



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

**WATER RESOURCES
RESEARCH CENTER**



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Water Resources Research Center

wrrc.arizona.edu



GREATER DEPTH, BROADER PERSPECTIVE FOR A CLEAR WATER FUTURE

We tackle key water policy and management issues, empower informed decision-making, and enrich understanding through engagement, education, and applied research.

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Water Resources Research Center (WRRC), a University of Arizona unit based in Cooperative Extension, continued its strong engagement, educational, and applied research programming in 2025. Through our *Weekly/Summer Wave* e-newsletter, webinars, annual conference, and regularly updated website, we shared current water information, insights, and developments. With robust interest in understanding Arizona's water management, including the challenges associated with reduced Colorado River flows, the WRRC responds to requests for speaking engagements, information, and connections to water experts. In 2025, we welcomed Associate in Extension Anne Gondor in February, and in September Dr. Elia Tapia rejoined the WRRC, also as Associate in Extension. In addition, former AmeriCorps member Julia Denton joined our team. In a time of unprecedented water challenges to Arizona and the region, engagement and partnerships remain key to fulfilling our applied research, engagement/outreach, and education mission. We look forward to your continuing participation in and support of our events and programs and welcome your suggestions and communications.



Sharon B. Megdal

About the Director

WRRC Director Sharon B. Megdal oversees programs and operations of the WRRC and engages with multiple partners on projects that investigate water resource policy issues and inform a range of audiences. Her publications, conference and workshop participation, and lectures have focused on approaches to water management in a drying climate. During 2025, Megdal was busy with invited presentations, article writing, and interviews involving local and global media outlets. She once again taught her graduate course, Water Policy in Arizona and Semi-arid Regions. Her service activities included memberships on the Kasser Joint Institute for Food, Water, and Energy Security Board, the Water & Tribes Initiative | Colorado River Basin, and the Global Leadership Council for the Women in Water Diplomacy Network. A detailed listing of her professional activities can be found on [this page](#). A member of the faculty in the Department of Environmental Science, Megdal is the C.W. & Modene Neely Endowed Professor for Excellence in Agriculture and Life Sciences and a University Distinguished Outreach Professor. She also holds numerous courtesy appointments in departments and colleges across campus.

EXTERNAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EAC)

The members of the committee and their affiliations as of December 2025 are listed below.

Bradford, Shawn

EPCOR Water USA, Inc.

Burman, Brenda

Central Arizona Project

Buschatzke, Tom

Arizona Department of Water Resources

Collings, William (Bill)

Maricopa Consolidated DWID

Dadgar, Maria

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona

Davis, Tom

Yuma County Water Users' Association

Fleming, Ron

Global Water Resources, Inc.

Forrest, Alan

AF Engineering

Hauter, Jason

Akin Gump Strauss Hauter & Feld LLP and Attorney for the Gila River Indian Community

Kmiec, John

Tucson Water

Lacey, Michael

Freeport-McMoRan

Macy, Jamie P.

USGS Arizona Water Science Center

Matas, Randy

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

Meyers, Leslie

Salt River Project

Olsen, Joe

Metro Water

Orme, Paul

Attorney

Porter, Sarah

Kyl Center for Water Policy, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, ASU

Richards, Philip

Arizona Public Service

Schneider, Fred

Arizona Water Company

Schonek, Kimberly

The Nature Conservancy

Smith, Alexander

Bureau of Reclamation

Take, John

Stantec

Tenny, Warren

AZ Municipal Water Users Association

Volpe, Christopher (Kip)

The Estes Co.

Wegner, Dave

Woolpert Engineering, Inc., National Academy of Sciences, Board Member Emeritus, Water Science Technology Board

