



JOINT DECLARATION ON COLORADO RIVER ISSUES

Whereas the United States and Mexico have sought to address areas of common interest through negotiations based on the principles of mutual respect and bilateral collaboration, recognizing that this commitment to joint discussion is likely to identify responsible solutions that benefit the citizens of both nations;

Whereas the Colorado River is a vital resource to vast areas of the southwestern United States in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming; and to northwestern Mexico in the States of Baja California and Sonora, which depend upon the waters of the Colorado River to support agricultural economies, growing municipal populations' potable water needs, as well as vital natural resources;

Whereas the United States and Mexico agreed to the allotment of the waters of the Colorado River in the 1944 Treaty Relating to the Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande and concluded subsequent agreements which are administered by the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC);

Whereas recent periods of historic drought in the Colorado River Basin and growing recognition of the potential adverse impacts of climate change have stimulated efforts to identify cooperative and innovative approaches to ensure that the Colorado River allotment of each nation will continue to meet the needs of both nations;

Whereas, pursuant to the August 13, 2007 U.S.-Mexico Joint Statement on Colorado River Cooperative Actions, the IBWC established a framework for the discussion, joint study, investigation and evaluation of cooperative, innovative and holistic measures that may benefit Colorado River water users in the United States and Mexico;

Whereas representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations in the United States and Mexico have devoted significant effort, particularly over the past two years through the IBWC, to this initiative in order to identify, discuss, and prioritize potential actions for implementation through cooperative efforts to provide additional security and certainty in the water supply of the Colorado River System;

Whereas both the United States and Mexico were deeply saddened by the tragic loss, on September 15, 2008, of U.S. Commissioner Carlos Marin and Mexico Commissioner J. Arturo Herrera Solis of the IBWC who were instrumental in leading these cooperative efforts and were committed to ensuring the sustainable management of the waters of the Colorado.

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne and Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan hereby applaud the efforts of the IBWC and its work to help identify cooperative and innovative measures that both countries could implement consistent with the provisions of the 1944 Treaty to help ensure that the Colorado River is able to continue to meet the needs of both nations; and,

Further, both governments support these efforts to identify innovative opportunities for water conservation, storage, supply augmentation, and environmental protection, which are viewed as complementary to the mission of the Department of the Interior and the respective Mexican ministries, consistent with the provisions of the 1944 Treaty.

Issued jointly, in Washington, DC, on the 13 of January, 2009.

For the United States of America:



For the United Mexican States:

