



# Colorado River Management Plan Fiscal Year 2026 Work Plan

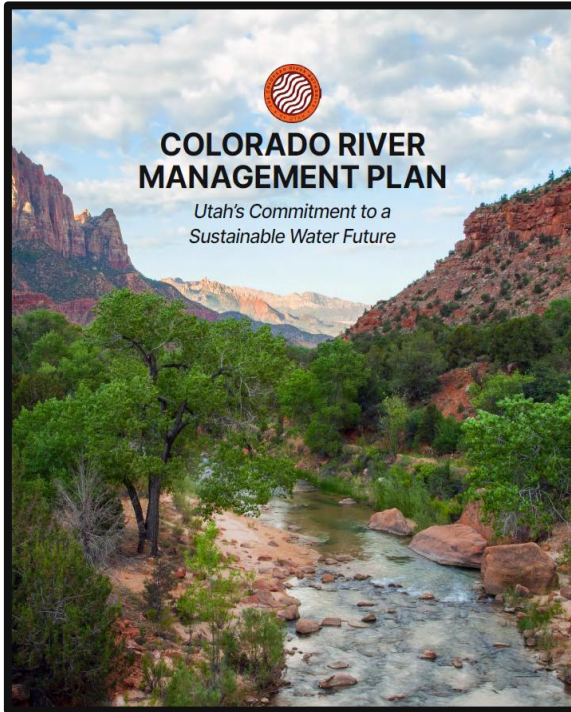
Colorado River Authority of Utah

June 17, 2025



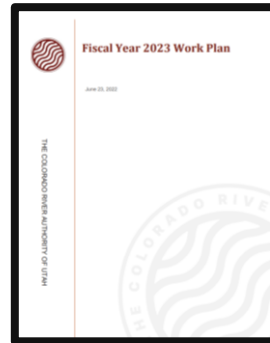


# 5-Year Management Plan: 3 Priorities & Annual Work Plans



Board Approved  
Mgmt Plan

April 2022



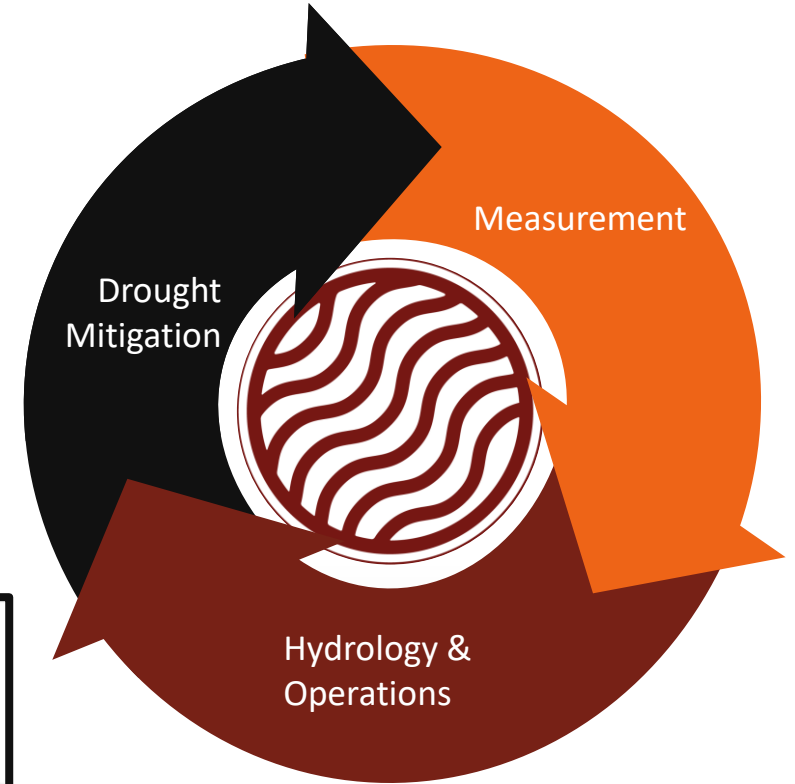
Board Approved FY 23-  
24 Work Plans

June 2022/23



