



February 3, 2010

**Southern Arizona Leadership Council, SALC, Comments on City/County Water Study Phase II Report 30 Day**

**TO:** Mayor Walkup, Members of the Tucson City Council

The Honorable Bob Walkup and Council Members,

SALC is pleased to submit our comments on the Phase II Water Report during this 30-day period. We appreciate that the Phase II report represents a great deal of work. While the report has substantial value, it is clearly not a consensus document on which all water policy can or should be based.

Many of the recommendations have merit and can form the basis for further research and public comment as we seek to build a sustainable water supply for our city and region. The mayor and council have the opportunity to adopt this report with language that places it in its proper context so that it can be used wisely in future water policy decisions. SALC appreciates your vote to offer a 30 day comment period and now we urge you to adopt the Phase II report with language that recognizes its strengths and also limits its impact on future water policy.

The following is a list of specific recommendations for your consideration.

**1. Water Policy decisions must take into consideration the economic value of this precious resource.** It is said that every city gets the community it can afford. At no time in our history has this statement been truer. Water is the foundation of our economy. Without an assured supply of water, future economic growth is jeopardized. SALC recognizes and supports the many critical needs for water, including sustaining our people and our environment. Decisions on the use and management of water are far clearer and wiser when the economics of water are considered. Therefore, a cost benefit analysis must be considered as part of every water policy decision.

**The Conservation Effluent Pool** is an example of a policy adopted unilaterally by the city and the county without an economic analysis or public discussion. Adoption language for the Phase II study should prohibit implementation of the CEP until the proper due diligence is complete. The potential set aside and federalization of 25% of our current effluent is a major issue that demands further discussion and review.

**2. The city must act soon to adopt a more flexible and business-friendly water policy that supports job creation and economic development.** The City of Tucson is the primary *regional* water provider. The city's current "obligated to serve" policy is costing jobs and hurting our region's economic recovery. This is one region, with one aquifer, and it is essential for the city to fulfill its responsibility to the entire region.

**3. The city and county need to keep their promise, given two years ago when they committed to a five-phase process, to now involve the entire region in the water deliberations.** SALC opposed the plan two years ago because Phases I & II kept many stakeholders out of the process. Despite our objections, we joined with others in the Tucson Regional Water Coalition to participate in phases I & II – based on the promise of a regional Phase III. SALC is counting on the city and county to live up to their promise and push forward with this crucial next phase.

We stand ready to assist in any way possible. We believe the private sector can partner effectively with the public sector to create a value-added process that informs and improves our regional water sustainability and management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Shoopman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "S".

Ron Shoopman  
President  
Southern Arizona Leadership Council