**WATER TESTIMONY**
**OCTOBER 29, 2008**

**Thank you for allowing us to speak this evening and thank you for serving on this taskforce. I am here representing myself as a consumer of water in the Tucson Water and Pima County Wastewater service area.**

**When I was preparing for this, I remembered two quotes from people in our past:**
**Sen. Ben Wade, chair of the US Senate committee on territories in 1866 said, "Arizona is like hell; it lacks water and good society."**

**The other better known expression came reportedly from Ben Franklin, "When the well runs dry, we know the worth of water." That is probably where we are today.**

**Sustainability is an important issue. I question whether we can really scientifically tell how much groundwater we have. That is one of the reasons that I think we need to have stronger conservation and water harvesting programs.**

**At the same time, I think we need to be aware that with less water usage, utilities sell less water and that does affect their bottom lines. They have fixed costs that must be met. How will that happen? That is not what your committee is charged with looking at, however.**

**We must import or purchase the right to use CAP water and other supplies that are not being used. And it is equally important that we ensure that no CAP allocations in our AMA be sold to others outside this AMA.**

**The State has required water utilities to develop drought plans. When do those go into effect? It depends upon the water supplies that a utility has and the sources of the supplies.**

**In the late 1990s the Bureau of Reclamation received funding for the Regional Effluent Planning study. How much effluent could be taken from the Santa Cruz for irrigation and other uses while still maintaining the riparian area along the river? I think that is still a valid question today although I am not sure that the study was ever completed due to funding.**

**Effluent is a growing supply of water in our region. Important decisions must be made about its use in the next decade.**

**Some would like to control our water use by limiting growth. State laws will work against that. And the present Legislature is not going to change that any time soon. Witness their refusal to deal with wildcat subdivisions as an example.**

**A major issue for us is the massive sprawl we are seeing. That is happening because of a lack of planning and foresight. It would be much better to grow UP rather than OUT. This would help not only with more frugal water use but on transportation issues as well.**

**The Tucson M & C voted unanimously to take all of the City's annual CAP allocation (144,000 AF) by 2011. It is vitally important that all of that water be recharged and stored for the future. TW is using 62% of its annual allocation.**

**We often fail to recognize that this region has CAP allocations totaling about 260,000 acre feet of water. Some of this is not in use because of the lack of infrastructure. Progress on this is urgent.**

**It is expected that the Secretary of the Interior could declare a shortage on the river in the next couple of years. Why is this important? What impact will it have on our region?**

**First of all, we are paying for water we are not using and allowing others in the State and throughout the West to use it. AZ has junior rights to the Colorado River. The region's- and most particularly Tucson's cut- if there is a declared shortage on the river, will be based on what we are now taking and NOT the full allocation in the region.**

**Instead of bickering over regional issues, we must begin to consider ALL water resources in the region. Where is water located in our region? Who uses it? How can it become more accessible for needed uses? What about water quality?**

**Water is a regional issue and not just one for Tucson and Pima County. I think that supply issues will continue to dominate the region. Planning for the future is essential. That involves working with the entire region.**

**Carol W. West**
**October 29, 2008**