

Welcome

The meeting will begin shortly, in the meantime please:

- Keep your microphone muted during the meeting
- If you have a question/comment type it in the chat box and it will be read and addressed during the Call to Public
- If you experience any technical difficulties, please contact ADWR Help Desk at 602-771-8444 or tickets@azwater.gov



Pinal AMA GUAC

September 23, 2025



Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order – Welcome & Introductions – *Chair*

2. Meeting Logistics – *Taylor Pearson, ADWR*

3. Arizona Water Banking Authority – *Rebecca Bernat, AWBA*

Rebecca will present the AWBA 2026 Preliminary Plan of Operation

4. Water Management Assistance Program Updates – *Tommy Thiatmaja, ADWR*

Tommy will review withdrawal fee rates and money collected in past five years, current projects, and remaining balance.

5. WMAP Contract Renewals

a. Irrigation Management Service – *Eduardo (Eddie) Enriquez, Pinal Natural Resources Conservation Districts*

b. Natural Resources Education Center – *Jennifer Salcido, Pinal Natural Resources Conservation Districts*

6. WMAP Project Proposal Request

The Council will hear a project proposal request for WMAP funding. Based upon such discussion, the Council may vote to make a recommendation to the ADWR Director with respect to the proposed action

a. University of Arizona’s Arizona Project WET – *Lisa Townsend, University of Arizona*

7. Groundwater Withdrawal Fee Recommendation

The Council will discuss and recommend to ADWR Director groundwater withdrawal fee rates for the reporting year 2026.

8. AMA Director of Operations Report – *David French, ADWR*

David will provide an update on ADWR activities & staffing.

9. Call to the Council – *Council*

10. Call to the Public – *Chair*

11. Adjournment – *Chair*



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- This meeting is being recording and will be posted to ADWR's website
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- If you would like to be added to the GUAC mailing list, please email tpearson@azwater.gov stating: "Add (your email) to Pinal AMA GUAC Mailing List"



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2026 Preliminary AWBA Plan of Operation

Rebecca Bernat, Ph.D., Manager



Groundwater Users Advisory Council - Pinal AMA
September 23, 2025

2026 Preliminary Plan of Operation

Water Availability

- BOR announced Tier 1 shortage for 2026
 - 512,000 AF reduction to AZ Colorado River entitlement
- Resultant reduction to CAP
 - Other Excess reduced first
 - Ag pool reduced second
 - Portion of non-Indian agricultural (NIA) pool impacted

2026 Preliminary Plan of Operation

Credit Development

- No Excess CAP water available to AWBA
- Goals achieved through other means
 - Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) Firming Credits
 - Long-term Storage Credit (LTSC) purchases
 - Changes in pricing method due to tightening market

Funding for 2026 Plan of Operation

Funding Source	Estimated Funds Available		Estimated Funds Utilized		Estimated Credits (AF)	
	AWBA	CAWCD	AWBA	CAWCD	Water Storage	Developed Credits
Withdrawal Fees						
Phoenix AMA (ICS) ¹	\$1,596,260		\$373,454		0	1,157
Phoenix AMA (LTSC) ²			\$1,222,805		0	2,292
Tucson AMA ³	\$328,813		\$328,813		0	822
Water Storage Tax						
Phoenix AMA		\$0		\$0	0	0
Pinal AMA		\$0		\$0	0	0
Tucson AMA		\$0		\$0	0	0
Total	\$1,925,073		\$1,925,073		0	4,271

¹ Funds used to develop ICS Firming Credits at \$290.40/AF pursuant to AWBA's 2019 IGA with the Community. Developed credits include a 10% loss factor.

² The purchase rate of \$533.50 per LTSC neither accounts for the source of credit nor market fluctuation.

³ The purchase rate of \$400 per LTSC neither accounts for the source of credit nor market fluctuation.

Distribution of Credits

Firming for 2026

- Tier 1 Shortage condition
- Tribal firming obligation for the Gila River Indian Community (Community): 10,281 AF

Firming Proposal for the Community - Tier 1 Shortage in 2026:

Year	Firming Credits Developed			Firming Credits Used (AF)		Remaining Balance (AF)
	Firming Credits Developed (AF)	Cost/AF	Total Cost	Through CY 2025	CY 2026 ¹	
2015	16,000	\$157.00	\$2,512,000	16,000	0	0
2016	12,000	\$161.00	\$1,932,000	12,000	0	0
2017	7,000	\$164.00	\$1,148,000	4,600	2,400	0
2018	9,000	\$160.00	\$1,440,000	0	7,881	1,119
Total	44,000		\$7,032,000	32,600	10,281	1,119

¹ Based on CAWCD's August 2025 estimates of 2026 water orders.

- No firming for CAP M&I or on-River (sub)contractors

No request for Intentionally Created Unused Apportionment

Estimated Firming Volumes thru 2026

Objective and Location	Estimated Credits Available as of Dec 31, 2025 ¹	Estimated Credits Used in 2026	Estimated Credits Remaining as of Dec 31, 2026
	Acre-feet		
CAP M&I Firming (4-cent tax)	2,368,057	0	2,368,057
Phoenix AMA	1,601,173	0	1,601,173
Pinal AMA	234,791	0	234,791
Tucson AMA	532,093	0	532,093
On-River M&I Firming (gen. fund)	403,830	0	403,830
Tribal Settlement Obligations:²	160,633	10,281	150,352
Community - 15,000 AFY	160,633	10,281	150,352
<i>LTSCs</i>	<i>105,390</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>105,390</i>
<i>Firming Credits</i>	<i>11,400</i>	<i>10,281</i>	<i>1,119</i>
<i>ICS Firming Credits</i>	<i>43,843</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>43,843</i>
WMAT - 3,750 AFY	0	0	0
Hualapai - 557.5 AFY	0	0	0
Future Settlements- 4416.5 AFY³	0	0	0
Federal Assistance (SAWRSA)	34,102	0	34,102
Groundwater Mgmt. (W/Fees)	780,087	0	780,087
Phoenix AMA	219,941	6,650	213,291
Pinal AMA	453,695	-6,650	460,345
Tucson AMA	106,451	0	106,451
Shortage Reparations	109,489	0	109,489
Pinal Redirect Credits	14,125	0	14,125
Interstate - SNWA	613,846	0	613,846

¹ Includes all credits accrued and utilized through 2025

² The White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act enforceability date is December 30, 2027. The Hualapai Tribe settlement enforceability date is April 15, 2029.

³ The AWBA understands that it is highly unlikely that additional NIA priority water would be included in future settlements. Therefore, the AWBA is assuming there will be no additional firming obligations of NIA priority water.

Questions?

