



Tuesday, April 14: 1:00 pm – 5:15 pm MST
Tuesday Reception: 5:15 pm – 7:15 pm MST
Wednesday, April 15: 8:30 am – 4:45 pm MST

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Parking Directions for WRRC 2026 Annual Conference

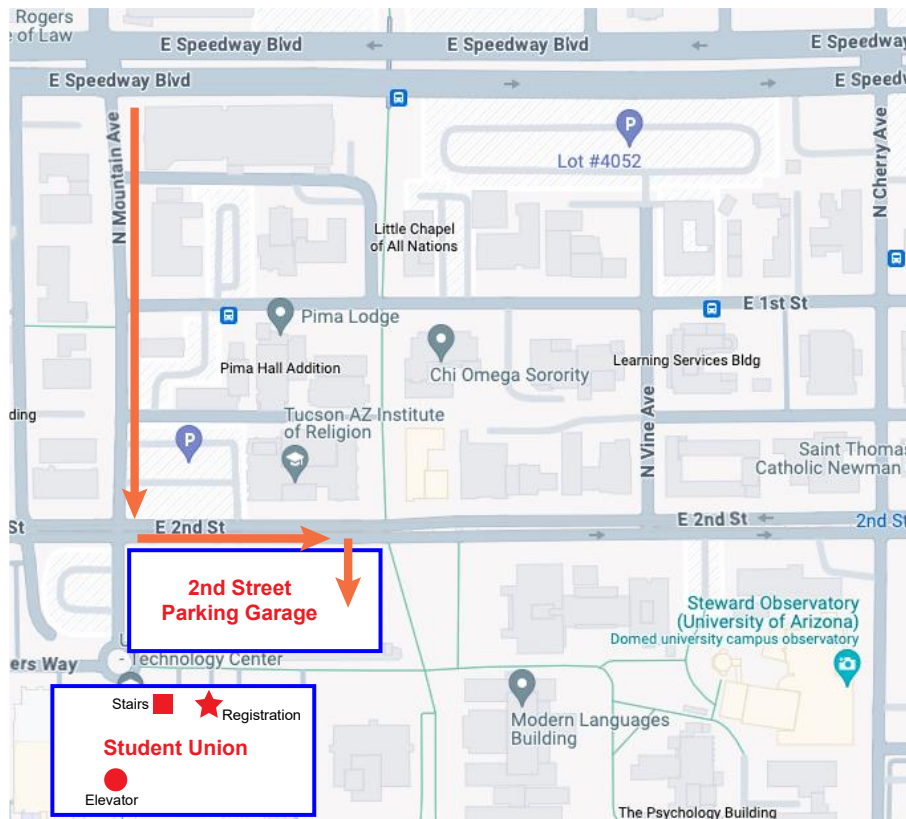
Getting to the Venue

- From Speedway Blvd, turn south onto Mountain Ave at the traffic light.
- At the next traffic light, turn left onto 2nd St.
- Immediately get into the right lane and turn right into the **2nd Street Parking Garage**.
- Push the button to get a ticket from the machine and proceed inside to park.
- Use the southwest stairwell (or east side elevators) to exit the garage and walk south to the Student Union.
- Proceed **upstairs** and inside to the registration table to pick up your name badge and attendee packet.

Using the Parking Garage

- **If you pre-paid for parking**, you may pick up a parking voucher upon check-in.
 - **If the parking garage is “full” it is because we reserved space for this event. Tell the attendant you are there for the conference and they will let you in.**
 - Pre-paid parking vouchers are only valid at the 2nd Street Garage and good for one exit.
- When you leave, **scan your parking ticket and then the parking voucher** to exit. The new payment system in the parking garage may automatically read your license plate, so your total amount due (prior to scanning the voucher) may appear on screen before you have scanned your ticket.
- **If you have NOT pre-paid for parking**, standard parking is \$2.25/hour, with a max charge of \$18.
 - We cannot guarantee space in the 2nd Street Garage for those who did not reserve parking in advance. You may check garage occupancy status in real time [here](#) or see other parking options on the campus map [here](#).

Parking Map



University of Arizona Student Union Map

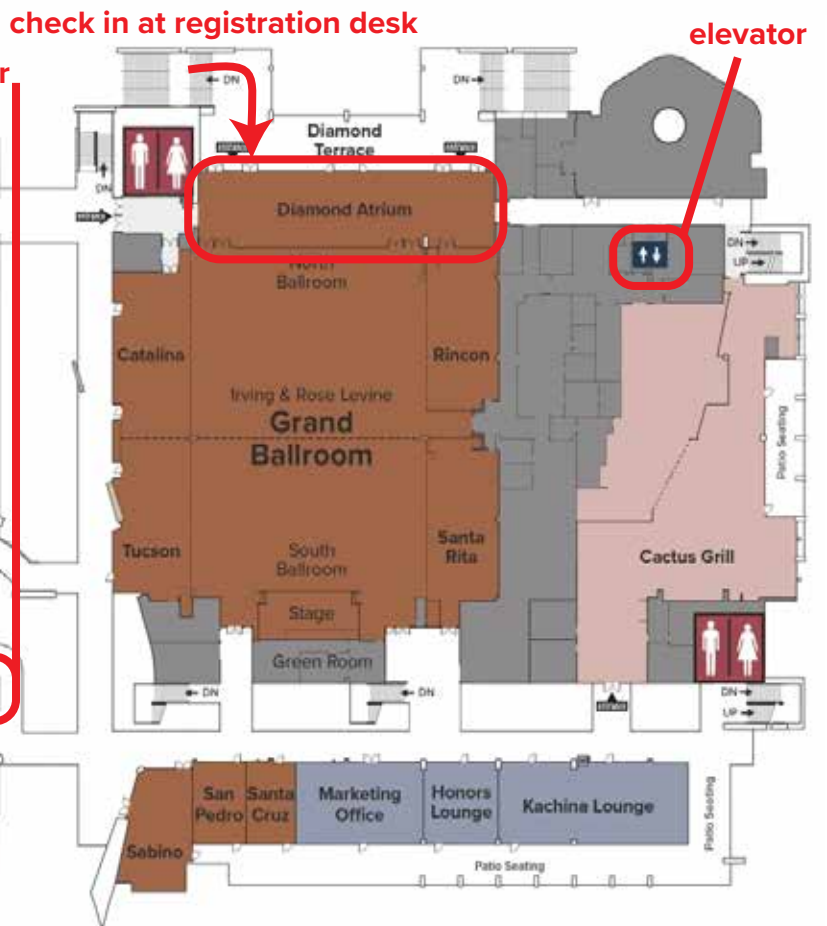
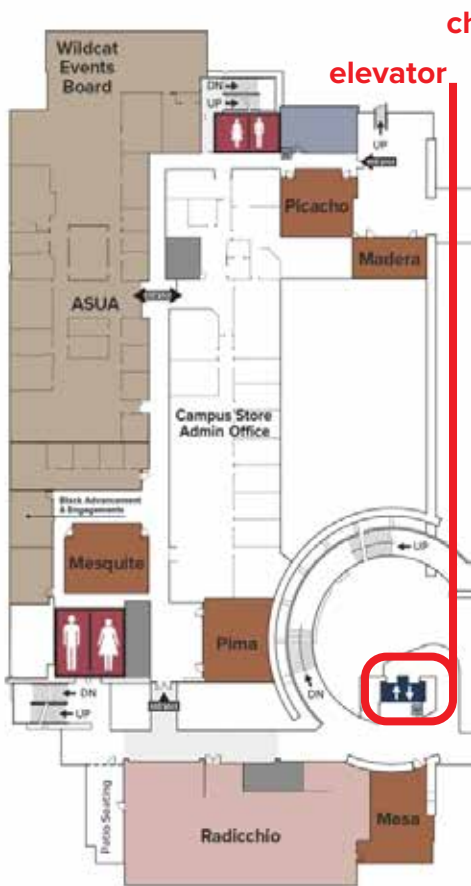
North ↑

