

# Reclamation seeks public input on alternatives to reduce salinity and improve water quality in the Colorado River

Media Contact: Justyn Liff, 970-248-0625, [jliff@usbr.gov](mailto:jliff@usbr.gov)

Lesley McWhirter, 970-248-0608, [lmcwhirter@usbr.gov](mailto:lmcwhirter@usbr.gov)

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GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. – The Bureau of Reclamation is seeking public input on alternatives to reduce salinity in the Colorado River from sources in the Paradox Valley in western Colorado. Currently, the Paradox Valley Unit (PVU) in Montrose County, Colorado, is intercepting naturally occurring brine and injecting it 16,000 feet underground via a deep injection well. The PVU began operating in 1996 and is nearing the end of its useful life. The United States has a water quality obligation to control salt in the Colorado River, in compliance with the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act, the Clean Water Act, and a 1944 treaty with Mexico.

“The Paradox Valley Unit is a cost-effective salinity control project in the Colorado River Basin as it prevents 95,000

tons of salt annually from reaching the Dolores River and eventually the Colorado River—that's approximately 7% of total salinity control occurring in the basin," said Area Manager for Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office Ed Warner. "Reducing salt in the rivers improves water quality, crop production and wildlife habitat in the basin."

Reclamation is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement and has released a draft for public review and comment. Alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS include a new injection well; evaporation ponds; zero liquid discharge technology; and no action, which would result in no salinity control in the Paradox Valley.

The public is invited to attend public meetings to learn more, ask questions and provide comments. Two public meetings will be held on:

- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020 in Paradox, Colorado at the Paradox Valley Charter School, 21501 6 Mile Rd., at 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020 in Montrose, Colorado at the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 1391 S. Townsend Ave., at 6 p.m.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement is available online at [www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/paradox/index.html](http://www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/paradox/index.html) or a copy can be requested by contacting Reclamation.

Reclamation will consider all comments received by 11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on Feb. 4, 2020. Those interested may submit comments by email to [paradoxeis@usbr.gov](mailto:paradoxeis@usbr.gov) or to Ed Warner, Area Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, 445 West Gunnison Ave, Suite 221, Grand Junction, CO 81501.

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