Email: rbernat@azwater.gov

Website: <https://waterbank.az.gov/>



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Water Management Assistance Program Fund:

Current Balance: \$217,331

Encumbered/committed: \$60,000

(+\$30,000 for NREC, +\$135,000 for IMS, +\$200,000 for PCWAA)

Remaining Balance: \$157,331

(\$127,331 after NREC)

(\$164,586 after projected April 2026 withdrawal fund deposit & IMS and PCWAA)

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Remaining Balance: \$157,331

(\$117,331 after NREC)

(\$154,586 after projected April 2026 withdrawal fund deposit & IMS and PCWAA)

PINAL ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

Groundwater Withdrawal Information:

Year		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
WMAP	Fee	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.70	Max. \$2.00
	Collected	\$336,238	\$363,418	\$357,091	\$345,665	N/A	
Water Bank / Irrigation Efficiency Fund (2020-2026)	Fee	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	Max. \$2.50
	Collected	\$1,178,326	\$1,289,949	\$1,153,741	\$1,113,724	N/A	
Admin & Enforcement	Fee	-	-	-	-	-	Max. \$1.00
	Collected	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	Fee	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.05	TBD
	Collected*	\$1,613,357	\$1,733,708	\$1,593,275	\$1,562,584	N/A	

Current Projects being funded WMAP:

PROJECT NAME	CONTRACTOR	TOTAL FUNDING	REMAINING FUNDING	CONTRACT ENDS
Irrigation Management Service (IMS)	Pinal Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs)	\$135,000	\$60,000	4/30/2026
Natural Resources Education Center (NREC)	Pinal Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs)	\$30,000	\$0	10/31/2025
Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority	PCWAA	Up to \$200,000	\$0	FY 2024-25

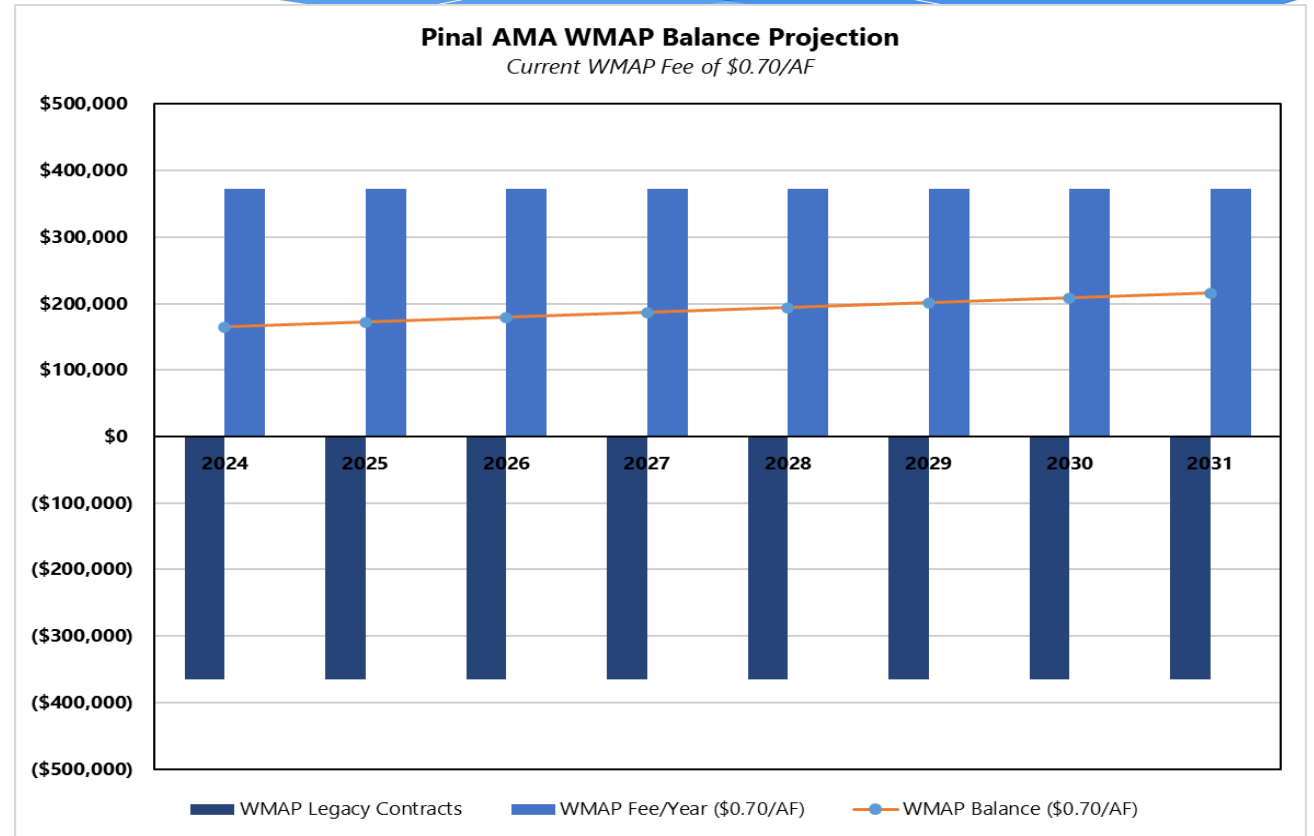
Current Projects being funded Groundwater Conservation Grant Projects:

PROJECT NAME	CONTRACTOR	TOTAL FUNDING	REMAINING FUNDING	CONTRACT ENDS
Using Project-Based STEM Education to Enhance Groundwater Conservation in Pinal County Schools	University of Arizona, Arizona Project WET	\$43,681	\$0	Completed
Leak Detection Equipment Replacement Project - Pinal AMA	Arizona Water Company	\$47,319	\$9,719	5/31/2026

Pinal ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

WMAP FEE Projections \$0.70:

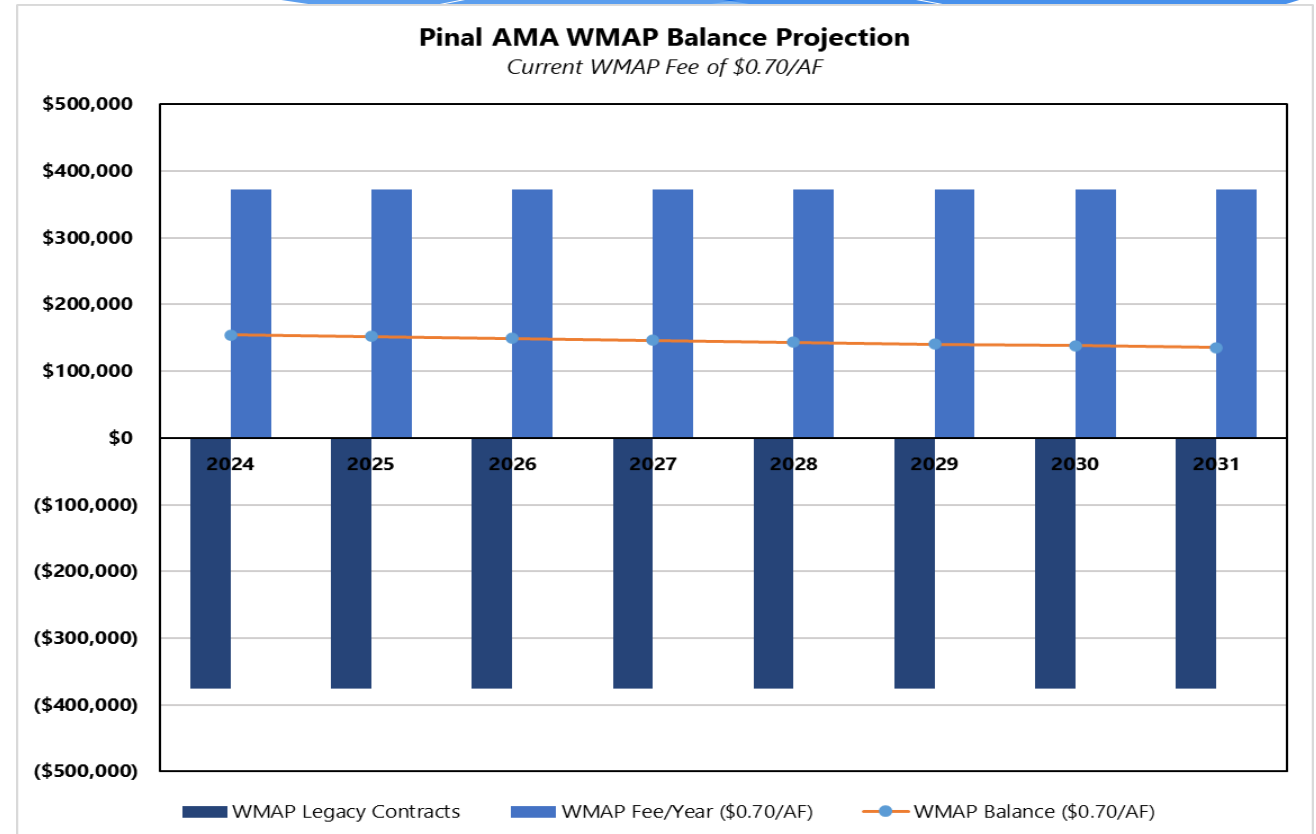
Year	WMAP Fee/AF	WMAP Fee/Year	Cost of WMAP Legacy Contracts	WMAP Balance
2024	\$0.65	\$345,665	(\$365,000.00)	\$157,331
2025	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$164,586
2026	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$171,840
2027	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$179,095
2028	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$186,349
2029	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$193,604
2030	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$200,859
2031	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$208,113
2032	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$365,000.00)	\$215,368



Pinal ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

WMAF FEE Projections \$0.70 (+10,000 for NREC):

Year	WMAF Fee/AF	WMAF Fee/Year	Cost of WMAF Legacy Contracts	WMAF Balance
2024	\$0.65	\$345,665	(\$365,000.00)	\$157,331
2025	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$154,586
2026	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$151,840
2027	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$149,095
2028	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$146,349
2029	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$143,604
2030	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$140,859
2031	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$138,113
2032	\$0.70	\$372,255	(\$375,000.00)	\$135,368



Pinal ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

WMAP FEE Projections \$0.75:

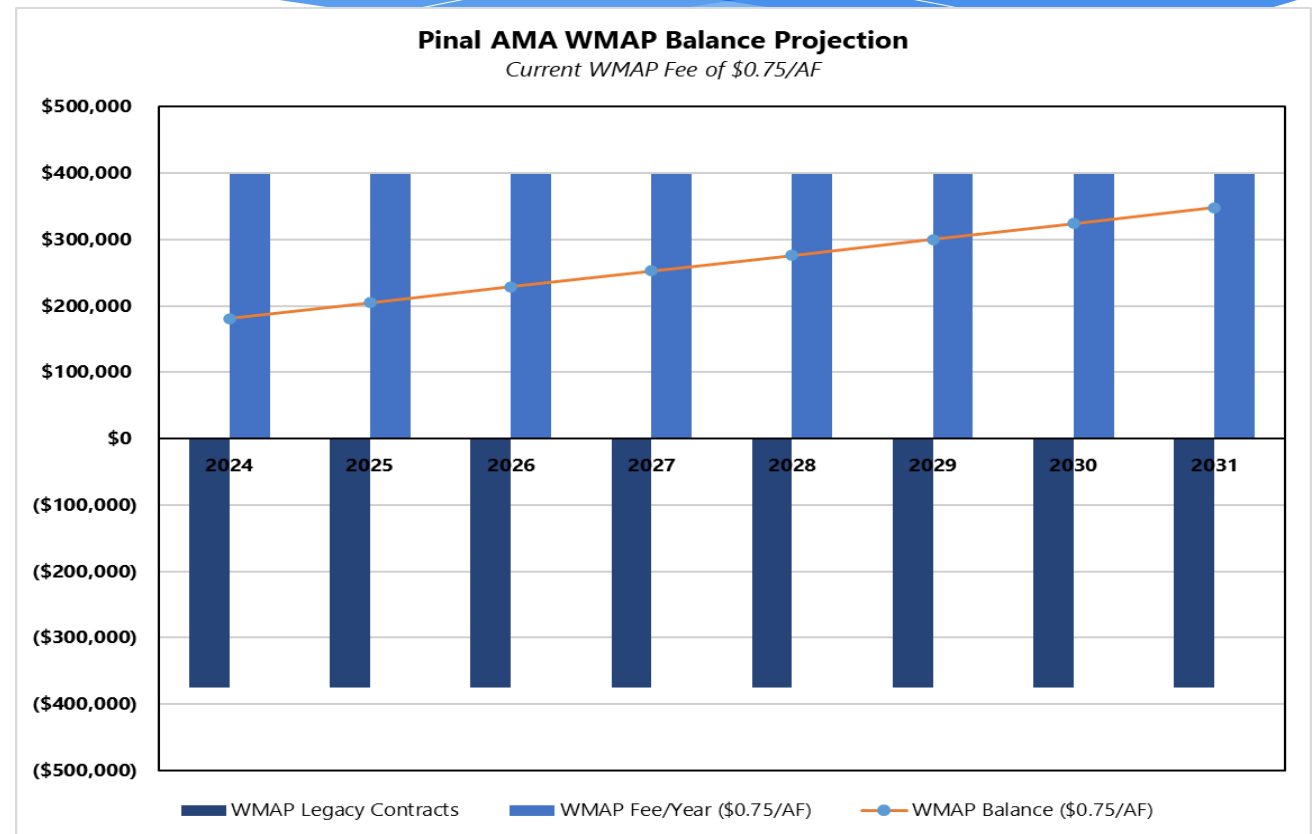
Year	WMAP Fee/AF	WMAP Fee/Year	Cost of WMAP Legacy Contracts	WMAP Balance
2024	\$0.65	\$345,665	(\$365,000.00)	\$157,331
2025	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$191,175
2026	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$225,019
2027	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$258,864
2028	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$292,708
2029	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$326,552
2030	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$360,396
2031	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$394,241
2032	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$365,000.00)	\$428,085



