

# DROUGHT AND THE STATE OF THE COLORADO RIVER

## Urgency, Solutions, Opportunities

**Urgency**

Western Drought Has Lasted Longer Than the Dustbowl - E&E News July 2021

Climate change is erasing 'flammability barrier' that protects high-elevation forests - NBC News May 2021

Reservoirs are drying up as consequences of the Western drought worsen - Washington Post July 2021

Worst Drought in Decades Escalates Threats Across U.S. West - Bloomberg June 2021

State hits 126-year lows for rainfall this year - SF Chronicle July 2021

Reduce, reuse, re-water?



**History-Making Shortage Declarations:** Water levels in Lake Mead continue to reach record lows. The Lower Basin entered its first Tier 1 shortage in 2021, followed by its first-ever Tier 2a shortage in 2022. Water deliveries to Arizona, Nevada and Mexico were reduced to retain 721 thousand acre feet of additional storage.

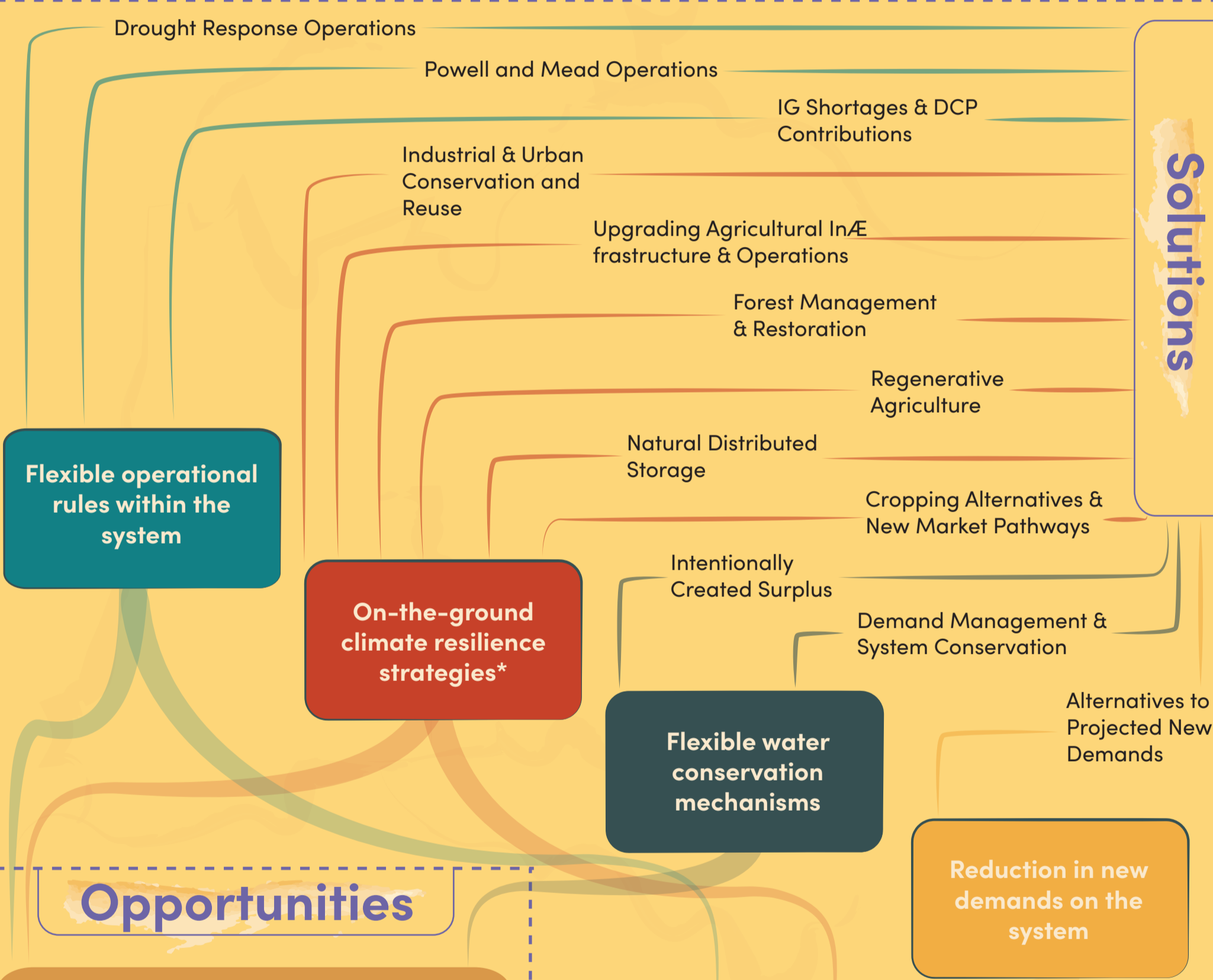


**First Upper Basin Emergency Declaration in History:** Sharp declines in Lake Powell storage prompted the Secretary of the Interior to move available storage from Flaming Gorge, Aspinall Unit and Navajo Reservoirs to help maintain hydropower production and to help ensure continued compact compliance releases from Lake Powell.



**Long-Term Drought Grips the Western United States:** The American West is in the grips of a historic and multi-decade drought. Temperature records continue to be shattered while catastrophic wildfires, record-low stream flows and ongoing declines in snowpack are felt throughout the basin.

## Unprecedented Risks to River Flow



**Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act**

The bipartisan infrastructure law of 2021 and Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 provide extremely important funding for water reuse and recycling, improving agricultural infrastructure, investing in nature-based solutions for healthier watersheds, and other items that are critical to a resilient Colorado River Basin for people and nature.

**Basin States Water Plans**

Water plans for each of the Basin States illustrate opportunities to increase climate resilience in critical watersheds by investing in nature-based solutions, forest management, urban communities, and agricultural water systems. Each state has funding programs to support these vital investments.

## Opportunities to Accelerate Solutions for a Healthy Colorado River