

Update on Arizona Water Policy

SAWUA - Water Forum

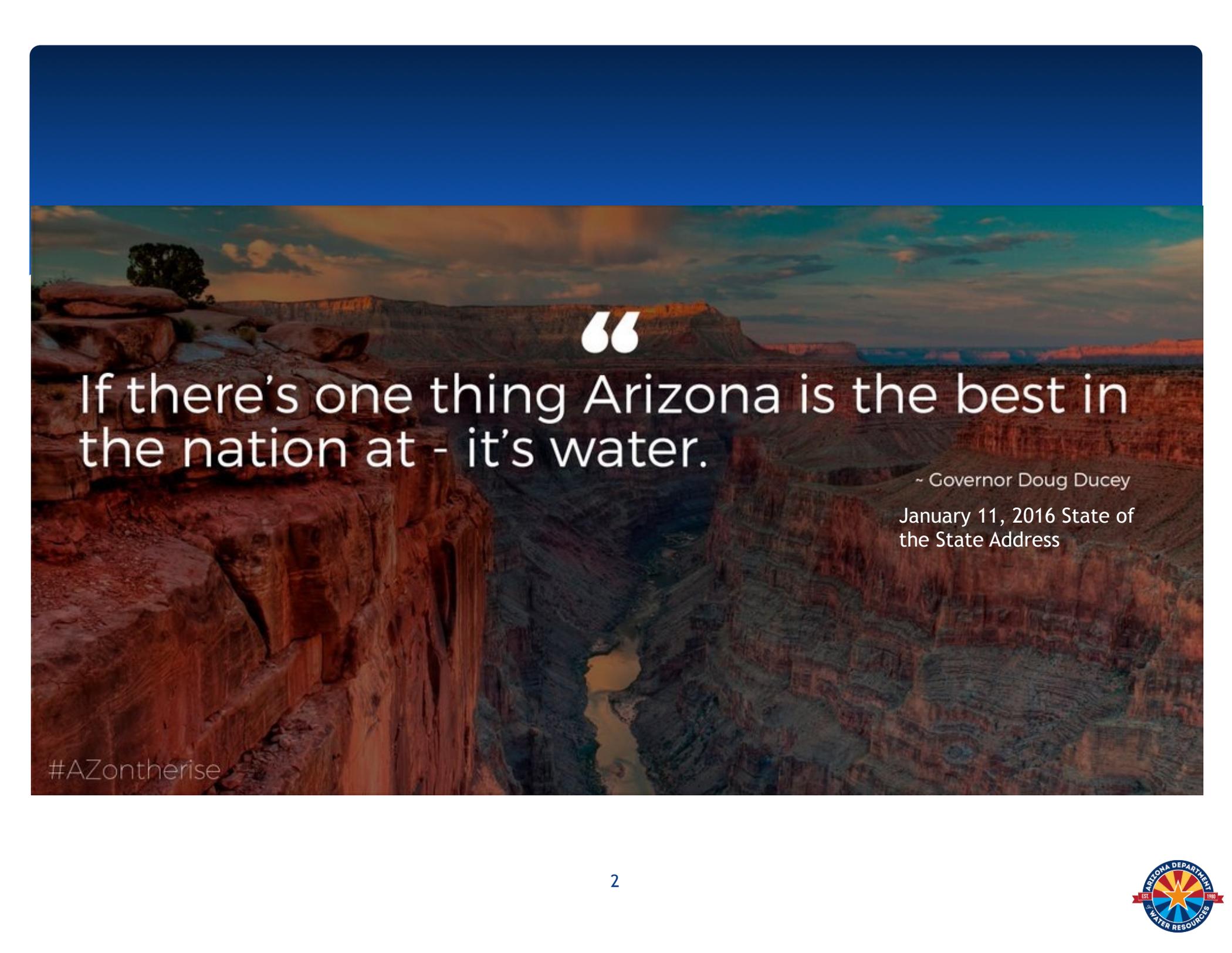


Clint Chandler

Assistant Director

Arizona Department of Water Resources

October 20, 2017



“
If there's one thing Arizona is the best in
the nation at - it's water.