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2024	\$0.65	\$345,665	(\$365,000.00)	\$157,331
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2026	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$205,019
2027	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$228,864
2028	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$252,708
2029	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$276,552
2030	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$300,396
2031	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$324,241
2032	\$0.75	\$398,844	(\$375,000.00)	\$348,085



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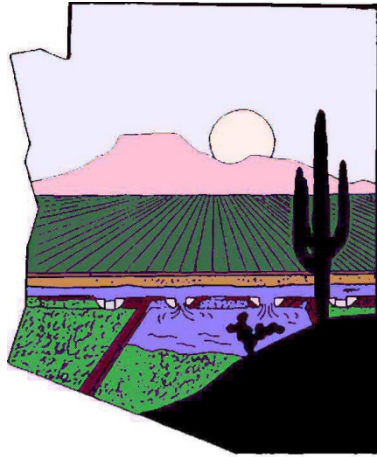
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IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT SERVICE 2025



Irrigation Management Service

“The sensible approach to evaluating and managing water use on crop land”

520 N. Camino Mercado – Suite 12 Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Office (520) 836-1960 ext.2430 / cell (520) 251-8241

Email: irrigationmanagementservice@yahoo.com

Irrigation Management Service (IMS), is program formed in 1987 By the cooperative efforts of 3 Natural Resource Conservation Districts, Eloy NRCD, West Pinal NRCD and Florence-Coolidge NRCD along with help of NRCS and ADWR....

The purpose of the program was to help producers in the Pinal AMA determine the most effective techniques to achieve maximum irrigation efficiency on existing irrigation systems....

2025 FISCAL YEAR

14 STANDARD EVALUATIONS (single evaluation w/follow up)

A Standard Evaluation shall also consist of all of the following:

An initial-event irrigation system performance analysis.

Recommendations to improve irrigation water management.

Information about irrigation scheduling services and techniques.

A discussion of the fundamentals of efficient irrigation water management techniques with each grower cooperator.

A follow-up visit to solicit comments from the grower or turf facility cooperator regarding the effectiveness of the services provided by the IMS Program.

6 SEASONAL EVALUATIONS IWM (Irrigation Water Management)

Season Long Evaluation:

All the services provided in a Standard Evaluation.

Educate the farmer and field staff on the irrigator's formula, irrigation scheduling methods, crop CU curves, water measurement methods, and how to analyze irrigation system performance.

Follow-up visits periodically through the growing season to systematically present this educational program aimed at improving the grower's water management skill.

IMS provides the farmer with educational resources and techniques to save water

The Irrigation Management service goal is to help the farmer fine tune their irrigation scheduling, Whether it's adjusting irrigation day depending on plant water needs at times gaining 1-2 days. When you add all those days up in a season, it usually eliminates an irrigation and therefore reducing the cost and water used.

4 TURF EVALUATIONS (TURF FARMS /PARKS).

IMS also helps with ADWR's Best Management Practices Program (BMP) :

170 Total Farms units 80,000 acres

IMS Held 4 BMP cooperator meetings/workshops at following locations...

Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation and Drainage District , Stanfield -AZ

Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District , Eloy Az

San Carlos Irrigation District , Coolidge-Az

Natural Resource Conservation Service office, Casa Grande, Az

At the Cooperator meetings we:

Review cooperators previous years BMP Practices and updated any changes

Assisted Producers with Schedule BMP Forms for Annual Water Reports

Looked at upcoming year crop schedule

New BMP SIGNUPS

*Meet periodically with BMP cooperators throughout the year
collecting BMP Verification Data and documenting in file.*

IMS also works close with :

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) - with Irrigation Water Manage (IWM) on farms under cost share programs (EQIP)

Natural Resource Education Center - IMS assist them with weed control, tillage, planting and irrigation at their facility @ Central Az College ...

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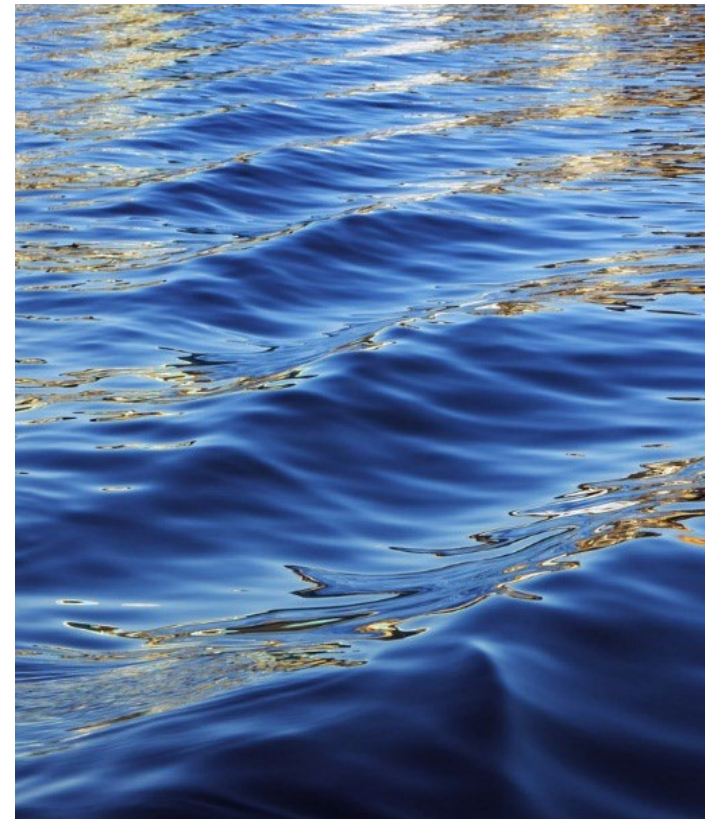
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Natural Resource Education Center

Pinal County



Natural Resource Education Center at Central Arizona College Signal Peak Campus



NREC PROGRAMS delivered 2024-2025



- Veggie Ventures
- Water out West (WOW)
- Ag-Ventures Corn Festival
- From Alfalfa to Ice Cream
- The Five C's of Arizona
- Let's get crackin' egg program
- **NEW** Plants of the Sonoran Desert



2024-2025 Attendance Numbers

9 Pinal County School Districts

Apache Junction
Casa Grande
Coolidge
Eloy
Florence
Marana
Maricopa
Sacaton
Stanfield