Ground Level



reception venue

Upstairs



WRRC 2026 Conference Attendee Info



Connect to Wi-Fi

UA Guests

- Select the UAGuest Wi-Fi network
- Open a browser if one doesn't open automatically
- Select "Create Account" if you haven't created one within the last 5 days
- Enter your name and phone number, and you'll receive a text message with your assigned name and password

UA Faculty, Staff, & Students

- Select the UAWiFi network
- Use your NetID and password to sign in



Conference Packet & Zoom Info

Visit wrrc.arizona.edu/conference

- to Access/Download the Digital Packet
- to Register for the Zoom Livestream

Top Hat Audience Engagement

Connect via the QR code below
or visit TopHat.now and enter **Join Code 520752**



**WRRC 2026
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



**WATER FOR TECH,
MINING & ENERGY**
PATHWAYS TO ARIZONA'S FUTURE



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
**WATER RESOURCES
RESEARCH CENTER**

Agenda

Image: Bert Bell, Bill Williams River, AZ

Tue, April 14

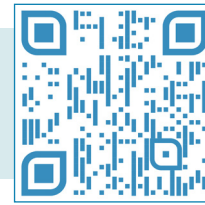
CONFERENCE DAY 1

University of Arizona, Student Union Memorial Center, Grand Ballroom
1303 E University Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85719

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

11:30 AM	SPONSOR CHECK-IN and SET-UP
12:00 PM	Conference Registration (Ongoing)
1:00 PM	Conference Starts: Land Acknowledgement/Blessing/Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharon B. Megdal, <i>Director, Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona</i>• The Honorable Austin Nuñez, <i>Chairman, San Xavier District, Tohono O'odham Nation</i>
1:30 PM	Opening Keynote: Future Prospects <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upmanu Lall, <i>Professor & Senior Global Futures Scientist, Arizona State University</i>
1:55 PM	Session 1: Sector Introductions <p><i>Session Introduction by Platinum Sponsor: Troy Kimball, South32</i></p> <p>Arizona Energy 101</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator – Kyle Tilghman, <i>Director, Water Strategic Projects, Salt River Project</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bryan Jungers, <i>Principal, Emerging Technology & Innovation, Tucson Electric Power</i> <p>Arizona Mining 101</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator – Alicja Babst-Kostecka, <i>Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Science; Director, Center for Environmentally Sustainable Mining, University of Arizona</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Steve Trussell, <i>Executive Director, Arizona Mining Association and Arizona Rock Products Association</i>▪ Sandy Fabritz, <i>Director of Water Strategy, Freeport McMoRan</i> <p>Arizona Tech 101</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator – Rob Simm, <i>Senior Vice President, Water, Stantec</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ David McCabe, <i>Engineering Director, Sundt Construction</i>
3:25 PM	NETWORKING BREAK

Additional Conference info can be found here
wrrc.arizona.edu/conference



3:55 PM	<p>Session 2: Planning for Large Industrial Water Use</p> <p><i>Session Introduction by Platinum Sponsor: Kyle Tilghman, Salt River Project (SRP)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator – Rachael L’Heureux, <i>Water Resource Specialist, City of Phoenix</i> Data Centers: A Playbook for Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Ann Dickinson, <i>Policy Director, Land and Water, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy</i> Water Markets in Arizona: Industrial Water Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Long, <i>Associate, WestWater Research</i>
4:45 PM	<p>Day 1 Audience Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator – Sharon B. Megdal, <i>Director, Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona</i>
5:15 PM	<p>RECEPTION at Cork and Craft (U of A Student Union)</p>

Wed, April 15

Conference Day 2

University of Arizona, Student Union Memorial Center, Grand Ballroom,
1303 E University Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85719

7:30 AM	Day 2 Registration/BREAKFAST
8:30 AM	<p>Welcome Back Remarks/Land Acknowledgement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharon B. Megdal, <i>Director, Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona</i> Welcome Remarks – Suresh Garimella, <i>President, University of Arizona</i>
8:35 AM	<p>Session 3: Environmental and Community Perspectives Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator – Jamie McEvoy, <i>Associate Director, Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona</i> Christopher Kuzdas, <i>Arizona Water Program Director, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)</i> Kim Schonek, <i>Arizona Water Program Director, The Nature Conservancy</i> Lindsay Rogers, <i>Policy Manager for Municipal Conservation, Western Resource Advocates</i> Anna Darian, <i>Executive Director, Patagonia Area Resource Alliance</i>
9:35 AM	<p>Session 4: Impacts, Strategies & Stewardship – Part I</p> <p><i>Session Introduction by Platinum Sponsor: Shawn Storey, Stantec</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator – Alice Templeton, <i>Client Relations Specialist, Stantec</i> Advances in Copper Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophie Dessart, <i>Manager, Communications & Public Affairs, Florence Copper LLC</i> Space-based Data Centers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krishna Muralidharan, <i>Professor, Materials Science and Engineering, University of Arizona</i> The Role of Nuclear Power Generation in Arizona <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brad Berles, <i>Senior Director, Palo Verde Water Strategy, Arizona Public Service</i>
10:35 AM	NETWORKING BREAK

