

January 30, 2019

RE: Drought Contingency Plan

As leaders in Arizona's craft brewing industry, we know that an adequate and reliable water supply is critical to our ongoing success. As members of Audubon's Western Rivers Brewers' Council, we know that it is also critical to Arizona's communities, economies, rivers, birds, and other wildlife.

Simply put: We must pass the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). This is a critical stop-gap measure. It allows Arizona to take the next step in its water management and policy process, while we all continue to work on what comes after. Granted, it is not perfect. There are compromises within the implementation plan. All the stakeholders involved in this inclusive process have given and taken—and it is time we pass this legislation that enables the Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources to engage with fellow basin state neighbors to implement the DCP, as well as the corresponding legislation which permits the intra-Arizona deals.

Although Pinal County agriculture will go back to groundwater (a right they have under the Groundwater Management Act), the DCP would provide surface water for Pinal County agriculture for three years, preventing groundwater pumping that would otherwise occur without DCP.

In 2017, the craft brewing industry contributed over one billion dollars to the Arizona economy. Our continued success depends on a reliable, predictable water supply, and DCP is an insurance policy against catastrophic shortages at Lake Mead. DCP does not solve all our water issues, but it reduces the risk to Lake Mead and increases the likelihood of maintaining a flowing Colorado River – a Colorado River that can continue to serve both people and wildlife.

The Western Rivers Brewers' Council is dedicated to supporting water policy that benefits not only the craft brewing industry, but also rivers and the communities, economies, habitats, birds, and other wildlife they support. Water management policies that provide more certainty and reliability for all users is of critical importance. We think that DCP passage helps us make progress on water policy in Arizona.

Shortage on the river is imminent, but a catastrophic one is not. We know the shortages are coming—however, by passing the DCP and the corresponding legislation that makes the deals within Arizona work, we are greatly reducing the risks that Lake Mead crashes to levels where no water can be released from the lake.

Overall, the DCP will leave more water in Lake Mead than we take out. It is time we move on DCP legislation—it is critical for people, the economy, and the environment.

Respectfully,

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