★ 4,279 students

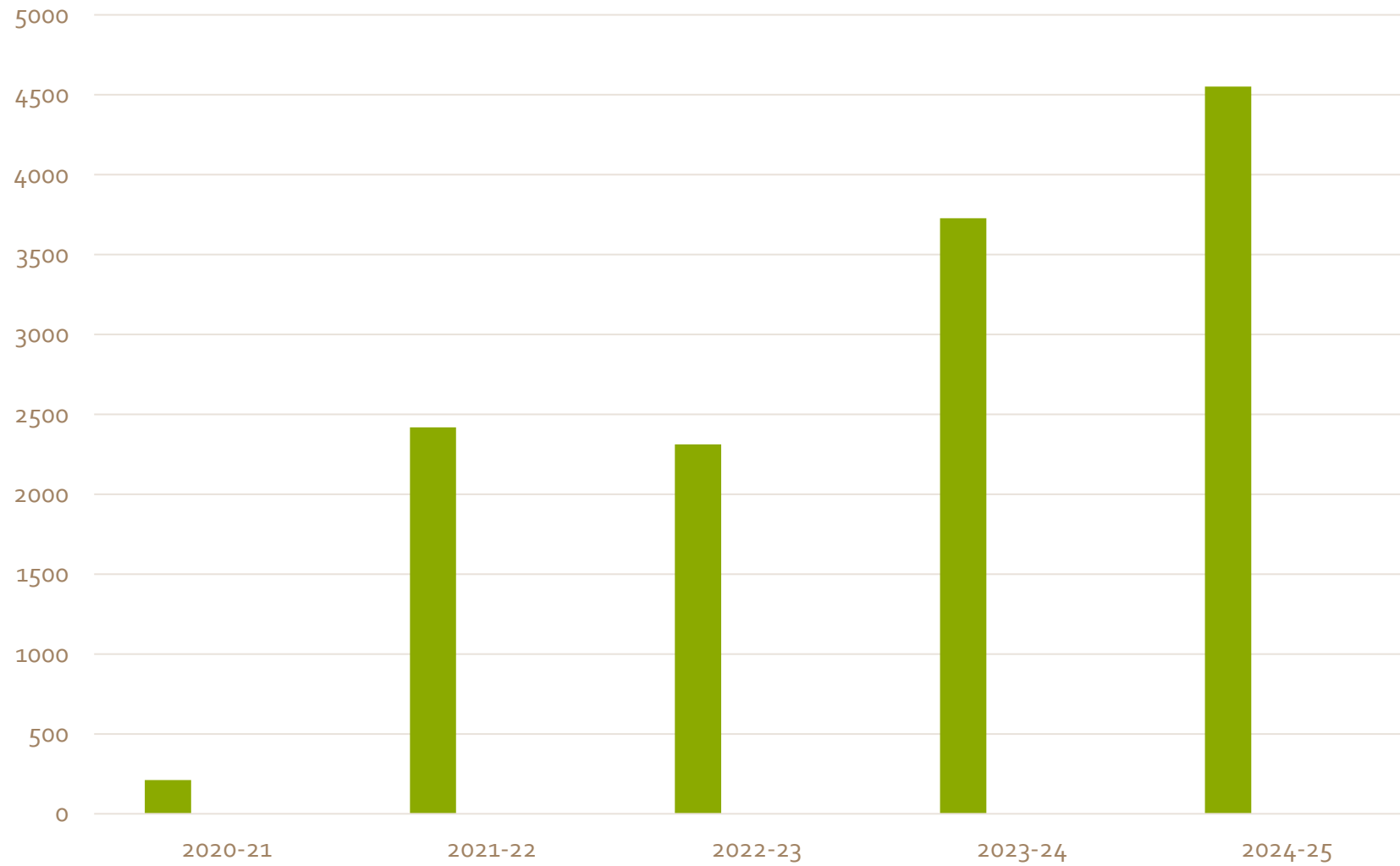
★ 272 adults

★ 11, 065

natural resource educational hours



NREC Attendance Numbers

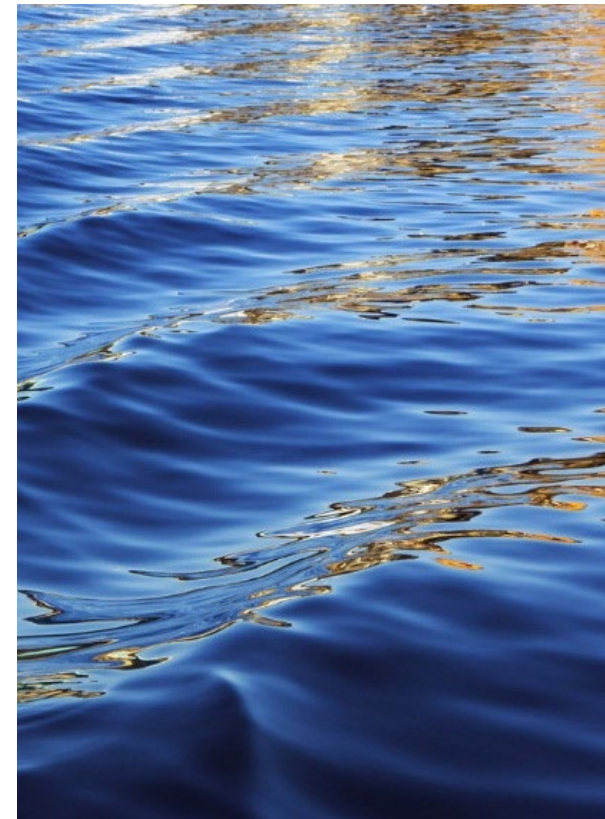




Grants



- **Arizona Department of Water Resources**
- **Gila River Indian Community**
- **Pinal 40**





NREC is sponsored by three (3) Natural Resource Conservation Districts

~Eloy Natural Resource Conservation District~

~Florence-Coolidge Natural Resource Conservation District~

~West Pinal Natural Resource Conservation District~



NREC is now overseen by the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts

WATER OUT WEST

- curriculum for K-5th graders
 - Az State Educational Standards
 - STEM
- Builds on information they learned during 4th grade, Project Wet
- Unique program throughout Arizona