11:05 AM	<p>Session 5: Impacts, Strategies & Stewardship – Part II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator – Scott Schladweiler, <i>Deputy Director, Tucson Water</i> • Critical Mineral Mining and Water Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pat Risner, <i>Hermosa President, South32</i> • Mining and Public Health: Santa Cruz County Health Impact Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nathan Lothrop, <i>Assistant Professor, Zuckerman College of Public Health, University of Arizona</i> • Energy and Tribal Sovereignty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilar Thomas, <i>Adjunct Professor, University of Arizona School of Law</i> • Water Stewardship in Semiconductor Manufacturing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kelly Osborne, <i>Senior Technologist, Intel</i>
12:30 PM	LUNCH BUFFET OPENS
12:45 PM	<p>Lunch Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgements & Introduction – Sharon B. Megdal, <i>Director, Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona</i> <p>Arizona Water: Accomplishments and Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Honorable Katie Hobbs, <i>Governor of Arizona</i> (via recorded video) <p>University of Arizona Research and Initiatives: Water, Tech, Mining, & Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tomás Díaz de la Rubia, <i>Senior Vice President for Research and Partnerships, University of Arizona</i>
1:35 PM	<p>Tribal Keynote: Pressure Points for Tribal Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Lewis, <i>Managing Director, Native American Energy, Avant Energy Inc.</i>
2:05 PM	NETWORKING BREAK
2:35 PM	<p>Session 6: Collaboration Case Studies</p> <p><i>Session Introduction by Platinum Sponsor: Arturo Gabaldón, Southern Arizona Water Users Association (SAWUA)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator – Greg Hitt, <i>Research and Outreach Programs Associate, College of Engineering, School of Mining Engineering and Mineral Resources, University of Arizona</i> • Town of Superior and Resolution Copper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Todd Pryor, <i>Town Manager, Town of Superior</i> ▪ Mila Besich, <i>Mayor, Town of Superior</i> ▪ Vicky Peacey, <i>President, Resolution Copper</i> • City of Phoenix and Large Commercial Water Users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Max Wilson, <i>Water Resources Management Advisor, City of Phoenix</i>
3:35 PM	<p>Session 7: Insights from the Field: Community Engagement and Planning That Works</p> <p><i>Session Introduction by Platinum Sponsor: Scott Schladweiler, Tucson Water</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Craig, <i>Director, Impact Water - Arizona, Arizona State University</i> • Eliza Stokes, <i>Program Manager, Growing Water Smart, Sonoran Institute</i> • Tahnee Robertson, <i>Director and Senior Facilitator, Southwest Decision Resources</i>
4:30 PM	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Wegner, <i>Senior Strategic Consultant, Woolpert Engineering; Board Member, National Academy of Sciences; Board Member Emeritus, Water Science and Technology Board</i>
4:45 PM	End of Conference

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

WRRC 2026
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**WATER FOR TECH,
MINING & ENERGY**
PATHWAYS TO ARIZONA'S FUTURE



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**WATER RESOURCES
RESEARCH CENTER**

Speaker Bios

Image: Bert Bell, Bill Williams River, AZ

Babst-Kostecka, Alicja



Alicja Babst-Kostecka is the director of the Center for Environmentally Sustainable Mining (CESM) and an associate professor in the Department of Environmental Science at the University of Arizona. CESM develops research and educational initiatives and brings together academia, regulatory agencies, and the mining industry to develop innovative, science-based solutions to environmental challenges associated with mining. Babst-Kostecka’s research integrates genetic, phenotypic, and environmental data to study plant adaptation to changing environments. She focuses on the mechanisms that allow certain plant species to colonize and thrive in metal-enriched, post-mining landscapes. These species exhibit rapid genetic and physiological adaptation, including the ability to tolerate and sometimes accumulate remarkable amounts of trace metal elements. Her interdisciplinary work supports the development of phytoremediation and biofortification efforts, contributing to more sustainable land management and improved environmental and human health.

Besich, Mila



Mila Besich was elected mayor of the Town of Superior in 2016 and served on the Superior Town Council since 2013. As a lifelong resident of this community, Mila has devoted her life of public service and volunteerism to advancing education, community, and economic development in Superior and the entire Copper Corridor region of Arizona. As a proven entrepreneur and business leader, Besich has used her many talents to establish and grow several business enterprises. Since founding her company, Miracle Executive Services in 2004, she has delivered project management, administration, event planning, and marketing expertise to more than a dozen small businesses, non-profits, and governmental entities in Arizona. Besich was appointed to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Small Communities Local Government Advisory Committee and serves on the National League of Cities Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Committee.

Berles, Brad



Brad Berles is senior director of Palo Verde Water Strategy for Arizona Public Service Company (APS). Berles is responsible for identifying and executing important water strategies needed for the continued long-term success of Palo Verde. Additionally, he has a lead technical management role in APS’s consideration of new nuclear generation in Arizona. Berles joined APS in 2008 and held manager and director positions in engineering prior to being appointed general plant manager of water resources in November 2020. In July 2024, he assumed his current role. Prior to joining APS, Berles worked at the Palisades station in Michigan, earning his U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Senior Reactor Operator license. Berles holds a bachelor’s degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree in engineering management from Western Michigan University.

Craig, Susan



As a program director for ASU’s Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation, Susan Craig leads the Impact Water – Arizona program, part of the Arizona Water Innovation Initiative, to foster community understanding and engagement in Arizona’s water challenges and solutions. Previously, Craig worked for ASU’s Kyl Center for Water Policy at the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, driving projects on water resilience, such as the award-winning Arizona Water Blueprint, an interactive tool designed to empower inclusive and informed decision-making. Before joining ASU, Craig worked for Arizona’s three primary state water agencies and led state programs for 20 years. She has extensive knowledge of the state’s water issues, policies, and players. She has led numerous state committees, including the Clean Colorado River Alliance, Governor’s Drought Task Force Interagency Coordinating Group, and Rural Water Infrastructure Committee, and is passionate about contributing to solutions and making an impact in securing Arizona’s water future.

Darian, Anna



Anna Darian is the executive director of the Patagonia Area Resource Alliance (PARA) and a rising voice for environmental accountability in Arizona's mining industry. A third-generation Arizonan with deep family ties to the state's mining history, she brings both personal perspective and policy expertise to the fight for stronger protections for frontline communities. Darian previously served as director of advocacy and community engagement for Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, where she helped organize regional opposition to major mining proposals and elevate community concerns in public decision-making processes. With more than 15 years of experience in public and nonprofit leadership, she specializes in advocacy, strategic communications, and coalition-building. She holds a degree in political science from the University of Arizona and studied urban planning at the American University of Beirut. Darian is committed to speaking truth to power in Arizona's complicated relationship with the mining industry.

Dessart, Sophie



Sophie Dessart is manager of communications and public affairs for Florence Copper, an in-situ copper recovery operation in Florence, Arizona. She leads the project's community and media relations, charitable initiatives, and communications strategy and serves as president of the Florence Copper Community Foundation. Sophie holds a master's of global management from the Thunderbird School of Global Management, with a focus on global affairs and global business. She serves as chair of the Arizona Mining Association Communications Committee and vice-chair of its Education Committee and is a graduate of the American Exploration & Mining Association's Society program. A proud Florence resident and active volunteer, Dessart represents the business community on First Things First's Pinal Regional Partnership Council and serves on several regional boards.

