



MEMORANDUM

TO: IEDA Board
RE: Water (& Ag) Committee Report
DATE: February 7th, 2025

Post-2026

Tom Buschatzke spoke at the Annual Meeting. He conveyed that none of the alternatives have Compact Compliance as part of their modeling. Lawsuits have been threatened, and a lot could depend on who the BOR Commissioner that is selected. Jason Phillips (CA ID manager) and Sandy Fabritz's names have both been floated inside the building. A strong hand may be necessary to force the Upper Basin to the table.

The states continue to meet, with Chuck Cullum and Becky Mitchell were in town at the Yuma Steak Fry as part of the negotiations.

AG Lawsuits & Letters

AG Mayes, in here pursuit to be governor, has targeted foreign and out of state companies (Fodomonte and Riverview Dairy) to make headlines. She has targeted industrial agriculture under nuisance laws over their water use. Different groups have sent letters in support of agriculture or counter the nuisance law claims.

Ag to Urban Water

ADWR is facilitating another Ag to Urban stakeholder process to help with Assured Water Supply, in the face of adequacy concerns. A meeting was held on January 16th regarding the Maricopa and Pinal AMAs.

The program is meant to be voluntary. Qualifying lands require IGFRs and have to meet a frequency standard (3 in 5 years) to qualify. The big sticking point will be the conversion amounts that the group(s) will settle on. They will be different in the two AMAs. There is a technical group being formed to help with this process and a dashboard to experiment with.

WIFA

Chelsea McGuire has been appointed interim Executive Director. I reached out to her, and she is still in the running for the permanent E.D. job, the question is if they want someone who is a workhorse or a show pony. There is a resolution to return the money to WIFA that was pledged during the Ducey term, but been missing in the last two budgets. Those funds could help alleviate some of the burden for conservation through compensation.