

Governor's Water Policy Council

May 17, 2023



Meeting Logistics

- Please note that this meeting is being broadcast via webinar and is being recorded.
- The meeting recording and materials will be posted to the Council's webpage (<https://new.azwater.gov/gwpc>).
- Only members of the Council will be able to unmute themselves to participate in the meeting.
- *Technical issues? Please call the ADWR Help Desk at 602-771-8444 or email tickets@azwater.gov.*

I. Welcome & Opening Remarks

Governor Katie Hobbs



I. Welcome & Opening Remarks

Director Tom Buschatzke, Chair

II. Introductions

III. Focus Areas & Objectives

Focus: Assured Water Supply

The 1980 Groundwater Management Act, and the Assured Water Supply Program in particular, have enabled and guided responsible growth in an arid environment. The Program:

- Provides consumer protection, ensures sustainable water supplies for new homes
- Drives innovation, collaboration, and creativity
 - recharge
 - replenishment
 - banking
 - investment in renewable supplies & infrastructure
 - exchanges
 - reuse
 - demand reductions



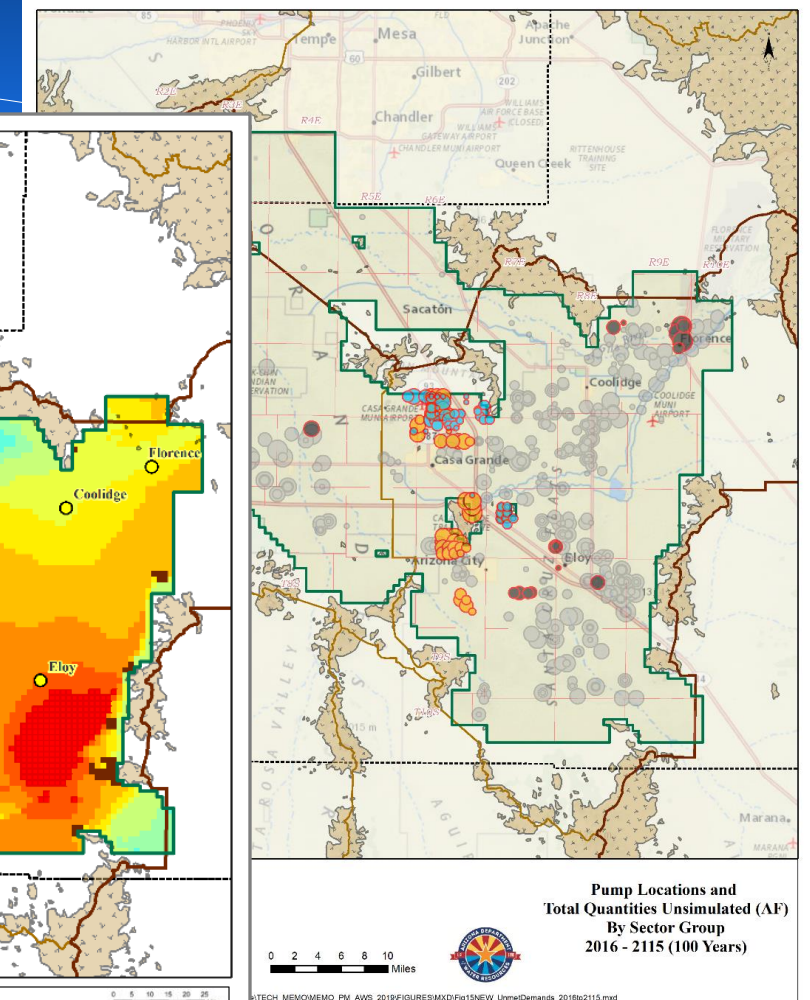
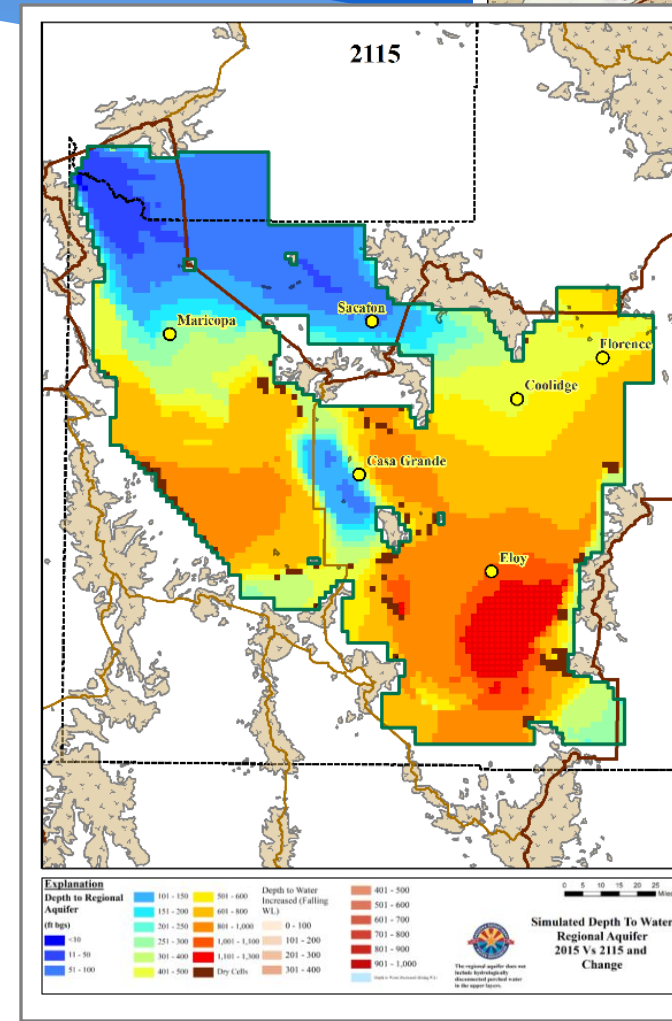
Assured Water Supply Modeling