Board Approved FY  
25 Work Plan

June 2024



Seeking Board Approval  
on FY 26 Work Plan

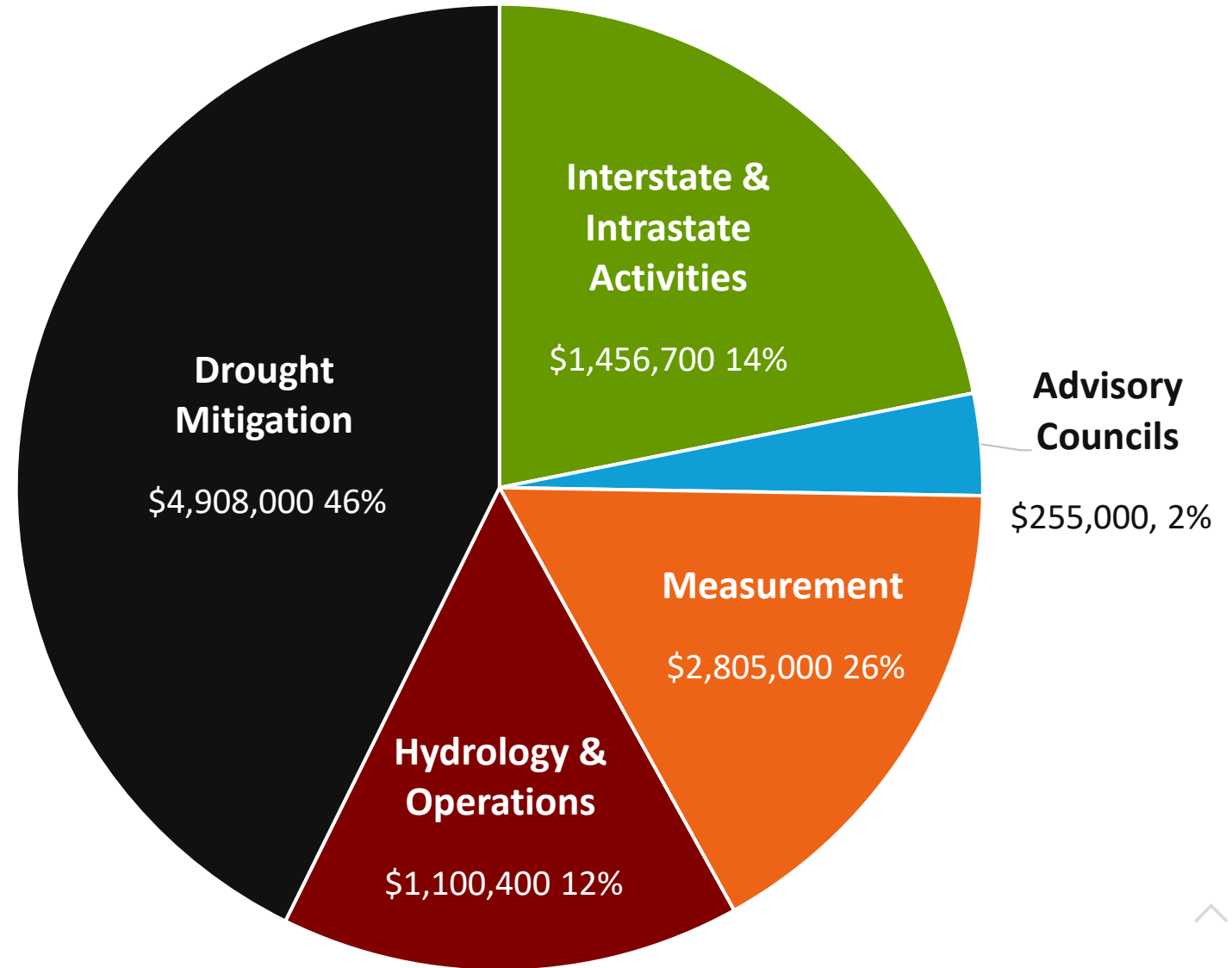
June 2025





# Fiscal Year 2026 Estimated Budget Allocations

## Total Proposed: **\$10,525,100**



\*Work Plan budgets are subject to adjustment depending on conditions and activities in the Colorado River Basin that may be unknown when the Work Plan was developed.

