

SAWUA: Thriving with Less

Sarah Porter • October 18, 2024

Mission: promote informed public dialogue on critical **water issues in Arizona and the West**

- **neutral & non-partisan**
- **research & analysis**
- **historical understanding**



Arizona
Water
Blueprint

azwaterblueprint.asu.edu



Tools for exploring Arizona's water resources



[The Water Blueprint Map](#)

A comprehensive tool featuring 50+ data layers to explore Arizona's water resources and infrastructure



[Groundwater Level Changes](#)

An interactive map that shows groundwater level changes across Arizona's sub-basins



[Colorado River Shortage](#)

An information hub about the Colorado River shortage



[Water Issues in Depth](#)

Introductions to critical Arizona water issues like the use of water in rural areas and the function of watersheds

Sign up for updates

Want to keep learning about water in Arizona? Sign up to receive emails from the Kyl Center for Water Policy at Morrison Institute.

[Sign me up](#)

Why this matters



Water is the foundation of public health, economic opportunity and quality of life in our desert region

When it comes to water, Arizona cities are held to a higher standard than any other part of the United States

Continued public confidence and economic investment depend on our ability to signal certainty in long-term water supply availability

Central Arizona's Water Story



Required growth on renewable supplies

Made water conservation a way of life

Reclaimed wastewater for beneficial reuse

Recharged aquifers to ensure a back-up supply

Our Brand

1980 Groundwater Management Act

Assured Water Supply Program



Groundwater

fallback supply in times of
surface water shortage

sustainable management
engenders **confidence for
investment**

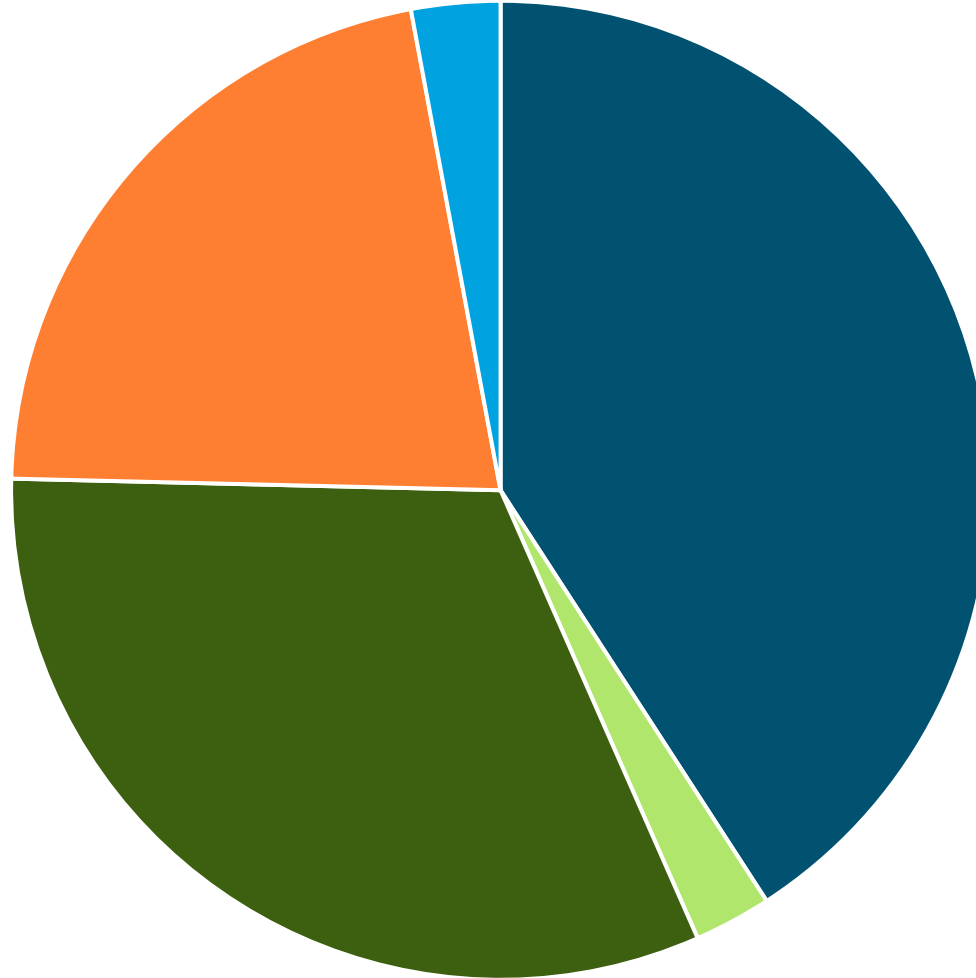




SLOWER SPEEDS
HELP PREVENT
WASHBOARDS

Colorado River Water Use in Central Arizona*

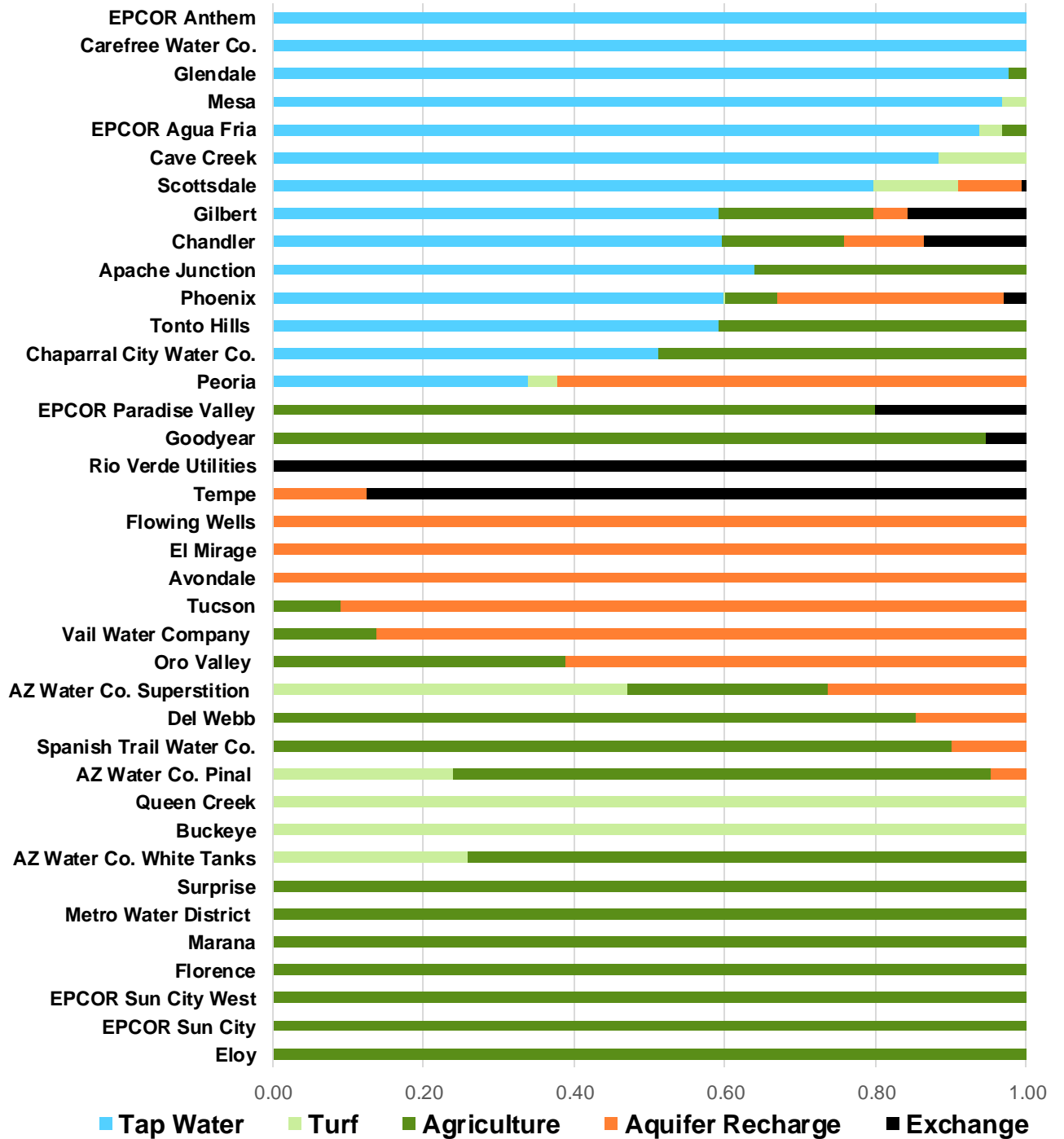
* Projections based on 2023 schedules and physical end use



