



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Speaker Steve Montenegro (R-29)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Speaker Montenegro: Arizona Must Defend Its Water Future After Federal Colorado River Plan

State must protect its allocation, expand its water supply, and prepare for long-term growth

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – Arizona House Speaker Steve Montenegro today released the following statement in response to the federal government’s Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for post-2026 Colorado River operations.

The federal plan includes a range of possible reductions to the Lower Basin, including Arizona, but does not include the specific reductions that Arizona and other Lower Basin states will take in the next two years. Those specific cuts, which will be announced next week with the Record of Decision, are expected to be approximately 20 percent of the Lower Basin’s total 7.5 million-acre-foot allocation.

However, it is unclear at this time how those reductions will be distributed among the Lower Basin states. A 20 percent reduction or less to Arizona’s Colorado River supply would be the best-case scenario, while reductions higher than that could be severe. This is a major water policy decision with broad implications for Arizona communities, water providers, agriculture, industry, and long-term economic growth. Its effects will vary across the state because every community and water provider relies on different water supplies and infrastructure.

“Arizona must be clear-eyed, united, and firm in defense of our water future,” said Speaker Montenegro. **“The Colorado River is vital to our state, and Arizona has spent decades preparing for drought, conserving water, storing water underground, and building a stronger water system. Our job now is to stay prepared, continue protecting Arizona’s rights, and defend our economy while making sure decisions in Washington recognize the contributions our state makes to national security and the economy.”**

For more than three decades, Arizona has invested in conservation, efficiency, and underground water banking to prepare for drought and potential shortages, including those being faced today. The Colorado River remains a critical part of Arizona’s water supply, but it is not Arizona’s only water resource. Reclaimed water, brackish groundwater, efficiency savings, and future augmentation projects are all available and can help strengthen Arizona’s long-term water security.

Water security is a central priority in the House Republican Majority Plan. House Republicans will continue working with Arizona stakeholders to evaluate the Record of Decision, once it is issued, and advance policies that expand Arizona’s water supply, protect rural and urban communities, and support future growth.

Steve Montenegro is the Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives and serves Legislative District 29 in the West Valley, Goodyear, and Surprise. Follow him on X at @SteveMontenegro.

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