

# Update on Arizona Water Policy

SAWUA - Water Forum

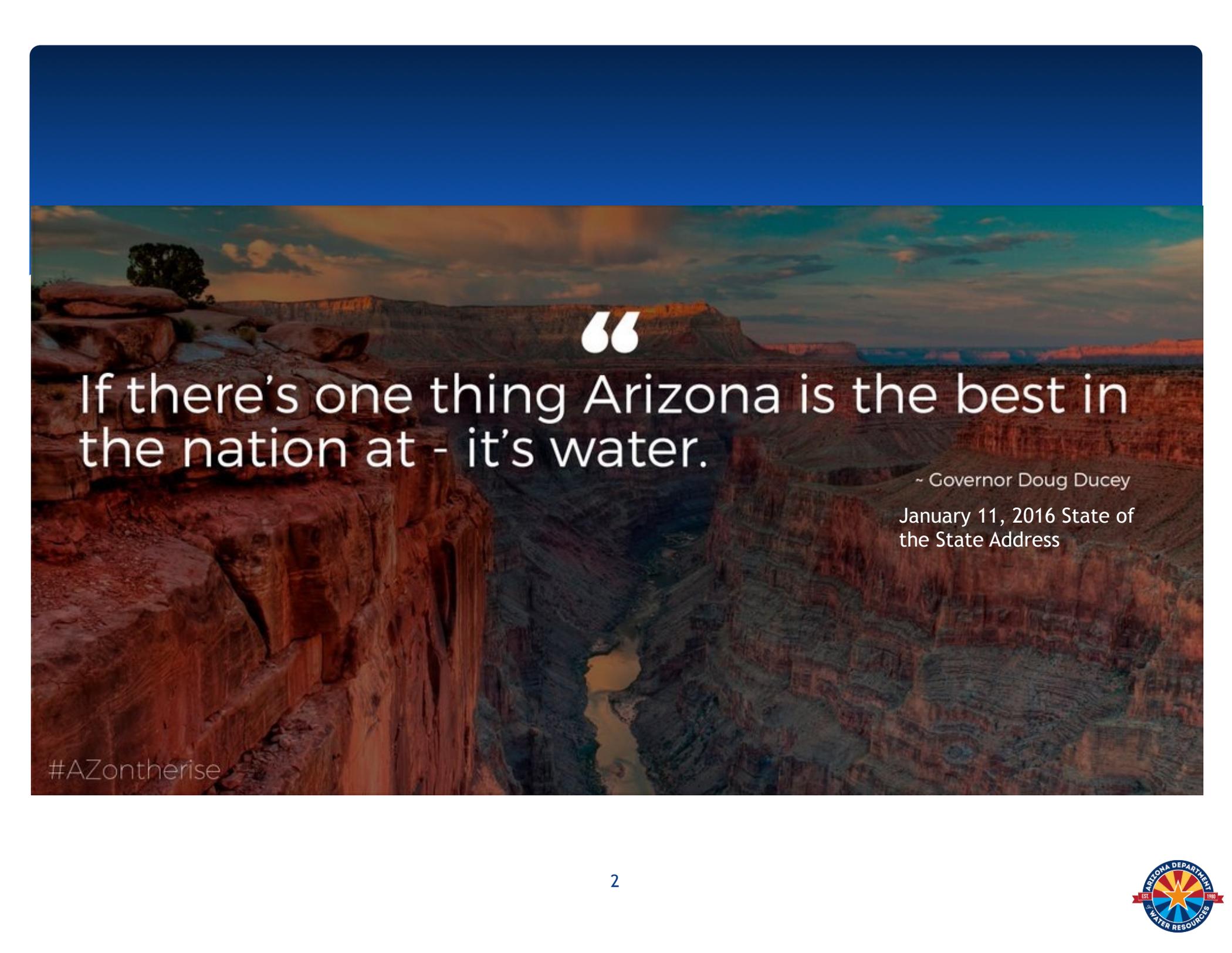


*Clint Chandler*

*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

