaming Gorge reservoir over 12 months, and would further reduce releases to the Lower Basin by a total of 1.48 maf by October 2026

Compact Compliance



Colorado River Basin Facts



*Source: WestWater Research **Facts exclude data from Mexico



25 OF THE 30 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES in the Colorado River Basin are in the **LOWER BASIN**

The Colorado River is the largest renewable water resource in the southwestern United States. Its supply is shared by seven Western states and Mexico. It provides water for 43 million people, including 30 tribal communities, and gives life to urban centers, agricultural heartlands and ecological habitats. The river supports nearly \$4 trillion in economic output and is key to the nation's economy.

The Colorado River Basin is divided into two regions: the Upper Basin (Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and New Mexico) and the Lower Basin (California, Arizona, and Nevada).

Within the Colorado River Basin, approximately 75% of the population, employment, agricultural crop sales, and 25 of the 30 tribal nations are located in Arizona, California and Nevada.



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What's Next