Wilson, Maxwell

City of Phoenix

Wilson, Sid

Retired, Central Arizona Project

Wong, Brian

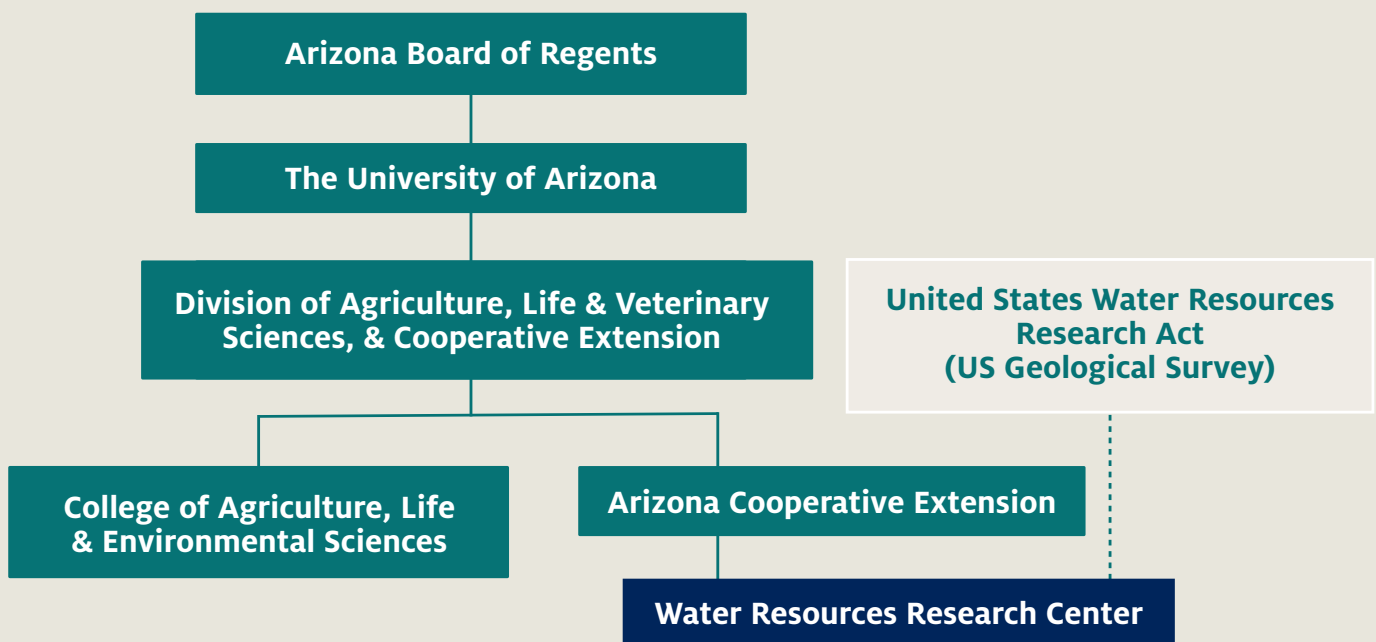
BKW Farms

Zamora, Francisco

Sonoran Institute

ORGANIZATION

The University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center is Arizona's federally authorized water institute pursuant to the Water Resources Research Act (WRRRA), as administered by the US Geological Survey (USGS).



PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

(Note: Links to webpages are provided when available.)

In 2025, the WRRC continued to collaborate with stakeholders and partners and serve as a trusted source of Arizona water resources information. Throughout the year, the WRRC's role in helping to facilitate water resources discourse in Arizona and beyond has been reaffirmed through many research and engagement efforts.

Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program (TAAP)

Website

The WRRC continues to contribute research and leadership as a partner in the Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program, which seeks to strengthen binational collaboration, enhance stakeholder engagement, and advance scientific understanding of shared groundwater resources along the Arizona-Sonora border. Director Megdal continues to serve as TAAP's lead University of Arizona PI.



During calendar year 2025, consultants Dr. Elia Tapia, who joined WRRC staff in September, Dr. Eylon Shamir, and Lizeth Lopez, MS, worked with Dr. Megdal and many project partners on advancing binational coordination and assessment activities. *The Binational Study of the Transboundary Santa Cruz Aquifer* is nearing completion, pending the USGS official review. Tapia and Lopez contributed significantly to these efforts, which are coordinated through the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC).

During 2025, team members engaged in multiple technical and outreach efforts. Shamir submitted a technical inventory of mining activities within the Santa Cruz and San Pedro aquifers, integrating geospatial data from US and Mexican sources. Tapia led the authorship of a peer-reviewed article, "**Prioritizing Transboundary Aquifers in the Arizona–Sonora Region: A Multicriteria Approach for Groundwater Assessment**," published in *Water* (Vol. 17, Issue 443). She also gave presentations at several binational and academic events, including a WRRC webinar, two guest lectures for an Arizona State University course, and the Douglas-Agua Prieta Growing Water Smart Workshop. Lopez supported stakeholder engagement and outreach by developing bilingual communication materials, including a visually engaging booklet on Arizona-Sonora border aquifers and a brochure for the Santa Cruz Aquifer Study, which are expected to be released in 2026.

On November 13, the WRRC participated in the 1st Earth Sciences Symposium organized by the Department of Geology at Universidad de Sonora in Hermosillo, Mexico. Tapia presented "Water, Risk, and Resilience: Shared Challenges in Ambos Nogales," highlighting how climate variability, population growth, and infrastructure limitations affect water security for the sister cities of Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora. This presentation aligned with TAAP efforts by addressing key challenges in the Ambos Nogales region, which relies on the Santa Cruz Aquifer, a TAAP aquifer of focus.

Director Megdal continued to oversee and coordinate the WRRC's TAAP efforts, with a focus on regional coordination and stakeholder engagement. Megdal hosted and spoke at the 2025 WRRC Annual Conference, **Shared Borders, Shared Waters: Working Together in Times of Scarcity**, which featured speakers from both sides of the border. She also presented TAAP updates at the IBWC Southeast Arizona Citizens Forum and responded to public and media inquiries. Megdal collaborated with Dr. Rosario Sanchez of Texas A&M on a Special Issue of *Water*, titled **Working Across Borders to Address Water Scarcity**, which is in progress at the time of this report's publication. The team also updated the English and Spanish TAAP webpages to improve public access to information.

