
ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4—ASSEMBLYWOMAN SWANK

PREFILED FEBRUARY 13, 2017

JOINT SPONSOR: SENATOR SEGERBLOM

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources,
Agriculture, and Mining

SUMMARY—Requests the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct an independent scientific and economic analysis of the current management practices of the Colorado River, the impact of these practices on water security, flood protection and biodiversity recovery, and alternative management options, including draining Lake Powell and decommissioning and destroying the Glen Canyon Dam. (BDR R-101)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Requesting the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct an independent scientific and economic analysis of the current management practices of the Colorado River, the impact of these practices on water security, flood protection and biodiversity recovery, and alternative management options, including draining Lake Powell and decommissioning and destroying the Glen Canyon Dam.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Colorado River provides water to 7 states, 20
2 Indian tribes and Mexico; and
3 WHEREAS, The supply of water in the Colorado River is critical
4 to the economies, people and natural resources of these
5 jurisdictions; and



1 WHEREAS, Numerous issues, including climate change and
2 overconsumption, threaten the Colorado River and its surrounding
3 habitats; and

4 WHEREAS, Numerous independent scientists have warned that
5 the current management practices of the Colorado River may be
6 placing those who depend on the Colorado River at risk; and

7 WHEREAS, The water management infrastructure of the
8 Colorado River is outdated and based on an invalid assumption
9 which causes unintended impacts and risks; and

10 WHEREAS, The Glen Canyon Dam poses a safety risk to the
11 residents of this State, loses billions of gallons of water stored in
12 Lake Powell each year due to evaporation and leakages from the
13 reservoir, disrupts natural sediment transport, degrades the natural
14 biological diversity and physical landscapes of unique elements of
15 the world's natural heritage and impacts the cultural heritage and
16 religious practices of indigenous people; and

17 WHEREAS, There is presently no independent body examining
18 the complex set of interrelated issues affecting the health and
19 sustainability of the Colorado River system; and

20 WHEREAS, As the nation's premier source of independent,
21 multidisciplinary, expert advice on issues including science,
22 engineering and the environment, the National Research Council of
23 the National Academy of Sciences is uniquely qualified to conduct
24 an independent review and analysis of the current management
25 practices of the Colorado River, the impact of these practices on
26 water security, flood protection and biodiversity recovery, and
27 alternative management strategies to overcome any impacts,
28 including altering and augmenting infrastructure, specifically
29 draining Lake Powell and decommissioning and destroying the Glen
30 Canyon Dam on the Colorado River; now, therefore, be it

31 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF
32 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 79th Session of the
33 Nevada Legislature hereby urge the National Research Council of
34 the National Academy of Sciences to undertake a study of the
35 current management practices of the Colorado River, the impact of
36 these practices on water security, flood protection and biodiversity
37 recovery, and alternative management strategies to overcome any
38 impacts, including altering and augmenting infrastructure,
39 specifically draining Lake Powell and decommissioning and
40 destroying the Glen Canyon Dam; and be it further

41 RESOLVED, That such a study should consider, without
42 limitation:

43 1. The sufficiency and sustainability of the flow of the
44 Colorado River to satisfy the allocations of water prescribed by the
45 Colorado River Compact;



- 1 2. The sufficiency and sustainability of groundwater supplies
2 to meet projected demand;
- 3 3. Flood risks and strategies for flood management;
- 4 4. The viability of expanded aquifer recharge as an alternative
5 to the storage of Colorado River water above ground;
- 6 5. The protection and rehabilitation of animal and plant
7 species;
- 8 6. Instream flow requirements to recover natural habitat
9 conditions in the Colorado River delta and the remediation of the
10 Salton Sea agricultural drainage;
- 11 7. Scenarios for the allocation of Colorado River water and the
12 appropriate infrastructure to realize the scenarios in order to meet
13 the region's future fresh water needs in times of flood or drought
14 and sustain and enhance the River corridor's natural biodiversity;
- 15 8. Options for draining Lake Powell and decommissioning and
16 destroying the Glen Canyon Dam that:
 - 17 (a) Mitigate flood risks on the Colorado River below Grand
18 Canyon National Park when the Glen Canyon Dam is no longer
19 available for flood storage and routing purposes;
 - 20 (b) Provide interim bypass mechanisms for water and sediment
21 around, below and through the Glen Canyon Dam that are sufficient
22 to allow for the return of the natural flow of the Colorado River at
23 the dam site, up to or exceeding a volume of 200,000 cubic feet per
24 second;
 - 25 (c) Identify groundwater recharge sites in the Lower Colorado
26 River Basin and the infrastructure requirements to utilize the
27 recharge sites in order to replace the water storage benefits
28 forecasted for Lake Powell;
 - 29 (d) Identify sources of electricity replacement for the
30 hydropower customers of the Glen Canyon Dam;
 - 31 (e) Remove sediment from Lake Mead; and
 - 32 (f) Ensure technical and scientific monitoring and oversight for
33 habitat recovery in Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon
34 National Recreation Area; and
- 35 9. Any alternative technologies and techniques that may be
36 used to manage the Colorado River; and be it further

37 RESOLVED, That the Division of Water Resources of the State
38 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is hereby
39 directed to consult with comparable agencies in the signatory states
40 to the Colorado River Compact, the United States Department of the
41 Interior and the National Research Council of the National Academy
42 of Sciences regarding options for funding the requested study; and
43 be it further

44 RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and
45 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Executive Officer of the



1 National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences,
2 the United States Secretary of the Interior, the Commissioner of the
3 United States Bureau of Reclamation, the Governor of this State and
4 the Governors of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah
5 and Wyoming, and the State Engineer as the executive head of the
6 Division of Water Resources of the State Department of
7 Conservation and Natural Resources; and be it further
8 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
9 passage.

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