

Arizona's Next Century: A Strategic Vision for Water Supply Sustainability

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Strategic Vision is to help guide Arizona through the coming decades on steps that Arizona can take to secure water supplies to meet current and anticipated demands and provide a stable economy for our future.

THE CHALLENGE

For over a century, Arizonans have faced challenges in ensuring that there are sufficient and sustainable water supplies. Arizona has efficiently utilized water supplies for agricultural, industrial and domestic uses while successfully ensuring that sufficient and dependable water supplies are available for its long-term economic stability. Through the development of the Salt River Project, the legal and political battles to authorize and construct the Central Arizona Project and the cooperation and compromise which lead to the passage of the 1980 Groundwater Management Act, Arizona has laid the groundwork for addressing the future challenges Arizonan's would face .

The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), in partnership with many in Arizona's water community has participated in the development of comprehensive water supply and demand analyses. Through the work of the Water Resources Development Commission and the Colorado River Basin Water Supply & Demand Study, we have identified the potential water supply and demand imbalance that may result if no action is taken to secure future water supplies. Based on the result of these analyses, Arizona may be facing an imbalance between available water supplies and projected demands of nearly one to just over three million acre-feet in the next century.

STRATEGIC VISION FOR WATER SUSTAINABILITY

As the State of Arizona enters its second century, we are at the crossroads of having to decide what actions we will take to meet these challenges. This Strategic Vision for Arizona is a necessary first step in this process. While many of the mechanisms necessary to address our future imbalances are available today, there are still limited supplies. A comprehensive Strategic Vision that identifies viable strategies will assist all water users in Arizona to come together to address our needs.

No single strategy can address projected water supply imbalances across the State. Instead a portfolio of strategies needs to be implemented dependent on the needs of each area of the State. It is very important to recognize the uniqueness of the various regions throughout the State and the varying challenges facing those regions. However, as we analyze the various strategies there are specific measures that have widespread potential benefit to all Arizonans. Strategic priorities are identified below which ADWR believes will move Arizona forward through its next century.

- 1) *Resolution of Indian and Non-Indian Water Rights Claims*
- 2) *Continued Commitment to Conservation and Expand Reuse of Reclaimed Water*
- 3) *Expanded Monitoring and Reporting of Water Use*
- 4) *Identifying the Role of In-State Water Transfers*
- 5) *Supply Importation – Desalination*
- 6) *Develop Financing Mechanism to Support Water Supply Resiliency*

CONCLUSION

Just as many of Arizona's greatest historic accomplishments have been directly linked to water, Arizona's future success is tethered to how effectively we continue to manage our water resources and develop new water supplies and infrastructure. Yet, our present success cannot sustain Arizona's economic development forever and we must continue to plan and invest in our water resources. While there are local areas that require more immediate action, the State as a whole has the good fortune of not facing an immediate water crisis. Now is the time to begin addressing this challenge by implementing this Strategic Vision for Arizona's water future. **The lack of an immediate problem increases the potential for inaction, running the risk of procrastination and not sufficiently motivating ourselves to plan and invest in our future.** Governor Brewer's foresight in calling for the development of a Strategic Vision for Water Supply Sustainability for Arizona is essential to guide and ensure our economic stability into the next century.

The Strategic Vision is available at: http://www.azwater.gov/AzDWR/Arizonas_Strategic_Vision/

The Arizona Department of Water Resources will begin a statewide outreach tour to present the Strategic Vision and receive input from local stakeholders and other interested parties.

Please submit Comments to Michelle Moreno E-mail: mamoreno@azwater.gov

