

Arizona Department of Water Resources  
**GROUNDWATER USERS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
Tucson Active Management Area  
Kenneth Seasholes, Area Director



DEE T. O'NEILL  
Chair

DAVID MODEER  
Vice-Chair

JOHN MAWHINNEY

JON POST

CHUCK SWEET

**Minutes**  
**June 19, 2007**

**Members Present:** Dee O'Neill, Chair  
David Modeer, Vice Chair  
John Mawhinney (via telephone)

**Tucson Staff Present:** Kenneth Seasholes  
Mary Bauer  
Christina Bickelmann  
Laura Grignano  
Diane Kusel  
Virginia Welford  
Dawne Wilson

**Phoenix Staff Present:** Fred Breedlove  
Teri Davis  
Sandy Fabritz-Whitney  
Dale Mason

**Others:** Janet Lea Carr, SAWUA  
David Crockett, FWID  
Jim Davis, E.L. Montgomery & Associates  
Arturo Gabaldon, Community Water Co.  
Rosanna Gabaldon, Town of Sahaurita  
Eric Holler, Bureau of Reclamation  
Herb Kai, Kai Farms  
Holly Lachowicz, Ward 3 – City of Tucson  
Karen LaMartina, Tucson Water  
Tina Lee, Ward 2 – City of Tucson  
Ries Lindley, Tucson Water  
Val Little, Water CASA  
Joy Miller-Frilot, LWVGT  
Philip Saletta, Oro Valley Water Utility  
Robert Simpson, Concerned Citizen  
Cynthia Stefanovic, AZ State Land Dept.  
Warren Tenney, Metro Water District.  
Deborah Tosline, Bureau of Reclamation  
Arnold Velasco, Phelps Dodge Sierrita Co.  
Alex Yiannakakis, Clear Creek Associates  
Claire Zucker, PAG

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Dee O'Neill called the meeting to order at 10:30 a. m. Introductions were made.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

David Modeer made a motion to approve the minutes of April 18, 2007. John Mawhinney seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. Central Arizona Water Conservation District's (CAWCD) Conceptual Plans to Recover Stored Water**

Kenneth Seasholes reported that the Institutional Policy Advisory Group (IPAG) met to discuss the report on CAWCD's plans to recover stored CAP water. IPAG is pleased with the content reflected in the report and supports CAWCD's efforts. In order for CAP staff to proceed to the next phase of recovery planning, the CAWCD Board must first approve the conceptual plan. Therefore, IPAG proposed to the GUAC the following recommendation:

*The Tucson AMA GUAC strongly supports recovery planning, so we urge the CAWCD Board to approve the report on "Conceptual Plans to Recover Stored Water" and to direct staff to proceed expeditiously to the detailed planning phase.*

John Mawhinney made a motion to approve the recommendation. David Modeer seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**4. Legislative Summary**

Sandy Fabritz-Whitney, Assistant Director of Water Management, and Fred Breedlove, Legislative Liaison, were invited to brief the group on 2007 water-related legislation. Of prominence were non-AMA water issues that were addressed by the recently formed Statewide Water Advisory Group (SWAG). Mr. Breedlove began by reviewing the five bills driven by ADWR.

**1) HB 2585 - Notice of Intent (NOI)**

This bill makes technical changes that protect fee provisions, which would have been removed from statute when the Secretary of Interior issues final regulations for administering entitlements to the Colorado River.

**2) HB 2488 - Drought Emergency Groundwater Transfers**

This is a session (temporary) law that allows limited transfers of groundwater across basins during drought emergencies.

**3) SB 1182 – Summerhaven**

This bill exempts Summerhaven from the requirement of obtaining a determination of an Assured Water Supply (AWS) prior to plat approval. This is a limited waiver (seven years) put in place in response to the aftermath of the Aspen fire. It does require disclosure to all subsequent home buyers that the state has not made a determination of an AWS for proposed subdivisions.

**4) SB 1557 - Municipal Water Conservation**

This bill modifies the Non-Per Capita Per Day Program for municipal providers within AMAs. It would require Best Management Practices to be put in place for water providers that do not have a designation of AWS. The program would be optional for providers that are designated.

5) **HJR 2001- Lower Colorado Basin Forbearance Authority**

This bill authorizes the Director or Governor to enter into forbearance agreements with the lower basin states to assist in avoiding water shortages in Arizona. Under the agreement new water would be added to the Colorado River by different methods such as extreme conservation measures and intentionally created surplus.

All ADWR bills were passed and signed by the Governor with the exception of HJR 2001, which was enacted without signature.

Next, Mr. Breedlove gave an overview on the three SWAG sponsored bills.

1) **HB 2484 Well Impacts**

This bill authorizes the Director to prohibit the drilling of a new well if it will likely result in the migration of contaminated groundwater to both exempt and non-exempt wells statewide. ADWR has existing rules already in place that prohibits drilling of non-exempt wells that will spread contaminated water to other wells with the AMAs.

2) **SB 1575 – Water Adequacy**

Current law does not allow counties to deny new subdivisions that are unable to obtain a determination of adequate water supply from ADWR. This bill would provide counties and municipalities outside AMAs the authority to require a determination from ADWR for new subdivisions.

