



Fact Sheet: Proposed Revisions to Nevada's Water Quality Standards

Proposed Regulation P2019 - 01: Colorado Basin – Lower Colorado River, Lake Mead and Las Vegas Wash

The revisions proposed in this regulation add definitions to the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) under NAC 445A, "Standards for Water Quality." The revisions update beneficial uses and numeric criteria, break out one waterbody, and add another waterbody. These revisions improve clarity throughout the tables for water quality standards in the Colorado Basin. These tables are found in NAC 445A.2146 through NAC 445A.2157.

Nevada's Water Quality Standards are provided in NAC 445A.070 - 445A.2234

Nevada's water quality standards, define the water quality goals for a waterbody, or a portion of a waterbody, by designating beneficial uses of the water and setting criteria necessary to protect the beneficial uses. The NAC tables provide water quality standards consisting of the following three components:

1. **Criteria** to protect beneficial use
2. Designated **beneficial uses** for each waterbody -- Beneficial uses include, but are not limited to, irrigation, recreation, aquatic life and drinking water supply
3. **Anti-degradation provision** - Requirement to Maintain Higher Quality (RMHQ), where applicable

Specific changes proposed in P2019-1

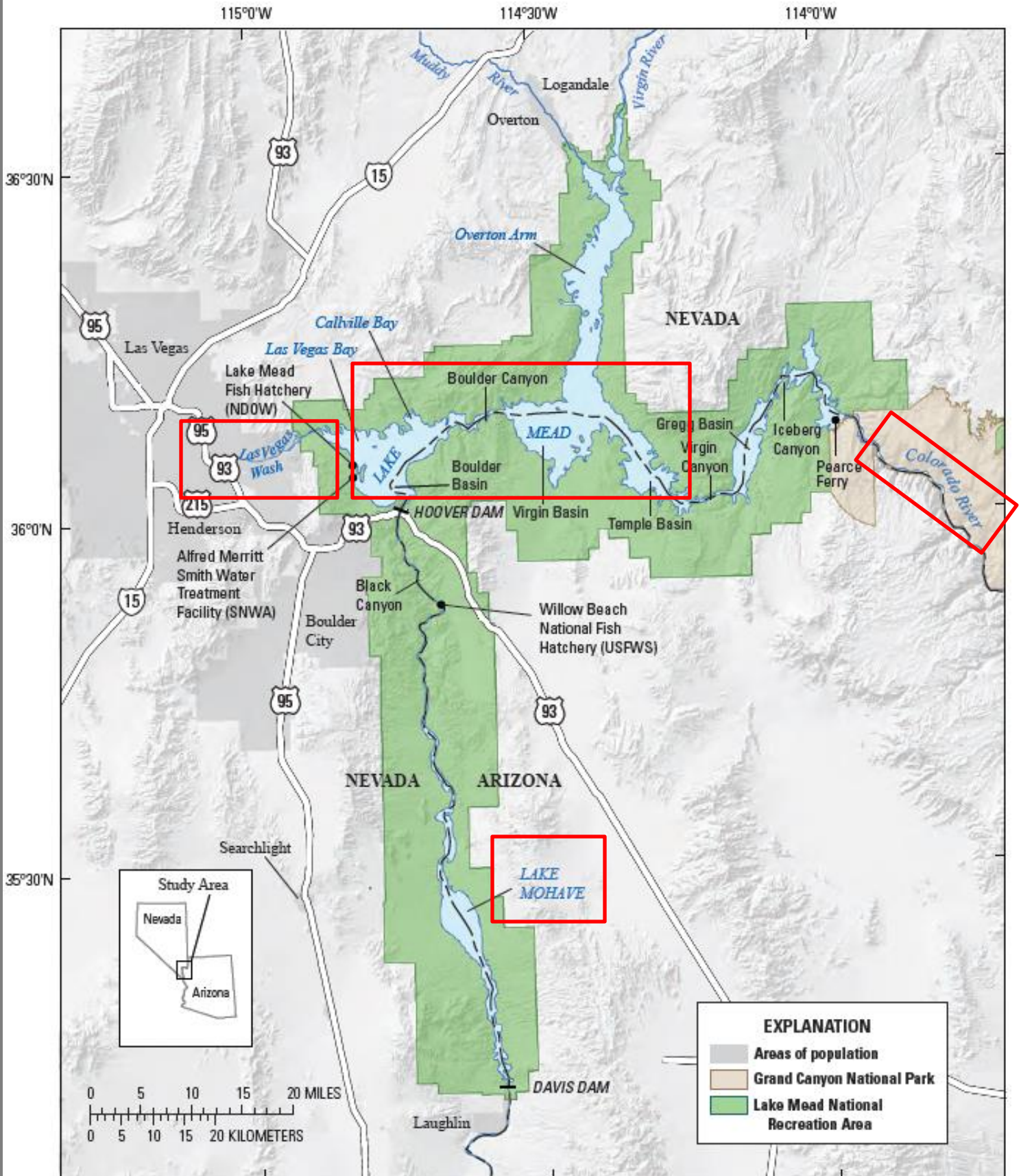
- Adjust the Lower Colorado River reaches to break out Lake Mohave as distinct from the Colorado River reaches.
- Adjust the water quality standards in the Lower Colorado reaches for temperature and dissolved oxygen to be suitable for adult cold-water fish, because there is no evidence that stocked trout are spawning.
- Add water quality standards for chloride and sulfate to the lower Colorado River reaches.
- Add warm-water fish and appropriate water quality standards for adult and juvenile warm-water fish to both reaches of Las Vegas Wash.
- Add contact recreation and appropriate water quality standard for E. coli to the Inner Bay of Lake Mead.
- Adjust the Las Vegas Wash reaches to extend the Upper Las Vegas Wash down to the Historic Lateral.
- Add maintenance of a *freshwater marsh* to beneficial uses in the NAC.
- Add Lake Las Vegas to the Nevada Administrative Code.

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Overview of Colorado River system (Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, Colorado River) in Southern Nevada. Map includes Las Vegas Wash, which enters into Lake Mead via the Las Vegas Inner Bay



Map from U.S. Geological Survey, Circular 1381, *A Synthesis of Aquatic Science for Management of Lakes Mead and Mohave*.