\*\*Projects that are part of the Work Plan but don't have planned expenses in FY26 are not included.





# Work Plan Highlights



**Interstate Negotiations**

**Advisory Councils**

- Listening & Engagement

**Provisional Accounting**

- Objectives & Methodology



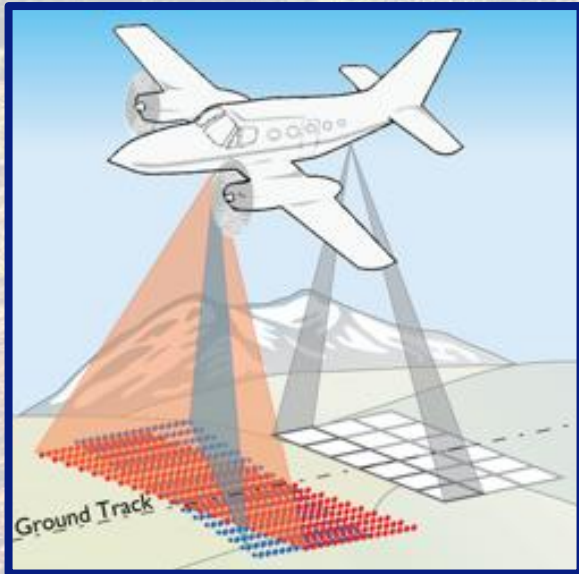
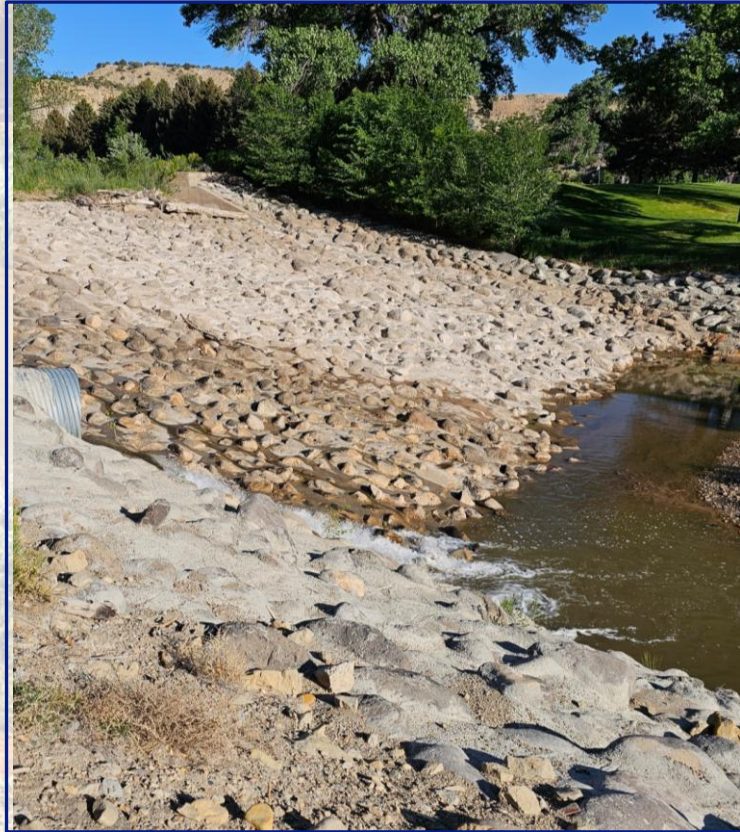


# Work Plan Highlights

**UCRAF / Measurement & Telemetry**



**Utah Demand Management Pilot Program**



**ASO**, Flakes, Flights, and Forecasts: Snow Measurement Enhancements in the Uinta Mountain Headwaters

# Interstate Negotiations: Post-2026 Operations

- **Current criteria to operate the Colorado River system (Lake Powell & Lake Mead) expire in 2026**
- **Seven Basin States are negotiating a consensus framework agreement in parallel with a NEPA process**
- **Key concept under discussion: Natural Flow Based Operations**
- **Draft EIS anticipated in December 2025**
- **Final EIS and Record of Decision expected in August 2026**



# A Year of Listening and Engagement

Advisory Councils of the Colorado River Authority of Utah – 2025 Focus

## 2025 PRIORITY: Public Engagement

- Councils will actively listen to local voices—residents, farmers, and water users across Utah.
- “Outward” orientation by hosting public meetings, field tours, and input sessions across all regions of the state.
- Focus on transparency, education, trust-building, and local partnerships.
- Ensuring community concerns shape Utah’s water policy going forward.