3) **Water Development Revolving Fund**

The intent of this bill is for large augmentation projects. The priority for funding of projects will be based on need. The rulemaking process will begin soon to determine how the process will be implemented. The fund will be administered by a subcommittee that was created under the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority.

Other water bills passed this session include:

1) **HB 2321 Adequate Water Supply; City Designation**

This bill will allow Bullhead City, Arizona to use its Colorado River allocation to directly serve some of the city's customers.

2) **SB 1312 – Water Storage Permits; Notice Requirements**

This bill requires ADWR to post notice on its website when an application is received for an underground storage facility permit.

3) **SB 1570 – Arizona Water Settlement Act**

This bill would allow the Gila River community and the Tohono O'odham Nation to proceed independently of each other when implementing the Arizona Water Settlement that Act.

4) **HB 2300 – Water District; Upper San Pedro (USP)**

The USP Partnership worked with ADWR to establish an organizing committee to create an USP water district. The committee is tasked with devising an organizational, financial, comprehensive, and election plan for the district. After the plan is established, it would be submitted to the electorate to vote on the district formation, taxing authority and board of directors.

The purpose and goal of the district are to maintain the aquifer and base flow conditions needed to sustain the USP River and to assist in meeting the water supply needs and water conservation requirements for Fort Huachuca and the communities within the district.

It was a very aggressive, successful legislative year. All ADWR and SWAG bills were passed. Between now and the next session, ADWR will continue to implement the enacted 2007 legislation, along with planning the 2008 legislative agenda.

#### **5. Tucson AMA Groundwater Level Maps**

Dale Mason, Hydrology Division, gave a presentation on the Tucson AMA groundwater level maps. Three different maps were distributed: 1) Water Level Elevations, 2) Depth to Water and 3) Water Level Change. Mr. Mason began by explaining that ADWR conducts annual water level sweeps in the Tucson AMA as well as across the state. These sweeps are known as indexes. There are approximately 380 wells in the Tucson AMA that are measured on an annual basis. In addition, water level data is provided by Tucson Water and other entities, which results in roughly 600-700 water levels each year.

One project that is conducted with this data is the production of hydrographs, which show long-term water level trends. Many of the water levels date back to the 1940s and 1950s. In addition to the annual well indexing, every five years or so ADWR will do a complete basin sweep. A typical basin sweep may result between 1800-2000 well indexes. From this data, water level elevation, depth to water, and water level change maps are constructed. The elevation and depth maps were produced from data collected in Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 and the level change map was produced from 1995 to 2005 data.

ADWR is currently in the process of conducting an internal review of the three maps. It is expected that sometime in July/August 2007 they will be sent to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), Tucson Water and others for external review.

The water level elevations haven't changed much; water is still flowing north/northwest. Depth to water has increased over time due to water level declines. The water level change map data shows a rebound from 50-70 feet in parts of northern Avra Valley due to the decline in agricultural pumping and irrigation return flows to the aquifer.

Portions of the Upper Santa Cruz area show long-term, gradual declines, with Oro Valley declining anywhere from 40-80 feet and the eastern portion of the Tucson AMA declining between 40-70 feet.

The Pima Mine Road area shows rises as much as 70 feet, due to the recharge facility, and a number of the hydrographs show a big rebound recovery due to direct CAP use within the last 5-10 years.

Next, Kenneth Seasholes introduced Terry Davis, Investigation Section, and asked her to talk briefly about some of the other work that is being done with the monitoring program. Ms. Davis reported that in addition to the index sweeps, automated groundwater monitoring devices (transducers) have started to be incorporated into the Tucson AMA. At these sites measurements are taken four times a day and recorded. Part of the strategy of having these devices is to look at areas where currently there is not a lot of data available, whereas in the future could provide valuable information as development occurs.

On a related note, Mr. Seasholes mentioned that folks from the USGS are interested in attending a future GUAC meeting to give an update on the ongoing aquifer storage and subsidence monitoring. This will be a good opportunity to look at another data set to learn more about what's been happening in the aquifers.

**6. Area Director's Report**

Kenneth Seasholes announced that Virginia Welford of the Tucson AMA office will be retiring after 21 years of service with the state. Virginia was recognized for the valuable contributions she had made to the agency over the years.

Next, Mr. Seasholes reminded the group that in March of this year a letter was received from USGS indicating that local funding support for eleven streamflow-gaging stations will end in June and that if additional funding is not located, the stations will be discontinued in September 2007. Fortunately, funding has been restored through ADWR, Pima County and the City of Tucson.

**7. Date and Agenda for Next Meeting**

The GUAC will be polled to set a meeting date for later in August. In addition to the USGS aquifer/subsidence monitoring, potential future agenda items include: 1) Water Banking Authority's withdrawal fee recommendation, 2) Pima County's proposed plan amendment. This plan could have significant impacts on water management, 3) ADWR's work in relation with Pima Association of Governments in putting together a half day conference on community water issues, and 4) Third Management Plan modifications.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.