



**Blue Ribbon Panel on Water Sustainability (BRP)  
Public Perceptions and Acceptance Working Group Meeting Notes**

- I. Call to order and introductions at 10:30 AM
  - a. 12 present in person
  - b. 3 by phone
  
- II. Recap of March 26 meeting and approval of meeting notes-Meeting notes approved
  
- III. Presentation: Southern California Wastewater Reuse Programs: Case Studies-Carol Erwin, Area Manager, Phoenix Area Office, US Bureau of Reclamation
  - a. Carol Erwin provided an overview of four case studies in which reclaimed water was used to augment water supplies. The case studies described were the City of San Diego Water Department, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, Orange County Water Department and Inland Empire Utilities Agency.
  - b. Successful projects that had positive public perception and acceptance had the following elements: use of a professional public relations firm, the project was named by the PR firm and included phrases such as reliability, replenishment. Recycled water and purified sewer water were also common terms. Precursors to the projects were a crisis such as drought or lack of replenishment water.
  
- IV. Issue Identification
  - a. Matrix-refer to Issue Identification Matrix
  - b. Recap of Goals
  - c. Other issues-Chair will update Issue Identification Matrix (available on website)
    - i. Use of consistent and positive terminology
    - ii. Retaining a professional public relations firm for BRP effort may be advisable
    - iii. Conveying risk in an appropriate fashion-are current rules a barrier to BRP mission?
    - iv. Relationship of reclaimed water to overall water picture
    - v. Relationships between water and growth
    - vi. Water preservation and environmental restoration-helping the environment instead of facilitating more growth
    - vii. Understanding the impact of the water energy nexus
    - viii. Watershed approach-keep water locally
    - ix. Help people to understand why we are doing this.
      - 1. The fact that we don't have drought awareness in the public may be a problem.
      - 2. We have done such a good job that the public does not know that we have a problem.
      - 3. This may be a regional challenge.
      - 4. The message could be that this process (BRP) is another stage in a forward thinking process of managing the State's water supplies.

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- x. How does Southern Nevada Water Authority manage this message? Chair will inquire.
      - xi. How does a persistent idea that the State lacks water affect the attraction of new business?
    - d. Recommendations
      - i. SROG and AMWA pool resources for outreach-BRP would promote this concept
      - ii. Coordinate with Conservation WG on the common, consistent positive terminology
      - iii. Change “Emerging Contaminants” to another term
    - e. Emerging Contaminants
      - i. Terminology
        - 1. Emerging chemicals?
        - 2. Constituent of concern?
        - 3. Change the language or promote clarity by using the common terminology
      - ii. Recommendations-Refer to the Issue Identification Matrix
      - iii. How would an emerging contaminant become regulated?
      - iv. Problem: what was once “pure” water now contains chemicals that we can now detect because of new technology.
      - v. Problem: how do municipalities communicate in a consistent matter? Speaking as a unified front.
      - vi. Utilize Universities doing research on Emerging Contaminants?
        - 1. Recommendations
          - a. Identify respected parties to add validity to message
          - b. Bring them into BRP, WG or workplan process
      - vii. Use social media to assist in outreach
    - f. Education
      - i. When information is decentralized it is hard to find.
      - ii. Potential uses and Safety-use the experience of Tres Rios project.
      - iii. Recommendations
        - 1. Focus Groups
        - 2. Public relations firm
      - iv. [“Tap into Quality”](#) may be a resource for education
- V. Next Steps
  - a. Water Resources Association materials
    - i. Energy Star-like ratings for water
    - ii. Linda MacPherson will explain at the May 28 meeting
  - b. City of Phoenix may have educational/media materials
- VI. Next Meeting – May 21-Note new meeting date

Visit our [web site](http://www.azwater.gov/AzDWR/waterManagement/BlueRibbonPanel.html): <http://www.azwater.gov/AzDWR/waterManagement/BlueRibbonPanel.html>