Díaz de la Rubia, Tomás



Tomás Díaz de la Rubia, Senior Vice President for Research and Partnerships at the University of Arizona, is a science and technology leader, strategist, and administrator with extensive experience in national laboratories, academia, and the private sector. He has served as the Deputy Director for Science and Technology and Chief Research Officer at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Director in the Strategy and Operations Energy practice at Deloitte Consulting, Senior Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer at Purdue University, and most recently, Vice President of Research and Partnerships at the University of Oklahoma. Tomas is a full professor of physics and of chemical, biological, and materials engineering. Tomas is a parent member of the Defense Science Board (DSB), which advises the Office of the Secretary of Defense on Science and Technology relevant to

the security of the nation and served six years as a member of the National Academies Intelligence Community Studies Board. He is an elected fellow of the National Academy of Inventors.

Dickinson, Mary Ann



Mary Ann Dickinson is the director of land and water policy for the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, where she works on the better integration of land and water policy in the United States and globally. Prior to joining the Lincoln Institute, she was the founder and president/CEO for 15 years of the

Alliance for Water Efficiency, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the efficient and sustainable use of water in the United States and Canada. Headquartered in Chicago, the Alliance works with over 500 member organizations. In 2014, the Alliance won the U.S. Water Prize in the non-profit category for its work. With over 50 years of professional experience in the water and land conservation fields, Dickinson has worked for retail and wholesale utilities, regulatory agencies, and NGOs. She has served in numerous local, national, and international organizations and is the former president of her local water utility board.

Fabritz, Sandy



Sandy Fabritz has lead efforts in water supply management for over 30 years, working with policy and elected leaders at the local, state, and federal levels on drought management; Tribal water settlements; groundwater management; surface water litigation; and Colorado River issues in the southwest United States. For the past 13 years, Fabritz has served as the director of water strategy for Freeport-McMoRan, protecting the company's water rights and water supplies through the development of water acquisition and mitigation alternatives and water supply sustainability strategies across the company's portfolio. Fabritz has put significant efforts into developing strategies to mitigate climate and drought risks, not only to water supplies across Freeport's global assets, but to the communities and natural systems that surround Freeport's operations.

Garimella, Suresh



Suresh Garimella serves as the 23rd president of the University of Arizona and distinguished professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering. He previously served as president of the University of Vermont and, at Purdue University, as the Goodson Distinguished Professor of

Mechanical Engineering and executive vice president for research and partnerships. Throughout his career, Garimella has emphasized the importance of access, affordability, and excellence in the student learning experience, discovery with impact, and engagement with community. Garimella has made seminal contributions to the field of electronics thermal management and energy efficiency at micro and nano scales, and in sustainable energy systems technology and policy. In

February 2026, he was appointed to the newly established Office of Science Advisory Committee for the U. S. Department of Energy.

Hitt, Greg



Greg Hitt is an associate for research and outreach programs at the University of Arizona in the School of Mining Engineering and Mineral Resources. He supports faculty in their search for external funding, assisting in developing and reviewing proposals. Additionally, Hitt employs his experience

with local and statewide government and his industry connections to enhance school participation in initiatives related to local and regional mining engineering. He spent nearly 20 years working for Pima County in planning and infrastructure development, utility coordination, and economic development and has served on local planning and development committees in the Tucson area. An Arizona native, Hitt is an alumnus of the state's two biggest rivals.

Hobbs, Katie



Born and raised in Arizona, Governor Katie Hobbs has spent her life exemplifying hard work and public service. She is a graduate of both NAU and ASU and has used her Master's of Social Work to help unhoused youth in Phoenix and run one of the largest domestic violence shelters in the country.

With over a decade of public service, Governor Hobbs spent eight years in the Arizona Legislature, including two terms as Senate Minority Leader. She later became Arizona's Secretary of State, where she forcefully defended the votes and voices of every single Arizonan. In 2022, she was elected the fifth woman and also the fifth Arizona native to lead as governor of the state. Governor Hobbs sees her role in government as an extension of her social work. In her first term, she has already moved the needle forward on some of our state's most critical issues, including housing, water security, and economic development. Governor Hobbs approaches each challenge with a desire to make people's lives better and give every Arizonan an opportunity to thrive.

Jungers, Bryan



Bryan Jungers is a principal of emerging technology and innovation for Tucson Electric Power (TEP). He has 25 years of professional and academic experience as an energy engineer and researcher and has spent the last 18 years working in the electric utility industry. Jungers specializes

in electrification and grid-edge technologies. He earned a BS in environmental resources engineering from Humboldt State University and an MS in civil and environmental engineering from the University of California Davis.

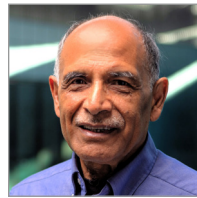
Kuzdas, Christopher



Christopher Kuzdas serves as the water program director for the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and EDF Action in Arizona, which comprises public interest groups with a combined total of 96,000 members. He serves on the Arizona Governor's Water Policy Council and

collaborates with local communities across the state to shape water-related decisions that impact them and ensure that public policy outcomes reflect local values and goals. Kuzdas is originally from Northern Arizona and still lives there with his family. He is active in his local community, coaching his daughter's mountain bike team, teaching at his local community college, and volunteering with the Coconino County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team.

Lall, Upmanu



Upmanu Lall is a global futures professor in the School of Complex Adaptive Systems and the director of The Water Institute at Arizona State University. Until January 2024, he was the founding director of the Columbia Water Center, the Alan and Carol Silberstein Professor of Engineering, and a

Senior Research Scientist at the International Research Institute for Climate & Society at Columbia University. He is a fellow of the American Geophysical Union and of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. He has received the Henry Darcy Award from the European Geophysical Union and an Arid Lands Hydraulic Engineering award and the Ven Te Chow award from the American Society of Civil Engineers, among others. Through the Columbia Water Center, Lall led projects on all major continents on water and climate sustainability, risk analysis and mitigation, infrastructure solutions, and the integration of financial instruments.

Lewis, John



John Lewis has been with Avant Energy since 2012, serving as Avant's managing director of Native American energy. In this role, he brings over 17 years of infrastructure-related consulting experience to Avant's Native American energy projects. Lewis has been directly involved with every

Native American client engagement, overseeing a wide array of projects, including Tribal utility formation, renewable energy development, Tribal organizational management, energy infrastructure development, and energy and utility related negotiations. He is an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community and previously served as the board chairman for GRIC's electric utility from 2010-2021 as well as serving on Gila River's telecommunications corporate board from 2012-2021.

L'Heureux, Rachael



Rachael L'Heureux is a water resource specialist with the City of Phoenix Water Services Department. She holds a BS in environmental science from Arizona State University and a professional master's in aquatic health sciences from William & Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

With the City of Phoenix, L'Heureux runs the Business Water Efficiency Program, a program that helps commercial, industrial, and institutional (CII) customers with water conservation. She is also involved in various policy and regulatory matters relevant to CII water conservation. A native of Seattle, WA, L'Heureux is passionate about achieving water conservation and resiliency in her new desert home.

