

The Colorado River Problem.

1439

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

THE COLORADO RIVER PROBLEM

BY WILLIAM KELLY,* M. AM. SOC. C. E.

TO BE PRESENTED AT THE FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE SOCIETY,
PASADENA, CALIF., JUNE 19, 1924.

This Society is not responsible for any statement made or opinion expressed
in its publications.

SYNOPSIS

So much has been written and spoken on the subject of the Colorado River in the past few years that perhaps the greatest need at present is an impartial digest of the facts and an estimate of the probabilities. This paper attempts to give both; it also presents some as yet unpublished studies of flood protection, water supply, irrigable areas, and power demand which are important factors in any study of the Colorado. Finally, it sets forth the salient features of a comprehensive scheme of development and points out the lines on which activities of the Federal Government should be directed.

INTRODUCTION

The Colorado has its sources in the melting snows of the mountains of the Continental Divide. Its drainage basin has an area of nearly 250 000 sq. miles and covers parts of seven States. Its delta is in Mexico through which it flows to the Gulf of California. Development, mostly irrigation, has gone forward up to the present with little or no thought of a comprehensive use of the entire river. Fortunately, what has been done will not interfere materially with full use of this great water resource, but in view of the large projects under consideration it is important that a general scheme of development be adopted and that supervision be exercised to require future developments to conform thereto. Such supervision can be exercised under existing laws by co-operation between the Federal Government and the seven interested States. Although many additional data on stream flow, location, and character of irrigable lands, dam sites, etc., are needed before details of the ultimate development can be determined, sufficient information is available to determine the general scheme insofar as that is necessary for the consideration of projects now advocated.

SCHEME OF DEVELOPMENT

The essential features of a comprehensive plan of the Colorado are determined by topographic conditions. Imperial Valley, both in the lies above the junction of the main river with

NOTE.—Advance copy of paper. This paper (see Fig. 1) is on the west side of presentation to the Society and then only on Author, and date of presentation to the Soc. Counties, California. The Project is pro-

* Col., Corps of Engrs., U. S. A.; Ch. The engineer of the Project states that the

The Colorado River Problem,
by William Kelly ["To be
presented at the Fifty-Fourth
Annual Convention of the (American)
Society (of Civil Engineers),
Pasadena, Calif., June 19, 1924"]

[006.094.2]