



Tucson Regional Water Coalition White Paper

Background

With the failure of Proposition 200, opposed by MPA, this past November, community leaders have started discussions on how to better approach and manage our region's water system. Recently, the City of Tucson and Pima County have authored memoranda detailing the steps they plan to take to ultimately achieve and implement a water and wastewater plan for their jurisdictions. Specifically, Phases I and II of the study assess water and wastewater inventories and existing infrastructure as well as policy and values, which includes developing common agreement on water, growth patterns, land use planning, and a drought management plan, to name a few.

Issue at Hand

To bring about regional consensus and planning, a group has recently formed called the Tucson Regional Water Coalition. MPA is a member of this group and has been a signatory on two letters to County Administrator Huckelberry and City Manager Hein asking them to garner more public input up front instead of during Phase V of the study and to bring the other water providers into the Phase I and II studies. The coalition seeks to promote policies and actions to:

1. Create long-range planning for a sustainable water supply that will support the economic prosperity, the current and future population and maintain and enhance the quality of life of the Tucson region.
2. Identify and maximize the supply of water resources available within and to the Tucson region.
3. Implement best practices for the efficient use, conservation and management of water resources in the Tucson region by working in collaboration with all of the regional water and wastewater providers, community leaders, community decision makers and the general public.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Directors direct MPA staff to continue to work with the Tucson Regional Water Coalition, the Pima Association of Governments and the governing bodies of the jurisdictions in Pima County to develop sound and comprehensive water policies and plans. MPA's focus in developing sound water policy and plans will center on establishing regional ties and forging partnerships where they make sense, knowing that each jurisdiction and water provider has unequivocal legal rights to CAP, groundwater and effluent/reclaimed water.