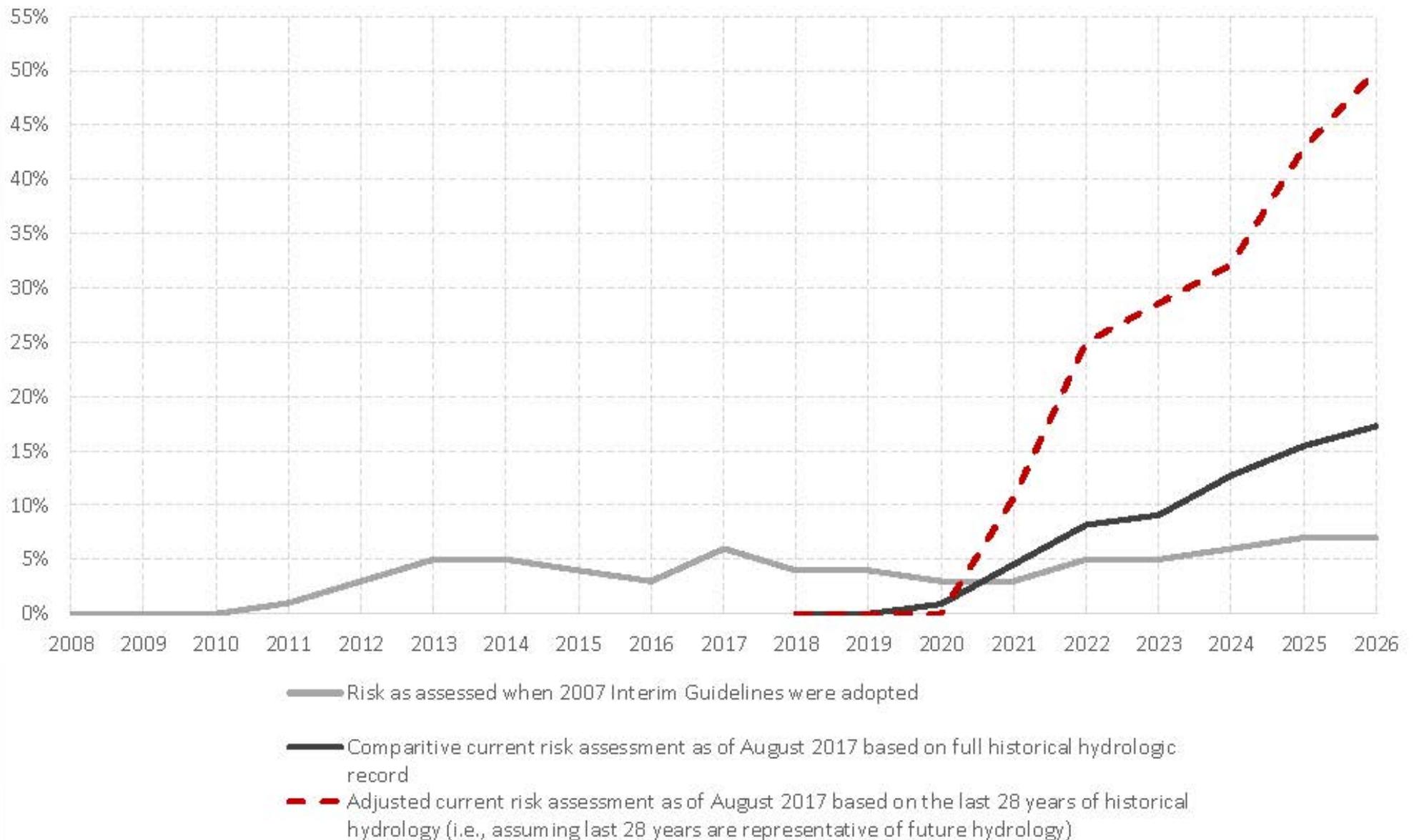
## Medium-term Challenges

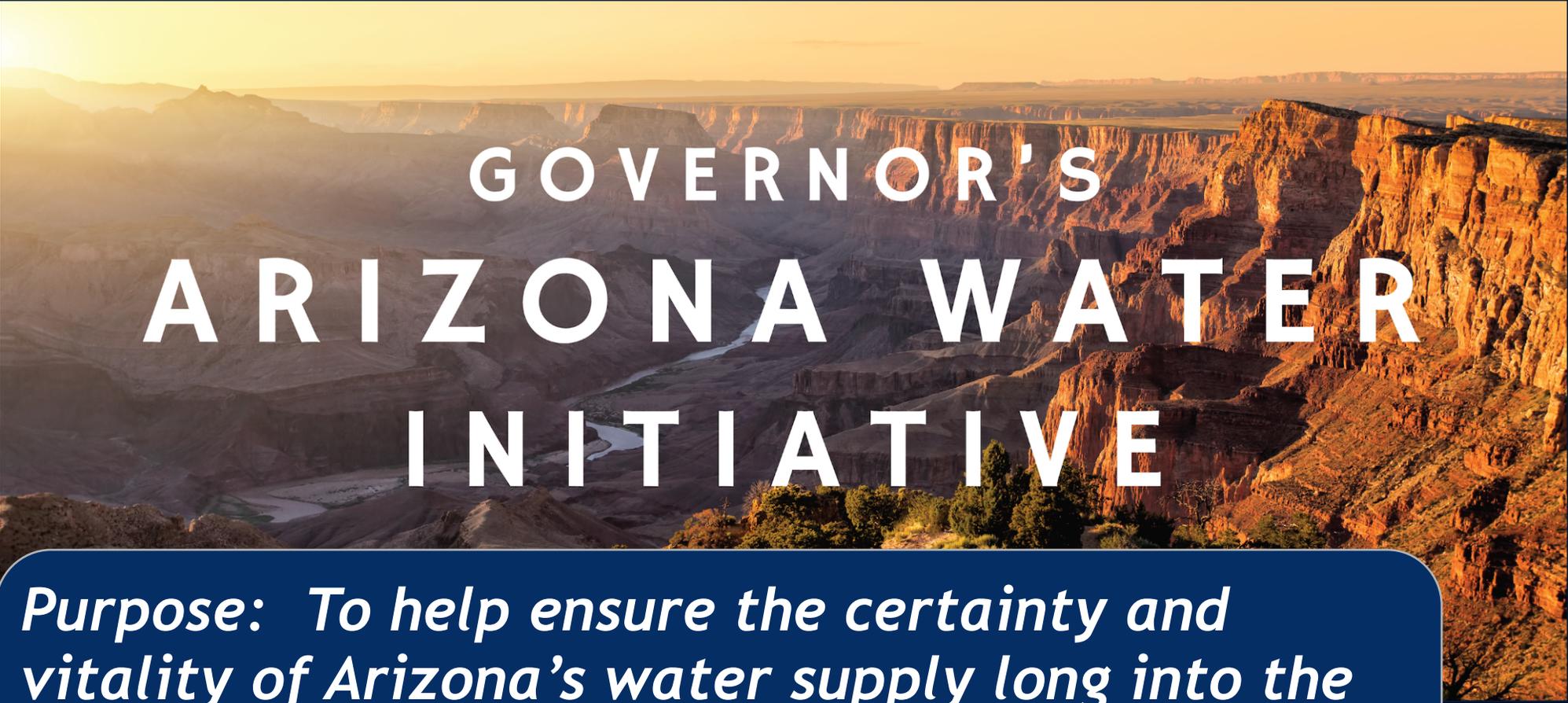
- Water resources in rural areas of the state are more stressed
  - Primary water source is groundwater
  - Lack of groundwater regulation
  - Lack of groundwater data
  - Rural areas lack the resources to address their issues

## 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*