

One Woman's 2,000-Mile Run Spurs a New Rescue Plan for the Colorado River

- **55-year-old CEO Mina Guli ran over 2,000 miles in 92 days from the river's source in Colorado to Los Angeles**
- **Summits in Denver, Las Vegas, Phoenix and Los Angeles brought communities, farmers, Tribes, and companies together**
- **Collective approach will help address water crisis that threatens more than \$1.4T in annual GDP**
- **New plan prioritizes water savings across urban, agricultural and industrial sectors as well as investments in natural infrastructure**

LOS ANGELES, September 17 – After an epic 2,000-mile run down the entire length of the Colorado River in the scorching heat of summer, Thirst CEO Mina Guli crossed the finish line in Los Angeles and announced a major victory for water advocacy, as representatives of communities, farmers, Tribes, and companies finalized a shared plan to restore the river.

"The Colorado water crisis isn't some future threat—it's hitting communities and cities across the West right now," said Mina Guli, who ran the river as part of the "Keep the River Running" campaign. "For the last three months, I've seen the frontlines of this crisis, hearing from families and companies about their daily struggles to get by on less and less water. But I've also been inspired by the wealth of ways people are already making a difference – from more efficient infrastructure on farms, in cities, and at companies, to conservation groups building beaver dams in mountain streams."

"Today's commitment shows us this crisis is solvable, if we act together, take hard decisions, and rapidly scale up investment in the solutions that build long-term resilience," added Guli.

The Colorado River is a lifeline for the American West, supporting 40 million people, 16 million jobs, and \$1.4 trillion in annual economic activity. Yet as its flow dwindles, its reservoirs have hit record lows, threatening power generation at the Hoover Dam, and agriculture that supplies the majority of the US's winter vegetables, and a third of its milk. The US government has called on Arizona, California and Nevada to cut back their use of its water by up to 3 million acre-feet per year – leaving huge questions about how to achieve that goal without impacting the agriculture, energy, manufacturing, technology, communities, cities and Tribal Nations that rely on the river.

"Keep the River Running," is a campaign to address those questions, supported by the Thirst Foundation, Grundfos, and the Water Resilience Coalition (WRC). The campaign's "[State of the Basin Report: A Guide to the Colorado River Crisis](#)" identifies key strategies that can move the river from crisis-management to long-term resilience.

55-Year Old CEO's Toughest Run Ever

Guli, an ultramarathon runner and global water advocate, has logged more than 25,000 miles in a career dedicated to raising awareness of global water challenges. "Keep the River Running" was her longest and toughest single-river run. She completed her run in 92 days, less than her 100-day target, and with only 6 days off running for summits and other advocacy work. Along the way, she had to divert her course due to wildfires, and suffer extreme temperatures in the Grand Canyon, which forced her to run at night and submerge herself in water as the sun rose.

"Mina's journey showed us both the urgency of the Colorado River crisis and the determination of the people working to address it," said Ansell Sims, US Country President, Grundfos. "This shared ambition reflects what is possible when communities, Tribal leaders, businesses and water experts come together around practical action."

Guli, sometimes referred to as "water woman" by fans who follow her campaigns, was joined by those on the frontlines of the water crisis, including the Colorado River Indian Tribes Community, their Tribal Council, and the Mojave Runners. Her stops included visits to the Hoover Dam, a Meta data center, the river's parched delta in Mexico, and the Imperial Irrigation District in California.

A series of videos highlight what Guli witnessed along her run, including [challenges](#), like dwindling snowpack, and actionable solutions, like [beaver dam analogs](#), [agrivoltaics](#), and [urban water efficiency](#).

Summits drove solutions

Four summits along her run drew prominent stakeholders in the basin, including Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego and representatives of major cities, and companies in the tech, agricultural, beverage, engineering and infrastructure space.

In Los Angeles, she crossed the finish line where the river's water now effectively ends, at the Metropolitan Water District, where it flows into the taps of 19 million people across California. At the summit, a shared commitment to the river was finalized among Thirst Foundation, Grundfos and the WRC, which will prioritize water efficiency and waste-reduction, freshwater habitat restoration, equitable water and sanitation access, and source water protection.

"No organization can solve this challenge alone," Sims added. "By working together, we can scale proven water solutions and help build a more resilient future for the Colorado River Basin."

On October 15, the WRC will launch the Colorado River Basin Collaborative (CRBC) to mobilize the private sector to act collectively in alignment with this ambition developed during the Keep the River Running summits. With Grundfos supporting the initiative as a Basin Champion, the CRBC will drive investment from business and philanthropy across a portfolio of projects aligned with the four priority areas, set shared goals, and track long-term outcomes in the basin.

"People told me I was crazy to run the Colorado River in summer. But I'm not crazy. I am committed to doing hard things because we all need to do hard things to save the Colorado as well as other economically-critical and water-stressed rivers across the world," said Guli.

"I crossed the finishing line today but this is not the end of the campaign: the journey goes on," she added, who will host a Keep the River Liquid Finance Lab for the Colorado on September 21st during New York Climate Week. "Together, we will work to leverage the investment needed to scale these solutions and save the Colorado River."

Editors Note:

For more information on Keep the River Running, visit www.keeptheriverrunning.com.

Photos for media use of Mina Guli's epic run down the Colorado are available [here](#)

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About the Thirst Foundation

Mina Guli founded Thirst in 2012 as a nonprofit focused on changing how we think about water, and encouraging governments and companies to prioritize water sustainability. This campaign builds on Mina's previous global advocacy, including running 200 marathons in one year ahead of the 2023 UN Water Conference in New York to draw attention to the global water crisis. Her journeys span the Nile, Yangtze, Seine and have helped mobilize the world's largest movement for water, educating more than 2 million students. Guli served as ambassador for the historic [2023 UN Water Conference](#) and has mobilized global corporate and grassroots commitments to feed directly into the UN's [Water Action Agenda](#). Learn more at www.minaguli.com.

About Grundfos

Grundfos pioneers solutions to the world's water and climate challenges and improves the quality of life for people. As a leading global pump and water solutions company, we promise to respect, protect, and advance the flow of water by providing energy and water efficient solutions and systems for water utilities, industries, and buildings worldwide. Learn more at www.grundfos.com.

About the Water Resilience Coalition

The Water Resilience Coalition is an industry driven, CEO led initiative of the CEO Water Mandate. It focuses on preserving the world's freshwater resources through collective action in water stressed regions and ambitious, measurable commitments. Learn more at <https://ceowatermandate.org/resilience/>.

More on the campaign: minaguli.com and keeptheriverrunning.com