



MEMORANDUM

TO: IEDA Board
RE: Water Committee Report
DATE: November 12, 2024

Committees of Reference

With the combination of retirements and election impacts, Arizona will lose some representatives from committees of reference. Gosar will likely stay with HNR, but Gallego is moving over to the Senate and it is likely that Grijalva will retire early in the next session. Gosar has been a strong advocate for our issues, while Grijalva has not. Losing Grijalva will likely help our cause, and it is unlikely that if he negotiates a replacement (aka his daughter), that she will be on HNR.

Gallego has been on HNR for a while, so it is likely that he may land on Senate ENR. As you recall, Kelly left ENR, so we lost representation on that committee. Despite his support for the Help Hoover Dam Act, he hasn't always been supportive of our efforts. We shall see how supportive he is moving forward. It is unclear who Gallego will bring with him to the Senate, but it is unlikely that he will retain any of Sinema's staff.

Ciscomani retained his seat, and his support of our issues (and Appropriations Committee assignment) will continue to help Arizona and public power.

Schweikert will be towards the top of Ways and Means due to seniority, which will likely play an important role in the first term with the likely tax bill that will show up.

Lesko's departure from E&C will be a loss, and it remains to be seen where Hamadeh may land. In discussions with Gosar, he recommended to Abe that he get on the Rules Committee. SRP suggested that he vie for E&C, which could be a

possibility given Trump's support during the campaign and a desire to garner Trump's favor. If the election would have gone the other way, not sure where Abe could have landed.

Biggs and Crane are part of the Freedom Caucus that disrupted Kevin McCarthy's time as the Speaker of the House. McCarthy was considered a possible Chief of Staff appointee, but has said he would likely decline that role. It will be interesting how the Freedom Caucus responds to Trump and if past problems with McCarthy impact Andy or Eli moving forward. Their current committee assignments won't likely help us in the next session. Things could change if Crane was able to get on Ag, like former Congressman O'Halleran.

Stanton has some connection with us in his role on T&I (think WRDA), but they exert jurisdiction over the Corps. Unless there are some specific projects (Bartlett Dam, Gila River clearing), it won't be extensive.

Congresswoman elect Ansari issues don't necessarily align with Natural Resources, so expect her to land in something like housing or education.

Post-2026

The only thing for certain is that we will have alternatives to contemplate in December (assuming at CRWUA), but the draft EIS will not be prepared by that time. It appears that the Upper and Lower Basin continue to be in their corners, but it will be interesting to see how the election results impact the negotiations. During the last Trump administration, BOR seemed to take a heavier hand to get the DCP done. Hoping that the TBD Commissioner is able to force the parties to a settlement. Assuming a settlement, this might be the best "must pass" vehicle to get some hydropower principles enacted into law (PRB, hydropower as a renewable, Hoover Dam foundation).

Water Settlements

Unless the Biden Administration can work magic, I believe that the Arizona Indian Water Rights settlements will not be signed into law any time soon. Biden's administration has been the most pro-tribe presidency, but without much time to work before the end of the session, I don't see them being finalized. A giant millstone will be the price tag for the Navajo settlement (\$5B). With the

Trump looking to cut \$2T from the budget moving forward, I don't see funding for projects like this unless you get the President's support (which seems unlikely).

NWRA/ABWC

NWRA met in Albuquerque in early November for their Annual meeting. Attendance seemed down this year, but Arizona had a strong showing. Greg Morrison was introduced as the new EVP. Greg has expressed an interest in recruiting new members and will be living in Idaho. This will help on travel to statewide meetings in the West, but may impact how often he gets to DC. Next year's meeting will be in Tucson on November 5-7, so plan to attend if available.

ABWC's closed their search for a new director at the end of October. The committee met on November 12th to discuss applicants. There is an ABWC on the 15th, so I hope to have more information for our meeting on the 18th.

Future Meetings

A list of possible IEDA topics/speakers were presented to the committee. We discussed the merits of these issues for the group and discussed any thoughts regarding the committee structure. Feedback seemed favorable regarding the committee and the fact that it streamlined the IEDA meetings. One thought would be to have more committee members to help round out the discussion.