Water cycle



Water sheds



Rolling Rivers



Water movement/management



Water history/conservation

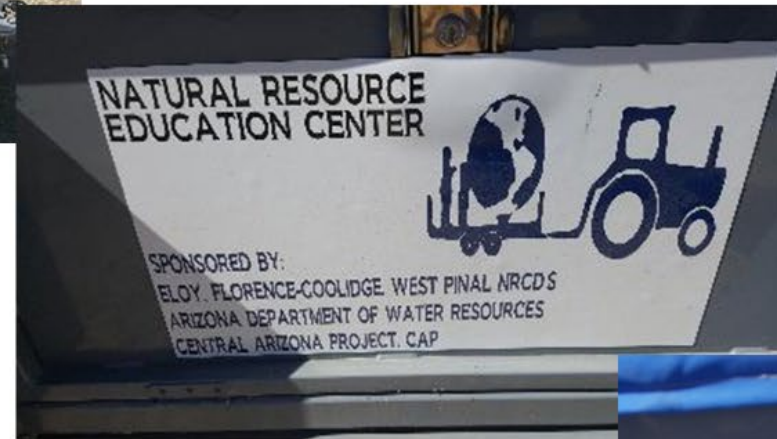


Irrigation





Rolling Rivers Mobile Trailers



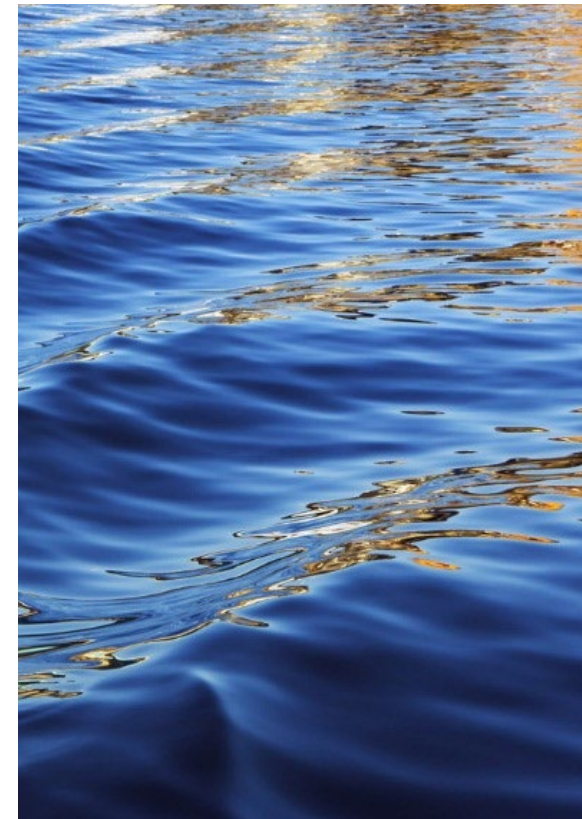
Water Out West
(WOW)



2025-2026 Goals

- ✓ Expand NREC reach to ALL Pinal County Districts
- ✓ maintenance of NREC farm at CAC
- ✓ Community outreach partnership with Uof A's Project Wet Program





THANK YOU

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF WATER
RESOURCES

for your continued generous support
of the

Natural Resource Education Center

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7. **Groundwater Withdrawal Fee Recommendation**

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8. **AMA Director of Operations Report** – *David French, ADWR*

David will provide an update on ADWR activities & staffing.

9. **Call to the Council** – *Council*

10. **Call to the Public** – *Chair*

11. **Adjournment** – *Chair*





EXPERIENTIAL

ENVIRONMENTAL

EDUCATIONAL

Arizona Water Festivals in Pinal



Cooperative Extension



ARIZONA
project **WET**
WATER EDUCATION TODAY

Arizona Project WET

Since 1995

It is imperative that Arizonans understand the interconnectedness of water resources from a local, regional, and global perspective. Arizona Project WET (APW) brings to the surface water-use practices that affect availability, dependability, access, and sustainability. APW program objectives, centered in the unifying theme of water, engage teachers and students while bringing real-world relevancy to science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) learning.

APW supports water stewardship and STEAM literacy by authentically and meaningfully engaging educators, students, and community members.

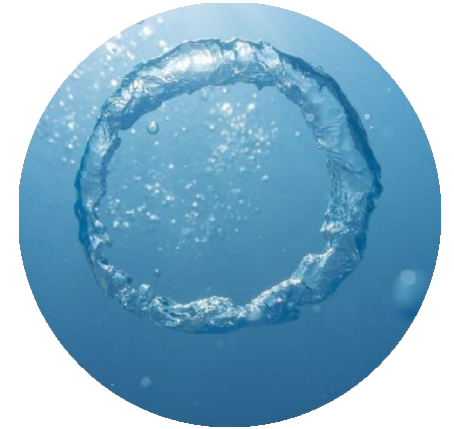
Arizona Project WET's mission is to meet the needs of our community by using relevant, research-based educational strategies and techniques in helping people develop knowledge and skills that equip them to act for water stewardship.

The APW team delivers water-focused programming with exceptional skill: meaningfully connecting content to participant and participant to action.



Water Cycle

Students track the movement of water molecules through the Arizona landscape reflecting the morphing, flowing, cyclical nature of water. The form and function of water varies depending on the molecules' position in the cycle. Students (and adults) reflect on how they fit into the closed circuit and the implications of human impact.



Groundwater

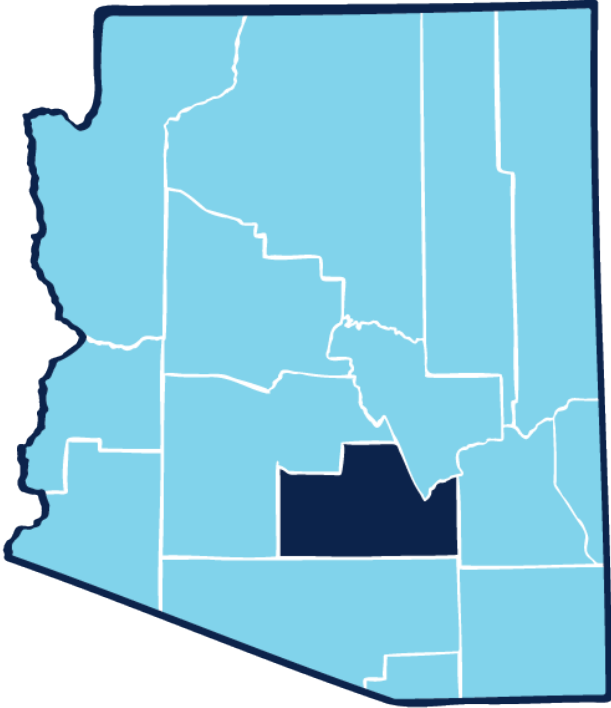
Students manipulate groundwater models to interpret the connection between groundwater recharge and discharge. Precipitation flowing through the watershed percolates into the ground and well-pumped groundwater affects the levels of surface water. Making water-wise choices and adopting water conservation practices helps lower the risk of overdraft and subsidence. Students reflect on how they might use/misuse groundwater.

Watershed

Students gather insights into the features of a watershed, exchanges between the elements, and the effects of human impact. Water flowing through our resident watershed(s) supports all life in the region. Students reflect on how their behaviors may help or hinder watershed health.

Water Sustainability

Students synthesize their water cycle, groundwater, and watershed reflections by connecting the challenges facing Arizonans to mindful, sustainable, and practical personal choices. Program participants commit to water conservation!



The **2024-2025 Academic Year, Pinal County Water**

Festivals were a grand success! **90 teachers** from **25**

schools brought **2,100 students** to the festivals in Casa Grande, Coolidge, Florence, and Maricopa!

150 community volunteers delivered lessons and engaged 4th graders in fun, relevant, meaningful activities about their connection to water sustainability in Arizona.