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Long, Amanda



Amanda Long is an associate at WestWater Research based in Phoenix, Arizona. She specializes in water right valuations, market analysis, and water supply assessments across the western United States. Her work encompasses a broad range of valuation contexts, including instream flow and

species concerns, private properties, and municipal and industrial acquisitions. Long also assists clients with navigating water policy and regulatory frameworks. Before joining WestWater, Long served at the Arizona Department of Water Resources, where she played a key role in developing the 4th and 5th management plans and led the team responsible for water supply and demand assessments across Arizona's groundwater basins. During this time, she also served as the governor-appointed Arizona representative to the Western States Water Council on water policy matters across the West. Long holds a BS in environmental and conservation sciences and an MS in agricultural and natural resource economics from the University of Alberta.

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Lothrop, Nathan



Nathan Lothrop is the associate director of the BRISA Center for the Environment and an assistant research professor in the College of Public Health. With nearly 15 years of collaborative environmental health and epidemiology research experience in academia and private consulting, he is

committed to community-engaged solutions to environmental health issues. Lothrop has expertise in air pollution epidemiology, GIS and spatial analysis, social determinants of health, heavy metals exposures, research results reporting, and science communication. Previously, he worked in photography and media, a skillset he applies to science communications. Lothrop is passionate about improving public health through responsible, team-based environmental health research and service. He has been awarded the International Society of Exposure Science JESEE Young Investigator Award (2019) and the College's Community-Engaged Scholarship and Practice Award (2015).

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McCabe, David



Sundt's engineering director David McCabe's career spans more than 35 years and includes technical and leadership roles on a wide range of high-profile, high-value projects worldwide. He applies his extensive technical knowledge and leadership experience to supporting

Sundt's design-build projects, serving as a resource to both preconstruction and operations teams. McCabe has a BS in chemical engineering and over three decades of specialized experience in semiconductor and advanced manufacturing facilities. He has worked on a variety of projects for companies such as TSMC, Samsung, Motorola, and Intel. McCabe began working in the water and wastewater industry at 20 years old. He has worked in design, equipment supply, and operations for water and wastewater systems. Now, he brings his experiences to a construction company that excels in the field of water and wastewater treatment.

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McEvoy, Jamie



Jamie McEvoy is the associate director of the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center (WRRRC) and associate extension specialist in the Department of Environmental Science. She received her PhD in Geography and Development from the University of Arizona in 2013, with a

focus on climate change adaptation in the water sector in the United States-Mexico border region. Prior to joining the WRRRC, McEvoy was an associate professor at Montana State University, where she conducted research on water governance. She has published on topics including participatory water planning, ecological drought, flood risk communication, desalination, climate adaptation, and nature-based strategies. As a social scientist, McEvoy works with interdisciplinary teams and diverse stakeholders to analyze water policy and management strategies and identify barriers and opportunities for equitable water governance. The cornerstone of her research and extension activities is building relationships with interested partners to collaboratively address water issues.

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Megdal, Sharon B.



Sharon B. Megdal is the director of the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center, professor and specialist in the Department of Environmental Science, C.W. & Modene Neely endowed professor, and distinguished outreach professor. Her work aims to bridge the academic,

practitioner, and civil society communities through water policy and management research, education, and engagement programs. Megdal teaches the graduate course, Water Policy in Arizona and Semi-arid Regions, and has won multiple awards for her contributions to water research and education. Her current professional activities include serving on the leadership team for the Water & Tribes Initiative, Colorado River Basin; the board for the Kasser Joint Institute for Food, Water, and Energy Security; and the Global Leadership Council for the Women in

Water Diplomacy Network. Past service includes the Central Arizona Project board of directors and the Arizona Corporation Commission. Megdal holds a PhD in Economics from Princeton University.

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Muralidharan, Krishna



Krishna Muralidharan is a professor in the department of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Arizona, with joint appointments at the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory and the Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Applied Math. He currently serves as the director of the

Center for Semiconductor Manufacturing at the University of Arizona. His research focuses on implementing integrated computational materials engineering paradigms to push the frontiers of semiconductor device technologies, advanced manufacturing, multiscale energy storage systems, and planetary materials analysis. Muralidharan received his PhD from the University of Arizona in 2004, and prior to joining the University of Arizona as a faculty member, he worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory and at the University of Florida.

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Nuñez, Austin



Austin Nuñez has been chairman of the San Xavier District, one of the 11 legislative districts of the Tohono O’odham Nation (formerly the Papago Tribe of AZ), since 1987. He presides over district council and community meetings and serves as CEO of the district’s governmental operations. Prior

to becoming district chairman, Nuñez worked for two Native American community development programs: first as assistant director for an international community development organization serving 19 Native American nations in Arizona, and second as assistant director for the Tohono O’odham Nation’s Community Development Program. He served for two years in each position. Nuñez has three adult children and six grandchildren.

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Osborne, Kelly



Kelly Osborne is a fab (semiconductor fabrication plant) facilities operations senior technologist at Intel Corporation. Her focus is conserving water through optimizing water use, wastewater treatment, and reclamation. She holds a BS in chemical engineering from the University of New

Mexico and has been with Intel for 24 years. During her time at Intel, she has held factory engineering positions in wet etch, diffusion, and yield, prior to moving to the fab facilities operations organization to support the industrial waste systems group.

Peacey, Victoria



Victoria Peacey serves as president of Resolution Copper. She started her career in 2001 as a project engineer at the Bingham Canyon mine and worked across the Kennecott Copper complex, including the mine, concentrator, smelter, and refinery, covering engineering, technical studies, environmental activities, and reclamation. Peacey then worked for Rio Tinto’s Kennecott Eagle Mine in Michigan in 2008. From 2010 to 2020, Peacey held a variety of roles at Resolution Copper, covering external affairs, communications, communities, environment, permitting, and cultural heritage. Through 2021 and 2022, Peacey led communities and social performance for Rio Tinto Americas and was chief of staff for the Chief Operating Office of Rio Tinto Copper. Peacey lives in Gilbert, Arizona, with her husband and three children and has a bachelor’s degree in applied geoscience and a master’s in civil engineering.

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Pryor, Todd



Todd Pryor has served as town manager for the Town of Superior since January 2016. Prior to holding this position, he was the fire operations chief for the Superior Fire Department and performed a variety of duties as the town’s fire marshal, arson investigator, and code enforcement officer, as well as chief of the department. Before entering public service, he worked as an assistant project manager for a junior mining company for 13 years.

.....

Risner, Pat



Pat Risner is president of South32 Hermosa, an advanced mine development project in southern Arizona that could produce five federally designated critical minerals—zinc, manganese, copper, silver, and lead—all of which are essential minerals for powering the nation’s energy future. With over 30 years of industry experience, he has held executive, global roles in operations, project development, health and safety, and environment in Australia and the United States.

.....