*“The best water solutions start with the people who rely on it every day.”*





# Helping Guide Utah's Water Future

## Council Recommendations: Focus on Storage and Conservation

### Strategic Recommendations for 2025 and Beyond

- Expand water storage infrastructure to prepare for prolonged drought.
- Accelerate conservation strategies that work for agriculture, cities, and ecosystems.
- Support voluntary reduction programs that protect rural economies.
- Maximize use of state and federal funding for sustainable water management.



“Storing more—and wasting less—is key to preserving Utah’s share of the Colorado River.”



# Provisional Accounting

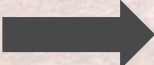
**Objective - Verify & Account for Volumes of Water from Upper Division States Delivered to an Upper Colorado River Basin :**

- Conservation Projects – Reduction in Consumptive Use
- Demonstration Projects – Reduction in Use or Demand

**Accounting Methodology:**

- Direct Measurement &
- River Modeling for Transit Losses

**UTAH QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES PROPOSAL**

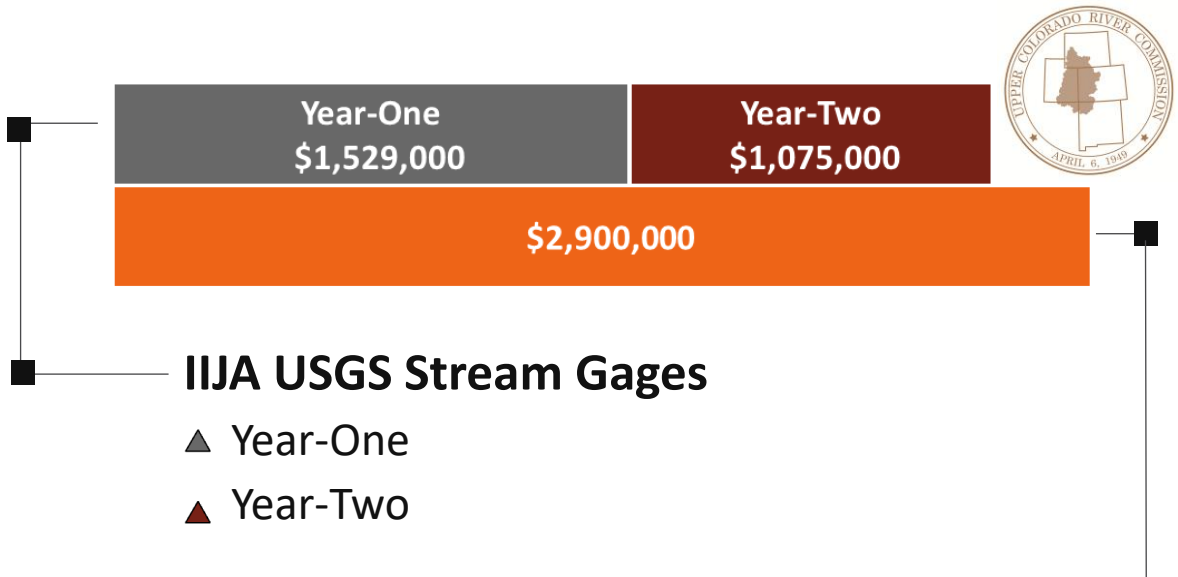
- Submitted to UCRC – May 30
- Utah Demand Management Pilot Program Projects
- UDS/UCRC  BOR





# Flow Measurement – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

Federally funded (IIJA), administered through the Upper Colorado River Commission

