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From: William W. Altaffer [mailto:William.Altaffer@azbar.org]  
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2010 7:13 AM  
To: District3  
Subject: Water Committee report

Dear Sharon,

Although I did not serve on the Tucson/Pima County Water/Wastewater Committee, I attended most of the meetings. I read the materials and conducted additional on-line research. Since the 9:00AM time of your joint city/county meeting is not conducive to public participation, I hope you will allow me to express some of my concerns by email. I have listed these below. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.  
Colette Altaffer  
323-9827

1.) SALT: This is the proverbial elephant in the room. Although salt will have an enormous impact on our region, it was not discussed in any great detail during the two years that this committee met. According to a report written by two University researchers, the CAP will bring 200,000 metric tons of salt to the Tucson Active Management Area each year.  
<http://www.cap-az.com/includes/media/docs/Corral.pdf> (Introduction, page 1)  
To put that into perspective, the average rail car holds approximately 100 tons of freight. A metric ton weighs 240 lbs more than America's "short" ton. <http://www.railcarmover.com/appissue.asp>  
[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How\\_many\\_pounds\\_equal\\_a\\_ton](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How_many_pounds_equal_a_ton)

Unlike a train, however, that salt travels wherever the CAP goes. It fouls our soil and our aquifer and clogs our appliances and our kidneys. In large enough quantities, it can interfere with the biological processes needed in sewage treatment. It may eventually render our soil sterile, leaving us to live in a dust bowl.

Desalination is an expensive process. In 2004, the Bureau of Reclamation conducted a study for the city to examine the cost of treatment of CAP water and disposal of the waste brine.  
<http://www.usbr.gov/pmts/water/publications/reportpdfs/report036.pdf>  
The projected construction costs alone approached \$400 million and the disposal of the waste product was costly, with a proposal to ship it by pipeline to the Colorado river. Because desalination is an energy-intensive process, the annual operating costs can be substantial. In 2006, Thomas McCann, an attorney with the Central Arizona Project Conservation District, conducted a legal seminar about the Yuma Desalting Plant. He explained that it would cost an estimated \$30 million annually to run the Yuma Desalination plant in order to produce 78,000 acre feet of treated water.

Furthermore, as the UA researches noted (Introduction, page 2) the standard reverse osmosis process loses approximately \$20 million worth of water per year.

The salt problem will be exacerbated if the Rosemont mine is allowed to move forward, since mines have a legal right to ground water and Rosemont will replace that water with CAP water.

infrastructure mistakes have combined into an almost insurmountable obstacle. Even if, by some miracle, we could gain access to more CAP water, it would require expansion of the height of the CAP canal at some point in the future. According to the cost figures that Vince Vasquez, Don Diamond's representative to the committee, obtained, that would increase the cost of CAP water from its current \$700 per acre foot to nearly \$15,000 per acre foot. There are few citizens who could afford water at that cost. The Southern Arizona Leadership Council's response to this, in a poorly written paper, is to grant water to those areas that can demonstrate an economic benefit. I guess that leaves the environment wanting.

You are in the unenviable position of trying to pull a rabbit out of a hat here. I hope that you, and all our elected officials, are up to the task.