



Docket Supervisor - ADWR &lt;docketsupervisor@azwater.gov&gt;

## Douglas Basin AMA 6/28/2023 Public Hearing Substantive Comment

1 message

**Lizann Michaud** Personal Identifying Information  
To: docketsupervisor@azwater.gov

Wed, Jun 28, 2023 at 7:59 AM

June 28, 2023

Attn: Sharon Scantlebury  
Docket Supervisor  
Arizona Department of Water Resources  
1110 W. Washington, Suite 310  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear ADWR,

I'm writing today as a concerned resident of the Douglas Basin.

According to Arizona statutes, groundwater policies must address future availability of groundwater, earth fissures, and the general economy and wellbeing of citizens. Paramount and basic to all else in this statement is the future availability of groundwater.

As you know, the Douglas AMA is already experiencing earth fissures and drying wells that are forcing some locals from their homes, or to go into massive debt to try and out-drill out-of-state industrial interests. This rate of water depletion is certainly not good for future economy and the wellbeing of the basin's citizens and economy. Water issues in our basin have made national and international news, and our water issues should be handled with all due urgencies while serving the area's current and managed future local populations along with its economy.

The Guardian: *Mega-dairies, disappearing wells, and Arizona's deepening water crisis* <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jun/02/mega-dairies-disappearing-wells-and-arizonas-deepening-water-crisis>

Grist: *The Cochise County Groundwater Wars: A thirsty megafarm is driving a libertarian enclave in Arizona to embrace a radical solution: government regulation.* <https://grist.org/regulation/arizona-groundwater-cochise-county-riverview/>

To that end, Santa Cruz's AMA has the management goal of "preventing long-term declines of local water tables." Rather than only "[reducing] the rate of aquifer depletion," we need to keep our Douglas AMA water supply stable and secure for the long term by using Santa Cruz's management goal language above for the Douglas AMA as well.

Corporate interests have long exploited Arizona's loose controls on water resources. This needs to be reigned in in the Douglas AMA. We should change the language, "water users in the basin," to prioritize water rights for local residents, local ranchers, and local farmers over those non-local corporate interests which exploit Arizona's resources, essentially exporting Arizona's water for their own out-of-state (and out-of-country) monetary profits.

The word "attempt"---as in "attempt" to reduce groundwater depletion---is understandable in that there are natural forces such as climate change that may affect the rates of depletion over time. Yet, "attempt" allows abundant wiggle room for players to avoid meaningfully reducing water use. The language could be changed to be resolute and strong, yet to also cover *unpredictable* natural exigencies. There are models that reasonably predict the effects of climate change over time, and those can certainly be placed into consideration as policies are developed.

This Cochise-County-specific PDF from Arizona University contains succinct information and valuable links to various resources that should be taken into consideration: <https://wrrc.arizona.edu/sites/wrrc.arizona.edu/files/attachment/Cochise-factsheet.pdf>

The opening paragraph from this factsheet:

*"Arizona's future depends on sustainable water supplies, which in turn depend on vigilant and innovative management of those supplies. In our varied landscapes, from low deserts to high mountains, counties and communities face different water challenges and take different approaches to addressing those challenges, while conforming with regional, state, and federal requirements. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality*

*(ADEQ) is responsible for water quality and tasked with enforcing federal environmental standards. The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) oversees the use of surface water and groundwater, which are legally distinct though physically interconnected. ADWR regulates groundwater more strictly in Active Management Areas (AMAs) than in the rest of the state."*

It's self-evident to say that water is absolutely essential to life in the Douglas Basin, as it is all over this world. This AMA was established to maintain that essential resource. Please ensure that we take this opportunity seriously as we move forward in protecting our essential water resources, as well as our local community and livelihoods.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Many thanks,

Ms. Lizann S. Michaud

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