- The Assured Water Supply Program requires the Department to evaluate available supply for 100 years before permitting additional future growth.
- Models are updated to utilize the best available science and are constructed to meet the rules, policies, and requirements of the Assured Water Supply Program.
- The latest modeling projections are making it clear there are challenges ahead that must be addressed.
- The program is doing what it was intended to do, requiring us to plan for water supplies ahead of growth.



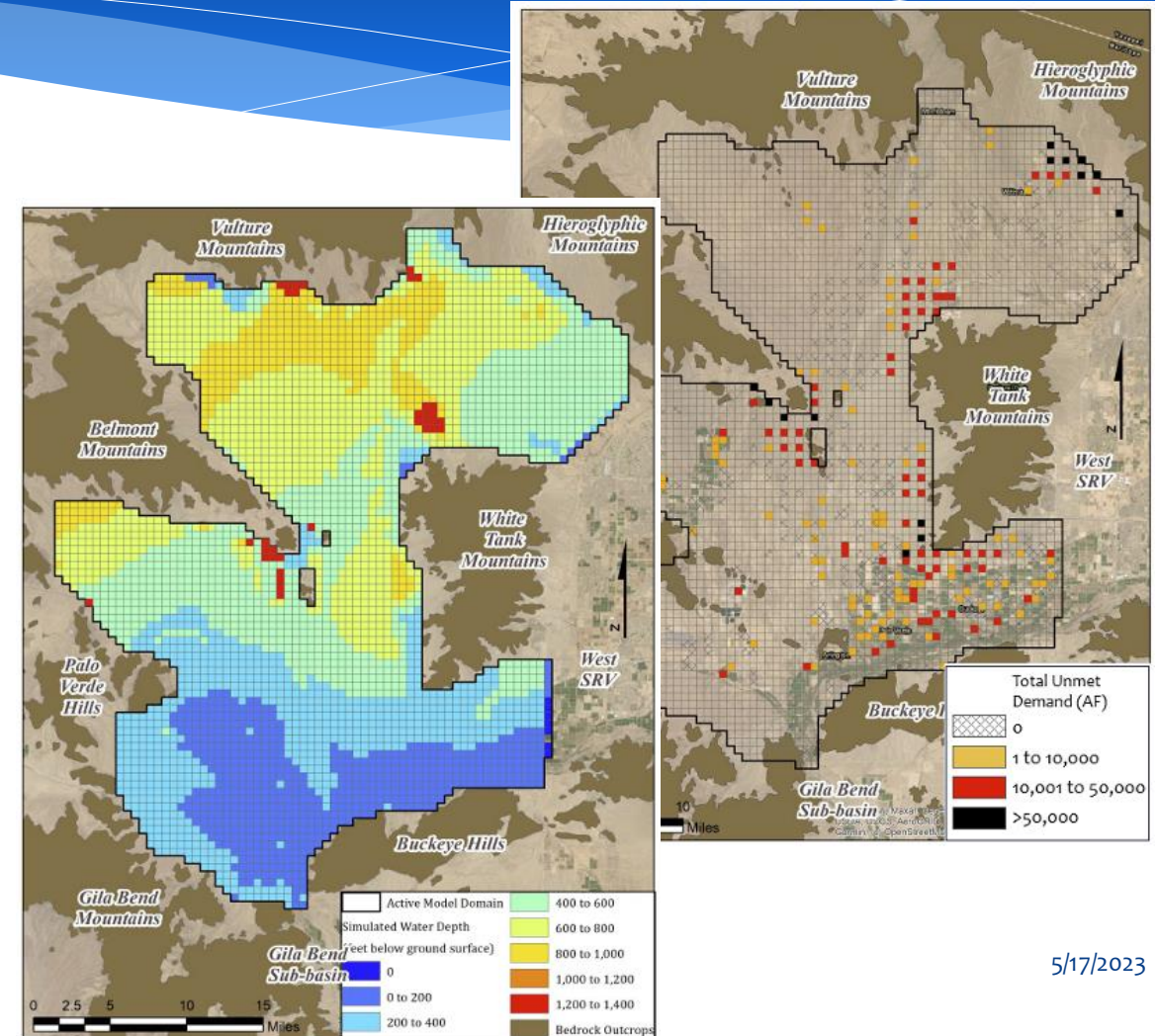
Pinal Model (2019)

- Unmet demand after 100 years:
 - Existing wells = 5.8 MAF
 - Analyses = 1.1 MAF
 - Certificates = 0.3 MAF
 - Designations = 0.6 MAF
 - LTSC = 0.3 MAF
- Total unmet demand after 100 years exceeds 8 MAF



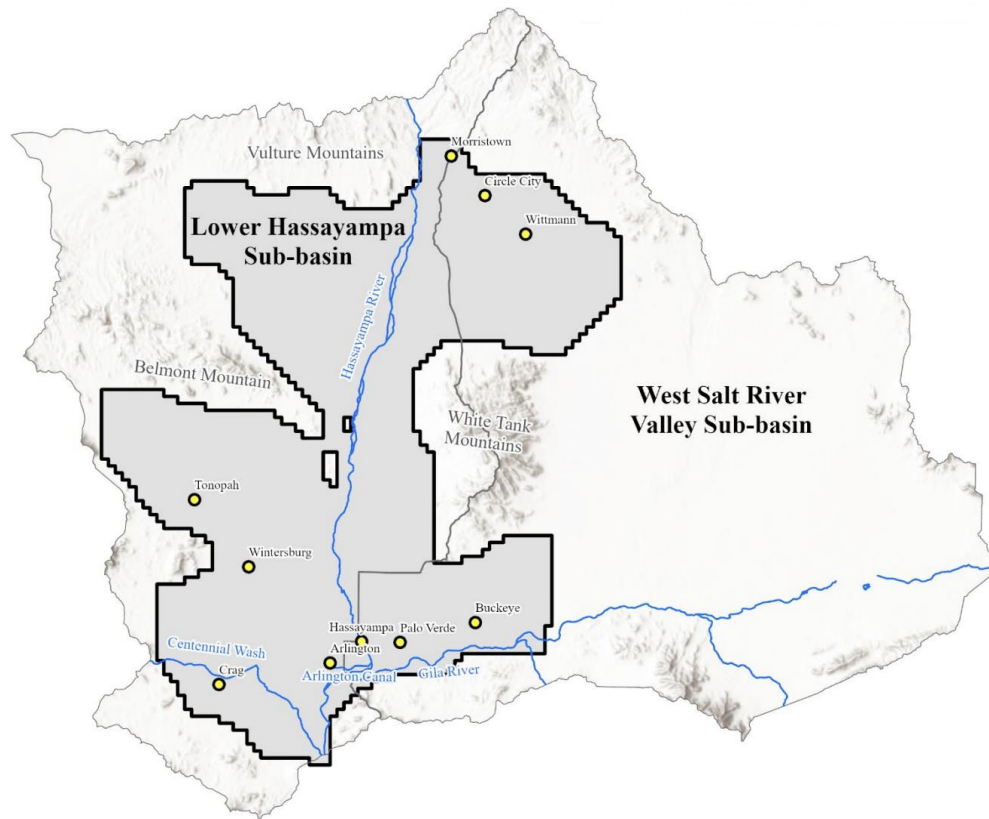
Hassayampa Sub-basin Model (2023)

