

Major Corporations and Foundations Commit Final Funding to Close Gap in Landmark Colorado River Water Conservation Deal

Microsoft, Procter & Gamble and other contributions secure funding to support water resilience, equity and combat drought within the Colorado River Basin

For Immediate Release: June 22, 2021

Contact: Sean Keady, sean.keady@berlinrosen.com

PHOENIX -- Business for Water Stewardship, Environmental Defense Fund and the National Audubon Society today announced that corporations and foundations have committed the funding to close an \$8 million funding gap required to complete a landmark water conservation project with the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) and the state of Arizona. The announcement marks the completion of one of the largest multi-sector collaborative drought response efforts ever achieved. To date, a combination of Arizona state, philanthropic, and corporate funding has provided **over \$38 million to secure** 150,000 acre-feet of conservation (nearly 49 billion gallons of water) to help shore up Lake Mead through the CRIT system conservation project.

Funding was provided by leading corporations spanning many sectors. Companies and brands include: **Intel Corp.; Google; Microsoft; Procter & Gamble; Reformation; Keurig Dr Pepper; Ecolab; Cascade; Cox; The Coca-Cola Foundation; Silk; Target; Brochu Walker; and Swire Coca-Cola, USA.** The corporate funding is joined by private philanthropic funds, led by the **Walton Family Foundation** and **Water Funder Initiative**, with additional contributions from the **Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation** and the **Arizona Community Foundation**.

“How we use, manage, and value water will dictate our future,” said Todd Reeve, **CEO of Bonneville Environmental Foundation and Co-Founder of Business for Water Stewardship**. “Today is a major milestone made possible by collective impact. We’re redefining how businesses work collaboratively with tribes, community and policy stakeholders, philanthropy, and nonprofit partners to advance solutions that ensure that the people, economies, and ecosystems along the Colorado River have enough clean water to flourish.”

The funding directly supports the CRIT and their comprehensive system conservation project developed as part of the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) negotiations that included Arizona and six other states that rely on water supply from the Colorado River. The project will help shore up declining water levels in Lake Mead, which has fallen to 36% of capacity, the lowest levels since it was filled in 1935, and help delay and reduce future water

shortages that would impact Arizona, Nevada, California, and Mexico. As a result of dry conditions, Arizona is expected to have to reduce its take of water from Lake Mead by 512,000 acre-feet (nearly 167 billion gallons) in 2022.

“The importance of the DCP cannot be overstated as drought conditions persist,” said **Amelia Flores, Chairwoman of the Colorado River Indian Tribes**. “CRIT is proud to play a key role in mitigating water shortfalls facing Arizona. We are able to do so by careful conservation that benefits Arizona while protecting our water rights. The partnerships and alliances that have been forged across all levels of government as well as corporate and non-profit entities demonstrate the level of commitment needed to solve this crisis.”

“Through our water positive commitment, Microsoft is focused on improving water conditions for people, nature, and society in water-stressed locations around the world,” said **Paul Fleming, Microsoft Global Water Program Manager**. “We’ve supported the CRIT project because of its tangible benefits to the community and because it has helped to coalesce and scale the activities of individual entities into a collective action framework. By aligning state government, tribal government, the non-profit and philanthropic communities, and the private sector, the CRIT project provides an example of how we can work together to steward a resource that sustains us all.”

“P&G is continually looking for innovative solutions to protect water for people and nature. We recognize millions of people, hundreds of species and thousands of miles of land rely on the Colorado River to thrive each day,” said **Shannon Quinn, P&G Global Water Stewardship Leader**. “Being a part of the CRIT project gives P&G the opportunity to collaborate with partners that make a positive impact and build a more resilient future for the states and Tribal Nations that rely on this precious resource.”

“The stakes couldn’t have been higher for this work, but together with the Colorado River Indian Tribes, philanthropic and private sector support, we were able to find solutions that work for nature and people together,” said **Ted Kowalski, Director of the Walton Family Foundation’s Colorado River Initiative**. “This needs to be the way of the future. There is obviously still a tremendous amount of work to be done across the Colorado River Basin, and no one sector or group meets this challenge on their own. The only way to meet the challenges of climate change and water is through collaboration.”

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Business for Water Stewardship

Business for Water Stewardship is a program of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation that helps businesses advance solutions to ensure that our communities, economies and ecosystems have enough clean water to flourish. We provide ways for businesses to actively help sustain rivers and replenish aquifers, promote forward-looking water policies, and boost their reputations as environmental stewards.

Learn more at www.businessforwater.org

Environmental Defense Fund

One of the world's leading international nonprofit organizations, Environmental Defense Fund creates transformational solutions to the most serious environmental problems. To do so, EDF links science, economics, law, and innovative private-sector partnerships. With more than 2.5 million members and offices in the United States, China, Mexico, Indonesia and the European Union, EDF's scientists, economists, attorneys and policy experts are working in 28 countries to turn our solutions into action.

Learn more at www.edf.org

National Audubon Society

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow. Audubon works throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation. State programs, nature centers, chapters, and partners give Audubon an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire, and unite diverse communities in conservation action. A nonprofit conservation organization since 1905, Audubon believes in a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Learn more at www.audubon.org and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @audubonsociety.