

Governor's Water Augmentation, Innovation and Conservation Council Long-Term Water Augmentation Committee January 8, 2020 Meeting Summary

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Arizona Department of Water Resources

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairman Wade Noble called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance, asking everyone to introduce themselves.

The following members of the Long-Term Water Augmentation Committee were present: Wade Noble, Sarah Porter, Scott Deeny, Virginia O'Connell, Bruce Hallin, Stephanie Smallhouse, Bill Garfield, Jamie Kelley, Pam Muse (for Lisa Atkins), Chuck Cullom, Cheryl Lombard, Ron Doba, Senator Sine Kerr, and Representative Gail Griffin. In attendance from ADWR staff were Carol Ward, Cyndi Ruehl, and Jeff Inwood.

II. "Potential Water Storage Sites on Arizona State Trust Land" study (2017) revisited

Jeff Inwood, ADWR Chief Hydrologist, gave a brief overview of the 2017 study completed by ADWR and the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). Senate Bill 1399 directed the two agencies to develop a report that identifies potential water storage sites on State Trust land, either for surface storage or underground storage. The presentation can be accessed [here](#). Mr. Inwood reviewed the investigation process, which resulted in ADWR identifying 331 potential underground storage sites and 21 surface storage sites on State Trust land. ASLD further narrowed the 352 possible sites to six sites, the minimum required by SB1399. The full report can be found [here](#).

Representative Gail Griffin asked that more be done to identify underground storage sites similar to current examples in Cochise County. The committee discussed what criteria might be used to revise the report and possibly identify additional potential storage sites. The committee agreed on the following:

- A subcommittee will be formed to recommend criteria by which another study could be performed: The Water Storage Site Selection Criteria Subcommittee. The subcommittee will comprise Doug Dunham (Epcor), Chuck Cullom (CAP), Bruce Hallin (SRP), Sarah Porter (Kyl Center), Stephanie Smallhouse (Arizona Farm Bureau), Bas Aja (Arizona Cattle Feeders Assoc), Bill Garfield (Arizona Water), Carol Ward (ADWR), Scott Deeny (TNC), Ricardo Aguirre (West Consultants), Rob Hussey (Flood Control District of Maricopa County), and Representative Gail Griffin. The chair tasked the subcommittee to complete criteria selection and present to the full committee at the next committee meeting.
- The committee recommended that potential locations should not be limited to State Trust land sites.
- The resulting study would serve as another tool in a toolbox of potential augmentation options being offered to water planning areas for further exploration.

III. Follow up to the Water Augmentation Options Report

The committee invited Ron Doba of Northern Arizona Municipal Water Users Association (NAMWUA) to present the list of questions that organization had submitted regarding the *Long-Term Augmentation Options for Arizona* report. The questions were addressed by the committee members who worked on the report. Chairman Noble stated that it is important to keep relevant reports and studies active and available to those who could use the information.

A section in the report subtitled “Water Augmentation Concepts Requiring Further Development” includes weather modification, phreatophyte management, and forest management (now could include grasslands, as well). The committee decided to follow up on these potential options with the following strategy:

- Weather modification: CAP will present the results of its studies with the Upper Basin states and the US Bureau of Reclamation, showing the current state of science on the subject at the next committee meeting. SRP’s study in the White Mountains is in progress and can be reported on when complete, probably next year.
- Phreatophyte management: The committee concluded that much more research is needed for the committee to determine and recommend if it is a viable augmentation option. Senator Kerr informed the committee of the passage of legislation in the last legislative session allocating \$2 million dollars toward phreatophyte management. The fund is being managed by Arizona Forest and Fire Management Department. Eleven project recipients around the state were awarded funding, which Senator Kerr believes will provide some of the data the committee is seeking; specifically, how much water is used by an invasive species and how much water could be conserved with its eradication from a habitat. Sarah Porter was asked to research available information relative to the Arizona situation and bring that information to the next committee meeting.
- Forest management: The committee agreed that it currently has a data gap regarding the amount of water provided by forest and grassland management in order to determine if members could recommend it as an augmentation option for Arizona. SRP is currently in the process of collecting data from its restoration sites and can give the committee an update on its projects. The Nature Conservancy offered to present some of its studies to the committee.

IV. Wrap up, closing remarks and adjournment

In order to allow time for the work to be completed by the subcommittee and individual committee members, the next meeting of the Long-Term Water Augmentation Committee was scheduled for May 22nd.