



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Water Resources Development Commission (HB 2661) Environmental Conditions Subcommittee – Notes: January 4, 2011 Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE:

David Iwanski (Goodyear)
Doug Kupel (Phoenix)
Val Danos (AMWUA)
Jason Baran (AMWUA)
Bill Wells (BLM)
Tom Buschatzke (Phoenix; WRDC Co-chair)
Bruce Hallin (SRP)
Jim Renthall (BLM)
Rebecca Davidson (SRP)
Rob Marshall (TNC)
Joanna Nadeau (WRRC; by phone)
Aaron Cirton (ALWT; by phone)
Linda Stitzer (ADWR; subcommittee lead)

INTRODUCTIONS:

Attendees introduced themselves and agenda items were reviewed.

DISCUSSION OF FORMAT AND CONTENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS COMPENDIUM:

- The format had been revised since the previous meeting. Notable changes included:
 - moved the more descriptive sections into a summary section above the table primarily under the headings of "Riparian Habitat Values" and "Wildlife Values"
 - removed the underflow column and all columns to the left of the "current environmental flow/volume" heading, which have been relocated either to the summary section above the table or to the "other" row at the bottom of the table
 - added a row identifying perennial tributary streams (in addition to the major streams), but no intention of quantifying baseflow or ET for these streams.
- Linda distributed a handout with definitions of "discharge", "storage" and "allocation" and asked the subcommittee to provide any comments. Also included in the handout were questions regarding table content which were subsequently discussed.
- There was discussion about the hydrologic geographies and it was decided to use delineations that most conform to the data. While gage data used for baseflow may represent a different geography, a gage at the lowest point in the watershed could be substituted, but annotated to show baseflow at different points in the groundwater basin. The subcommittee agreed that the table should show data at the groundwater basin, 8-digit HUC subwatershed and county level.
- It was decided to keep a stockpond count and to ask AZGF for wildlife catchment data and that it should be noted that there are changes in the number of these features over time.
- Unique waters and wild and scenic river designations will be added to the descriptive values section

- Decided to keep the row for “instream flow” but move more descriptive information to the descriptive values section (e.g. HCP’s). However, certain special circumstances should be added to the table
- Environmental flow numbers were discussed including the work done that determined that median flows were a relatively good approximation of baseflow. Rob provided supporting information from this work to the subcommittee.
- Riparian data in the table will include the number of acres multiplied by ET rates from studies. Rob is working with the USGS, ARS and others to determine appropriate approaches. The weak point is the availability of comprehensive riparian acreage data.
- There was discussion about the importance of floodflow but lack of comprehensive quantitative data. Baseflow captures a portion of floodflow but not all. It was agreed that a qualitative overview discussion should be added with any additional basin-specific information as available from studies.
- It was again noted that ranges of baseflow and ET estimates would be included and sources cited
- Baseflow data available from the TNC study adhered to certain criteria such as a minimum period of record so some important streams (such as the lower San Pedro River) are not included in the study. It was agreed to evaluate where additional baseflow data should be incorporated into the table and to note the data components.
- Once there is agreement on what species counts should be included in the table the numbers can be generated quickly.
- AZGF and wetlands inventory will be compared to NDVI work.
- Economic values need to be discussed and organized at the county level. Revenue generated from environmental resources are critical to the state economy.

IDENTIFY WORKTASKS AND SCHEDULE NEEDED TO COMPLETE COMPENDIUM:

- Linda will revise the table for discussion at the Workgroup meeting
- The components of the descriptive section of the compendium need discussion at the workgroup meeting since there are concerns about the sensitivity of displaying certain information for some areas but not all.
- ADWR agreed to help populate the table (springs, perennial reaches identification, basin/subwatershed/county delineations, instream flow, reservoirs, stockponds, effluent)
- WRRC agreed to provide economic value and qualitative floodflow information
- TNC will pursue riparian ET calculation and baseflow data
- A subgroup will need to be formed to complete the descriptive section (BLM, Phoenix, SRP, AZGF, others?)
- AZGF will provide wildlife resource counts
- In general, interface with the Mapping Subcommittee will be used to populate the table

NEXT MEETING:

- Friday, January 21st from 10:00 to 12:00 at the ADWR office