Reauthorization of TAAP is under congressional consideration.

Water Research and Planning Innovations for Dryland Systems (Water RAPIDS)

Website

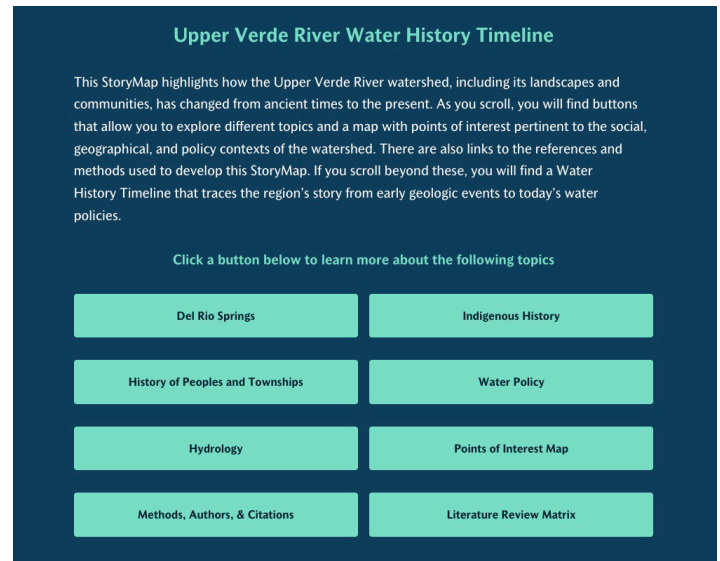
The Water RAPIDS Program works at regional, state, watershed, and local scales to build capacity within communities for water resources and watershed planning. The Water RAPIDS program fosters holistic approaches that integrate water planning with land use planning.

Assisting the Town of Superior in Understanding Environmental Flows for Queen Creek: In 2025, the Water RAPIDS Program continued to provide coordination and facilitation services in support of the Town of Superior's and the Queen Creek Working Group's activities, including the Queen Creek Restoration Project and green stormwater infrastructure projects. Queen Creek Working Group members finalized a Project Partnership Agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to secure \$2.25 million in funding to rehabilitate and install infrastructure that will restore base flow to reaches of Queen Creek through the town. With WRRRC support, the Town of Superior also secured approximately \$245,000 in Bureau of Reclamation funding for integrated watershed planning and a \$140,000 Water Infrastructure Financial Authority of Arizona (WIFA) grant to develop a new green stormwater infrastructure project. Through 2025, Water RAIPDS continued to support activities for both awarded grants. Additional WRRRC involvement in Town of Superior activities included participation in meetings to seek other grants, such as exploring an opportunity for the Town of Queen Valley to apply for infrastructure funding to store treated wastewater for use by their local golf course. A new effort, initiated in response to flooding from hurricanes Priscilla and Raymond in early October and emergency declarations, led to formation of the Copper Corridor Flood Mitigation Coalition between Globe, Miami, and Superior, allowing the towns to apply for funds collaboratively to address flooding problems in the watershed.

Water History Timeline of the Upper Verde Watershed

In 2024–2025, WRRRC Associate Director Jamie McEvoy and Yavapai County Extension Director Matt Halldorson led a water history timeline project for the Upper Verde River Watershed. The project was funded by The Nature Conservancy and Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. The team, which included graduate research assistant Luna Falk, and undergraduate research assistant Ian Cann, conducted interviews, organized stakeholder meetings, and collected archival materials to produce

a shared understanding of key events in the Upper Verde River Watershed. This information was compiled and developed into a **StoryMap**, which highlights how the Upper Verde River watershed has changed from ancient times to the present. It allows readers to explore different topics and points of interest pertinent to the social, geographical, and policy contexts of the watershed. The timeline traces the region's water history from early geologic events to today's water policies. The StoryMap is available on the Water RAPIDS webpage.



WRRRC Water Conservation Factsheets

In September 2025, WRRRC received notice of an award for a WIFA grant supporting the development of six water conservation factsheets targeting populations throughout the state that are under-resourced in terms of existing conservation education resources. Using the WRRRC process of factsheet development established by the successful **Arizona Water Factsheets** project, the Water RAPIDS program staff and graduate research assistants initiated research on conservation programs and began engaging groups and individuals with knowledge of water uses for which conservation education is likely to produce water savings. Topics covered will likely include 1) indoor water conservation for customers of small community water systems 2) outdoor water conservation for customers of small community water systems; 3) domestic well users; 4) rural industrial water conservation and reuse; 5) small-scale farming water conservation; and 6) riparian and stream water conservation. Targeted populations may include small and mid-size utility customers, small industries, landscapers, gardeners, and small and mid-size municipalities. The focus of each factsheet will be determined through consultation with technical advisors who are water resources management and conservation professionals or experts with knowledge of the target populations' conservation

needs. The ultimate educational goal is to help water users understand opportunities to achieve water conservation.

