

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Colorado River Authority of Utah
May 12, 2026 -- 1:00 p.m. MT**

1. Call to Order – Gene Shawcroft, Chair

Mr. Shawcroft called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm stating there was a quorum. A list of all attendees is included in Attachment I. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the Minutes of April 21, 2026, Colorado River Authority of Utah Board Meeting – Gene Shawcroft

Mr. Renstrom motioned to approve the minutes, Mr. Humphrey seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

3. Public Comment Pursuant to the Public Comment Policy of the Authority (limit of 2 minutes per person) – Gene Shawcroft

Kael Weston encouraged obtaining a mediator for post-2026 negotiations.

4. Hydrology and System Status Update – Amanda Daniels, Senior Project Engineer

Ms. Daniels provided a hydrology and system status update and discussed month and water year to date precipitation which she explained showed large areas below average. Ms. Daniels discussed precipitation accumulation, which is still in the low 10%. Ms. Daniels explained the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) was in the 3rd percentile. Ms. Daniels explained that high temperatures and dry weather conditions continue to set records and explained the drought status map has not changed much and Utah remains in extreme drought. Ms. Daniels discussed system operations and explained the Upper Basin water supply volume forecast is less than 30% of normal for April - July. Ms. Daniels discussed the Upper Basin storage and explained that Flaming Gorge was 78% full, Fontenelle 45% full, Morrow Point 94% full, Blue Mesa 42% full, Navajo 62% full, and Lake Powell 24% full. Ms. Daniels explained that Lake Powell, Lake Mead, and system storage as of May 10th are 35% full, compared to 40% one year ago. Ms. Daniels discussed the Lake Powell WY2026 Forecast evolution which she explained has trended downward since January and as of May 11th the observed volume is 431 kaf.

5. Report of the Chair – Gene Shawcroft

Mr. Shawcroft explained that the Upper Division States (UDS) were invited by the Bureau of Reclamation to provide input prior to Reclamation putting out the preliminary preferred alternative. Mr. Shawcroft explained that the UDS provided input but it was not incorporated into the preliminary preferred alternative presentation due to timing. Mr. Shawcroft explained that the preliminary preferred alternative provides a 10-year framework for determining reservoir operations with operations being set for 2 year intervals. Mr. Shawcroft explained that Reclamation has established principles, guidelines and sideboards, within which the reservoirs will be operated. Mr. Shawcroft explained that Reclamation shared some concepts of the preliminary preferred alternative which include shortages of up to 3 MAF in the Lower Basin and a range of releases from Lake Powell between 5-12 MAF to protect Lake Powell at elevation 3520'. Mr. Shawcroft explained the Upper Division States proposed working through a mediator and while the other parties may be on board with the idea, it won't happen immediately. Mr. Shawcroft explained the NEPA schedule has not changed and that in late June the Final Environmental Impact Statement should be published and will a Record of Decision completed in July. Mr. Shawcroft explained the Upper Division States met with the Upper Basin Tribes last week and continue to work together to understand one another's needs.

6. Report of the Executive Director – Amy Haas, Executive Director

Ms. Haas discussed the Inflation Reduction Act that was passed during the Biden administration and included \$4B for reclamation to provided to drought impacted regions with a priority the Colorado River Basin. Ms. Haas explained this money was not fully distributed and that yesterday Reclamation announced it would award funding to four projects in Utah. Ms. Haas explained she was not aware of the recipients yet and would share that information at a future board meeting. Ms. Haas explained that the Governors of the 7 Basin States sent a letter to the Secretary requesting that additional Inflation Reduction Act funds be released and noted that \$100 M had been promised to the Upper Basin through the UCRC which will include money for demand management activities. Ms. Haas explained that Reclamation contacted her about this opportunity last week and acknowledged the fact that Utah is far ahead of some of the other Upper Division States due our DMPP.

Ms. Haas explained the Upper Division States will begin discussions regarding obligating the \$100M tbefore the September 30th deadline and the states will have until September 2031 to spend the funds.

Ms. Haas provided a summary of the 2026 Drought Response Operations Agreement (DROA) Plan which she explained has a range of plan releases from Flaming Gorge between 660,000 to 1,000,000 acre-feet beginning on April 23 and operating through April 2027. Ms. Haas explained releases from Blue Mesa and Navajo Reservoirs were considered as part of the plan but insufficient supplies are available and explained it will be uncertain as to the effectiveness of the releases until after September 2026.

Ms. Haas discussed preliminary DROA and Flaming Gorge Operations and explained approximately 18,468 acre-feet of the DROA volume was released in April 2026. Ms. Haas explained Flaming Gorge releases are designed to complement fish experiments, and this initial release complemented LTSP experiment, which is ramping down. Ms. Haas explained the Smallmouth Bass flow experiment is 3 days at powerplant capacity and that as this experiment is the same in both the baseline and DROA scenarios, no additional DROA release volume will accrue during this timeframe. Ms. Haas discussed DROA and the SEIS 6E and explained the 1 maf release and reduced released from Lake Powell to 6.0 are what is keeping Powell at or above critical elevation. Ms. Haas explained the Flaming Gorge release arrived at Lake Powell yesterday and should bump up significantly later in May.

