

MOHAVE COUNTY BOARD of SUPERVISORS



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Travis J. Lingenfelter - Mohave County Supervisor District 1

June 23, 2022

Mr. Thomas Buschatzke, Director
Arizona Department of Water Resources
1110 W. Washington St., Suite 310
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin

Dear Director Buschatzke:

Pursuant to A.R.S. 45-432, the Mohave County Board of Supervisors hereby requests the Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) to take whatever actions available and necessary to designate the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as a subsequent Irrigation Non-Expansion Area (INA).

In accordance with A.R.S. 45-432, the Director of ADWR may designate an area which is not included within an Active Management Area as a subsequent INA if the Director determines that both of the following apply:

- (1) There is insufficient groundwater to provide a reasonably safe supply for irrigation of the cultivated lands in the area at the current rates of withdrawal; and (2) The establishment of an active management area pursuant to A.R.S. 45-412 is not necessary.

The lands currently owned by large-scale farms will cause the groundwater level in the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin to drop below the Adequate Water Supply level of 1200'. An estimated total of 8,400 acres of the total 77,743 farm-owned acres are currently under cultivation and represent a current withdrawal of 26,901 acre-feet per year. Combined with City of Kingman municipal water system usage, this currently produces an annual groundwater deficit of 30,900 acre-feet per year out of the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin and growing.

Mohave County urges you to initiate the process to designate the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as an Irrigation Non-Expansion Area. Inaction at this time means that Mohave County and an estimated 70,000 citizens in-and-around the City of Kingman that rely upon the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as their primary and forever water source will risk the depletion of this finite groundwater basin. The citizens of Mohave County living both in-and-around the county seat of Kingman, Arizona, deserve to have their collective future secured which justifies action at this time.

Mohave County, the City of Kingman and the USGS have been partnering on this expanding groundwater crisis since 2017 to track, analyze, and understand the groundwater conditions in the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin. The existing USGS HVHM was developed to serve water-resource managers in understanding the effects of groundwater withdrawals on groundwater levels in the basin.

The ongoing partnership between Mohave County, the City of Kingman and the USGS updated the model between March 2022 to May 2022, and this updated data serves as the basis of our current request. The most-recent update of the USGS HVHM in 2022 indicates a much higher risk of groundwater depletion due to the large-scale irrigation out of the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin, and the USGS model is obviously available to ADWR.

In addition, the unsustainable current groundwater withdrawal for irrigation purposes will endanger the 100-year Adequate Water Supply and well-being of the citizens and communities utilizing the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin, including Mohave County's county seat the City of Kingman, Arizona. The Board of Supervisors strongly believes that the Irrigation Non-Expansion Area designation is truly the best approach for the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as large-scale agricultural use is rapidly depleting this aquifer, and there is real and serious potential for that large-scale agricultural use to significantly expand in the future.

In closing, with the BoR describing the current conditions on the Colorado River system and identifying the need for the seven basin states to conserve between two million and four million additional acre-feet of Colorado River water; with the ongoing and extreme drought conditions, lack of monsoon rains, and the absence of runoff that currently exist in the arid area of the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin – we are now deeply and profoundly concerned about resolving our expanding groundwater crisis in the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin and are reaching out to you Director Buschatzke, and the Arizona Department of Water Resources, for immediate assistance in managing this finite groundwater resource by designating the Hualapai Valley Groundwater Basin as a subsequent Irrigation Non-Expansion Area.

Respectfully Submitted,



Travis J. Lingenfelter, Vice-Chair
County Supervisor – District 1
Mohave County Board of Supervisors
County of Mohave, Arizona

Cc: Regina E. Cobb, DDS, LD5 State Representative
Leo Biasiucci, LD5 State Representative
Sonny Borrelli, LD5 State Senator
Mohave County Board of Supervisors
Sam Elters, Mohave County Manager