■ Tap Water ■ Turf ■ Agriculture ■ Aquifer Recharge ■ Exchange

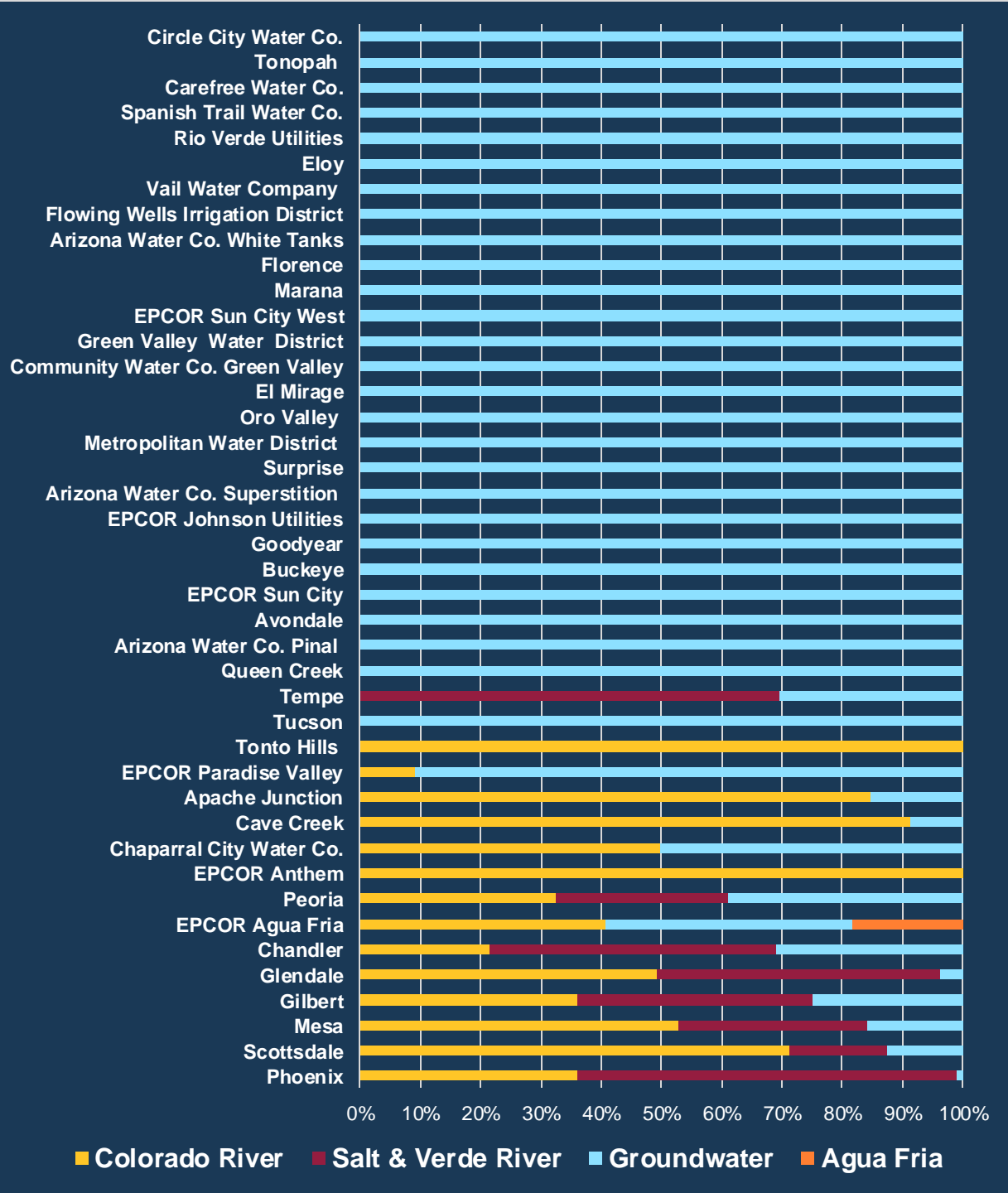
Colorado River Water Use Among Municipal Providers in Central Arizona*

