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Proposed Legislation Authorizing CRIT to Market Its Colorado River Supply

1 message

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To: "sscantlebury@azwater.gov" <sscantlebury@azwater.gov>

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed federal legislation which would authorize off-reservation marketing of the Colorado River Indian Tribe's ("CRIT") decreed water supply for use in Arizona within the Lower Basin. The state should support this legislation and companion agreements which would allow CRIT to utilize its water supply in a manner that provides the highest and best use of that supply as determined by the Tribe.

The proposed agreements and legislation address the technical issues specific to this authorization. Marketing projects must be crafted in a manner that avoids harm to other Colorado River users. Consultation with the Arizona Department of Water Resources and Reclamation prior to approval of future projects should provide adequate protection against potential third party harm. The legislation also provides that this Lower Basin supply continues to be utilized within the Lower Colorado River Basin.

Currently, tribes with Central Arizona Project Colorado River water supplies may lease and recharge those supplies. If approved, this legislation will create greater equity between CRIT and other tribes with Central Arizona Project water supplies by allowing CRIT to enter into similar types of agreements.

CRIT has already demonstrated its desire to support the broader goal of protecting Lake Mead storage to avoid catastrophic reductions to Lower Basin water supplies, by participating in the System Conservation program. The types of future projects that would generate marketable supplies may be similar to System Conservation projects that have already been implemented. As such, we have an example of how future projects can be crafted and implemented in a manner that poses no harm to other Colorado River water users and allows the Tribe to fully utilize its supplies for the benefit of its members.

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