- **Unmet demand after 100 years**
 - Existing wells = 0.9 MAF
 - Analyses = 2.2 MAF
 - Certificates = 1.3 MAF
 - LTSC = 0.1 MAF
- **Total unmet demand after 100 years**
 - **4.4 MAF**
- Depth to water exceeds 1,000 ft bls and/or hits bedrock in the central and northern parts of the sub-basin



"The days of utilizing native groundwater for development in Pinal are over, it's done."

- Director Buschatzke, June 2021



"ADWR previously worked with stakeholders in the West Valley that are subject to the Assured Water Supply program to seek solutions to the shortfall projected in the Hassayampa model."

"As Governor Hobbs signaled in her State of the State speech, it is time to include legislators, the business community and all constituencies to address the challenges attendant to the Assured Water Supply program in the Hassayampa Basin and for all the water management challenges facing Arizona."

- Director Buschatzke, January 2023

Objective: AWS Review & Recommendations

Objective:

Review and make recommendations for changes to Assured Water Supply policies—legislatively, administratively, or by executive action—to address the challenges revealed by Assured Water Supply modeling projections, while continuing to:

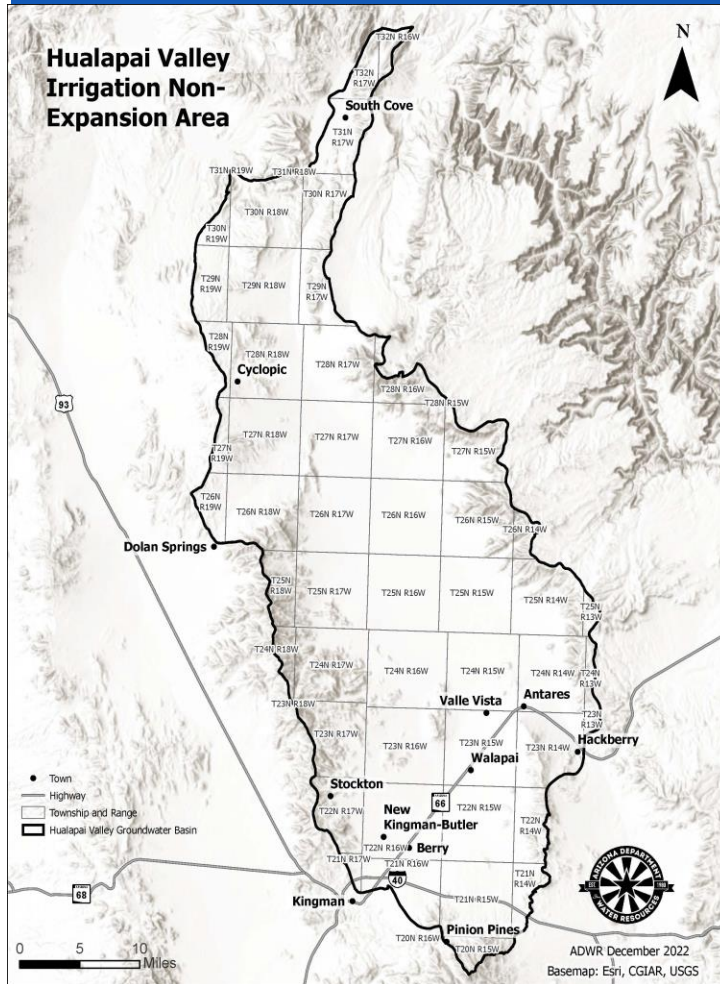
- strengthen the integrity of the Assured Water Supply program,
- protect consumers and aquifers, and
- ensure future growth is not reliant on mined groundwater.