*2021 data



Tap Water Sources Among Municipal Providers in Central Arizona*

***2021 data**



Phoenix area can't meet groundwater demands over next century

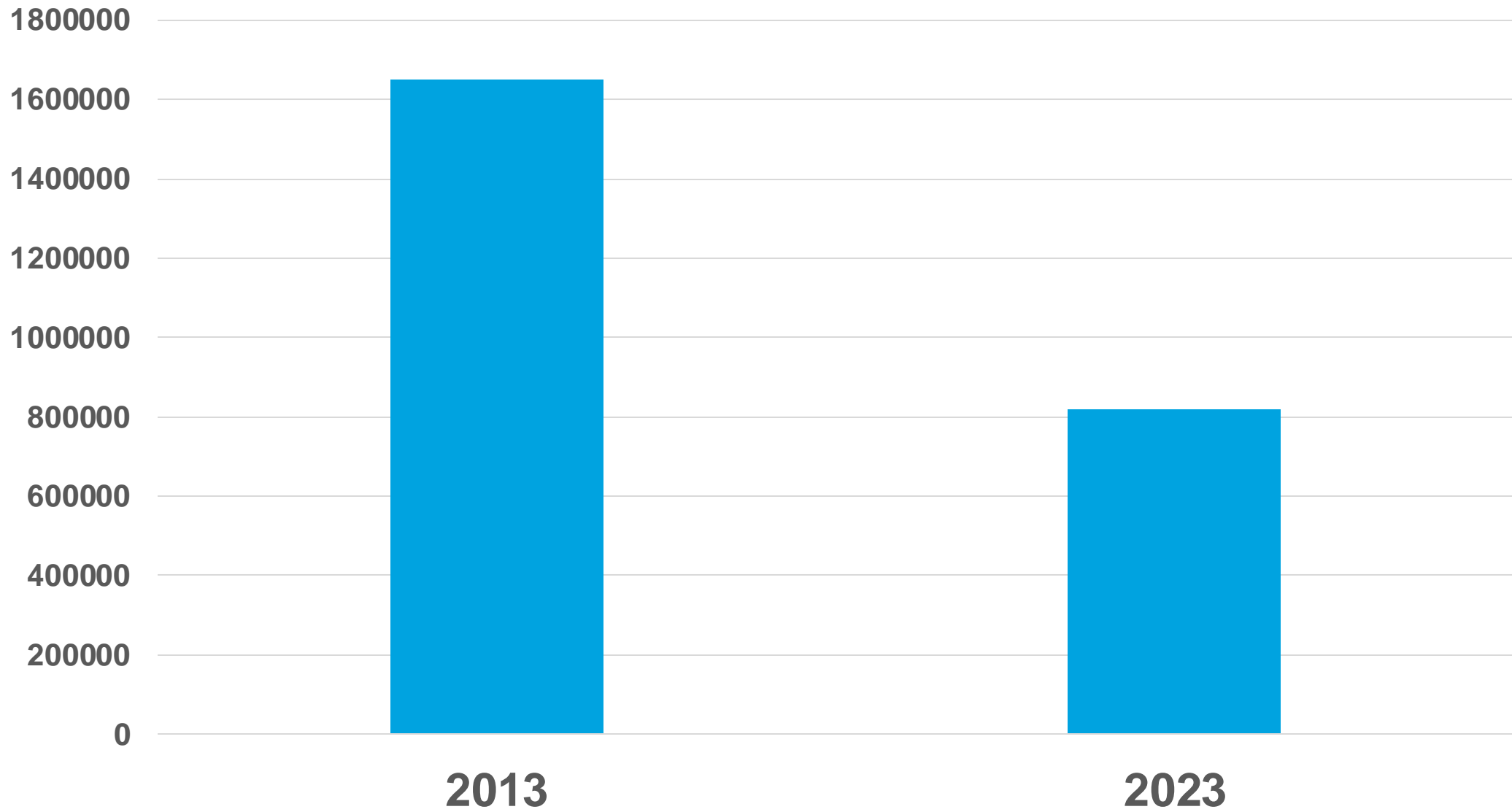
A new report amounts to a chilling warning for a region that has been a development hot spot for new residents and high-tech businesses