~ Governor Doug Ducey
January 11, 2016 State of
the State Address

#AZontherise

Arizona Circa 2017

- Economically Arizona is getting stronger
- Our water supply plays an integral part in growing Arizona's economy
- Arizona has the most far-sighted set of water-management laws in the country
- Most of those laws are over three decades old
- If Arizona is to remain a national leader at water resources management, it must continually review and update its water-management programs and policies

Arizona's Water Resource Challenges

Driving Forces

- 17 year ongoing drought
- Population and economic growth will increase demand for water

Short-term Challenges

- Risks to Colorado River Supply
 - Shortage on the Colorado River System is likely
 - Recurring Lower Basin Annual Deficit

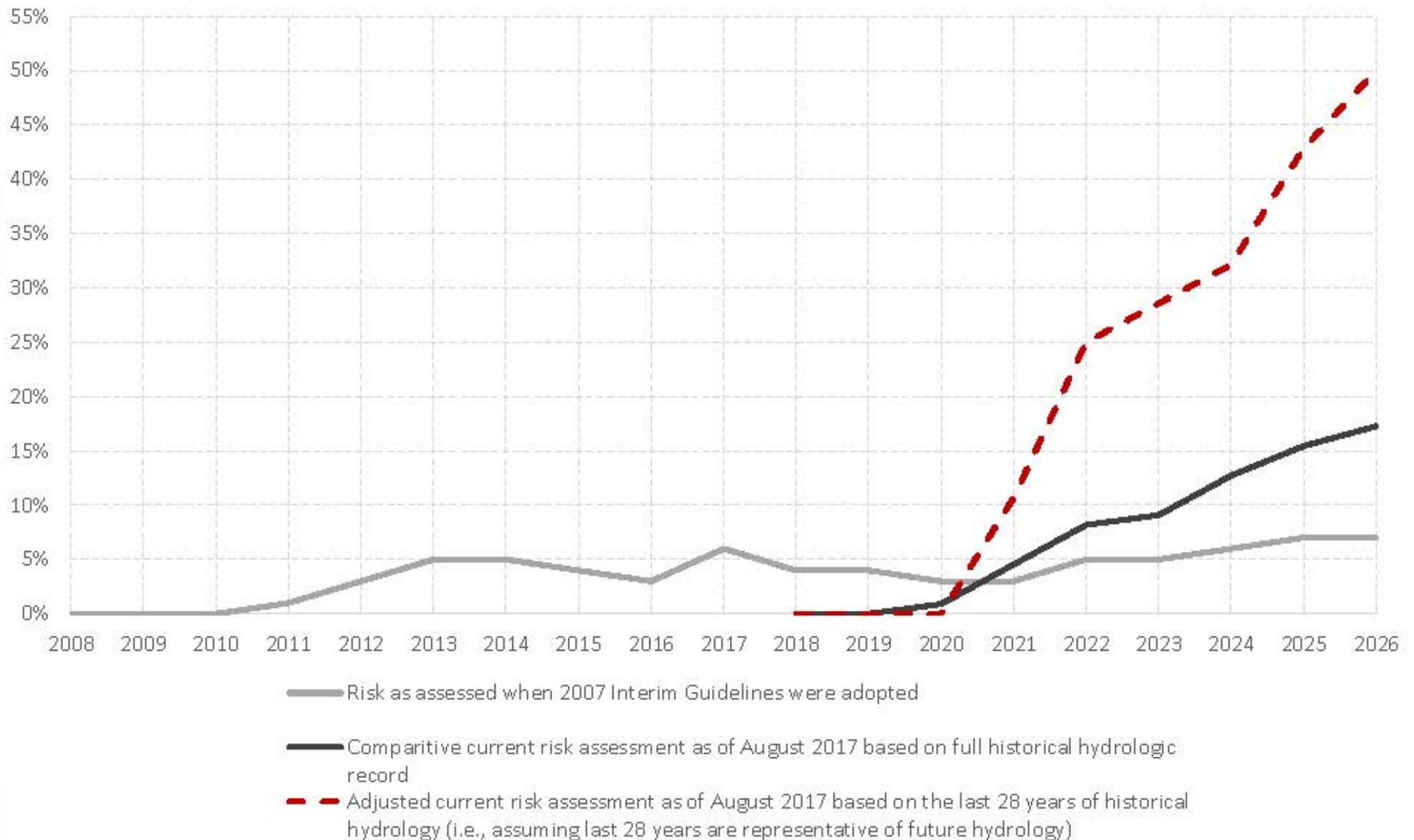
Medium-term Challenges

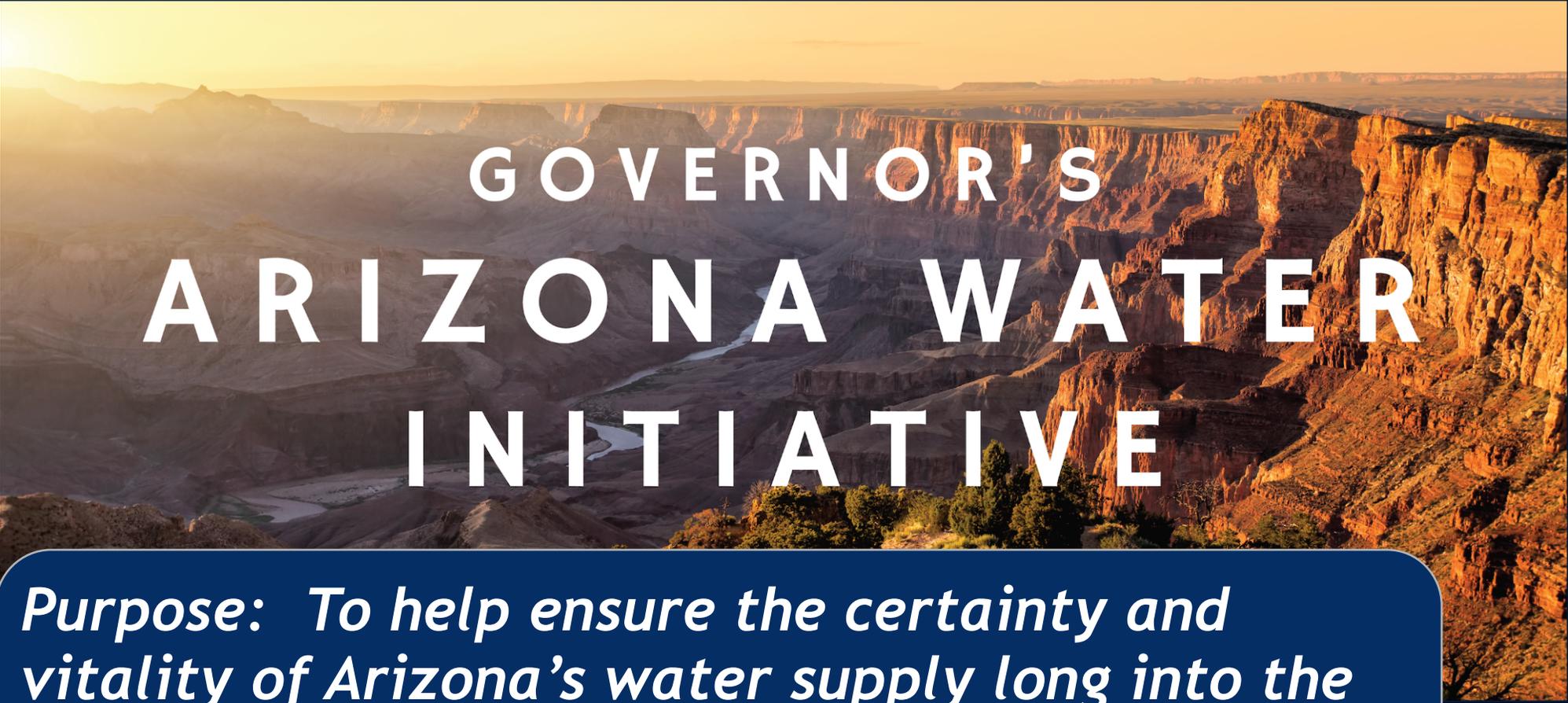
- Water resources in rural areas of the state are more stressed
 - Primary water source is groundwater
 - Lack of groundwater regulation
 - Lack of groundwater data
 - Rural areas lack the resources to address their issues

Long-term Challenges

- Growing statewide imbalance between existing water supplies and demand projected in the next 25 years to 50 years

Risk of Lake Mead Reaching Critically Low Elevations (1,025')





GOVERNOR'S ARIZONA WATER INITIATIVE

Purpose: To help ensure the certainty and vitality of Arizona's water supply long into the future.

