



## Guest View

# “ADD Water” Invites Input About CAP’s Future Water Delivery Role

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Where will municipal providers get the water they need to meet future demands? How will they pay for those new supplies? What role will the Central Arizona Project play in developing new water supplies for its three-county service area? These questions lie at the center of a public stakeholder participation process led by CAP and known as “ADD Water” — the Acquisition, Development and Delivery of Water.

Projections show that long-term water demands in CAP’s three-county service area will someday exceed the water supplies that are currently available. When that day will come is a matter of much debate, and will depend on many variables, including population growth, conservation and reuse of reclaimed water. But whether our current supplies will last 20 more years or 50, it makes sense now to develop a comprehensive strategy for the acquisition and delivery of water to meet future demands. That’s what ADD Water is about.

The ADD Water process is an outgrowth of the Strategic Plan adopted by the CAP Board of Directors in 2006. The Plan directed CAP staff to establish a collaborative process to address the issue of developing new water supplies for central Arizona — one that encourages fair competition and eliminates perceptions of unfair advantage. The Plan presumed that the most efficient and cost effective way to develop new water supplies would be for CAP to be the single point of acquisition.

CAP’s role in transporting additional water into central Arizona has been a frequent topic of discussion over the years. In 2002, it was at the heart of another CAP-led public stakeholder process — Project Wheel. In that process, stakeholders were asked to consider a continuum along which CAP’s role ranged from a “delivery agent” for water acquired by others to a “water provider” that developed its own supply for delivery to water users in its three-county service area.

Project Wheel ultimately adopted a hybrid approach that called for “interim set asides” to transport water supplies already acquired by CAP providers and recommended further exploration of the water provider model, including a public process to address how to allocate any new water supply acquired by CAP.

Historically, water providers have worked independently to acquire and develop their own water supplies. But over the past few years, Arizona Municipal Water Users Association cities, Tucson and others met with CAP Board members to discuss a broad framework and public process for developing a wholesale water supply program. That emerging view was reflected in the 2006 CAP Strategic Plan.

In keeping with the CAP Strategic Plan, the ADD Water process is focused on the following question:

Assuming CAP is to be the primary entity that acquires, develops and delivers new water supplies for its three county service area,

how should the water be shared and paid for?

Admittedly, there are other questions that will also have to be answered eventually to implement an ADD Water program, such as how much water is needed, when it is needed, and where it will come from. But we already have a good idea of the answers to those questions.

We know from our first ADD Water stakeholder meeting on May 21, 2008, that water users will need significant new supplies to meet future demands (including Assured Water Supply requirements), to replace existing non-renewable supplies, to provide back-up supplies in time of shortage and to meet Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District obligations. These new supplies will be used for direct delivery, recharge/recovery and replenishment.

We also know that there are significant quantities of water potentially available. The Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District most recent plan of operation identified more than 900,000 acre-feet that could be acquired to meet municipal and industrial demands within central Arizona. And that total did not include the new water that could be developed through desalination of ocean water or brackish groundwater.

There is ample capacity to move these new supplies through the CAP. Long-term CAP contract entitlements total 1.415 million acre-feet. Yet the CAP system, as it exists today, can readily deliver 1.8 MAF annually. And with reasonable improvements, CAP could be expanded to deliver 2.2 MAF each year.

In short, CAP is confident that it can implement an ADD Water program. But first we must seek consensus on what such a program would look like — i.e., how an ADD Water program might fairly and equitably make new water supplies available to those that need them and how the program would be financed. Hence the focus of the ADD Water stakeholder participation process.

There are five steps in the ADD Water process. The first step was to gain a better understanding of stakeholder interests and expectations and identify information needs. That was the purpose of our May 21 public meeting.

The next step in the process is to define and prioritize the criteria that will be used to evaluate ADD Water alternatives. This will be the subject of at least two public meetings this fall, likely in September. Specific information on these meetings—including date, time and location—will be posted on our website: [www.projectaddwater.com](http://www.projectaddwater.com).

Future public meetings will allow stakeholders to develop alternatives, evaluate those alternatives against the criteria established in step 2, and develop recommendations to be presented to the CAP Board.

The ADD Water process could lead to a fundamental change in how water providers within central Arizona develop new water supplies and could redefine CAP’s mission. With stakes that high, all interested parties should plan to participate. ■