- *2024-2025 Casa Grande Water Festival Impact Report [HERE](#)*
- *2024-2025 Coolidge Water Festival Impact Report [HERE](#)*
- *2024-2025 Florence Water Festival Impact Report [HERE](#)*
- *2024-2025 Maricopa Water Festival Impact Report [HERE](#)*

These water festivals were a fantastic collaboration between Arizona Project WET and community stakeholders: Abbott Fund, Arizona Water Company, Casa Grande Elementary School District #4, City of Casa Grande, City of Coolidge, Coolidge Unified School District, Florence Unified School District, Global Water, Imagine Coolidge, Kohler, Maricopa Unified School District, STORM, Town of Florence

Join us in 2025!

10/21 **Coolidge**,
Arizona Water Festival,

10/16 **Florence**,
Arizona Water Festival

Join us in 2026!

2/19 **Maricopa**,
Arizona Water Festival

2/26 **Casa Grande**,
Arizona Water Festival



The purpose of this program is to educate K-12 students about their interconnected water resources and their importance to Arizona's future in support of Pinal AMA's statutory goal of safe yield. Project goals are to work towards an understanding of:



- Surface water in terms of a watershed's components, its dynamics, and its role in the hydrologic cycle
- The groundwater system in terms of its components, composition, and its role in the hydrologic cycle
- The effect of snowpack on water flow in a watershed
- The movement of water through diverse substrates
- Surface water and groundwater rights in Arizona
- Surface water management through containment and distribution
- Groundwater recharge and the Arizona water bank
- Water conservation technology
- Water reuse and augmentation
- The Engineering Design Process



Casa Grande Water Festival



Coolidge Water Festival



Florence Water Festival



Maricopa Water Festival



Arizona Water Festival

Summary:

During the Arizona Project WET – Water Festival Unit of Study, 4th grade students explore the Arizona water cycle, map our regional watersheds, unearth the connection between groundwater and surface water, and learn how their behaviors impact water availability in Arizona. Students use this knowledge to develop accessible, community-focused solutions that simultaneously conserve water and promote sustainable decision-making.

Guiding Question(s):

Where is Arizona’s water? What are the connections between people, water, and heat in the environment?

Learning Objectives:

- **Track** the movement of water molecules through the Arizona water cycle
- Understand how water moves through a watershed and **demonstrate** the human impact of changes to that natural system; city surfaces affect the movement of water, and those changes can be **observed/measured**.
- **Model** aquifer recharge and discharge connecting water availability to human behavior
- **Act** as environmental stewards, conserving water through both behaviors and available technologies, supporting resilient solutions that benefit the (biodiverse) community.

Science Standards	
This unit addresses, but is not limited to, the following standards:	
Elements of Life 4.L4U1.11	Analyze and interpret environmental data to demonstrate that species either adapt and survive or go extinct over time. When the environment changes in ways that affect a place’s physical characteristics, temperature, or availability of resources, some organisms survive and reproduce, others move to new locations, yet others move into the transformed environment, and some die. For any particular environment, some kinds of organisms survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.
Elements of Earth & Space 4.E1U1.6/7	Plan and carry out an investigation to explore and explain the interactions between Earth’s major systems and the impact on Earth’s surface materials and processes. Rainfall helps shape the land and affects the types of living things found in a region. Water, ice, wind, living organisms, and gravity break rocks, soils, and sediments into smaller particles and move them around.
Elements of Earth & Space 4.E1U3.9	Construct and support an evidence-based argument about the availability of water and its impact on life. Nearly all of Earth’s available water is in the ocean. Most freshwater is in glaciers or underground; only a tiny fraction is in streams, lakes, wetlands, and the atmosphere. About two-thirds of the surface of the Earth is covered by liquid water, which is essential to life.
Elements of Earth & Space 4.E1U2.10	Define problem(s) and design solution(s) to minimize the effects of natural hazards*. A variety of hazards result from natural processes. Humans cannot eliminate natural hazards but can take steps to reduce their impacts.

* Natural hazards abound in Arizona. At the top of list: flash floods, severe weather, landslides and debris flows, earthquakes, and earth fissures.

