COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, OCEANS, AND WILDLIFE
REMOTE OVERSIGHT HEARING
October 20, 2021
11:00 a.m. ET

Oversight Hearing on "*Colorado River Drought Conditions and Response Measures – Day Two*"

Responses to Questions for the Record for Ms. Anne Castle, Senior Fellow, Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy and the Environment, University of Colorado

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to the Subcommittee on this critical topic. My responses to your excellent questions are provided here.

Questions from Rep. Grace Napolitano, CA
    1. In your testimony, you say that "ensuring that tribal communities in the Basin have universal access to clean and safe drinking water should be considered a foundation for any future Colorado River agreements."
        a. Can you explain why you recommend linking the two critical issues of: securing clean water for tribes, and creating a meaningful role for tribes in Colorado River discussions?

Castle response: Because access to clean drinking water is a fundamental component of human life, it is not surprising that Colorado River Basin leadership supports achievement of the goal of universal access, as has been affirmed by the Western States Water Council and by the Governor's representatives of the Colorado River Basin States in their testimony to this Subcommittee on October 15, 2021. The Basin States and the Department of the Interior have also committed to meaningful inclusion of Tribes in discussions and negotiations concerning management and operation of the river and reservoirs. The 30 tribal nations in the Colorado River Basin will determine exactly what interests and demands they will seek to have considered in future Colorado River agreements, and I do not presume to speak for them. However, regardless of whether universal access to clean and safe drinking water is a specific point of negotiation in Colorado River management discussions, it should be considered foundational to a broader recognition of equity throughout the basin.