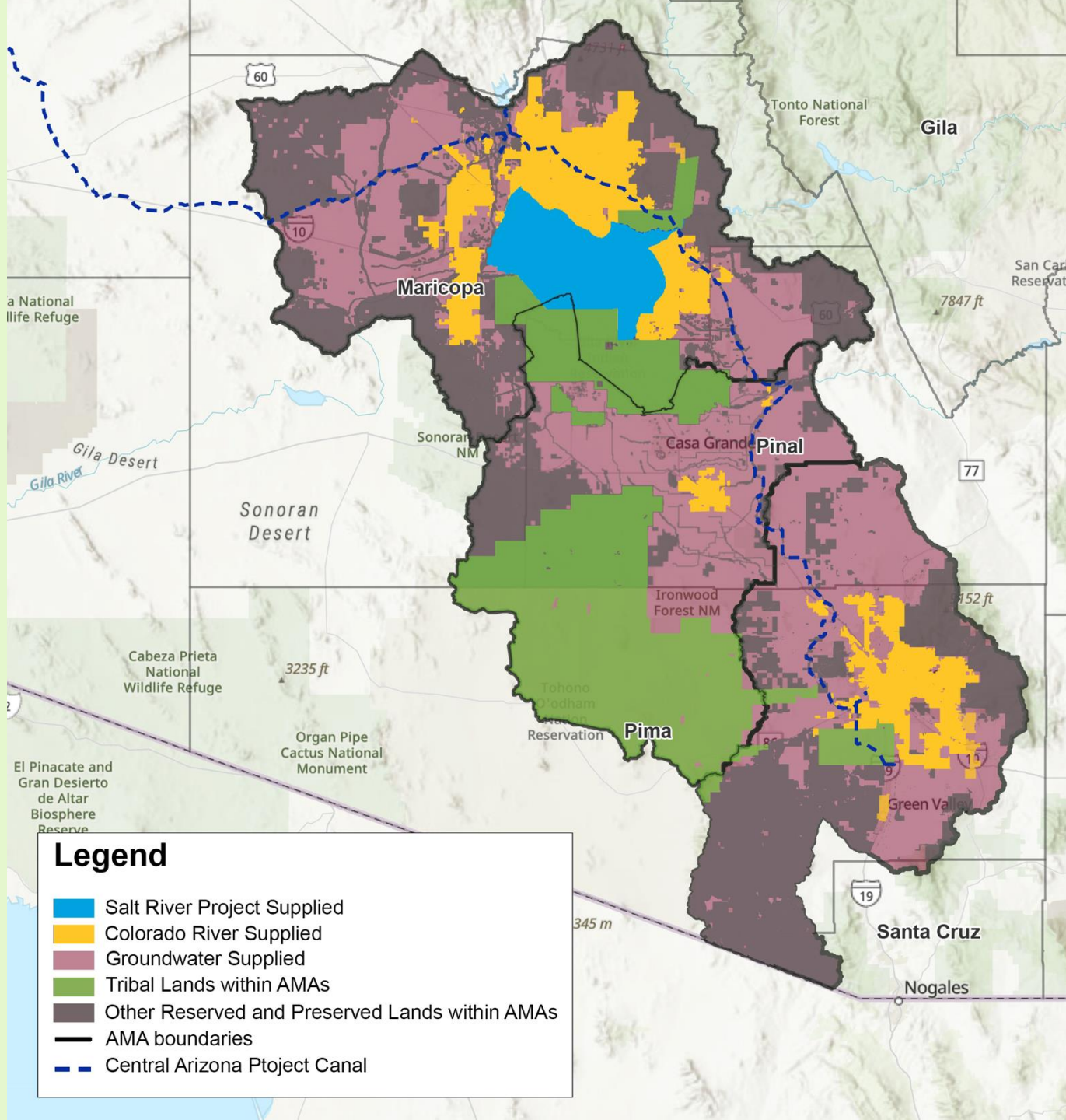
“The assured water supply issue first daylighted in Pinal County. Now it’s daylighted in the West Valley. Sooner or later, it’s going to **daylight everywhere.”**

Groundwater is finite, and we’ve been allocating it for 40-plus years.”

ADWR Director Thomas Buschatzke
Arizona Daily Star, January 12, 2023

Colorado River Water Imported into Central Arizona





Legend

- Salt River Project Supplied
- Colorado River Supplied
- Groundwater Supplied
- Tribal Lands within AMAs
- Other Reserved and Preserved Lands within AMAs
- AMA boundaries
- - -** Central Arizona Ptoject Canal

Trade-offs

Some value our aquifers as an available supply of water for immediate economic gain and continued growth.

Others regard our aquifers a long-term savings account for shortages on the Colorado River and as an enduring resource for future opportunities.

Both are valid perspectives.



Loosening groundwater management schemes risks sending a signal of **uncertainty & instability** regarding water supplies



Solutions?





