

October 26, 2023

Governor Katie Hobbs
Office of the Governor
1700 W Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor Hobbs,

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Arizona's economy, contributing \$23.3 billion in economic benefits to the state. The prosperity of our rural communities is inextricably linked to the health of our agricultural sector. We believe it is crucial to preserve and enhance the economic vitality in rural Arizona. While we think about the future of our communities and industries that drive our local economies, we are concerned about the ongoing efforts surrounding the Governor's Water Policy Council and specifically that of the Rural Ground Water Committee. While we appreciate the efforts undertaken by your administration to address these critical issues, we feel that the voice of rural Arizona and our communities are not being afforded an opportunity to provide input.

The development of any new groundwater management regulations must involve those that are directly and most impacted. The current process undermines our pursuit of innovative solutions that align with the values of sustainable water management, protecting existing uses, and creating opportunities for future growth with an emphasis on conservation. Specifically, we emphasize the need for a fresh, forward-thinking approach that not only safeguards the interests of water users but also entrusts decision-making to locally elected planning bodies.

Our foremost concern emanates from the fact that the current trajectory of the committee appears to be predetermined, resembling a fusion of previous unsuccessful attempts that have faced heavy scrutiny for many years. We, the 12 undersigned County Supervisors, are opposed to a Local Groundwater Stewardship Area (LGSA), which has been the focal point of this committee. County Supervisors have had multiple opportunities to vote in support of a LGSA, all of which have failed. We believe this situation is untenable, particularly considering the immediate and direct implications of such a regulatory framework on the livelihoods of our constituents who rely on rural groundwater. As county supervisors, we firmly believe in finding solutions to complex issues through a process that ensures all voices may be heard, rather than the select few whom the powers that be may deem worthy.

We seek your attention to rectify the inherent flaws in the current process within the Rural Groundwater Committee. We urge you to recalibrate the committee's approach, listen to the concerns of our rural communities, and work collaboratively with us to develop a regulatory framework that aligns with the broader goals of sustainable water management, economic prosperity, and the conservation of our precious resources.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to working together to ensure the success and well-being of rural Arizona.

Respectfully,

Nelson Davis, Chair

Apache County Supervisor
ndavis@apachecounty.gov
75 West Cleveland
St. Johns, AZ 85396

Peggy Judd, Chairman

Cochise County Supervisor
pjudd@cochise.az.gov
1415 Melody Lane
Building G
Bisbee, AZ 85630

Paul David, Chairman

Graham County Supervisor
pdavid@graham.az.gov
921 W Thatcher Blvd.
Safford, AZ 85546

John Howard, Vice Chariman

Graham County Supervisor
jhoward@graham.az.gov
921 W Thatcher Blvd.
Safford, AZ 85546

Clay Mack, Member

Graham County Supervisor
cmack@graham.az.gov
921 W Thatcher Blvd.
Safford, AZ 85546

Richard Lunt, Chairman

Greenlee County Supervisor
rlunt@greenlee.az.gov
253 5th St.
Clifton, AZ 85533

Woody Cline, Chairman

Gila County Supervisor
wcline@gilacountyaz.gov
1400 E. Ash St.
Globe, AZ 85501

Buster Johnson

Mohave County Supervisor
Buster.johnson@mohavecounty.us
2001 College Drive, Suite 90
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403

Ron Gould

Mohave County Supervisor
Ron.Gould@mohavecounty.us
2001 College Drive, Suite 90
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403

Daryl Seymore

Navajo County Supervisor
Daryl.seymore@navajocountyaz.gov
PO Box 668
Holbrook, AZ 86025

Jason Whiting, Vice Chair

Navajo County Supervisor
jason.whiting@navajocountyaz.gov
PO Box 668
Holbrook, AZ 86025

Jonathan Lines

Yuma County Supervisor
Jonathan.lines@yumacountyaz.gov
198 S Main St.
Yuma, AZ 85364

CC: Chad Campbell, Patrick Adams, Tom Buschatzke, Senate President Warren Peterson, Speaker of the House Ben Toma, Senator Sine Kerr, Representative Gail Griffin, Stefanie Smallhouse