

Guiding Principles for Augmentation Discussions

Finding new water supplies is an increasing area of focus for state leaders, decision-makers, and the water community, as highlighted by the recent announcement to create an Arizona Water Authority that will focus on augmentation. Recognizing this emphasis on finding new water supplies, the AMWUA cities identified the need for a clear and unified position on augmentation and how to evaluate specific water projects.

As discussions on state water augmentation increase, the ten AMWUA cities want to be engaged since they collectively serve 3.7 million people, more than half of the state's population, along with the majority of businesses and industries that drive Arizona's economy. This means that the AMWUA cities have vast knowledge and an acute understanding of how vital long-term planning and investing in water resources, augmentation, and infrastructure is to ensure our communities thrive here in the desert. Plus, these ten Valley cities provide the bulk of the tax base necessary for a statewide augmentation effort to succeed.



The guiding principles for water augmentation are as follows:

1. The AMWUA municipalities believe all proposals to develop new water resources or to enhance or restore existing water supplies must:
 - a. Be sustainable and cost-effective.
 - b. Be paid for by those who benefit from the water.
 - c. Maintain existing water rights and priorities.
2. The AMWUA cities maintain that efforts to develop new water resources or enhance or restore existing water supplies should first address the demands of existing commitments to residential and commercial customers.
3. We need to prioritize local and regional projects within Arizona that enhance or maximize the utilization of existing water supplies — for example, recycling our existing water through the development of direct potable reuse. Also, the expansion of Bartlett Dam as proposed by the Salt River Project and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is a proactive augmentation project. It would reverse the decline in available Verde River water due to sedimentation build-up and create additional water for the Valley.
4. Regarding the Colorado River, any project to develop new water supplies to supplement the Colorado River directly or through exchanges as well as other efforts that would

restore municipal and industrial subcontractors' Colorado River supplies that have been reduced by shortage must:

- a. Involve active engagement of municipal and industrial users who have allocations of Colorado River water.
 - b. Demonstrate that the project directly benefits those municipal and industrial users.
 - c. Maintain the priority system for Colorado River water delivered by the Central Arizona Project.
5. Municipalities invest significantly in supply resiliency, water infrastructure, and conservation programs; therefore, proposed augmentation projects that impact wholesale water delivery rates from CAP or SRP must not jeopardize a municipality's ability to invest in its water utility. In other words, augmentation project costs must not outweigh the benefit.
6. Finally, the development of new water resources and enhancement of existing supplies must be accompanied by continual improvement in the management and conservation of Arizona's groundwater resources.

The AMWUA cities believe these principles are essential for measuring the value of augmentation initiatives, including creating the Arizona Water Authority and ensuring that water projects ultimately benefit the taxpayers who fund them. As we continue to look at ways to augment our water supplies, we need to remain aware that there is a high probability we will need to live for a long-time with the water supplies that we have today. This is why we need to stay vigilant and protective of those supplies and make sure every drop counts.

For over 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has worked to protect our member cities' ability to provide assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies to their communities. For more information, visit www.amwua.org.