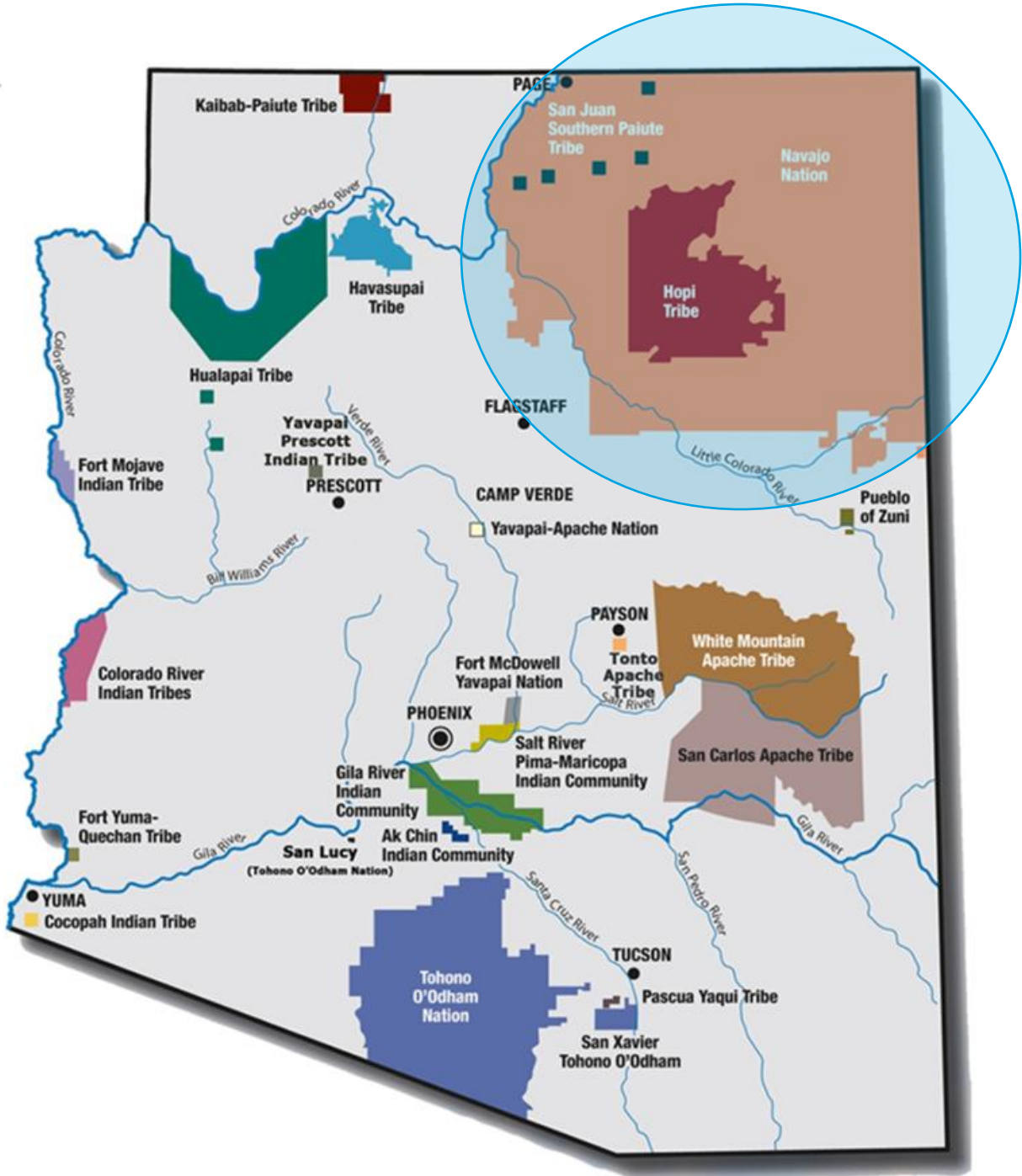
Augmentation & importation

Land use changes

Wastewater reclamation & reuse

Voluntary transfers from higher priority rights

Development of increased reservoir capacity



Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement

- 44,700 AF Upper Basin Colorado River supply
- Authority to lease within Arizona

Advanced Water Purification

- One Water – Effective Way to Stretch Supplies.
 - Safe and Reliable
 - Enhanced Water Security
 - Flexibility in drought
 - More Cost-effective on a large scale
- Regional AWP Plant
 - More Efficient and Cost Effective
 - +\$2 Billion in Capital Cost
 - 80 million gallons per day or 90,000 AF a year.





Groundwater Protection

in the Valley of the Sun

Past, Present & Future

March 2024

Key Findings

**Insufficient investments in
long-term water resilience**

Localized depletion risks

**Potentially exacerbated by
Colorado River shortage**

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