Community Partners:

The Water RAPIDS Program continued to provide support to assist community partners with watershed planning. To address frequent questions from community partners, the Water RAPIDS program initiated a report, in partnership with Resolution Copper Mining, LLC, to describe water use and copper mining in Arizona. The goal of this report is to explain regulations and policies affecting water quantity and quality, contextualize mining water use by describing mining demand and economic impacts using available data and studies, and describe the evolution of water use efficiency with advancing mineral extraction technologies. The Water RAPIDS Program also worked with the French National Centre for Scientific Research, Cienega Watershed Partnership (CWP), Friends of Sonoita Creek, and the Lower San Pedro Collaborative on extending CWP's watershed indicator process to other watersheds in Southeastern Arizona. This work has helped expand regional capability and provided a launching point for additional landscape-scale planning work currently underway with the Lower San Pedro Collaborative.

The durable partnerships and relationships maintained by the program helped support activities, including participation in a Rural Groundwater Resilience workshop in the Sonoita Creek watershed and answering questions related to water management and Active Management Area formation, that furthered the overall Water RAPIDS outreach mission. The WRRC expanded its engagement in 2025 through additional workshops and events that strengthened regional water planning and binational collaboration. At the Douglas-Agua Prieta Growing Water Smart Workshop on June 12, organized by the Sonoran Institute and Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, Director Megdal joined discussions along with Anne Gondor, and Elia Tapia presented TAAP research on aquifer prioritization for the Douglas-Agua Prieta region. Later in the year, Megdal contributed to the Patagonia-Sonoita-Elgin Rural Groundwater Resilience Workshop, which was held on October 30 and convened by Arizona State University's Arizona Water Innovation Initiative in partnership with the University of Arizona's Institute for Resilience and the Lincoln Institute's Babbitt Center. Megdal provided an overview of Arizona's groundwater policy framework, and Tapia supported workshop facilitation, helping local leaders and community members explore strategies for rural groundwater resilience.

Together, these partnerships reflect the WRRC's commitment to advancing collaborative water solutions

and supporting community-driven approaches across Arizona and the Arizona-Sonora border region.

Multi-University Collaboration on Groundwater-Dependent Agriculture

Website

The five-year USDA-funded project, "Sustaining Groundwater and Irrigated Agriculture in the Southwestern United States under a Changing Climate," began its fifth year on September 1, 2025. The project is led by UC-Davis, and the small University of Arizona team focuses on Pinal AMA agriculture and cover crops. Soil Health Extension Specialist Dr. Debankur Sanyal worked on research related to soil health and cover cropping. Sanyal participated via Zoom, along with Arizona farmer Ron Rayner, in a session Director Megdal organized for an August conference focused on no-till and sustainable agriculture, which was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Arizona team continued to collaborate with project team members from California and New Mexico. In January 2025, the annual project symposium was held in Albuquerque, NM, and planning was underway for the January 2026 annual project symposium at California State University, Fresno.

Indigenous Water Dialogues

This year, the WRRC continued to co-sponsor the **Native Voices in STEM** seminar series and partner on other programs with Tribal water content and speakers. Director Megdal served on host-planning committees and attended two programs. The first, where Megdal also spoke, was the Collaborative Adaptive Management Workshop, held at Six Nations of the Grand River and Toronto, Canada, October 8–10, which was co-sponsored by the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research. The second was the Women and Water Convening, held November 5–7 in Tuba City, Arizona, which was convened by Planet Women. On November 12, WRRC alum Dr. Aminta Menjivar gave a webinar presentation on her dissertation research on "**Indian Water Rights Settlements in Arizona: An Analysis of Their History and Potential Future.**" The WRRC maintains ongoing collaboration and communication with Indigenous water professionals and leaders in Arizona and beyond. Megdal continues to serve on the Leadership Council of the Water & Tribes Initiative in the Colorado River Basin.

Middle East Water

Website

Director Megdal's Middle East water activities continued to center on serving as one of two University of Arizona

board members for the Kasser Joint Institute for Food, Energy, and Water Security (KJI), a unique partnership of the U of A, Jewish National Fund - USA, and the Arava Valley in the South of Israel. KJI's agrivoltaics work includes working with the Makueni community in Kenya. A six-person binational board meets regularly via Zoom. Through lectures and other commentary, Megdal shared information and insights about Middle East water policy and management. In February 2025, she presented on "Israel's Water Solutions: Global and Regional Impacts," to a community group in SaddleBrooke, AZ, and in May 2025, she delivered a presentation on "Israel's Water Innovations and Partnerships" at the Tucson Jewish Community Center.

