



Colorado-Rio Grande Distribution System

NAWAPA XXI will tunnel into the Great Basin and the Colorado Basin, creating reservoirs on the tributaries of the Colorado River, which will feed water into its main stem.

A large distribution reservoir, up to four times the size of the Hoover Dam’s Lake Mead, will be formed in the Little Colorado River Valley. Out of this central reservoir, tunnels and canals will form three reservoirs on the tributaries of the Salt River, three reservoirs on the tributaries of the Gila River, and a large reservoir on the headwaters of the Gila River itself. A tunnel will connect a reservoir formed on the Gila River to the Rio Grande Basin, crossing and supplying water to the Rio Grande River, and forming a large reservoir on the Pecos River, which will supply West Texas, and Mexico, and connect to eastern Colorado.

Throughout the Colorado and Rio Grande basins, groundwater pumping costs will be eliminated and farmland restored, and with the water added to Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and West Texas alone, 14 million acres of farmland could be opened up. The average 11 MAFY currently flowing through the Colorado River will be increased over 100% through these added reservoirs; the Pecos and Rio Grande rivers will become full and flow year-round.

Approximately 30 new reservoirs will be formed in New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado, changing local climates and expanding recreation. The storage capacity of the Rio Grande Basin will be more than doubled, from 20 MAF to 54 MAF. The Colorado Basin storage will be increased from 61 MAF, largely from Lake Mead and Lake Powell, to 230 MAF. A 7-MAF reservoir will also be formed 50 miles north of Las Vegas, just north of Hayford Peak in the Sheep Mountain range, distributing water to southern Nevada and paralleling the Colorado River, supplying water to farms before continuing south to Mexico and the Imperial Valley.