Summary of Draft Proposed Changes to ADWR AAWS Physical Availability Rules and Substantive Policy Statement for Hydrologic Studies Demonstrating Physical Availability of Groundwater for Assured and Adequate Water Supply Applications (March 24, 2010)

Background: Over the last year and a half the ADWR has been engaged in an internal review of the Assured and Adequate Water Supply Rules and its Substantive Policy Statement on the requirements for Hydrologic Studies Demonstrating Physical Availability of Groundwater for Assured and Adequate Water Supply Applications. The purpose of this review was to improve efficiency and increase understanding of the requirements for hydrologic studies by identifying areas of the current rules and policy statement that needed clarification or modification. The result of that review is a set of proposed modifications to the rules and policy statement that are summarized below.

Proposed AAWS Rules Modifications:

- Requirement that all AAWS Hydro studies must be submitted by a registered Geologist or qualified registered engineer (registered in the State of Arizona)

- An exception to the maximum allowable 100-year water level depth of 1,200 foot below land surface (BLS) would be granted for some applications seeking adequate water supply determinations outside AMAs (except dry lot sub-divisions) in consolidated sedimentary rock aquifers (such as, the "C" and "R" regional aquifers of northern Arizona); providing that the applicant can prove financial capability to obtain groundwater from a lower depth

- Requirement that one or more wells must be drilled by AAWS applicants in data deficient project areas where no other well data are available that could be reasonably used to estimated depth to water and aquifer properties in the area of the proposed project's withdrawals

- Requirement that if there are limited data on aquifer depth, then the maximum depth of well(s) in the area will be assumed to be the maximum depth of the aquifer

- Requirements when numerical models must be used to demonstrate physical availability unless an analytical model is approved by the ADWR

- Requirements that specify conditions when analytical models may be used to demonstrate physical availability without prior approval from ADWR.

- Prohibition of "Negative Impacts" to existing and issued AAWS determinations

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Significant Proposed Substantive Policy Statement Modifications/Clarifications:

- Detail provided on exception to 1,200 foot BLS depth criteria for Water Adequacy
- More detail provided on general and specific requirements of Hydrologic Reports
- Information on sources of existing and issued AAWS demand data (web-application)
- Additional guidance on the requirements for aquifer tests
- Additional clarification on inclusion stored water in hydrologic studies
- Additional guidance on the requirements for drilling well(s) in data deficient areas
- Additional guidance on maximum depth criteria based on maximum depth of wells in data deficient areas
- Additional information and guidance on the selection of appropriate groundwater models for the 100-year drawdown analysis
- Additional information and guidance on determination of the minimum extent of the model area, inclusion of boundary conditions and appropriate model cell size
- Guidance on assumptions for 100-year numerical model projections
- Additional information and guidance concerning requirements for model reports and analysis of model results
- Additional information and guidance on "Negative Impacts" to existing and issued AAWS uses