

## The Colorado Basin Streamflow Forecast Testbed: Assessing Hydrologic Skill and Operational Projections of Streamflow Forecasts in the Colorado River Basin

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The Colorado River is a critical resource in the Western U.S., meeting the needs of water supply, power, the environment, tribes, and recreation across seven states and Mexico. Reclamation plays an important management role in the Colorado River Basin (CRB); one aspect of this role is generating mid-term projections of reservoir elevations and operating conditions that are relied on by stakeholders throughout the CRB. Currently Ensemble Streamflow Prediction (ESP) forecasts provided by the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center drive Reclamation's Mid-Term Operations Model (MTOM) to produce probabilistic for risk-based analysis and decision support for a two-year outlook, but other forecast products could be used if they showed more skill. To explore the potential for using different forecasts, Reclamation partnered with the University of Colorado Boulder and the National Center for Atmospheric Research to develop the Colorado Basin Streamflow Forecast Testbed. The testbed creates an objective framework for comparing the hydrologic skill of streamflow forecasts and the resulting skill in MTOM operational projections. The testbed has been used to assess ESP and an experimental forecast product.