Focus: Rural Groundwater

- Outside the Active Management Areas and Irrigation Non-Expansion areas there is limited regulatory framework for managing groundwater.
 - There is no requirement for metering and reporting non-exempt wells, with the exception of community water systems.
- Certain areas are growing in population at a rate similar to the AMAs. Some are experiencing significant growth in agriculture.
- Many communities are facing aquifer depletion with limited access to renewable supplies and no tools to manage the groundwater declines.
- There are increasing calls for a framework that will assist rural communities to manage their groundwater resources.

Hualapai Valley INA

Designated by decision of the Director, December 19, 2022



- On June 23, 2022, citing to updated USGS modeling and "ongoing and extreme drought conditions," the Mohave County Board of Supervisors requested that the ADWR Director take "whatever actions available and necessary to designate the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as a subsequent [irrigation non-expansion area (INA)]."
- After an informal public meeting and comment period, on October 12, the Director initiated proceedings to designate the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as an INA.
- On November 12, ADWR held a hearing in Mohave County to present information on INA requirements and factual data regarding the Hualapai Valley Basin, as well as to take oral and written comments.

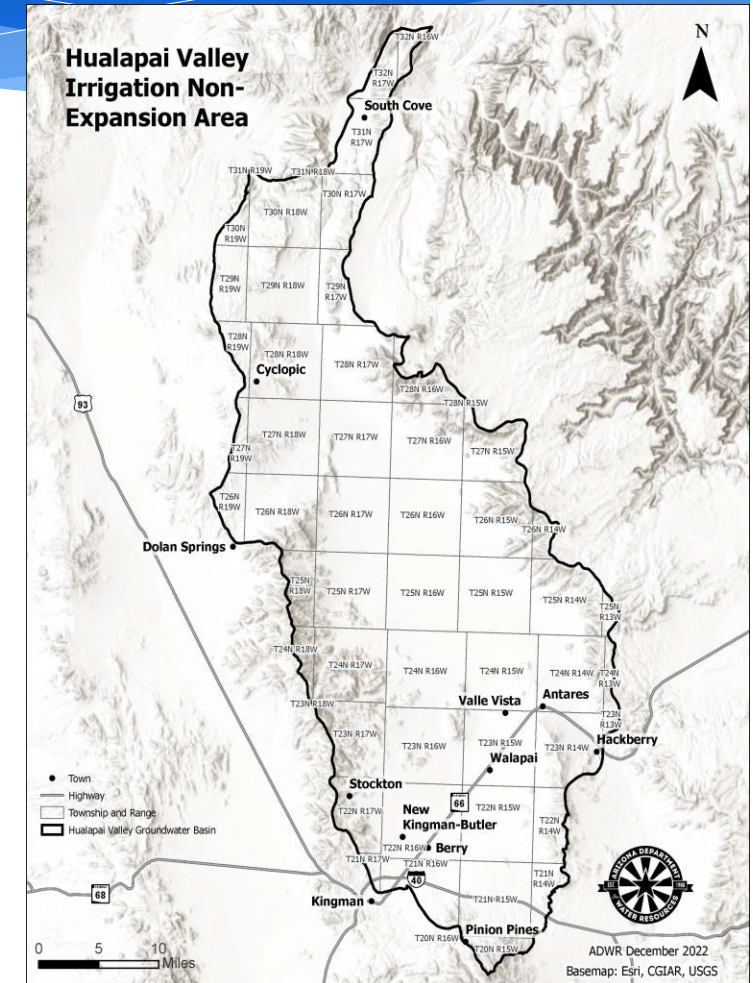
Hualapai Valley INA

Designated by decision of the Director, December 19, 2022

Upon review of updated modeling and other relevant information, including current drought conditions, the Director found:

- At current rates of withdrawal, depth to groundwater will increase
- After 100 years of pumping at current levels, ~1 in 20 existing wells are estimated to be no longer pumpable
- For the basin as a whole, outflows are currently exceeding inflows by a factor of 4
 - ~10,000 AFY of inflow to the aquifer
 - ~44,000 AFY of outflow from the aquifer

Based on these findings, the Director designated the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as an INA on December 19, 2023.

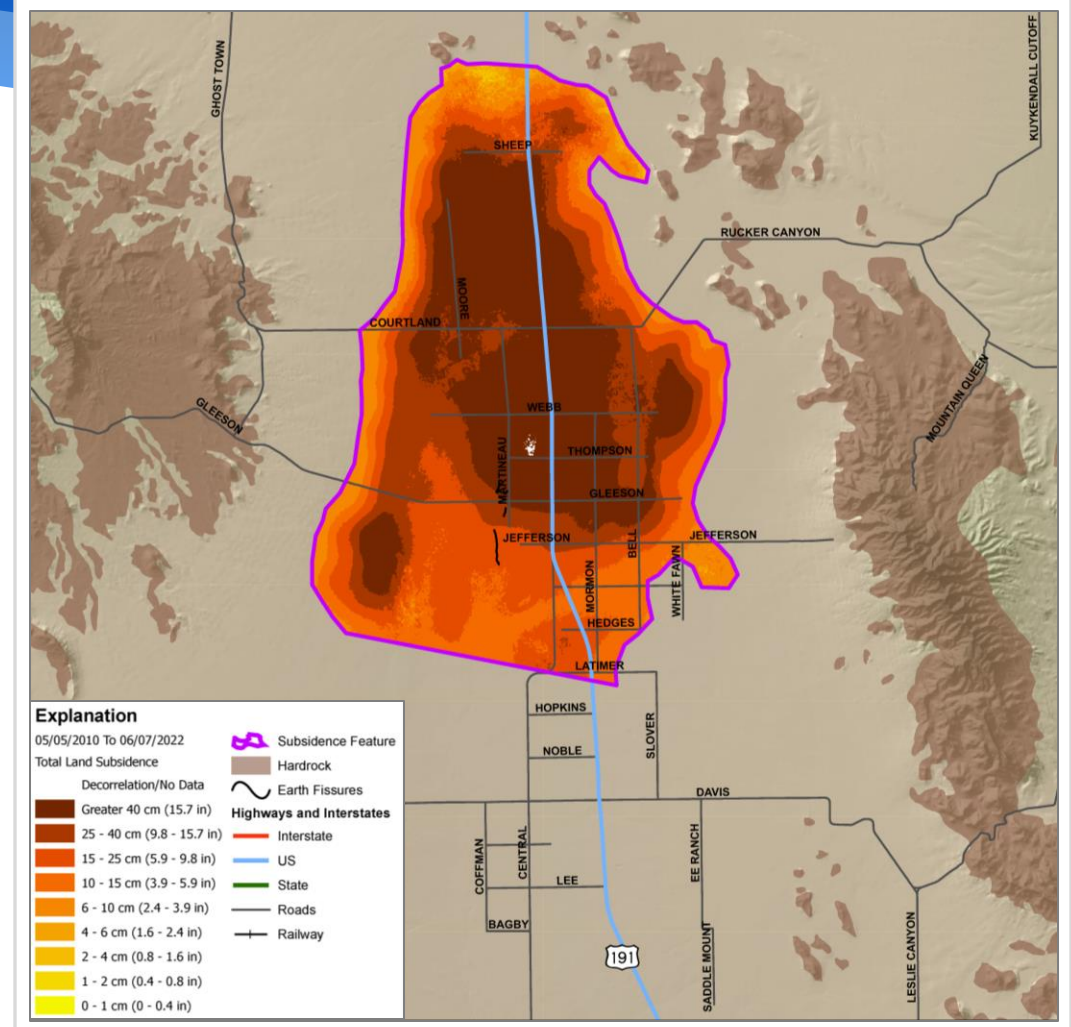


Douglas AMA

Designated by ballot initiative, December 1, 2022

- For the basin as a whole, outflows are currently exceeding inflows by a factor of 2.6
 - ~22,000 AFY of inflow to the aquifer (USGS estimates)
 - ~ 57,000 AFY of outflow from the aquifer (USGS estimates)*
- Groundwater declines of over 200 feet have been observed since 1965
- Land subsidence and earth fissures have been observed

*2007-2021 average



Douglas AMA Establishment Process

Management Goal

- Public meetings for background and public input
- Next: Public hearing with a formal comment period (estimated June 2023)

Management Plan

- Plan development will be guided by the goal and public input.
- Target: Adopt plan by the end of 2024, with conservation requirements becoming effective January 1, 2027.

DRAFT GOAL:

The management goal of the Douglas AMA is to support the general economy and welfare of communities in the basin by attempting to reduce the rate of aquifer depletion by 2035 and by further attempting to reduce the rate of aquifer depletion every 10 years thereafter.

Objective: Recommendations for a Water Management Framework

Objective:

Develop recommendations for a water management framework to assist rural Arizona communities to manage their groundwater resources.

"The Governor's Water Policy Council is created to analyze and recommend updates, revisions and additions to the GMA and related water legislation, which shall include, without limitation, analysis and recommendations for groundwater management outside current Active Management Areas."

Summary

Objective: Review and make recommendations for changes to Assured Water Supply policies—legislatively, administratively, or by executive action—to address the challenges revealed by Assured Water Supply modeling projections, while continuing to:

- strengthen the integrity of the Assured Water Supply program,
- protect consumers and aquifers, and
