

## WRAN Talking Points

### Team Leader:

Introduction – after brief WRAN introduction, partners will introduce themselves, group water priorities and highlight general talking points as appropriate (see miscellaneous points).

### Leader Points:

The Western Rivers Action Network is a multi-state network (AZ, CO, NM and NV) of over 35,000 members working to protect western rivers - concentrating on the Colorado River and its tributaries - and increase river flow for the people and wildlife dependent on the rivers.

WRAN includes birders, hunter and angler groups, business owners and other diverse outdoor enthusiasts, representing thousands of citizens who've spent thousands of dollars and hours working to protect our rivers and wildlife habitats.

Hunting – angling – birding – outdoor recreation – all contribute millions of dollars and jobs to Arizona's economy.

Our organizations don't always agree but we do agree that there must be adequate river flows for people and wildlife - for Arizona's long-term economic health.

### Partner Points:

Highlight your group's water priorities.

### Miscellaneous Points for Shared Emphasis

Statewide input is now being gathered as part of ADWR's strategic water planning process. Some thoughts...

- The Colorado River supplies about 40% of Arizona's total water supply and Arizona is particularly dependent on it to drive the economy, irrigated agriculture, cities and recreation, and sustain the birds, fish and other wildlife of the state.
- Birds such as the Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo – trout, deer, elk and other wildlife - are at risk today where rivers don't have healthy flows.
- We're using more water than the river replenishes – so-called "Structural Deficit" – and risks to wildlife are expected to increase.

*More than 15 years of historic drought and a projected shortfall in supply in the coming decades...*

- Arizona has a proud tradition of making the most out of our water supplies through innovative water management, conservation, reuse, ag efficiencies, water sharing.
  
- Further innovation and collaboration will be needed in future – local, state and federal decision makers, along with partners in the non-profit and private sectors.
  - a. Develop a balanced management plan – increased conservation, water reuse, water sharing.
  
  - b. Must have statewide Water planning & management rather than piecemeal approaches.
  
  - c. WaterSmart and other federal programs need to be funded to enable us to leverage funding sources at state and local level. (Refer to Fact Sheet).
  
  - d. Pumping more groundwater not the answer.
  
  - e. Clearly define what happens to water that has been conserved.
  
  - f. Water for fish, bird and wildlife habitats must continue to be prioritized in discussion.

Team Leader conclusion:

Thank you for your time and attention. In the packet is contact information for group leaders participating Western Rivers Day. We hope you will rely on us as a resource when you deal with related issues.

**A Brief Overview of Arizona Water Policy Issues  
November 2015**

**Major Issues**

1. Arizona's Commitment to Resolving the Annual Water Deficit: Current potential water sources include water from the Yuma area and Non-Indian Agricultural Water and Excess CAP from CAP/Pinal County Irrigation Districts. Potential conflicts are with Yuma agriculture that wants to protect their rights and from CAP subcontractors that believe that they have been paying for the NIA water and promised the water to meet growing demand. Efforts such as the SCPP and agreements with CAP are examples of pilot efforts underway.
2. Meeting Urban Areas' Increasing Demands for Long-term Sustainable Supplies: There is a distinct set of issues delineated by the "Have cities" and the "Have-Not cities." The Have Cities, best described as the AMWUA cites and in some ways Tucson, are looking to protect their existing sources, store excess supplies, and find sources that aid in drought or sustainability planning. The Have-Nots are rapidly growing and/or have aspirations to grow, and are looking for supplies to gain an independent Assured Water Supply. Many of these communities generally rely on the CAGR. They will be looking for more water through the NIA reallocation process. There is also a lot of pressure to build infrastructure and accelerate plans that could lead to desalination facilities.
3. Meeting Increasing Demands in Rural Areas for Long Term Supplies for Growth While Preserving Natural Benefits: Areas as diverse as the San Pedro, Wilcox, Williams, and the Verde are faced with increased competition for limited supplies. These areas are not part of the Groundwater Management Act structure, so they are looking for locally appropriate water management tools.
4. Preserving Agricultural Economies in the Face of Increasing M&I Demand: Potential water transfers may harm local agriculture as demand for acquiring senior water rights by cities continues to increase.
5. Providing Non-Structural Alternatives to Meet Future Demands: Water markets, "next generation" municipal and agricultural conservation, forest management for water supply and fire suppression, increased efficiency in reuse of effluent and other green alternatives are more likely to be ready in the short term.
6. Improving Regional, State and Local Planning and Water Planning Databases
7. Providing Certainty to Arizona's Water Rights: The General Stream Adjudications has been in process since the 1970s. Until the nature and priority of water rights are settled, concepts like water markets and conserving water for natural resources dependent purposes are difficult to create and administer.

