

## **Tucson Regional Water Coalition**

The Tucson Regional Water Coalition is a union of business organizations from across the Tucson Region. Each member business organization is independently governed and staffed. Each maintains policy positions and goals that are discrete to each member organization. However, due to the significance of the issues of water resources and sound management of water resources within the Tucson Region, the member business organizations have united under the umbrella of the Tucson Regional Water Coalition.

Members of these organizations are employers who provide over 250,000 jobs in our community. The coalition represents the business community, however, its regional water efforts set a clear goal to maintain and enhance the quality of life and general prosperity for all who live in our region. It will work to engage water issues with fact based initiatives based on best practices. The coalition stands ready to work with others in the true spirit of collaboration, to be inclusive, willing to compromise and to take the critical actions necessary to ensure a vibrant future for the Tucson Region.

### **Mission Statement**

“Seek to promote policies and actions to; (i) create the long range planning for a sustainable water supply that will support the economic vitality, the current and future population and maintain the quality of life of the Tucson region (ii) identify and maximize the supply of water resources available within and to the Tucson region, , and (iii) 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 waste water providers, community leaders, community decision makers and the general public.”

## **Tucson Regional Water Coalition Members**

Arizona Builders Alliance  
Alliance of Construction Trades  
Marana Chamber of Commerce  
Metropolitan Pima Alliance  
Northern Pima County Chamber of Commerce  
Safe and Sensible Water Committee  
Southern Arizona Home Builders Association  
Southern Arizona Leadership Council  
Tucson Association of Realtors  
Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce  
Tucson Utilities Contractors Association

### **Statement on Sustainability**

The Tucson Regional Water Coalition believes that community sustainability dialogues must move beyond bumper stickers and political slogans. Sustainability must become a resource management and resource economics discussion, where tradeoffs between alternatives must first be understood and debated in quantifiable terms. Sustainability cannot be the exclusive domain of environmental protection. The success of local sustainability forums rests on moving debate toward a common language and set of metrics, which fundamentally includes recognizing water as an economic good with economic value to all competing uses/users. Moreover, the Coalition believes cost analysis methods should play a central role in the community's attempt to collectively define sustainability. These proven methods both inform policy debates and provide a common language for responsible management of local resources, ultimately transforming values discussions into viable financial plans.

The Coalition's water resource sustainability principles are not a menu of options to be applied individually or to serve as criteria in case-specific evaluations. Rather, the Coalition offers these principles in their entirety to guide, and in support of, a scenario planning process that seeks to understand costs and benefits on a regional scale.

# **Principles of Sustainable Water Resource Management**

## **Promote Comprehensive Inclusiveness and Transparency.**

- Water management must be based on a participatory approach, involving a balance of technical expertise and expression of community values with an emphasis on consensus building between those representing current and future users, planners, and policy-makers at all levels within the region.

## **Acknowledge that Sound Water Resource Management Knows No Jurisdictional Boundaries.**

- All water providers, users, and uses in the metropolitan area are connected by reliance on regional groundwater supplies to meet annual demand and provide a buffer against drought. Water planning should be conducted at the basin scale (defined as the Tucson AMA) and should involve all users.
- Support shared use of community infrastructure through cost-effective wheeling agreements for delivery of effluent, surface water, imported groundwater, and/or stored renewable supplies to achieve greater integration, reliability, flexibility and reliance on renewable supplies throughout the region.
- Collectively maximize purchase and underground storage of additional surface water and/or imported groundwater supplies, augmenting local groundwater supplies to further insulate the region from cyclical weather patterns.
- All local water supplies—groundwater, CAP, other surface water, and effluent—should be cooperatively used for the maximum economic, social, and environmental net benefit of the region expressed in monetized or quantifiable terms.
- All work products and policies of a local water planning process must be consistent with applicable state laws and policies. In circumstances where local conditions or values conflict with state law and/or policy, the process should seek the appropriate amendments at the state-level.

### **Recognize Water as an Economic Good with Value to all Competing Uses**

- Price signals are an important tool for achieving efficient allocation of water resources. Current retail water rates do not match claims of scarcity and conflict with cultural messages urging conservation.
- Promote policies that facilitate allocation or reallocation of water resources to highest value uses that yield the greatest economic, social, and environmental net benefit for the region expressed in monetized or quantifiable terms.
- Commit to understanding the fundamental relationship between water resources and regional economic development in the form of job retention and creation, and the general prosperity of citizens.

### **Use Economic Analysis to Evaluate Alternatives & Risk**

- Promote non-discriminatory methods, evaluating alternatives objectively and comparing net benefits in monetized or quantifiable terms.
- Promote community-wide conservation goals and standards that maximize acre-feet saved per community dollar spent, focusing policies and finite economic resources on uses/users with the greatest conservation potential.
- Evaluate proven conservation measures as an alternative to supply acquisition, justifying investment decisions on alternatives that yield the greatest economic, social, and environmental net benefit for the region expressed in monetized or quantifiable terms.
- Concerns regarding evolving and/or uncertain conditions should be addressed through iterative risk assessments and decision-making processes, systematically reevaluating risk according to potential financial impact to the region and probability of occurrence.

### **Create Long-Range Financial Plans and Funding Mechanisms**

- A Sustainable Water Resource Management Plan for the region is incomplete without a Budget and Implementation Strategy (Fiscal and Physical). The region must move away from the “plan and pay as we go” approach and develop flexible long-range plans and funding mechanisms to avoid the potential for future crisis management situations.
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