- ensure future growth is not reliant on mined groundwater.

Objective: Develop recommendations for a water management framework to assist rural Arizona communities to manage their groundwater resources.

Deadline: December 2023

IV. Structure & Process

Council

- The Director of ADWR serves as the Chair of the Council.
- ADWR will provide staffing and technical support to the Council, which may include support from the Department's legal counsel.
- The Council will meet at such frequency as the Governor, or the Chair may direct.
 - Meetings will be called to solicit substantive input discussion and to make recommendations.
- The Council shall prepare legislative and policy recommendations at a frequency to be determined by the Chair in consultation with the Governor or her designee.
- Council members may designate one alternate from their organization; alternates are responsible for briefing their respective Council member.

Committees

"The Chair shall create committees, as necessary, to facilitate the Council's work, and the Chair shall appoint the chair and vice chair for any committee so created."

- Two initial committees: AWS and Rural Groundwater
- Committee leads: ADWR staff
- The Chair may additionally form and appoint members or their representatives to technical working groups
- Committee membership
 - Council members are asked to provide their choice of committee to the Director in writing
 - The Chair and Governor's Office will make final decision of committee rosters
- Committee members will be council members or their designated representative
 - Designees are empowered to make decisions and are responsible for briefing their respective council members

V. Upcoming Meetings

Initial Committee Meetings

- Committees will meet at least once a month from June through December 2023.
- Dates for the first two committee meetings follow. Additional dates will be forthcoming.
- Tentative Council dates will also be planned.

Assured Water Supply Committee

Tuesday, June 27, 2023, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Conference Room 3175
1110 West Washington Street, Phoenix

Rural Groundwater Management Committee

Thursday, June 29, 2023, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Conference Room 3175
1110 West Washington Street, Phoenix

VI. Closing Remarks

Contact Information

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ADWR Governor's Water Policy Council webpage:

new.azwater.gov/gwpc

