



## Coalition of Colorado River Basin NGO's Call on U.S. Department of Interior to Abandon Lake Powell Pipeline

### Letter to Interior asks federal government to stop its permitting of largest new proposed water diversion in the Basin as water cuts are proposed downstream

A coalition of conservation organizations across the Colorado River Basin called on the Department of Interior to eject the largest new proposed water diversion from continued environmental permitting. The Lake Powell Pipeline is a proposed water diversion in Utah being permitted by the Bureau of Reclamation at a time when water cuts are simultaneously being proposed downstream in three states because of shrinking water flows.

The State of Utah and the Washington County Water District have spent at least \$40 million advancing the pipeline since 2006, and have been actively seeking to acquire right of ways for the project over the past year. Yet the proposed project has been stalled since 2020, when the other six basin states voiced opposition about the water project's impacts to the shrinking Colorado River water supply and openly threatened litigation. As reservoirs declined rapidly since 2020, huge water cuts have been proposed to lower basin residents.

**"The Lake Powell Pipeline is a paper dinosaur that needs to be shredded once and for all"** said Zach Frankel, Executive Director of the Utah Rivers Council. **"40 million residents need the federal government to step in and stop Utah from wasting anymore tax money on this irresponsible boondoggle"** said Frankel.

Climate change has reduced Colorado River flows nearly 20% over the past 20+ years, draining reservoirs and creating a water shortage crisis the Bureau of Reclamation is scrambling to address. Millions of acre-feet of new water cuts are being proposed in California, Nevada and Arizona, leading many to wonder how the same water agency could propose a massive new water diversion at the same time upstream.

**"The Colorado River is already over tapped, and the Lake Powell Pipeline is a sure way to make everything worse"** said Eric Balken, Executive Director of the Glen Canyon Institute.

A letter (attached) was sent to the Secretary of Interior by a group of organizations calling upon the Department of Interior to direct the Bureau of Reclamation to formally eject the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline from further environmental permitting. The groups seek to have the Bureau of Reclamation issue a federal register notice formally ejecting the project from further consideration. The organizations that have signed the letter include the Utah Rivers Council, the the Center for Biological Diversity, the Glen Canyon Institute, the Great Basin Water Network,

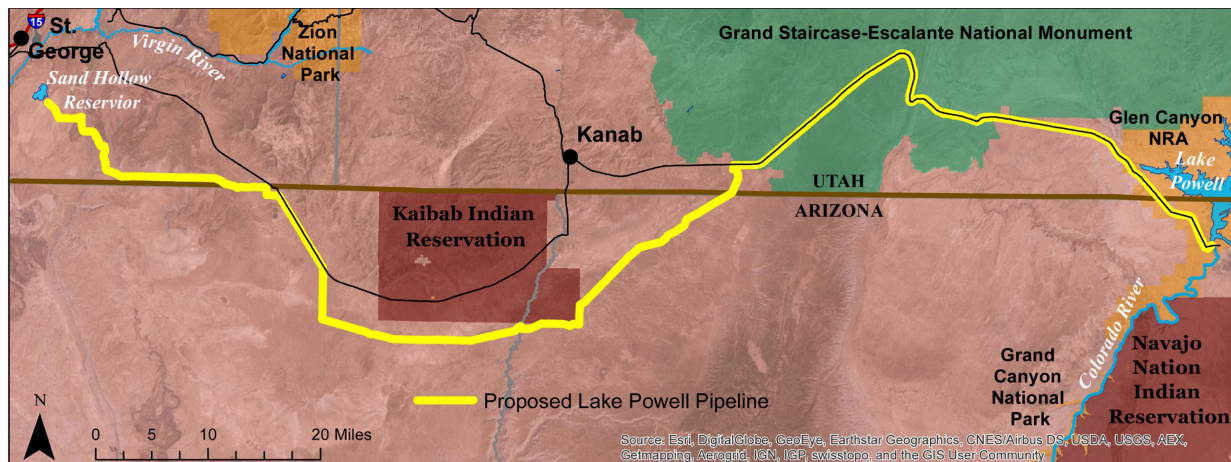
Living Rivers & the Colorado Riverkeeper, Wild Earth Guardians, the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, and Save the Colorado.

**“Each minute wasted on this pipeline sham comes at the cost of real solutions that the Colorado River’s communities and endangered fish desperately need for survival,”** said Taylor McKinnon, Southwest director at the Center for Biological Diversity. **“It’s time for the Interior Department to pull the plug on the Lake Powell Pipeline.”**

**“There has never been water available for this project and there never will be”** said Kyle Roerink, executive director of the Great Basin Water Network. **“Let’s retire the idea of LPP and relinquish any notion that the paper water remaining on the river will become wet water”** said Kyle Roerink, Executive Director of the Great Basin Water Network.

Even proponents of the Lake Powell Pipeline have indicated no imminent need for the water project. The Washington County Water District released a new [water plan](#) indicating the region could satisfy future water needs without any water from the pipeline for the next twenty years.

The groups called upon the Department of Interior to formally eject the proposed pipeline from further permitting consideration given the range of problems, concerns and critics across the region of 40 million people.



*Proposed route of the 140-mile-long Lake Powell Pipeline, shown in yellow.*

The Lake Powell Pipeline is a 140-mile-long pipeline proposed by the State of Utah and the Washington County Water District to provide water to the suburbs of St. George, Utah. The 2020 environmental permit for the pipeline noted the per person water use in the Utah area as being 304 gallons per person per day, more than twice the per person water use of Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Denver. The 2020 proposal failed to address impacts on downstream water supplies and underestimated the impacts of climate change on the Colorado River Basin.

A [change.org petition](#) has been drafted by the groups to help convince the Interior Department to eject from the Lake Powell Pipeline from further environmental permitting.

For more information, contact:

Zachary Frankel  
Executive Director, Utah Rivers Council  
[zach@utahrivers.org](mailto:zach@utahrivers.org)  
(801) 699-1856

Eric Balken  
Executive Director, Glen Canyon Institute  
[eric@glencanyon.org](mailto:eric@glencanyon.org)  
(801) 631-2774

Kyle Roerink  
Executive Director, Great Basin Water Network  
[kyle4gbwn@gmail.com](mailto:kyle4gbwn@gmail.com)  
(702) 324-9662

Page 3 of 3

###