Water Resources Research Act Programs

Website

The WRRRC is the water resources research institute for Arizona, federally authorized under the Water Resources Research Act (WRRRA). The WRRRA base funding (104b) supports a portion of the WRRRC's information transfer activities and a small competitive research grants program, which is open to research personnel at any of the three universities that are part of Arizona's public university system (U of A, ASU, and NAU). A key criterion for these small grants is that the proposed project shows significant student training. In November, the WRRRC hosted a **Water Webinar** featuring the research findings from the project funded last year on "Indian Water Rights Settlements

in Arizona: An Analysis of their History and Potential Future," mentioned above. For the 2025–2026 project year, WRRRC personnel increased efforts to publicize and solicit proposals for the 104(b) program, which resulted in the submission of nine proposals to the WRRRC. Based on the recommendation of the WRRRC's Technical Review Committee, two projects were selected for funding, but one had to withdraw due to personnel changes. The 104(b) project for 2025–2026 is "Quantifying the Water Losses of Data Centers in Maricopa County," led by Principal Investigator (PI) Dr. Dwarakanath Ravikumar and co-PI Dr. Saurav Kumar, both at Arizona State University. Due to delays in federal funding, the WRRRC received a no cost extension for 2024–2025 funding. Though the 2025–2026 WRRRA funding had been appropriated, it was not dispersed until the end of January 2026, five months after the anticipated September 1 start date.

WRRRA administrative responsibilities also include the highly competitive Section 104(g) National Competitive Grant Program. The WRRRC solicits proposals from researchers at any of Arizona's three state universities and submits them to the US Geological Survey (USGS). In 2025, there were two 104(g) submissions. Due to delays in the USGS review and funding cycle, these proposals are still under review at the time of this publication. The WRRRC's webpages for the 104(b) and 104(g) were updated to show a current list of funded projects. Announcements have been issued to faculty and students at the three state universities to solicit applications for the 2026 104(b) grant cycle.

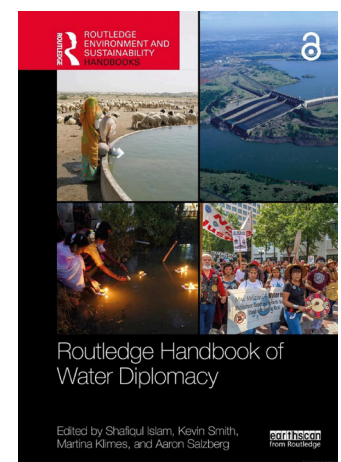
OUTREACH, ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

The WRRRC engages with partners, stakeholders, and the public throughout Arizona and beyond through multiple media platforms. The communications team meets weekly to coordinate work on outreach activities and products. WRRRC personnel routinely responded to requests for information and media interviews. A wide range of external news and information outlets featured WRRRC personnel and programs in 2025.

International Engagement

Director Megdal continued to be involved in international partnership efforts during 2025, particularly through the Women in Water Diplomacy Network (WWDN), for which she serves on the inaugural Global Leadership Council. Megdal participated in July 2025 United Nations meetings to further the planning of the 2026 UN Water Conference, to be held in the United Arab Emirates. She also led the

planning for a WWDN event in Las Vegas immediately following the conclusion of the Colorado River Water Users Association annual conference. In addition, Megdal led the planning for a December 15, 2025, WRRRC-hosted webinar featuring content from the recently published **Routledge Handbook of Water Diplomacy**, to which she contributed the case study, "Factors that Contribute to Successful Diplomatic Outcomes: Case Study of the Colorado River Basin Cross-boundary Institution." The webinar was co-convened by the Stockholm International Water Institute and others. Additionally,



Megdal was hosted by the Energy and Water Agency of Malta to provide a keynote presentation at their February 2025 conference. She was similarly hosted by the Argentinian no-till association, Aapresid, in August. She returned to Argentina December 3–4 for the 5th International Congress - *Water for the Future: Towards a New Agreement for Water* in Mendoza. Megdal shared information and take-aways from many of these experiences via her Reflections essays, published in the Weekly Wave and posted on the WRRC website. During 2025, the WRRC hosted international researchers Anna Msigwa (from Tanzania) and Pintu Kumar Mahla (from India).

Weekly Wave e-News Digest

Website

WEEKLY WAVE

In 2025, the WRRC published 37 editions of the *Weekly Wave* and six editions of the bi-monthly *Summer Wave*. Each edition included WRRC and water community news, events, publications, and announcements. As noted above, the *Weekly Wave* published Director Megdal's **Reflections** series; she authored six *Reflections* in 2025. The *Weekly Wave* distribution list continued to grow, reaching over 4,080 subscribers in 2025. Its reach is enhanced through posting on the WRRC website and further distribution by recipients.

