

Ending the Battle for the Colorado

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The waters of the Colorado River have been the object of bitter contention between Arizona and California for many years. Colorado River water has been used, and in some cases temporarily blocked, reclamation projects designed to make the river more useful to the Southwest.¹ Despite many attempts at reconciliation,² a final settlement has yet to be reached. It is the purpose of this note to examine the possible means of settling this dispute, without attempting to consider the relative merits.

One indication of the magnitude of the problem is the amount of water currently in dispute—over two million acre-feet per year.³ Arizona has been pressing for federal construction of the billion dollar Bridge Canyon Project.⁴ Titled a "ruler operation" by Arizona, the project would divert great amounts of Colorado River water to central Arizona and reclaim once-barren agricultural lands. A Senate report asserts that the economy of a large area of Arizona is dependent upon the project's completion.⁵ California opposes the project on the ground that Arizona is not entitled to so much water. Diversion of the water by Arizona would force Southern California to curtail extensive plans to use the water in the near future. Water districts have already invested millions of dollars on the assumption that California's claims to the water will prevail.⁶ Loss of the disputed water would create a serious problem for the cities of Southern California. The unprecedented growth of these cities has created



1. For a complete discussion of the history of this dispute and other literature see: *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958); *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958). See also: *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958). For a discussion of the California water problem, including the dispute, see: *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

2. See *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

3. 27 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

4. *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

5. *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

6. *Water Rights in the Colorado River Basin*, 10 *Stanford Law Review* 1 (1958).

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