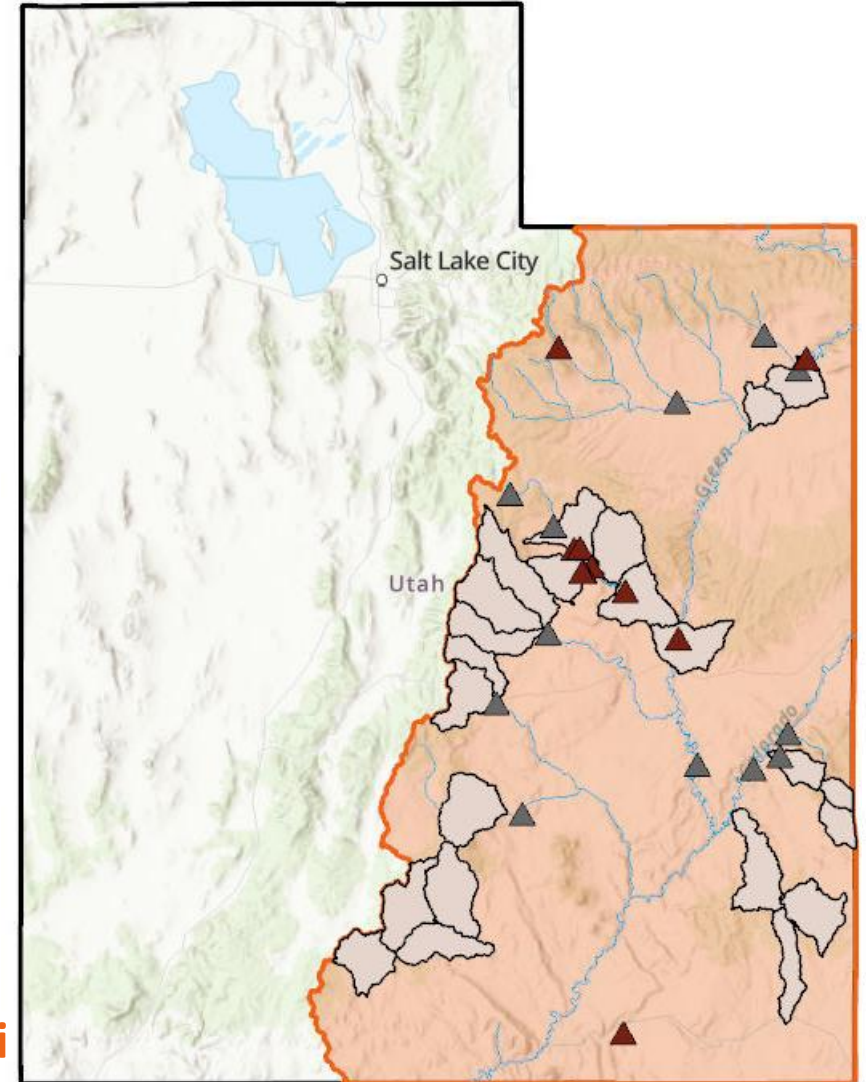


## IIJA USGS Stream Gages

- ▲ Year-One
- ▲ Year-Two

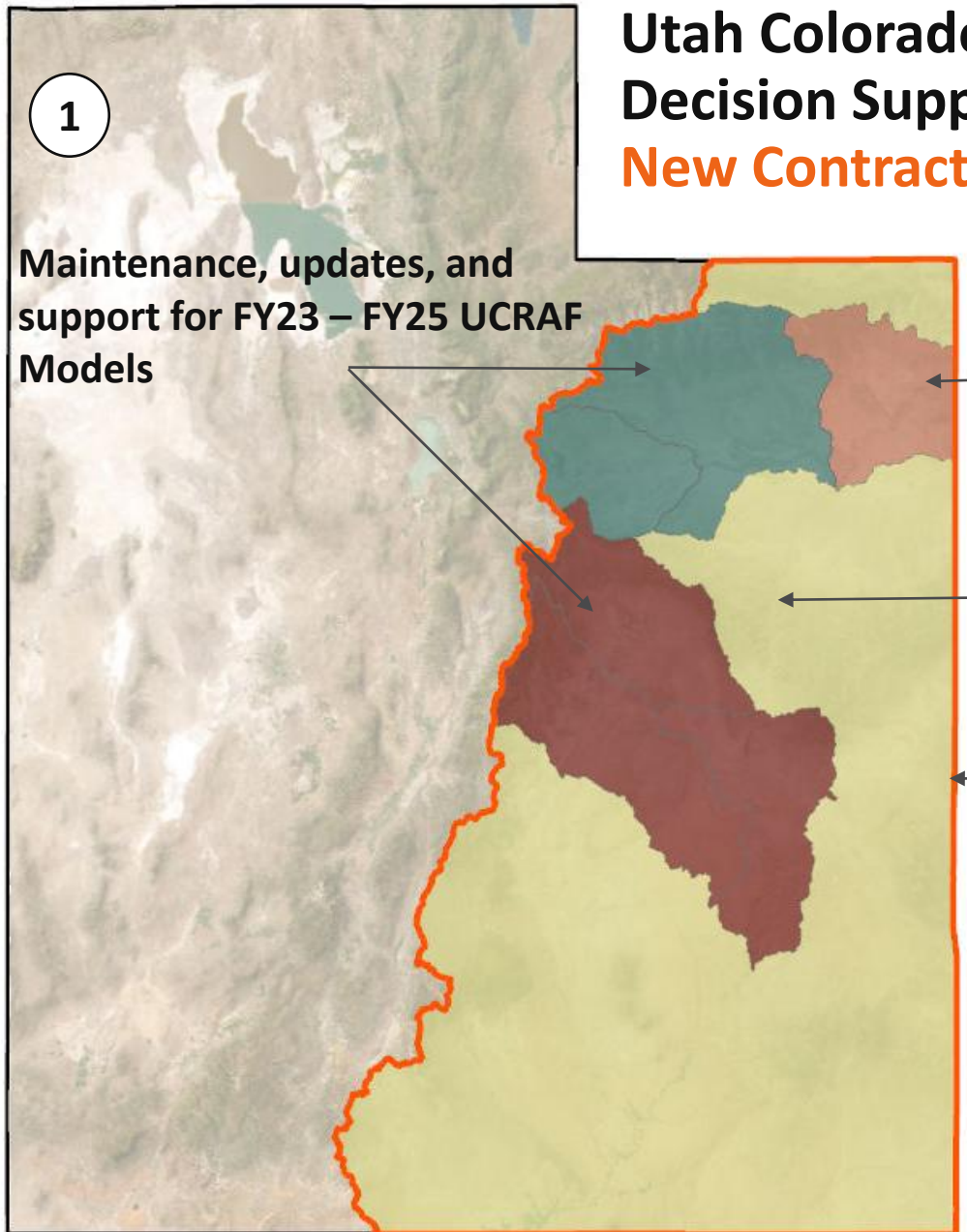
## IIJA Diversion Measurement and Telemetry Program

- Program Extent  
**Open Application for interested water users**
- Potential Target Areas  