7. Presentation on OpenET and its Application in the Colorado River System in Utah - Sara Larsen, P.E., CEO OpenET

Ms. Haas introduced Ms. Larsen, the CEO of OpenET, which is an organization providing satellite-based large-scale remotely sensed measurement of evapotranspiration.

Ms. Larsen provided a presentation on Supporting Water Resilience in Utah and the Colorado River Basin with Evapotranspiration Data.

8. Management Plan Implementation and Preview of FY 2027 Work Plan - Marc Stilson, Principal Engineer

Mr. Stilson provided a preview of the FY27 Work Plan and will share a draft for board review next week. He noted that both the Work and Management Plans are dynamic, allowing them to adapt to changing hydrology and conditions. Mr. Stilson explained the Work Plan activities are informed by

3 key developments: amendments to the Colorado River Authority Act which become effective on July 1st; lack of a consensus Colorado River Basin states agreement for the post-2026 operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead and corresponding interstate commitments; and significant drops in the elevations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead to critical elevations along with the record low hydrology in the Colorado River System. Mr. Stilson explained the Management Plan was built around three foundational pillars: Measurement, Hydrology & Operations, and Drought Mitigation. Mr. Stilson explained that Utah is leading out in all of these areas and all of this work is being done consistent with the Authority's refined mission to "*protect Utah's right to use waters from the Colorado River system*". Mr. Stilson explained the basic themes of the Work Plan revolve around Interstate Engagement, Utah Stakeholder Engagement, and Continued Work on FY23-27 Projects. Mr. Stilson explained Colorado River Authority staff are involved in Colorado River Basin States negotiations and are engaged in 25 different interstate work groups and committees. Mr. Stilson discussed the work of the five Advisory Councils and explained that each council is composed of regional experts and engaged citizens that provide recommendations to the Authority Board.

Mr. Stilson discussed Measurement which he explained includes five projects: Utah Diversion & Telemetry Program; Stream Flow Instrumentation & Measurement; OpenET, Utah Flux Network; and Provisional Accounting. Mr. Stilson discussed Hydrology & Operations which he explained includes three projects: short, mid and long-term River & Reservoir Operational Modeling; Climate & Hydrology Research & Instrumentation; and Snowpack, Runoff & Operations Pilot Project & Research. Mr. Stilson discussed Drought Mitigation which he explained includes five projects: Emery County Irrigation Efficiency Study; Utah Colorado River Accounting & Forecasting - Decision Support Tool; Agricultural Water Demonstration, Research & Implementation Pilot Program; Pelican Lake Subsurface Drip Pilot Program; and Utah Demand Management Pilot Program.

Ms. Haas explained this is the fifth Work Plan which is a bridge plan and explained that since we don't yet have a 7-states agreement, that there have been significant statutory changes to the Authority and it was the worst year on record for the Colorado River System, the Board should view the Work Plan through this lens. Mr. Renstrom asked about other Basin states' activities and how the Authority monitors progress with respect to their actions. Mr. Stilson responded that many of the interstate work groups and committees engage with the other basin states on the various activities they are engaged in.

9. Remarks from the Board

Mr. Humphrey explained his area is dismal, runoff is poor, cities aren't allowing secondary water, they are dealing with a reservoir that has issues, it's tough. Mr. Renstrom stated it was the 2nd year they didn't have a runoff and reservoirs are what carry them through. Mr. Renstrom explained water conservation measures from previous years are showing to have helped and demand for water has plateaued. Mr. Williams complimented Mr. Renstrom for water conservation efforts and explained educating the public on what they can do to help during a drought is extremely important. Mr. Larsen explained they have a little water in rivers and did have some rain over the past two weeks but otherwise has been extremely dry.

