



# **Board of Supervisors Memorandum**

July 24, 2007

## **Board of Supervisors Policy Regarding Water Rights Acquisition, Protection, and Management**

### **Background**

Management of water resources in the Pima County region is gaining in relevance and importance. Pima County has routinely acquired various water resource assets including rights to surface water, groundwater, effluent, reclaimed water, recharge water, rainfall runoff, and other water resources that are valuable public assets. With the increasing concentration on effective management of any available water resources, the adoption of a water rights policy is an appropriate action for the Board of Supervisors to consider.

The initial concentration of our efforts has been to develop a complete and comprehensive inventory of the various water resources that are in the possession of Pima County and the Pima County Regional Flood Control District. Such an inventory is virtually complete and the attached September 28, 2006 report represents the various categories of water resources owned and controlled by Pima County that will be monitored, and ultimately allocated for specific beneficial applications. To effectively advance the structured management of such resources, a set of operating practices and procedures will be developed to provide guidance as to the manner in which water resources will be procured, managed, maintained, shared, delivered, apportioned, sold, or exchanged as necessary to provide the maximum benefit to Pima County residents. The attached policy statement is purposely general in nature but signifies our intent to more closely monitor the status of our water resources and provide periodic updates to the Board of Supervisors as to the status of such resources. More detailed guidelines for staff responsibilities will be developed based on this policy direction.

A management and utilization plan for our County water resources will be developed to allow for the appropriate management of all available water resources.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached policy on water rights acquisitions, protection, and management.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Huckelberry", is written over the typed name and title.

C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/jj (July 10, 2007)  
Attachments

c: John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator - Public Works



PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

<u>Subject:</u>	Policy Number	Page
Water Rights Acquisition, Protection and Management		1 of 1

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to set forth conditions under which Pima County and the various County Departments will manage County owned or acquired water resources including surface water, groundwater, effluent, reclaimed water, recharge water and water storage credits.

**BACKGROUND:** In its ordinary course of business, the County has acquired and regularly acquires various water resource assets, along with any associated water rights, and generates reusable effluent or reclaimed water and related recharge credits. These assets become public property and are managed by the County for the public interest and welfare in the same manner as other public assets under County management. The County recognizes and hereby affirms that these various water resources including surface water, groundwater, effluent, reclaimed water, recharged water, rainfall runoff, other water resources and any related water rights and storage or use credits, are valuable public assets. The Board of Supervisors establishes this policy to insure that said water resource assets are properly managed and preserved for the public benefit. This policy does not apply to potable water purchased from water providers.

**POLICY:** It is the policy of Pima County to buy, sell, lease, exchange, use, improve, operate, manage and maintain County owned and acquired ground and surface water, wastewater, reclaimed water, stormwater, recovered water and associated rights and credits that inure to the benefit of the citizens of Pima County. The County proposes to manage, operate and maintain those resources, rights and credits in conjunction with other County facilities. These assets will be accurately monitored by creating and maintaining an inventory and management database of all County water and wastewater assets including effluent recharge credits and other County or Pima County Regional Flood Control District owned or acquired water resources. These water resources will be assigned to identified County Departments or the Pima County Regional Flood Control District for their use and management. These assigned entities will report changes in the status of these waters and annually report their utilization of these water resources. An annual accounting of these resources will be prepared for the County Administrator and Board of Supervisors.

The manner in which these water resource assets will be procured, managed, maintained, shared, delivered, apportioned, sold or exchanged shall be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the County Administrator. A Water Management Committee will be established which consists of staff from County Departments and the Pima County Regional Flood Control District. This committee will develop and propose a management and utilization plan for all County water resources and will recommend assignment of various water resource management functions to specific County organizational units. Additionally, this committee will advise and assist in the implementation of this policy and procedures established pursuant to this policy.

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:** Real Property Services; Pima County Wastewater Management Department, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation; Facilities Management; Pima County Regional Flood Control District; Pima County Department of Transportation.

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_