

## State News for NSPE Members

### Utah Cities Abandon Plan for a Nuclear Power Plant

After nearly a decade of planning, the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems has given up its effort to provide 27 communities with nuclear power by 2029, [The Salt Lake City Tribune reports](#).

UAMPS and NuScale, the company that was going to build and operate small nuclear reactors at the Idaho National Laboratory, jointly announced that they were ending the "Carbon Free Power Project." The project would have provided power to Bountiful, Brigham City, and 25 other communities, most of them in Utah.

Mason Baker, UAMPS CEO and general manager, said in an interview that it was "a disappointing outcome" for the cities and towns pursuing the project, but neither UAMPS nor NuScale could find enough utilities or government power systems willing to commit to the project.

The cities had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars since 2015 on preliminary work for CFPP, but UAMPS had negotiated "off-ramps" where the cities could quit before having to issue bonds to come up with their share for the multi-billion-dollar project.

With no one else signing on, they elected to take an off ramp, Baker said. "The most prudent decision was not to make further expenditures." [Read more](#).

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### Construction on 'Vital' New Southern Utah Reservoir Now Underway

A ceremony on November 7 to break ground on a new reservoir in southwest Utah was about 20 years in the making, but it's well worth the wait, says Washington County Commissioner Gil Almquist. "It's amazing that it's taken this long ... but (it's) so vital to our reuse program," he said, standing on the land that will soon be a part of the new body of water.

The planned Toquer Reservoir, which is expected to take about two years to complete, won't be very large, [ksl.com reports](#). Washington County Water Conservancy District officials say that it will cover about 115 acres near I-15 and state Route 17 north of Toquerville, where Ash Creek flows through. It's projected to contain as much as 3,725 acre-feet of water once it's filled, almost 14 times smaller than Sand Hollow, the district's largest reservoir.

The initial foundation work is currently expected to be completed by the spring of 2024. Embankment construction for the 125-foot tall, 1,270-foot wide dam is projected to take another 18 months after that, district officials said.

It's part of the \$94 million Ash Creek Project, which includes an almost 19-mile pipeline that will connect the Ash Creek Reservoir near New Harmony to the new Toquer Reservoir. The Bureau of Land Management released an environmental assessment report about it in 2019, and its construction is already underway. It'll also collect water from the Leap, South Ash and Wet Sandy creeks. [Read more.](#)

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## Researchers Create Model for Colorado River Water Management

Public policy scholars published a 339-page paper to help state and federal regulators manage water for the Colorado River Basin, [The Center Square reports](#).

The Colorado River provides drinking water for approximately 40 million people in Arizona, California, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and Mexico. Its water also provides irrigation for approximately five million acres of farming, or 15% of the nation's crop production, and livestock, approximately 13%.

Three professors from the University of California-Riverside collaborated with two representatives from the Utah Rivers Council to develop a "hydro-economic model" to provide answers for critical questions regarding management of the water resource. The analysis shows impacts to cities, states, tribes, farmers and wildlife conservation. It also suggests "out-of-the-box solutions that right now many stakeholders don't even want to mention," Ariel Dinar, one of the authors, said in a media release from the university announcing the publication.

Increased water use due to population growth and reductions due to climate change are examined in the analysis and are the basis for alternative water policies.

"This knowledge provides an understanding of the magnitude of growing socioeconomic and climate pressures in the basin," the analysis states. "This is important because of the rising chorus of scientists, water managers and policymakers who suspect the Colorado River Basin is approaching a tipping

point." [Read more.](#)

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## Engineers Week 2024 — Welcome to the Future!

Founded by NSPE in 1951, [Engineers Week](#) (February 18–24, 2024) is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce. The latest theme for Engineers Week — **Welcome to the Future!** — seeks to inspire the next generation to play a vital role in innovating solutions to global challenges that impact future generations. By working together to develop new technologies, products, and opportunities, engineers create new possibilities that make the world a better place.



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22314**