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Hello:

I attended the meeting in Bowie so have some idea of the emotion and drama attached to the subject. My land south of Portal might be affected, though it is not a great concern at this time.

Frankly, I find the idea of declining static water levels in wells to be more of a concern than most people who spoke at the Bowie Meeting. Gifford Pinchot, who pioneered the concept of sustained yield in forestry understood that in order to assure the viability of any resource, the harvest and cutting rates or discharge and recharge rates should be balanced. Declining water levels even of a foot or so a year will mean people will have to drill deeper wells at some point in time. Why should a home owner on well water have to drill deeper because farmers are planting crops which use a lot of water? Elfrida and other areas already are experiencing the need to drill deeper because the decline in the water table.

Crops like corn grow well in the Midwest where water is more abundant and rainfall often supplies most or all of the water necessary. Growing corn in the San Simon Valley Sub-Basin seems wasteful. Likewise growing alfalfa and other water-loving grasses, legumes, and crops serves to more rapidly deplete the aquifer. Cotton which is abundant worldwide should be grown only where sufficient water is available. Can the subject area really be the nut capital for an export and domestic market if the aquifer is already declining? Maybe it can be with more efficient use of water.

Still, I understand the emotion. People have lived in the area for generations and don't want anything to impose on their lifestyle. Perhaps, if I were in their situation I would feel the same way.

In summation, I would hope that there would be some thought to stabilizing the water table at a given depth and making efforts to maintain the target water table depth, while attempting to allow expansion of irrigated acres. Better water control and water savings measures might be incorporated to offset additional irrigated acres.

On a different topic, the AZDWR could stand to update the map of well locations. The map does not always accurately reflect the area roads at least in some areas west of Rodeo, NM and south of Portal, AZ.

Thank you for allowing public comment!

Chuck Lawrence