

Streaming Wars

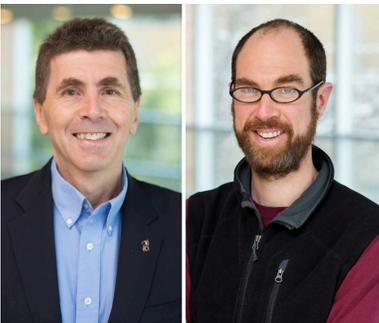
12/04/2023

Historic drought and a chronic overuse of resources is depleting the flow of the Colorado River. Utah, along with six other states, depend on water from the river for drinking and daily use. Experts at the Utah Water Research Laboratory are searching for ways to decrease drought and adapt to water depletion.



Experts at the Utah Water Research Laboratory are searching for solutions to protect the Colorado River.

UWRL Director David Tarboton and his student, Homa Salehabadi, published a paper in the Journal of American Water Resources Association on plausible severe drought scenarios in the Colorado river basin. The drought scenarios were updated to reflect recent years by considering historical flows, tree-ring constructions, and climate change. The models indicated that more severe droughts are likely to occur.



David Tarboton (left), the Director of the Utah Water Research Laboratory, and Assistant Professor David Rosenberg are both a part of the expert group researching the Colorado River.

“These results indicate a need to rethink Colorado River management and operation to be prepared for future droughts,” said Tarboton.

Associate Professor David Rosenberg has also dedicated countless hours to Colorado River research. He studied ways to adapt basin depletions to available water by using models of the Upper and Lower Basin depletions as well as how to adapt to low river flows. Rosenberg is also finding new ways to conserve water used from the Colorado River in farming and everyday life.

“Our generation will be defined by how we adapt, how we experiment, how we jointly learn, how we collaborate, how we cope with numerous uncertainties, and how we pursue goals,” Rosenberg said. “We want to find more sustainable and equitable river management by working with managers, stakeholders, and experts to adapt Colorado River operations to declining basin flows and reservoir storage.”

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