

Colorado River's Worst Water Year Ever Puts 40 Million People at Risk — New Report Says There's a Path Forward

- **The Colorado's River Basin's worst water year in history threatens 16 million jobs, \$1.4 trillion in annual GDP, and Hoover Dam's power generation**
- **This first-ever synthesis of challenges and approaches to the crisis draws on new hydrology data, recent research and expert interviews**
- **The report underpins summits along ultramarathoner Mina Guli's 2,000-mile route for this summer's "Keep the River Running" campaign**

DENVER, CO – July 14, 2026 – The "State of the Basin Report: A Guide to the Colorado River Crisis" has found that solutions already exist to mitigate a growing water crisis that affects more than 40 million people across seven states.

Drawing on recent research about ecology, water management and technology, new data on the severity of the hydrological crisis, and interviews with conservation experts, the report highlights:

- The current ecological state of the Colorado River Basin, including challenges with growing salinity;
- Key system pressures including water security, governance, the growth of tech companies and data centers, economic risk and climate adaptation;
- Shared challenges for agriculture, cities, energy, ecosystems and Tribal communities
- High-impact intervention areas to strengthen long-term resilience across the basin

The report is ([LINK HERE](#)) supported by the Walton Family Foundation, the Water Resilience Coalition, Thirst Foundation and Grundfos. It was released alongside "Keep the River Running," a campaign by ultramarathon runner and Thirst Foundation CEO Mina Guli, who will run 2,000-miles down the length of the Colorado River over 100 days to accelerate action on the water crisis, including through a series of community runs and high-level summits along her route.

"I've run more than 300 marathons in 32 countries, and I've seen the devastation caused by drying rivers. But I have also seen that there are ways to tackle this: we can become more water-aware, restore our wetlands, and upgrade our infrastructure – we just need the courage to act," said Guli.

With record-low snowpack feeding the Colorado River, its reservoirs, agriculture, hydropower, major cities, tech companies and industrial operations are all at risk this summer.

The report builds a foundation to address those challenges at summits in Las Vegas (Aug. 14), Phoenix (Sept. 1), and Los Angeles (Sept. 17). Discussions among community leaders and stakeholders will build on its findings, and culminate in shared ambition to turn awareness into action.

"Keep the River Running" builds on Guli's previous global advocacy campaigns, including running 200 marathons in one year ahead of the 2023 UN Water Conference in New York. During that journey, she ran around Lake Mead, where the reservoir's white "bathtub rings"

became a powerful symbol of the Colorado River's decline. Her work has also helped mobilize the world's largest movement for water, with people participating in previous campaigns across more than 200 countries and territories.

The full report and executive summary can be found here [LINK](#).

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About Thirst Foundation

Mina Guli founded Thirst in 2012 as a nonprofit focused on changing how we think about water, following a 15-year career in law, finance, and climate change. Her Run Blue campaign built the largest grassroots movement for water in history with a series of 200 marathons and participation from over 200 countries. Thirst Foundation has educated more than 2 million students, and works to mobilize governments and companies to prioritize water sustainability. Guli served as ambassador for the 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 <https://keeptheriverrunning.com/> and follow her on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).

About Walton Family Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation is, at its core, a family-led foundation. Three generations of the descendants of our founders, Sam and Helen Walton, and their spouses work together to lead the foundation and create access to opportunity for people and communities. We work in three areas: improving education, protecting rivers and oceans and the communities they support and investing in our home region of Northwest Arkansas and the Arkansas-Mississippi Delta. To learn more, visit waltonfamilyfoundation.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).

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 a wide range of applications for water utilities, industries and buildings. Learn more at www.grundfos.com.