Robertson, Tahnee



Tahnee Robertson is the founder and director of Southwest Decision Resources (SDR), an Arizona-based team of 14 professional facilitators and collaboration practitioners. For the past 25 years, SDR has worked across the southwest United States to support more inclusive and informed natural resource management, community development, and public policy planning and decision-making. Robertson’s project work has included urban and community planning, large landscape conservation, outdoor recreation, energy and water

issues, and watershed and forest management. She has a bachelor's in biology from Grinnell College and a master's in natural resources from Cornell University.

Rogers, Lindsay



Lindsay Rogers is the policy manager for municipal conservation at Western Resource Advocates, where she advances both state and local water policy in the Interior West to strengthen communities' water security and reduce pressure on rivers. She specializes in integrated water

and land use planning, helping communities implement tailored strategies such as water efficient landscaping programs and large water user policy. Previously, she spent five years as the Colorado Basin program manager at WaterNow Alliance, advancing sustainable water programs with municipal decision-makers. She holds a BS in environmental studies and international relations from Tufts University and is pursuing an MPA from the University of Colorado Denver.

Schladweiler, Scott



Scott Schladweiler serves as deputy director of Tucson Water, with approximately 27 years of leadership in public utility management, infrastructure planning, and engineering. Prior to taking up his current position with Tucson Water in 2021, Schladweiler led water and

wastewater operations as water director for the Town of Marana. His expertise spans capital project delivery, regulatory compliance, and advancing sustainable water solutions for Arizona communities. Schladweiler is a registered professional engineer and holds a BS and MS in civil engineering from the University of Arizona. Bear Down!

Schonek, Kimberly



Kimberly Schonek is the water program director for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Arizona and has been with TNC for more than 15 years. Currently she oversees statewide water policy development and project work for Arizona's most sensitive freshwater ecosystems. In addition to her

role at TNC, Kim was appointed to, and served as chairwoman for, the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA) Conservation Grant Committee from January 2023 through May 2024. Previously, Schonek worked for the Oregon Water Trust as a project manager, where she designed and implemented a statewide flow monitoring program and various flow restoration projects. Schonek has also worked for the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. National Park Service, and City of Portland Water Bureau. She holds a master's degree in environmental management with an emphasis in hydrology and a BS in environmental studies from Portland State University.

Simm, Rob



Rob Simm is a senior vice president at Stantec. He has over 30 years' experience in municipal and industrial water and wastewater treatment, including project development, process evaluation and design, project management, facility planning and optimization, pilot testing, operators training, and contract administration. Simm focuses on project development for Stantec, specifically private equity funded industrial and municipal infrastructure projects. He is an adjunct professor in the Civil Engineering Department at the University of British Columbia and a visiting scholar at John Hopkins University in the School of Public Health.

Stokes, Eliza



Eliza Stokes is the Growing Water Smart program manager with the Sonoran Institute, where she trains and assists local governments in three western states and in the United States-Mexico borderlands to ensure that land use planning decisions make strategic use of water resources. In

this role, Stokes facilitates interdisciplinary municipal and county teams to create 12- to 18-month water resilience action plans, while also connecting water and land use professionals across the Colorado River Basin through the Growing Water Smart peer network. Stokes previously held roles as the communications and campaign manager with the Tucson-based Watershed Management Group as well as the organizer and communications manager at the environmental advocacy organization MountainTrue in Western North Carolina. She has a master's degree in public policy with a concentration in environmental water policy from the University of Arizona.

Templeton, Alice



As a client relations and community leadership specialist, Alice Templeton is a bilingual Tucson native who is a passionate advocate and skilled communicator for her clients. She draws on a wealth of experience from her work with professionals in the development

community, non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations, governmental entities, and the media. Templeton has implemented programs that bring people together to fulfill organizational goals, find innovative solutions, and cultivate important connections. These help to design, construct, and enhance communities in Southern Arizona. She feels strongly about the investment of her time mentoring others and is proud of the long-term relationships she has built with those she has counseled. Always seeking ways to provide opportunities for the next generation of community leaders, she leverages her experience and contacts to help build beneficial relationships. Away from her client relations work, Alice is an avid hiker who enjoys living the Southern Arizona lifestyle.

Thomas, Pilar



Pilar Thomas (Pascua Yaqui) is an adjunct professor in the University of Arizona School of Law, where she teaches Indian Energy Law. She previously served as a partner in the Quarles & Brady Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Practice Group, where she provided strategic legal

advice to Tribes, Tribal enterprises, and renewable energy companies. She also serves as a professor of practice at Arizona State University College of Law, is a board member for Western Resources Advocates, and is the Vice Chair at large for the ABA Section on Energy, Environment, and Resources Indigenous Resources Committee. She received her JD from the University of New Mexico School of Law, magna cum laude, with a certificate in Indian law, and her BA in Economics from Stanford University.

Tilghman, Kyle



Kyle Tilghman is the Director of Water Strategic Projects at Salt River Project (SRP). He has spent his entire 25-year career at SRP on the water side of the company. Before coming to the Water Strategic Projects group in 2023, Tilghman held various leadership positions in the water

engineering, water construction and maintenance, and groundwater departments. In his current role, he leads a staff that is working on water supply resiliency projects, water conservation programs and initiatives, and forest health projects on the SRP watershed. Tilghman has a mechanical engineering degree from Northern Arizona University and an MBA from Arizona State University. In his spare time, he can be found on the soccer field, either as a youth coach or as a high school referee.

Trussell, Steve

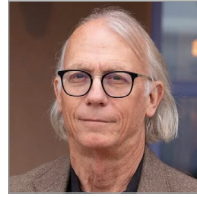


Steve Trussell began his career in mining as a consultant for the Arizona Mining Association advocating for the copper mining industry and later worked with the Arizona Foundation for Resource Education. In 2001, he joined the Arizona Rock Products Association as community

relations director and was named executive director in 2007. In 2017, Trussell became executive director of the Arizona Mining

Association, where he continues to champion the mining industry and applies his expertise in community relations, government affairs, and the legislative and regulatory arenas at all levels of government. He has served on numerous boards and committees. He holds a BA and master's degree from Arizona State University and a post baccalaureate degree from Ottawa University. Trussell is also a Phoenix Police Reserve Officer and was inducted into the Minor League Football Hall of Fame.

Wegner, David



David Wegner is a senior strategic consultant with Woolpert, an architecture, engineering, geospatial, and strategic consulting firm. Wegner is a biological scientist based in Tucson and is a member of the Water Science and Technology Board of the National Academies of Sciences,

Engineering, and Medicine. He has served as senior principal investigator or the equivalent on dozens of water and environmental studies conducted on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works program and has provided scientific and engineering support as a member of the senior staff for the U.S. House of Representatives. Wegner oversaw the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, the Power Marketing Administrations within the Department of Energy, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Wilson, Max



Max Wilson is the water resources management advisor for the City of Phoenix, where he advises mayoral, council, and city leadership on water resource issues and is responsible for developing and implementing the city's water resources strategy. Wilson previously

served as deputy water services director and water conservation coordinator. Prior to joining the city, he was the sustaining flows manager at Friends of the Verde River, where he worked to promote sustainability in Phoenix's headwaters by keeping the Verde River healthy and flowing. Wilson holds BS, MS, and PhD degrees in biology from Arizona State University, where he studied a variety of land and water planning issues from the Tibetan Plateau to Beijing and Shanghai.