**Identified through coordination with regional DWRi offices**





# Utah Colorado River Accounting and Forecasting (UCRAF) Decision Support Tool (DST) New Contract (FY26 – FY27)

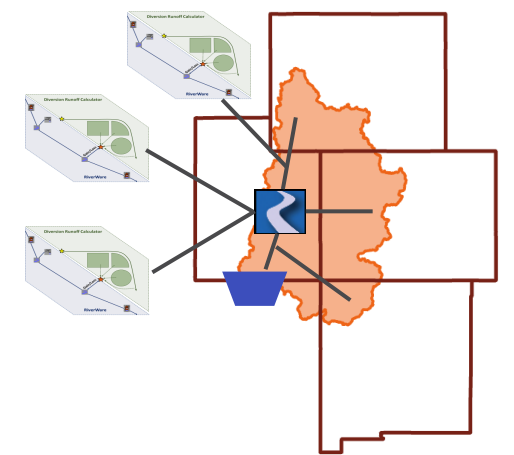
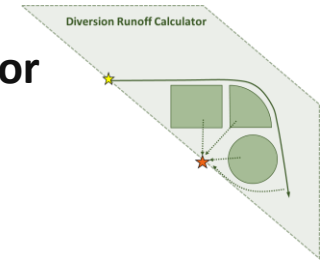
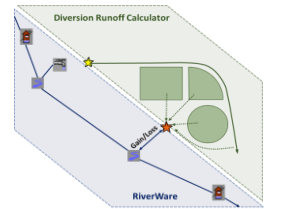


1 Maintenance, updates, and support for FY23 – FY25 UCRAF Models

2 Full UCRAF-DST for the Brush Creek/ Ashley Creek system

3 Diversion Runoff Calculator buildout

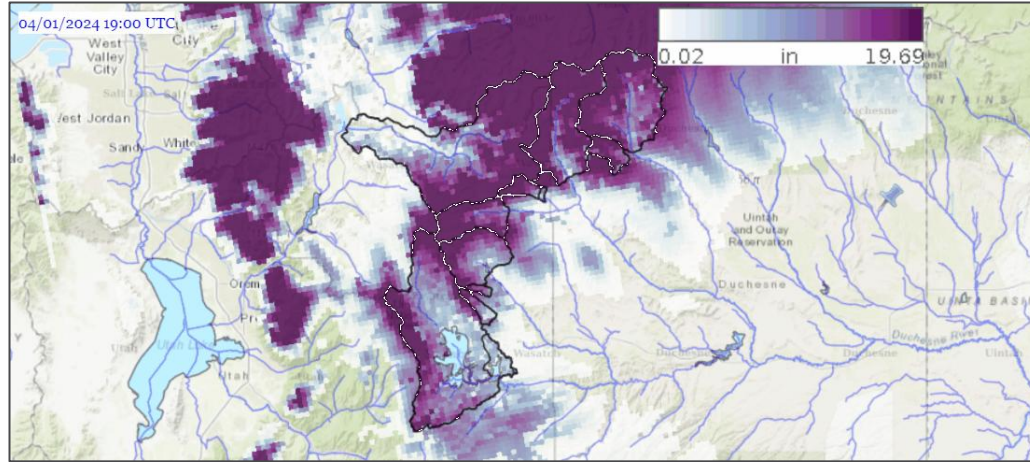
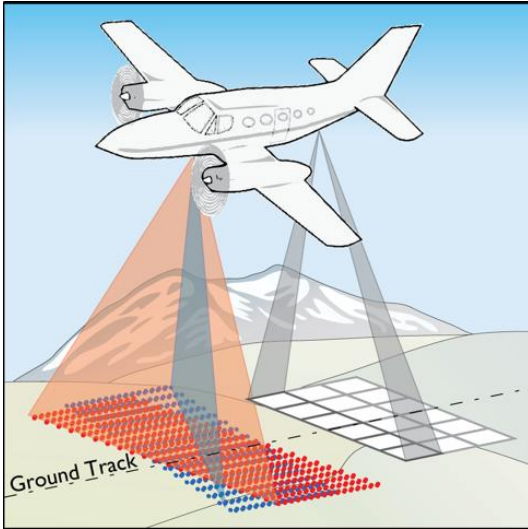
4 Colorado River System RiverWare Model





# Airborne Snow Observatories Pilot Project

- \$2M from Authority, Central Utah Water Conservancy District, Division of Water Resources, and Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Program

