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85TH ARIZONA TOWN HALL

"ARIZONA'S WATER FUTURE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES"

Water is the lifeblood of Arizona's vitality, lifestyle and growth. Fortunately, Arizona's leaders, from the time of statehood and even before, had the vision and foresight, intelligence and tenacity to plan and implement policies and projects to develop a reliable and safe water supply. Current and future leaders must step forward in today's climate of further unprecedented growth and current drought conditions to continue that safe and reliable water supply. Following are just a few of the major recommendations that the record-setting 177 participants at the 85th Town Hall developed that reflect what they believe must take place to accomplish the mission of maintaining a reliable and safe water supply for the future.

- * To avoid crisis management, Arizona must engage in long-term planning based on good science and data collection that should be made widely available throughout the state.
- * ...the collection and dissemination of information about water supplies and demand is a statewide concern and must be improved, particularly in non-AMA areas.
- * Non-AMA areas should have management tools specific to the needs of each region.
- * While water shortages have prompted many communities to better manage their resources, it is imperative that communities plan for water shortages before they occur.
- * Existing AMAs generally are effective but need some modification. A major concern is the rapid growth of the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District membership and the District's ability to meet the growing long-term replenishment obligations.
- * New or amended legislation is required to empower counties and local entities to address water management issues.
- * Arizona must defend its current water rights, while at the same time work to maintain good relations with its sister river basin states. Negotiations between states should include establishment of shortage criteria.
- * Native American water claim settlements present great opportunities for collaboration between non-tribal communities and tribes on water and non-water related issues, but challenges remain.