Additional info can be found here

wrrc.arizona.edu/conference



We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. The University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

WRRC 2026 Conference Advisory Committee

Cepand Alizadeh, Government Relations Specialist, Arizona Technology Council

Alicja Babst-Kostecka, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Science;
Director, Center for Environmentally Sustainable Mining, University of Arizona

Natalie DeRoock, Public Affairs Administrator, Tucson Water

Sandy Fabritz, Director of Water Strategy, Freeport-McMoRan

Rachael L'Heureux, Water Resource Specialist, City of Phoenix

Greg Hitt, Research and Outreach Programs Associate, School of Mining Engineering and
Mineral Resources, University of Arizona

Yu-Feng Lin, Director, Illinois Water Resources Center, University of Illinois

Randy Matas, Deputy Director, Water Quality Division, AZ Department of Environmental
Quality

Michael Mendonca, Senior Director, Water Strategic Services, Salt River Project

Scott Miller, Water Resources Analyst, Water Resources Management, Arizona Public
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Kevin Moran, Associate Vice President, Regional Affairs, Environmental Defense Fund

Rob Simm, Senior Vice President, Water, Stantec

Carol Ward, Assistant Director for the Planning and Permitting Division, Arizona
Department of Water Resources

Dave Wegner, Senior Strategic Consultant, Woolpert Engineering; Board Member, National
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Thank You!

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The WRRC 2026 Annual Conference was supported in part by the Technology and Research Initiative Fund/Water, Environmental and Energy Solutions Initiative, administered by the University of Arizona Office of Research and Partnerships.

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The WRRC 2026 Annual Conference was supported in part by Water Resources Research Act Grant G21AP10594.

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ARROYO



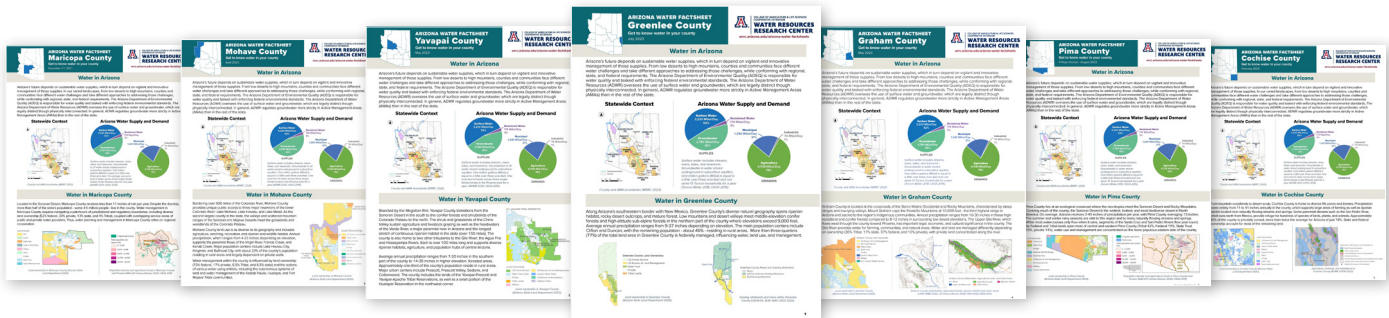
Water Issues Critical to Arizona

The WRRC's *Arroyo* is a unique publication produced each spring to look in depth at a single topic of timely importance to Arizona. Intended for the lay public, it reaches educators, water managers, decision makers, students, and interested individuals and has been used to inform policy discussions.

wrrc.arizona.edu/arroyo



ARIZONA WATER FACTSHEETS



Get to Know Water in Your County

These county-level factsheets are designed to answer common questions about water resources, tailored to every county in Arizona so as to foster understanding of the local nature of Arizona water resource challenges and solutions.

wrrc.arizona.edu/az-water-factsheets



WEEKLY WAVE

Be Informed

Keep up with our news and events with a subscription to the *Weekly Wave*.

wrrc.arizona.edu/subscribe



To read the 2026 *Arroyo* use the QR code or link below.
wrrc.arizona.edu/arroyo-2026



Borders and Water: Institutions, Investments, and Information

Authors: Katherine N. Marsh and Susanna Eden
Layout: John Polle
Executive Publisher: Sharon B. Megdal
Cover Photo: Mark Howe, Anzalduas Dam, Rio Grande, WRRC 2025 Photo Contest

INTRODUCTION

Water links communities, ecosystems, and economies irrespective of political borders. This is evident in North America, where the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Indigenous nations share rivers, aquifers, and coastlines. These shared water resources sustain communities and industry, but sharing brings challenges. As pressures from population growth, climate, and economic development intensify, cross-border collaboration will continue to form the foundation for managing border water resources.

This year's *Arroyo* explores the topic of water and borders, building on discussions from the 2025 WRRC Annual Conference, *Shared Borders, Shared Waters*. The

publication highlights the history of water cooperation involving Arizona, the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Indigenous Nations while examining current efforts to expand, conserve, and protect shared water resources through public and private partnerships. This *Arroyo* aims to provide readers with a clear understanding of how cross-border collaboration is shaping water management today and how partnerships can ensure equitable access to clean, reliable water.

SHARING WATER

Many of the world's politically sensitive regions also contain shared rivers and aquifers. From the Nile River to the Aral Sea, shared waters have long been viewed as areas of potential conflict. However, according to WRRC



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The *Arroyo* is published by the Water Resources Research Center
Cooperative Extension, University of Arizona
350 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson, Arizona 85719; **Phone:**
520-621-9591 **Email:** wrrc@arizona.edu; **Website:** wrrc.arizona.edu

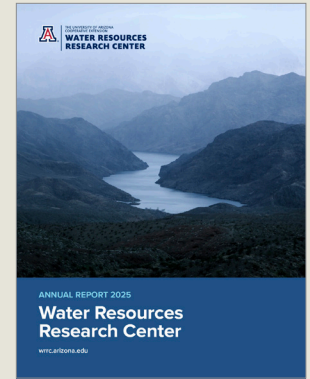


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2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Photo: Sandy Shiloh – Colorado River, AZ 2023
2025 WRRC Photo Contest



ANNUAL REPORT

More information and metrics can be found at wrrc.arizona.edu/about/annual-report



Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs and WRRC Director Sharon B. Megdal, WRRC 2025 Annual Conference. Image: Jay Corella

- **13,500** RECIPIENTS of the annual *Arroyo* publication
- **4084** SUBSCRIBERS to the Weekly Wave e-News Digest
- **1010** REGISTRANTS for the 2025 Annual Conference
- **45** PRESENTATIONS by WRRC personnel to diverse audiences
- **26** PUBLICATIONS by WRRC personnel
- **142** SUBMISSIONS to the annual WRRC photo contest
- **57** PUBLIC INQUIRIES submitted and answered via WRRC-Extension's online information request form
- **134** ATTENDEES (AVERAGE) participated in 12 Water Webinars

CONNECTING TO THE PUBLIC

In 2025, water remained an important issue in the Southwest, and the WRRC was once again called upon by various stakeholders and partners to be a trusted source of 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, outreach, and engagement efforts to expand water awareness and understanding of water resource issues.