Annual Conference

Website

The WRRC's 2025 annual conference, *Shared Borders, Shared Waters: Working Together in Times of Scarcity*, was held May 20–21, 2025, at the University of Arizona Student Union, with free livestreaming. Its theme focused on frameworks for cross-border collaboration, sharing the Colorado River and other water resources, water sector collaborations, and strategies for sharing data and knowledge with collaborators and the public. Speakers included University scientists and students, government officials, journalists, industry representatives, and non-governmental organizations. Special dedications were presented to honor the memory and legacy of Roberto F. Salmón Castelo, former Commissioner of the International Boundary and Water Commission – Mexican Section, and former US Congressman Raúl



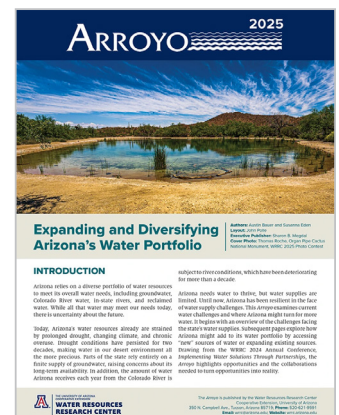
Grijalva. Keynote speakers included Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs, Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Verlon Jose, Gila River Indian Community Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, Arizona Department of Water Resources Director Tom Buschatzke, North American Development Bank Managing Director John Beckham, and Oregon State University Professor Aaron Wolf. The conference team developed the agenda with input from a Conference Advisory Committee to deliver an engaging one-and-a-half-day program. The conference attracted 267 in-person registrants and 743 virtual registrants on the Zoom livestream. Feedback received during and after the conference confirmed that it was a well-organized event featuring diverse perspectives and solutions. The WRRC 2025 conference agenda and session recordings can be found on the **conference webpage**, along with bios for the 49 speakers and moderators, information about the many generous conference sponsors, and archived materials from past WRRC conferences.

In 2025, the staff began planning for the **WRRC 2026 Annual Conference, Water for Tech, Mining & Energy: Pathways to Arizona's Future**. This conference will focus on the challenges and opportunities for water stewardship in Arizona's industrial sectors, such as mining, energy, and technology. Discussions will cover innovative strategies, best practices, regulatory frameworks, municipal-industrial partnerships, and environmental considerations. The conference will be held in Tucson at the University of Arizona Student Union on **April 14–15, 2026**. As in past years, free non-interactive livestreaming will be available.

Arroyo

Website

In 2025, *Arroyo*, the WRRC's annual publication on a single topic, focused on the theme of the previous year's conference: *Implementing Water Solutions Through Partnerships*. More than a synopsis of the knowledge and perspective shared during the conference, **Arroyo 2025: Expanding and Diversifying Arizona's Water Portfolio** explores



the conference themes, augmenting conference presentation content with broader research. Austin C. Bauer, who co-wrote the 2024 *Arroyo*, returned as a private contractor to develop the first draft of the 2025 *Arroyo*. After internal review, the draft received external reviews from conference advisors and speakers (listed in the acknowledgements)

and was revised in accordance with their comments. In May 2025, the completed *Arroyo* was sent to email and print subscribers, including libraries, schools, firms, agencies, and nonprofits. Additional copies have been distributed through various organizations and events. Conference sponsorships at the *Arroyo* level by the City of Tucson/Tucson Water, HDR, Southern Arizona Water Users Association, and Stantec supported *Arroyo* production.

Work on the 2026 *Arroyo* was underway in 2025. Katherine Nichole Marsh, a U of A undergraduate, was selected as the 2025 *Arroyo* Summer Intern. This internship was made possible by the generosity of former College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean and former U of A President Gene Sander and his wife Louise Canfield-Sander, with the goal of fostering student research and engagement with water resources. Marsh attended the 2025 WRRC conference, familiarizing herself with the topic for the upcoming *Arroyo*. The conference provided the foundation for this *Arroyo*, shaping its themes and providing examples. Working with WRRC staff, Marsh developed a draft, which underwent internal review and revisions before being sent to external reviewers, including conference speakers. The 2025 conference sponsorships at the *Arroyo* and Platinum levels also supported the 2026 *Arroyo*. Thank you to the Agnese Nelms Haury Program, City of Tucson/Tucson Water, Walton Family Foundation, Resolution Copper, Stantec, ASU's Arizona Water Innovation Initiative, Salt River Project, and the Southern Arizona Water Users Association!

WRRC Water Webinars

Website

In 2025, the WRRC continued to deliver the Water Webinar Series, attracting diverse audiences to presentations on a variety of water topics. This year, 12 Water Webinars featured a wide range of water experts and professionals. On average, 134 people attended WRRC Water Webinars in 2025, with an average of 227 registrants. Subject to speaker permission, Zoom recordings and copies of the slide presentations for each Water Webinar are posted to the WRRC website.

Other Public Events, Presentations, and Outreach

Website

In addition to Water Webinars, the WRRC hosted or co-hosted a variety of special events, including the annual Chocolate Fest and a book signing by author and director of the Gila River Indian Community's Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project, David DeJong. Among the WRRC's co-sponsored events were the ASU Water Institute Earth Day webinar, "Poisoning the Well:

How Forever Chemicals Contaminated America," and the **Native Voices in STEM (NVIS)** seminar series, a collaboration with the U of A **Indigenous Resilience Center**. NVIS seminars feature Native scientists, engineers, activists, community members, and leaders sharing their personal and professional journeys. The WRRC also partnered with the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy to co-host two seminars related to PFAS and the Colorado River water shortage, respectively.

