



February 14, 2020

Mr. Ed Warner  
Area Manager  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
445 West Gunnison Avenue, Suite 221  
Grand Junction, CO 81501  
VIA EMAIL TO PARADOXEIS@USBR.GOV

Re: Support for Salinity Control in the Paradox Valley in Western Colorado

Dear Mr. Warner:

We submit this letter in response to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU) of the Colorado River Basin Title II Salinity Control Program.

On behalf of the 175 members of the Southern California Water Coalition, I want to express our support for efforts to reduce salinity in the water delivered to all those who rely upon the Colorado River Basin for supplies as our region does. Our member organizations include leaders from business, regional and local government, agricultural groups, labor unions, environmental organizations, water agencies and the general public.

High salinity impacts water users by increasing scaling potential on water-using devices, reducing agricultural crop yields, limiting groundwater recharge efforts, and reducing the usability of reclaimed water, among other impacts. Protecting the Colorado River's water quality is important to us and we support USBR's commitment to explore long-term alternatives to reduce salinity in the Colorado River from sources in the Paradox Valley.

For the past 45 years, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum has worked with federal agencies to implement beneficial salinity control measures. Salinity control measures have included improved irrigation practices, rangeland management for non-point source control, and deep-well brine injection through the PVU.

In the upper Colorado River Basin, the PVU historically has played a substantial role in salinity control. No other single project or group of projects with equivalent salinity reduction benefits (i.e., removal of 100,000 tons of salt annually) is ready for implementation. Therefore, as operation of the existing PVU well faces challenges and its future operation is uncertain, we support planning for the long-term replacement necessary to avoid significant basin-wide economic damages that some estimate could reach more than \$20 million annually. Continued salinity control in the Paradox Valley is critical to reducing salinity levels in the Colorado River, and we support a long-term replacement alternative that continues or exceeds the salinity reduction achieved by the existing project.

We recognize the considerable efforts taken by USBR to evaluate the environmental effects of salinity control alternatives in Paradox Valley. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support during the DEIS comment period and look forward to receiving the Final EIS and Record of Decision that identify an alternative ensuring the long-term protection of the Colorado River and its tributaries.





USBR has demonstrated a strong commitment to reducing salinity levels in the Colorado River and collaborated with stakeholders who depend on the Colorado River as a source of drinking water. We thank you for your support of these efforts and appreciate your consideration to provide the resources necessary to continue managing salinity in the Paradox Valley. It is important to Southern Californians.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charley Wilson", on a light beige rectangular background.

Charley Wilson  
Executive Director