Annual Conference

The 2025 Annual Conference, *Shared Borders, Shared Waters: Working Together in Times of Scarcity*, at the University of Arizona Student Union. There were **267** people registered in-person and more than **740** for the Zoom livestream. Attendees heard from **49** speakers, who shared their ideas for solutions to the pressing water resource challenges currently facing Arizona and the region. The full recorded program is available online.

wrrc.arizona.edu/conference

WRRC Water Webinar Series

The WRRC's Water Webinar Series continues to attract diverse audiences for presentations and dialogues on a wide range of water topics.

wrrc.arizona.edu/news-events/water-webinars

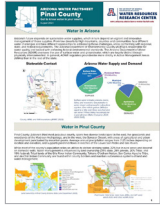
GREATER DEPTH, BROADER PERSPECTIVE FOR A CLEAR WATER FUTURE

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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RESOURCES

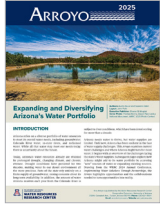
Online and Print



Arizona Water Factsheets

The WRRC's Arizona Water Factsheet series offers an in-depth overview of the county's water resources and the vital roles of groundwater and surface water in supporting agriculture and population growth.

wrrc.arizona.edu/arizona-water-factsheets



Arroyo

The *2025 Arroyo — Expanding and Diversifying Arizona's Water Portfolio* — The 2025 Arroyo describes the many ways Arizona is exploring to develop "new" water sources for a secure, sustainable supply. It focuses on four broad strategies: treating water, capturing water, transporting water, and exchanging water.

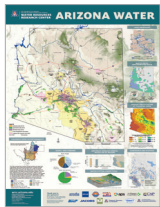
wrrc.arizona.edu/publications/arroyo



Reflections

WRRC Director Sharon B. Megdal published six *Reflections* essays via the *Weekly/Summer Wave*.

wrrc.arizona.edu/publications/reflections



Arizona Water Map Poster

Order your water map using the link below.

wrrc.arizona.edu/arizona-water-map-form

Water Research and Planning Innovations for Dryland Systems

Through a flexible approach to water resources planning, the Water RAPIDS program seeks to strengthen local and regional economies while supporting the natural resources that contribute to quality of life.

wrrc.arizona.edu/programs/water-rapids

Transboundary Aquifer Assessment Program (TAAP)

TAAP is a federally funded program co-hosted by the USGS Arizona Water Science Center in Tucson, Arizona, and the Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) at the University of Arizona.

wrrc.arizona.edu/taap

wrrc.arizona.edu/taap-spanish

WRRC Website

The WRRC website highlights programs, activities, news, and events. Seminars and annual conference presentations are posted for easy access, along with publications and online resources.

wrrc.arizona.edu

- wrrc.arizona.edu/conference
- wrrc.arizona.edu/groundwater-gov-management
- wrrc.arizona.edu/middle-east-water
- wrrc.arizona.edu/publications

Arizona Water Conservation Factsheets

In 2025, WRRC received notice of an award for a WIFA grant supporting the development of six water conservation factsheets. Using the process of development established by the successful Arizona Water Factsheets project, the Water RAPIDS program staff and graduate research assistants initiated work on this project.

Keep Up With Water News and Events

Subscribe to the **Weekly Wave** — the e-News Digest that offers the latest in water news, notices of upcoming events, and announcements from the WRRC and others. Subscribers also receive the *Arroyo* — an annual publication that examines a timely topic of importance to Arizona.

WEEKLY WAVE



wrrc.arizona.edu/subscribe



WRRC Annual Photo Contest

Each year, the WRRC hosts a photo contest (wrrc.arizona.edu/opportunities/photo-contest) and uses the submitted photographs in various ways, including in this document, in the *Arroyo* and other publications, and on the website. The 2025 Photo Contest theme was *A World of Water*. Photo: Kohinoor Kar — Horseshoe Bend, Glen Canyon, AZ 2023



Member of the National Institutes for Water Resources

The WRRC is Arizona's federally authorized Water Resources Research Institute (WRRI), and as such, is one of 54 members of the National Institutes for Water Resources.



The University of Arizona
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A Unit of Arizona Cooperative Extension
350 N. Campbell Ave.
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Water touches every aspect of life in Arizona—from public health and the environment to our economy and long-term sustainability. At the **WRRC**, we are proud to be a trusted leader in developing practical, science-based solutions to water issues. We rely on help from Donors, who have a big impact on our ability to conduct in-depth research, top-level education, and purposeful engagement for improved water management for Arizona and beyond.

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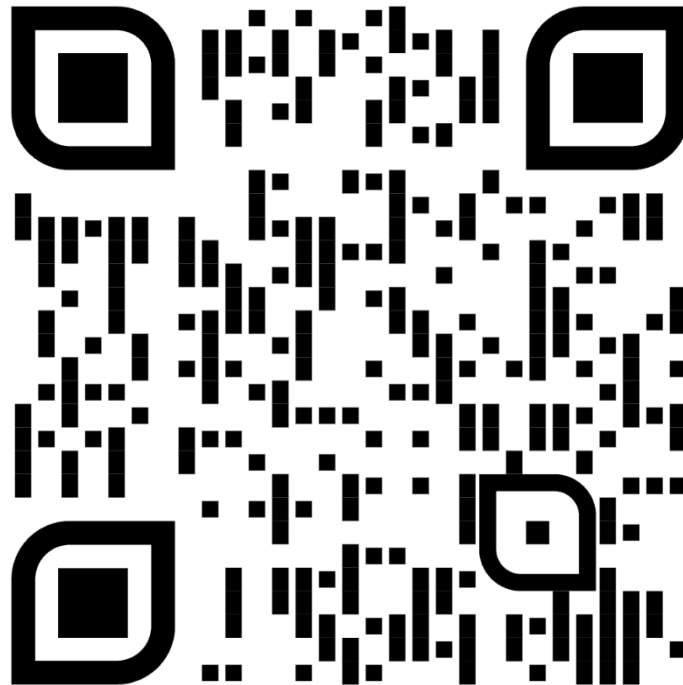


Participant Evaluation Survey

Thank you for attending the WRRC 2026 Annual Conference!

We value your feedback.

Please complete this [short survey](#) to help guide future conference programming.



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