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

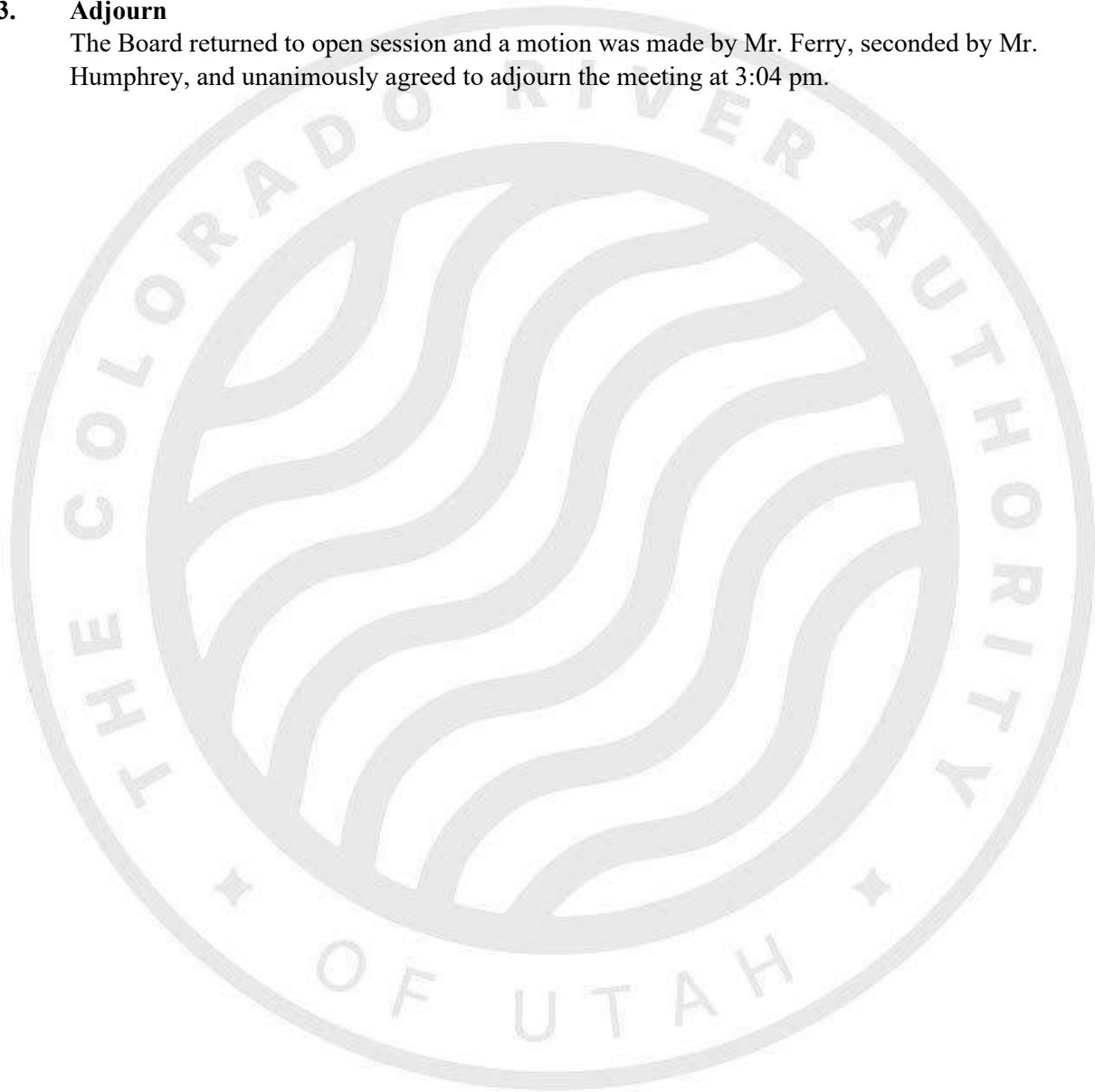
11. Next Meeting: June 16, 2026 1:00 pm World Trade Center 1st Floor Conference Room, 60 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84111

12. **Closed Session as needed to discuss interstate claims to the use of water from the Colorado River system and to protect classified records, legal strategy, or the ability of the state to carry out negotiations (UCA 52-4-205(2)(e)).**

A motion was made by Mr. Williams to close the meeting pursuant to Utah Code section 52-4-205 to discuss interstate claims to the use of water from the Colorado River system and to protect classified records, legal strategy, or the ability of the state to carry out negotiations. The motion was seconded by Mr. Renstrom. Ms. Coleman took a roll call vote from each Board Member; the motion to enter a Closed Session passed unanimously.

13. **Adjourn**

The Board returned to open session and a motion was made by Mr. Ferry, seconded by Mr. Humphrey, and unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 3:04 pm.



May 12, 2026
Colorado River Authority of Utah Board Meeting – VIRTUAL ONLY

Board Member Attendees:

Gene Shawcroft, Chair
Joel Ferry
Dan Larsen (Virtual)
Jay Mark Humphrey
Zach Renstrom
Joel Williams

Attendees:

Amy Haas
Betsy Coleman
Emma Epperson
Wendy Crowther
Marc Stilson
Amanda Daniels
Cody Stewart
Bart Leeftang, CUWCD
Ben Winslow, Fox 13
John Eulberg, Fox 13
Sarah Shechter, AG
Roger Pearson, CUWCD
Jordan Nielson, Trout Unlimited
Sara Larsen

Virtual Attendees:

Cody Allred
Lisa Anderson
Logan Anderson
John Berggren
Lily Bosworth
Joel Brown
Tom Bruton
Ric Cantrell
Evan Curtis
Bryan Dixon
Mike Drake
Duane Houston
Brooke Larsen
Willis LeFevre
Eric McCulley
Megan Nelson
Troy Ovard
Kael Weston
Teresa Wilhelmsen
Darren Simon