



In light of Governor Hobbs' recent release of the Phoenix Active Management Area Groundwater Model on June 1, which effectively suspends the issuance of new Certificates of Assured Water Supply (CAWS) for those reliant on groundwater by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), the city of Buckeye respectfully disagrees with this reactionary response to an exaggerated issue.

The underlying problem stems from an outdated model developed over 40 years ago which fails to incorporate current water management practices and an evolving economic development landscape. The recent decision is short-sighted and does not provide any context for a solution and puts an unfair target on the City.

When the Groundwater Management Act was enacted in 1980 it truly was a state-of-the-art model. However, it was based on a time when Arizona's economy had a heavy emphasis on agriculture and bedroom communities, making the model static and limited in its ability to adjust to the latest groundwater management practices and technologies.

Today, Arizona's economic climate is much different. The state is thriving with emerging technologies, high-tech manufacturing companies and robust communities.

Buckeye understands the value water has on our community and the entire State of Arizona and has made it a priority to secure new water sources.

The truth is, Buckeye has the water resources available to sustain our existing customers, both residential and commercial, as well as the future growth that already has Certificates of Assured Water Supply (CAWS) issued by ADWR. Buckeye's water future is secure, and the number of CAWS already issued within our city limits will continue to support years of growth. However, without updating the groundwater management model to reflect current market trends, it puts the entire Phoenix Active Management Area at risk of serious economic challenges to remain vibrant and sustainable.

Rest assured, Buckeye takes water management very seriously and is continuously finding new ways to manage the water available to the city for our customers in the most conservative and cost-effective manner, regardless of the source of the water.

Here are a few examples:

- As agricultural land is converted to neighborhoods, businesses or industrial uses, the amount of groundwater pumped is significantly reduced.
- Buckeye is a member of the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishing District, which is required by law to replenish the aquifer with every drop that is pumped out by development with a CAWS.
- As more homes and businesses are built in Buckeye, the amount of reclaimed water will increase, providing the City with additional, renewable water supplies that can be used to replenish the groundwater supply or be reused for landscaping or direct potable reuse (DPR).

- Buckeye is awaiting ADWR to approve the purchase of nearly 6,000 acre-feet of water from the Harquahala Valley. This water can be used to replenish aquifers and/or provide drinking water for new customers.

Other factors to consider:

- Arizona has a housing shortage of approximately 270,000 units, and Buckeye is key to helping close the gap. Buckeye has approximately 23,000 single family residential units with CAWS located throughout the city.
 - Once developed, these homes will bring approximately 74,000 new residents to the city, and every home will have a guaranteed 100-year water supply, just like every other current resident in Buckeye.
 - The median price for a home in Buckeye is still within reach for many Arizonans, making the American Dream possible.
- Buckeye currently pumps approximately 30,000-acre feet of water annually from a waterlogged area near our downtown to prevent flooding to neighboring properties and farm fields.
 - This water is considered a waste due to its brackish and poor quality, and would require expensive treatment processes to meet drinking water standards.
 - Neither the recent model released on June 1, nor the Hassayampa Sub-basin report released during the Governor's State of the State address includes this water in any of their models.
 - For comparison, 30,000 acre-feet of water is nearly three times the amount of water our customers currently use in one year.
- Arizona's future and economic success as a leader in emerging industries and high-tech manufacturing cannot be accomplished without cities similar to Buckeye.
 - Most emerging industries and high-tech manufacturing companies require mega-parcels in excess of 500 acres.
 - Buckeye and other similar cities in the Phoenix-metro area are the only places with this much available land.
 - At 640 square miles and only 13% built out, Buckeye is a primary location in Arizona for these companies to select to expand and grow their business.
 - New housing developments bring the workforce required to attract these industries to Arizona and make them and the state's economy thrive.

Buckeye strongly believes all entities need to work together to ensure Arizona continues to grow successfully and sustainably. This effort will require private water companies, developers, water industry experts, municipalities, other local governments, and research institutions to work together on an incremental approach. Both sides of the stories must be heard, and practical, reasonable solutions will develop to secure not only Buckeye's future, but Arizona's future.