WRRC Website and Communications

Website

The WRRC maintains a robust website featuring news, events, and programs, as well as many publications and other resources, such as recorded Water Webinars. In 2025, the communications team continued to employ social media, specifically **Facebook**, **X** – formerly Twitter (**@AZWRRC**), **LinkedIn**, and Instagram (**@uofawrrc**), to share program updates and events and highlight publications. LinkedIn has become the platform that the WRRC's audience is most actively engaged with.

WRRC Photo Contest

Website



Each year the WRRC hosts the WRRC Photo Contest. The photographs are used in multiple ways, including in the annual report, in the *Arroyo* and other publications, and on the WRRC website. This year, the contest returned to a broader theme: *World of Water*. Winning photographs were selected by a team of judges, consisting primarily of WRRC staff. The winning photos each year are featured at the annual WRRC Chocolate Fest in February. All submitted photographs are maintained in an online gallery.

AFFILIATED PROGRAMS

Arizona Project WET

[Website](#)



As an Environmental Science extension program physically housed at the Water Resources Research Center (WRRC), Arizona Project WET (APW) aims to bring attention to water-use practices that influence availability, reliability, access, and sustainability. The program actively engages teachers, students, and community members to promote water stewardship while integrating science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) education with practical relevance. APW's mission is "to meet the needs of our community by employing relevant, research-based educational strategies and techniques that empower individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective water stewardship." Offering community-based workshops, events, and modules, APW prioritizes experiential learning outcomes in its environmental education programming. The APW team delivers water-

focused programming meaningfully connecting content areas to participant, and participant to action.

Arizona Water Festivals are the most widely recognized APW program statewide, last year these events brought together:

- 15,399 4th grade students
- 625 teachers
- 216 schools
- 1,302 volunteers

Visit the 2024–2025 **APW Water Festival Impact Report** to learn more.

Water, Environment, and Energy Solutions Initiative (WEES)

[Website](#)

The WRRC has received significant funding each year from the Technology and Research Initiative Fund (TRIF), including in 2025. The WEES initiative invests TRIF dollars in cutting-edge research, cross-campus collaborations, and innovative partnerships that promote fresh ideas, technologies, and effective resource management practices. Since 2021, control over TRIF funding has been with Arizona Legislature, which initiated a new approach to distributing TRIF monies. The WRRC is grateful for continued TRIF funding, through the University of Arizona Senior Vice President for Research and Partnerships and the Arizona Institute for Resilience.

PERSONNEL NEWS

In 2025, the WRRC welcomed three new staff members. Anne Gondor and Elia Tapia both joined as Associates in Extension for Water RAPIDS, with Tapia also carrying out TAAP work. Julia Denton, who started at the WRRC in 2024 as an AmeriCorps member, joined the staff part time as Conference Coordinator & Communications Support Specialist. The WRRC also welcomed Luna Falk, who is pursuing dual master's degrees in Public Policy and in Water, Society, and Policy, as a graduate research assistant, and Katie Marsh, who is studying Biosystems Engineering, as the 2025 summer *Arroyo* intern and then as an undergraduate research and outreach

assistant. They joined continuing students Noah Rios and Ian Cann.

Dr. Aminta Menjivar, who started with the WRRC as a graduate student in 2024, completed her PhD in May and continued to work with the WRRC as a Designated Campus Colleague (DCC). Garland Speight and Ashley Hullinger, who previously worked on Water RAPIDS, also continue to be engaged with the WRRC as DCCs. Several others worked with the WRRC as DCCs in 2025, including researchers Anna Msigwa and Pintu Kumar Mahla, along with Cade Pankowski, who helped with

map updates, and Alice Templeton, who served on the conference planning committee.

As the University has moved to a centralized model for Human Resources services, the WRRC received assistance from Senior Business Manager Jennifer Rascon, Accountant Nicolas Propp, and Finance & Administration Manager Kevin Teres through the shared business office that also provides service to the Department of Environmental Science (ENVS), and School of Plant Sciences. The business office hired several new staff members including Business Manager Tammy Strom.