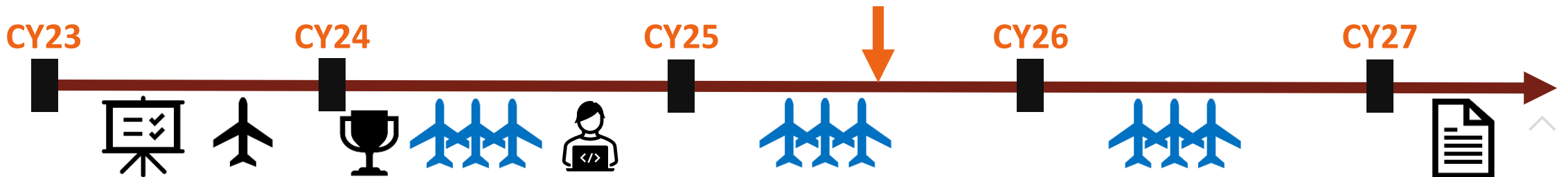


- Snow-Free Flight = Lidar
- Snow-On Flights = Lidar + Spectrometry

- Model Snowpack = iSnobal
- Forecast Runoff = WRF-Hydro

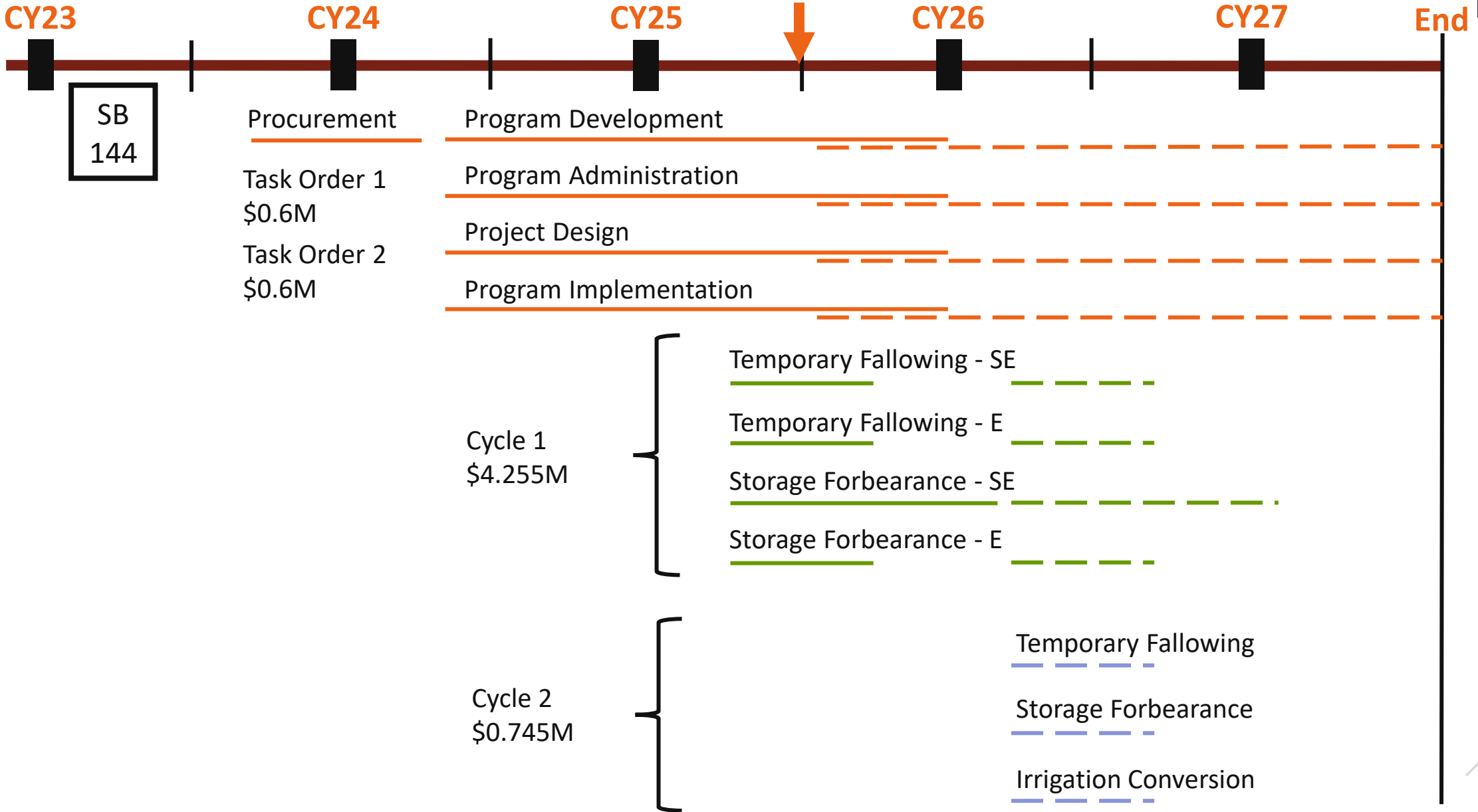
- Compare = CBRFC, SNOTEL
- **Operate** = SACS Model
- **Plan** = UCRAF Model

THE COLORADO RIVER AUTHORITY OF UTAH





# Utah Demand Management Pilot Program





# Request approval for proposed FY 26 Work Plan to begin July 1





*Defending Every Drop*



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