

Governor's Water Augmentation, Innovation and Conservation Council

December 3, 2019

Meeting Summary

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Arizona Department of Water Resources

I. Welcome and Introduction of Council Members

Chairman Tom Buschatzke called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance to the fourth meeting of the Governor's Water Augmentation, Innovation and Conservation Council (Council). Council members introduced themselves and noted their affiliation. Council members in attendance were as follows: Aja, Basilio, Arizona Cattle Feeders Association; Atkins, Lisa, ASLD; Buschatzke, Thomas (Chair), ADWR; Cabrera, Misael, ADEQ; Bourcet, Tim, for Camacho, Chris, Greater Phoenix Economic Council; Dent, Patrick, for Cooke, Ted, CAWCD; Tomkus, Jay, for Dadgar, Maria, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona; Doba, Ronald, NAMWUA; Ferris, Kathy; Gammage, Grady, Gammage and Burnham; Garfield, William, Arizona Water Company; Stellar, Dan, for Graham, Patrick, The Nature Conservancy; Coolidge, Courtney, for Hamer, Glenn, Arizona Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Kamps, Spencer, Home Builders Association of Central Arizona; Kelley, Jamie, Mohave County Water Authority; Maxwell, Edward, Southern Arizona Leadership Council; Noble, Wade, Noble Law; O'Connell, Virginia, Arizona Water Banking Authority; Porter, Sarah, Kyl Center; Miller, Scott, for Richards, Philip, APS; Roberts, Dave, SRP; Rogers, Kevin, Arizona Cotton Growers Association; Smallhouse, Stephanie, Arizona Farm Bureau; Smith, Mark, Yuma Irrigation District; Tenney, Warren, AMWUA; Townsend, Phillip, Sunland Chemical Co.; Udall, Christopher, Agribusiness & Water Council, Representative Griffin, Gail, AZ House of Representatives; Senator Kerr, Sine, AZ Senate; Representative Fernandez, Charlene, AZ House of Representatives; Senator Otondo, Lisa, AZ Senate; Representative Nutt, Becky, AZ House of Representatives; ADWR staff Ward, Carol, and Mast, Natalie.

II. Committee Updates

Desalination Committee

On behalf of Chairman Philip Richards, Scott Miller summarized the committee's October 10th meeting. A presentation was given on the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Desalination Plant in El Paso, Texas, and CAP presented an evaluation of the cost to Arizona of not operating the Yuma Desalting Plant (YDP), both at full capacity and one-third capacity. Meeting materials for that committee meeting can be accessed at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/committee/meeting/desalination-committee-meeting>. The committee created a sub-committee to identify regulatory and legislative hurdles to potential desalination projects across the state. Information for that sub-committee can be accessed at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/committee/meeting/desalination-regulatory-legal-issues-subcommittee-meeting>. The next meeting of the Desalination Committee is scheduled for January 16, 2020, 10:00 a.m. at ADWR.

Non-AMA Groundwater Committee

Co-Chairwoman Jamie Kelley reported that the 21 topics referred to the Committee from the Council were discussed at the November committee meeting. The one topic that rose to the top of the priority

list was the need for more data. Staff will assist in prioritizing the remaining items for discussion. Ms. Kelley added that staff should consider groundwater basins that are “at risk.”

Co-Chairwoman Representative Griffin reported that the committee is gathering Best Management Practices utilized across the state and shared some examples. Meeting material from the committee’s November meeting can be accessed at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/committee/meeting/non-ama-groundwater-committee-meeting-0>. The next meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2020, 10:00 a.m. at ADWR.

Post-2025 AMAs Committee

Committee Co-Chairman Warren Tenney summarized the committee’s initial October 10th meeting, reviewing the committee’s mission, goals and approach. Mr. Tenney outlined the committee’s strategy: to generate a list of challenges, to analyze and prioritize issues that need to be addressed, and to present this list to the Council by December 2020. Then, in 2021, with the Council’s support, the committee will begin building solutions and strategies to address the identified priority issues. The October meeting materials can be accessed at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/committee/meeting/post-2025-amas-committee-meeting>. The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. at ADWR.

Long Term Water Augmentation Committee

Committee Chairman Wade Noble reported that the committee has not met since the last Council meeting during which the committee’s Water Augmentation Options Report was presented. The committee is scheduled to meet next on January 9, 2020, at 10:00a.m. at ADWR. In answer to Chairman Buschatzke’s inquiry, Chairman Noble said he does not anticipate any items from the committee to come forward to the Legislature in 2020.

III. Safe-Yield in the AMAs: Natalie Mast, ADWR Manager AMA Management Plans

In response to the Council’s request, Natalie Mast, ADWR Manager for AMA Management Plans, provided an overview of “safe-yield,” including the components that determine safe-yield, where each AMA stands regarding reaching safe-yield, challenges to analyzing safe-yield, and ongoing work on the issue. The presentation can be accessed on the GWAICC meeting website at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/meeting/governors-water-augmentation-innovation-conservation-council-meeting>.

IV. AMA Management Plans Update: Natalie Mast, ADWR Manager AMA Management Plans

Ms. Mast updated the Council on the current status of the 4th and 5th Management Plans, the projected timelines for completion, and upcoming dates through March 2020 for the various work groups. Information about these meetings and other management plans efforts can be found at <https://new.azwater.gov/5MP>. The presentation can be accessed on the GWAICC meeting website at <https://new.azwater.gov/gwaicc/meeting/governors-water-augmentation-innovation-conservation-council-meeting>.

V. Pinal AMA Assured Water Supply Physical Availability Issues

Chairman Buschatzke presented a brief overview of the recently revised and released ADWR Groundwater Model for the Pinal AMA. Based on the model results, there is insufficient groundwater in the Pinal Active Management Area to support all existing uses and issued assured water supply determinations over the next one hundred years. Chairman Buschatzke reported that ADWR held a stakeholders' meeting on November 1st to take a deeper dive into the model and to address questions. A community-driven Pinal AMA Water Supply Stakeholder Group has been established. The Group's first meeting was held December 9th in Florence at the Pinal County Complex. ADWR is a member, providing technical support and assisting the Stakeholder Group in vetting options. ADWR will post all the Stakeholders Group's meeting notices and material on the ADWR website at <https://new.azwater.gov/pinal-groundwater-supply-updates>.

VI. Closing Remarks and Next Meetings

Misael Cabrera provided brief updates on the Corps of Engineers 404 permitting process and a stakeholder process for a Waters of Arizona program.

Chairman Buschatzke announced the Department is accepting grant applications for the Water Management Assistance Program. Two million dollars were appropriated as part of the Drought Contingency Plan for the purpose of funding additional conservation of groundwater in the Active Management Areas. Information about the grant can be accessed at <https://new.azwater.gov/ama/wmap>.

Chairman Buschatzke updated the Council on efforts by members of the Legislature to expedite the adjudications process. Senator Otondo shared information about efforts to assist small claimants by way of legal workshops held through the universities. Representative Fernandez requested that Indian water rights be placed on the March agenda, including an update on federal water rights settlements. In response to a comment encouraging council support for funding for acceleration of the adjudications process, Chairman Buschatzke noted that the next Council meeting would not be held until well into legislative session. He suggested that Council members would need to make their own assessments of any legislation and decide if they would want to support it, as it would be unlikely the Council would have the opportunity to do so.

The next Council meeting will be March 13, 2020, at ADWR.

VII. Adjournment

Chairman Buschatzke thanked everyone for their participation and comments and adjourned the fourth meeting of the Governor's Water Augmentation, Innovation and Conservation Council.