Governor's
Water
Augmentat



Planning Area
Process

- Planning
Area



Water Solutions Conversation

In the Spring of 2017, the Governor's Office began holding a series of meetings with business and water leaders from across the State

- Asked what water issues need attention
- Most of the responses focus on two areas:
 1. **Colorado River**
 - *Important that the State speak with “one voice” on water issues to fulfill the ADWR Director’s statutory role representing the State on Colorado River Issues*
 2. **Groundwater**



Governor's Water Discussions

- Governor Ducey is leading the conversation
- The process is examining the current status of Arizona's laws, policies and practices to determine where improvements should be made
- Timeframe is generational
- The emphasis: reforms that benefit the State as a whole
- Launched on June 15, 2017

Process

- **Plenary (Governor serves as chairman)**
 - 21 Members
 - Broad representation across entire state (business, agriculture, industry, cities, counties, irrigation districts, water providers, NGOs, tribes and legislative leaders)
- **Work Groups (Chief of Staff serves as chairman)**
 - Colorado River (28 members + support staff)
 - Groundwater (31 members + support staff)
- **Targeted completion - Fall 2017**
- **Membership and attendance is by invitation only**



Groundwater Work Group

- Extend measuring and reporting of water use
- Seek flexibility within the Assured Water Supply Program
- Expand existing water management tools e.g., Irrigation Non-Expansion Areas, drought pumping exemption, flexible IGFRs
- Post 2025 AMA management plans

Colorado River Work Group

- **Addressing the health of Lake Mead**
 - Tools: DCP, DCP Plus, System Conservation Program, and Tribal ICS
 - 2007 Stipulation allows CAWCD to sell or use all excess water “for any authorized purpose of the CAP” - limited discretion
- **Strengthening the State of Arizona as the “One Voice” on Colorado River matters**
 - Clarifying the role of the State vis a vis CAWCD
 - ADWR Director represents the State of Arizona on Colorado River matters, A.R.S. §§ 45-105(A)(9), 45-106 & 45-107
 - A.R.S. § 48-3717(B): “Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed as authorizing the district [CAWCD] to determine how the central Arizona project water is to be allocated among water users of this state”
- **Updating the role of the Arizona Water Banking Authority**

Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan

The Need:

Risks of Lake Mead falling below 1025' doubled between development of 2007 Interim Guidelines and 2013

The Goal:

Reduce the probability of reaching critical elevations that would cause draconian reductions in water deliveries

The Strategy:

- Avoid and protect against the potential for Lake Mead to decline to elevations below 1,020 feet by collectively taking additional actions
- Includes a commitment by the U.S. to work to create or conserve Colorado River system water
- Recovery of additional reduction volumes would be allowed under certain conditions
- Incentivize ICS creation/storage
 - *Agree that ICS may be withdrawn at lower Lake Mead elevations, similar to ICMA arrangements under Minute 319*
 - *Modification of the evaporative losses currently applied to ICS*
- Agreement between Arizona, California, Nevada & Reclamation
- ADWR Director needs Arizona Legislature authority to sign (Pursuant to A.R.S. § 45-106)
- Will seek Congressional authorization of Lower Basin DCP

Drought Contingency Plan Plus

The Need:

To partially mitigate the impact on Arizona water users from the additional reductions resulting from the inter-state DCP

The Goal:

Reduce Probability of First Tier Lake Mead Shortage

The Strategy:

- Targets a buffer at elevation 1,080 feet
- Makes projections of Lake Mead's end of year elevations using 24-Month study data
- Determines required conservation (based on August 24-Month Study)
- Achieves conservation through Arizona system conservation & ICS
- Continues to monitor hydrologic conditions & adjust as necessary

Goals of Governor's Water Conversations

- ✓ Improve water management in the State
- ✓ Clarify role of the State vis a vis CAWCD
 - *Speak with one voice strengthening Arizona's interaction with Reclamation & other states*
 - *Actions with statewide implications are within the purview of the State*

Questions?

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PROTECTING
ARIZONA'S WATER SUPPLIES
for ITS NEXT CENTURY