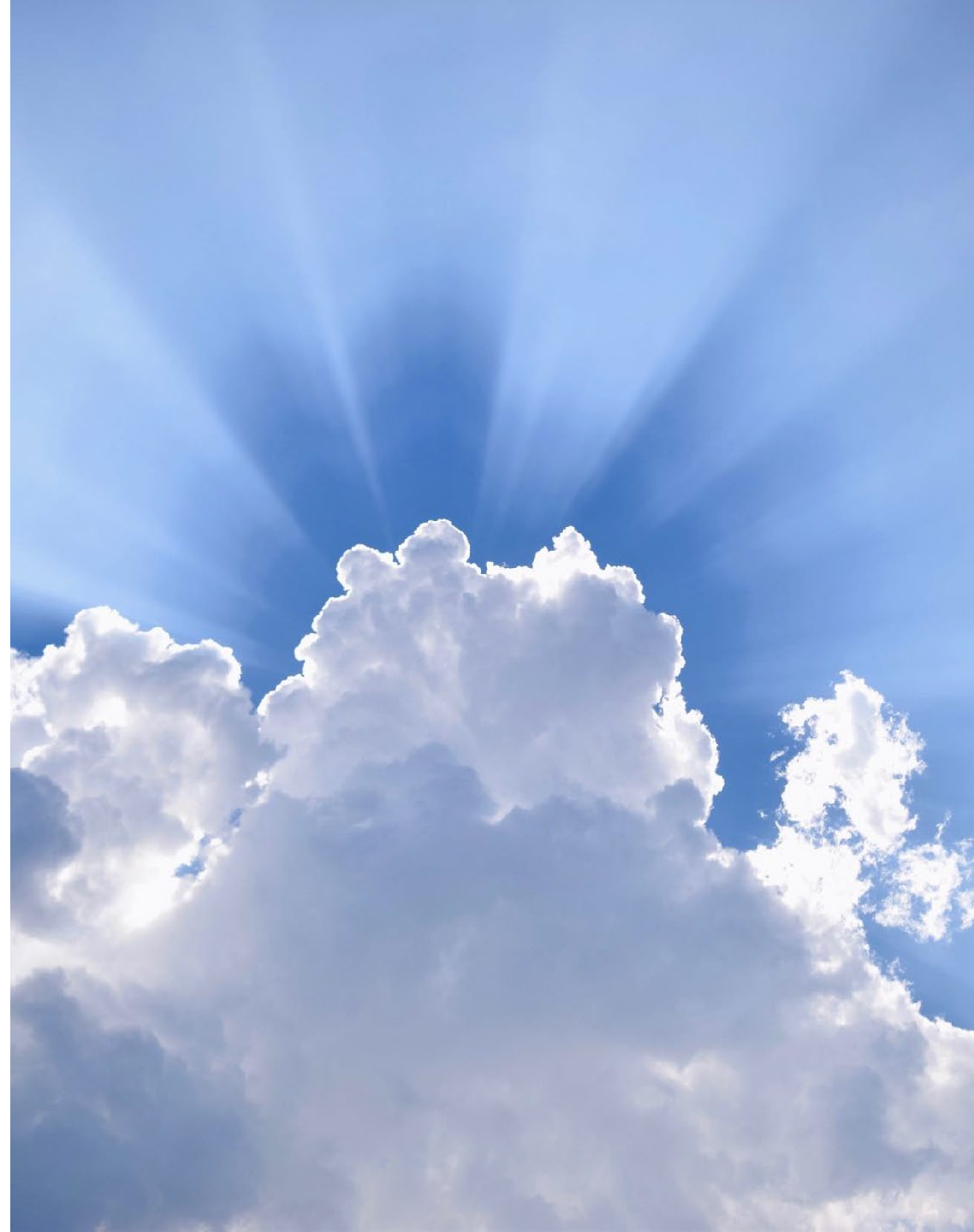
EDUCATOR ENRICHMENT

4th Grade Teacher Professional Development

Educators improve their skills engaging learners with real-world, relevant science, technology, engineering, and math practices that focus on systems thinking and project-based problem solving. Participants leave these workshops with myriad resources, and a supportive cohort, to lead their students through meaningful, Pinal County-centric applications of water-science instructional concepts.

Making Connections,
Gaining Perspective, and
Fostering Creativity

The water festival unit of study kicks off with the teacher professional development workshop, which all teachers new to the program attend. During this workshop, APW instructors connect teachers with tangible reference points and supporting resources in physical science, engineering, and environmental science through exploration, inquiry, and technology.





41%

Groundwater is a vital water source in Arizona, making up 41% of the state's water supply.

42.6% of Pinal County's water is sourced from groundwater.

The groundwater system is one of Arizona's most important water reserves. Increasingly, in many areas of the state, water storage is managed by using the groundwater system. Arizona students are eager to understand this crucial system and its place in the water cycle. This ensures that water users also self-identify as sustainable decision makers: I/we manage this resource together.

Arizona Water Festival Scope of Work

Arizona Water Festivals (AWF) instill a deeper understanding of water in the earth systems and Arizona's water resources through a 4th grade interdisciplinary curriculum unit driven by exploration and inquiry. The entirety of the AWF program encompasses:

Foundations of Water Education **professional development workshop** for participating 4th grade teachers

- Arizona Science Standard connection and integration
- 3-Dimensional Learning approaches
- Best practices for the 6-lesson classroom module

Pre-Festival survey to gauge students' existing subject-area knowledge

3 teacher-led, in-classroom Unit of Study lessons before the Water Festival

THE WATER FESTIVAL:

- 3 – 5 area schools per AW
- 9 – 12 classes per AWF, on average
- 250 – 750 students in attendance per AWF, on average based on single or double session
- Community Volunteer training and place-based event support
- Municipal Park permits, when/if needed

3 teacher-led, in-classroom Unit of Study lessons after the Water Festival

Post-Festival STUDENT survey to measure knowledge gain.

Post-Festival TEACHER survey to evaluate programming and Unit of Study content elements.

Post-Festival VOLUNTEER survey to evaluate programming and Unit of Study content elements, and reflection on practice.

The AWF is attended by water professionals and community volunteers who engage participants in an experiential and fun exploration of the Groundwater System, Watershed Management, Water Stewardship, and the Arizona Water Cycle. By diving into hydrology through authentic, relevant, and meaningful water-focused activities, this “field day” event instills a deeper understanding of Arizona's varied and complex water resources. As a result, these 4th graders can put forward an evidence-based argument about the availability of water in their region and its impact on their lives.

Arizona Project WET aims to educate, engage, and connect Pinal AMA community members (residents, local businesses, K-12 students, educators, administrators, and municipal stakeholders) through educational outreach to raise awareness of current and future challenges to Arizona's water resources and sustainable solutions to help mitigate them.

Arizona Project WET will grow our work with regional partners to continue developing, improving, and delivering meaningful school-site units of study and place-based community events. Our programming engages, educates, and empowers participants, through conservation-action, to adopt principles and practices of sound water resource management. In 2026 our goal is to build capacity ensuring that all eligible schools/4th Grade classrooms wanting to join an Arizona Water Festival in Pinal may access an event.

Community Partners:

Funding Period/Length of Contract:

January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026



Funding Requested, \$25,000

Arizona Project WET

Measurements

APW has a strong record of programmatic evaluation and self-reflection that not only provides evidence of content area knowledge gain but also informs our practice and program improvement. A number of tools will be used to measure the outcomes and impacts of this Unit of Study.

Participant Counts

APW collects self-reported data relating to the number of participants engaged in each activity, including numbers of schools, students, teachers, and community members.

Members of the Pinal GUAC,

**We appreciate your time,
attention, and consideration.**

We are happy to answer any questions you may have about Arizona Project WET, the Water Festival, or our statewide reach.



Water Education is in our Nature.



Thank you for the opportunity.

Lisa Townsend, Director

Water Resources Research Center

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Tucson, AZ 85719

lisatownsend@arizona.edu

Kirstyn Kay, Program Supervisor

Water Resources Research Center

350 N Campbell Ave

Tucson, AZ 85719

kkay@arizona.edu



Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order – Welcome & Introductions – Chair

2. Meeting Logistics – Taylor Pearson, ADWR

3. Arizona Water Banking Authority – Rebecca Bernat, AWBA

Rebecca will present the AWBA 2026 Preliminary Plan of Operation

4. Water Management Assistance Program Updates – Tommy Thiatmaja, ADWR

Tommy will review withdrawal fee rates and money collected in past five years, current projects, and remaining balance.

5. WMAP Contract Renewals

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Water Management Assistance Program Fund:

Current Balance: \$217,331

Encumbered/committed: \$60,000

(+\$40,000 for NREC, +\$135,000 for IMS, +\$200,000 for PCWAA)

Remaining Balance: \$157,331

(\$117,331 after NREC)

(\$154,586 after projected April 2026 withdrawal fund deposit & IMS and PCWAA)

PINAL ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AREA

Groundwater Withdrawal Information:

Year		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
WMAP	Fee	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.70	Max. \$2.00
	Collected	\$336,238	\$363,418	\$357,091	\$345,665	N/A	
Water Bank / Irrigation Efficiency Fund (2020-2026)	Fee	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	\$2.35	Max. \$2.50
	Collected	\$1,178,326	\$1,289,949	\$1,153,741	\$1,113,724	N/A	
Admin & Enforcement	Fee	-	-	-	-	-	Max. \$1.00
	Collected	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	Fee	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.05	TBD
	Collected*	\$1,613,357	\$1,733,708	\$1,593,275	\$1,562,584	N/A	

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