To learn about the outstanding WRRC staff and students, please visit the **Personnel Directory**. Selected staff contact information is as follows:

- For anything and everything: Sharon Megdal, **smegdal@arizona.edu**
- Conference, 104 Program: Jamie McEvoy, **jmcevoy@arizona.edu**
- Communications (*Weekly Wave* and Water Webinars): Jessie Hampton, **jessiehampton@arizona.edu**
- Water RAPIDS: Anne Gondor, **gondora@arizona.edu**
- Water RAPIDS, TAAP: Elia Tapia, **emtapia@arizona.edu**
- Graphics, Website, Photo Contest, *Weekly Wave*: John Polle, **jpolle@arizona.edu**
- Admin Support, *Weekly Wave*: Rose Veneklasen, **trvene@arizona.edu**
- *Arroyo*: Susanna Eden, **seden@arizona.edu**
- Conference: Julia Denton, **juliadenton@arizona.edu**

Staff (2025)



Sharon B. Megdal
Director



Jamie McEvoy
Associate Director



Julia Denton
Extension Professional 1



Susanna Eden
Research Program Officer



Anne Gondor
Associate in Extension,
Water RAPIDS



Jessie Hampton
Communications Coordinator



John Polle
Media Specialist



Elia Tapia
Associate in Extension,
TAAP & Water RAPIDS



Rose Veneklasen
Administrative Associate

Business Office Personnel



Nic Propp
Accountant



Jennifer Rascon
Senior Business Manager



Kevin Teres
Manager, Finance
and Administration



Tammy Strom
Team 2 Business Manager,
ENVS Staff

Students

Ian Cann
Undergraduate Research
and Outreach Assistant

Katherine Marsh
Arroyo Summer Intern/Student Assistant

Luna Falk
Graduate Outreach Assistant

Noah Rios
Graduate Research Assistant/
Coverdell Fellow

Aminta Menjivar
Graduate Research Associate

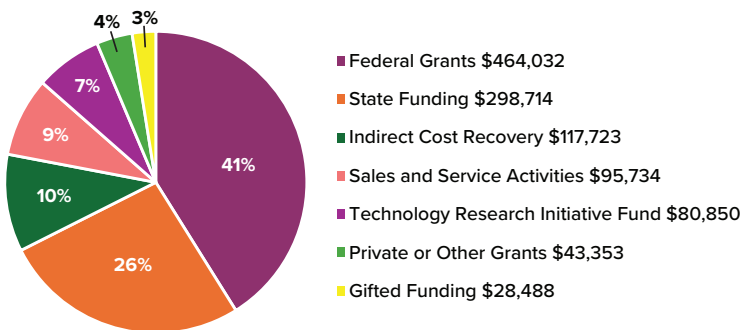
AmeriCorps

Julia Denton
AmeriCorps Member
Transitioned from AmeriCorps to P/T staff on 8/4/25

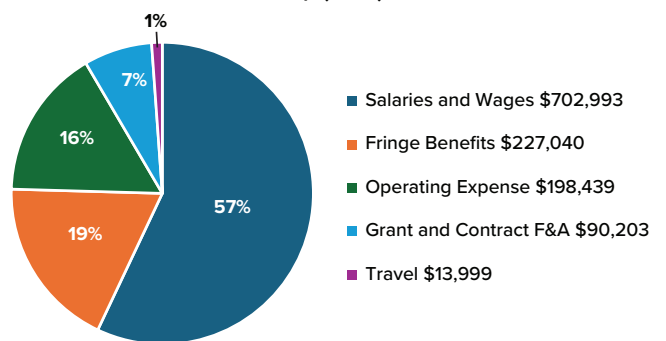
FINANCIAL SUMMARY CY 2025

To create the CY 2025 Financial Report, the WRRC worked with Business Office personnel using the updated process for building the Financial Report that the University Analytics and Institutional Research created last year. While there have been some shifts within WRRC funding, programs, and expenses, the overall budget for the Center has remained stable. In addition to funding from federal grants, financial support continues to come from state funding, sales and service activities, and gifts. Of the WRRC's total 2025 revenue, 41 percent came from federal grants, 26 percent came from state funds, 10 percent came from indirect cost recovery, and 9 percent came from sales and service activities. The voter-approved Technology and Research Initiative Fund (TRIF), now under control of the Arizona Legislature, provided support in 2025. Due to changes in the timing of allocations of funds by the administration, only a portion of the committed TRIF funds were received during this reporting period. Private grants and gift funding also provided support in 2025. Support for staff and appointed personnel accounted for 76 percent of total expenses. WRRC operations accounted for 16 percent of total expenses and grant and contract F&A accounted for 7 percent of total expenses.

Operating Support & Revenue
Total \$1,128,894



Operating & Program Expense
Total \$1,232,674



WEEKLY WAVE

The *Weekly Wave* e-news digest is distributed on Fridays and contains WRRC news, events, and much more.

wrrc.arizona.edu/subscribe

Photos

Front cover: Sandy Shiloh – Colorado River, AZ 2023
 Table of contents: Kohinoor Kar – Canyon De Chelly, Chinle, AZ 2020
 1. Bert Bell – Bill Williams River, AZ
 8. Kohinoor Kar – Horseshoe Bend, Glen Canyon, AZ 20238.
 Back Cover: Nicole Bies Hernandez – River Trail, Lees Ferry, 2024

All photos were submissions to the **WRRC Photo Contest**.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

**WATER RESOURCES
RESEARCH CENTER**

wrrc.arizona.edu

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