



MEMORANDUM

Date: November 4, 2016

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C.H. Huckelberry", is written over the typed name and title.

Re: **Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department and Regional Partners
Win Water Innovation Challenge**

I am pleased to inform the Board of Supervisors that a regional coalition led by the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) has been named the winner of the Water Innovation Challenge sponsored by the Arizona Community Foundation, Arizona State University's Morrison Institute and Republic Media.

In addition to the \$250,000 grand prize, Pima County's team will benefit from up to \$50,000 in technical assistance from the WaterNow Alliance to advance the development and implementation of the project. The team also won the \$2,500 Audience Choice award for best presentation at the awards ceremony in Phoenix on November 3.

These funds will be used to underwrite a statewide beer-brewing competition using reclaimed water from community water reclamation facilities across the state, with the winner announced at the national WaterReuse Symposium to be held in Phoenix in September 2017. The Pure Water Brew Challenge will match local brewers with their local wastewater facility to craft beer for a head-to-head taste challenge tournament similar to the NCAA basketball tournament.

The goal of this statewide public outreach program is not about how to brew beer using reclaimed water; rather, it is to demonstrate to the public that reclaimed water is safe to drink. Every day in Arizona, more than 130 reclamation facilities produce more than 800 million gallons of water. In Pima County, our eight wastewater facilities produce more than 60 million gallons of water each day.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has endorsed the County's beer challenge, and the agency will help establish a framework for eventual potable reuse in the State.

As you know, we recently completed an overhaul of our two major wastewater processing facilities. This more than \$600 million public investment – the largest public works project in the County's history – built state-of-the-art facilities that produce millions of gallons of high-quality, Class A+ water for reuse purposes.

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Re: **Pima County RWRD and Regional Partners Win Water Innovation Challenge**
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The day is soon approaching where we will have to use reclaimed water for drinking. Mr. Jeff Prevatt, RWRD's Regulatory Compliance and Innovation Manager, is leading the regional effort through this innovative beer brewing challenge to help the public understand that reclaimed water is water you can drink and to help overcome, as he puts it, the "yuck" factor.

The Water Innovation Challenge Award recognizes the County's innovative leadership in bringing regional partners together to solve real problems, especially one as important as water sustainability for our present and our future. If we want our County to continue to grow and prosper, we must have a water supply, and that means we must reuse our reclaimed water.

Attached is more information about the award presented on November 3. [Click on this link](#) to watch the County's Challenge presentation video, which was produced by our Communications Office.

CHH/mjk

Attachment

c: John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Jackson Jenkins, Director, Regional Wastewater Reclamation

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And the winner is...

Pima County Southwest Water Campus is winner of The New Arizona Prize: Water Innovation Challenge

Pima County's Southwest Water Campus, a coalition of water professionals representing local government, water utilities, academia and private partners was announced as the winner of The New Arizona Prize:



Water Innovation Challenge during the Finalist Presentations & Prize Ceremony held this week in Phoenix. The group was one of five finalist teams that pitched their solutions to advance a sustainable water future for a town or city, county, tribal area, or an entire region to a Selection Committee. After a brief period of deliberation, the Pima County Southwest Water Campus was named the winner.

The Water Innovation Challenge's \$250,000 winning solution from the Southwest Water Campus, whose members include Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department, Tucson Water, Marana Water, Carollo Engineers, CH2M, University of Arizona, aquATECTURE, and Clean Water Services, is an effluent-to-potable reuse technology, statewide mobile public engagement campaign, and local craft beer competition. This team also won the \$2,500 Audience Choice award.

Thanks to a partnership with the WaterNow Alliance, the winner of the Water Innovation Challenge will benefit from as much as \$50,000 in additional technical assistance to accelerate development and implementation of their winning solution.

“We believed there were committed communities and groups of creative Arizonans and organizations with innovative ideas in various stages of development, that could be brought to fruition if the proper funding and support were available,” said Steve Seleznow, ACF’s President and CEO. “Pima County’s Southwest Water Campus has demonstrated exactly what all the partners hoped for with this challenge. Their collaborative, innovative plans hold great promise for the future of water in Pima County and statewide. We are pleased to be able to provide this catalytic funding, visibility and technical assistance to help make their vision of water sustainability a reality. We look forward to watching their idea become a reality.”

Read more about the Water Innovation challenge and the Finalist Presentations & Prize Ceremony in an [article from *The Arizona Republic*](#) by Brandon Loomis.

The New Arizona Prize was conceived by the Arizona Community Foundation, in partnership with Republic Media and Morrison Institute for Public Policy, as a philanthropic initiative to create the Arizona of tomorrow. Discussion of the Prize began in August of 2014, and after meeting with leaders in government, business and Arizona communities, it was clear that no issue needed to be addressed more urgently than the state of our water resources.

The first challenge offered under The New Arizona Prize banner was the Water Consciousness Challenge. Heightened attention around water, made possible by groups like Beyond the Mirage, the team that won the first challenge, is laying important groundwork for what needs to happen next. We need all Arizonans to become engaged in safeguarding this precious resource.

To this end, the next challenge offered under The New Arizona Prize, the Water Innovation Challenge was announced in March 2016, inviting collaborative teams in Arizona communities to develop innovative and scalable market-based solutions.

Twenty-three teams met the August 12 deadline for submitting projects for consideration by the 18-member team of judges whose scoring identified the top five teams in the Water Innovation Challenge.

The teams competing in the Water Innovation Challenge brought strategies for wastewater collection and treatment; ways to move, share, exchange, and deploy water assets; water credits for groundwater users; increased farm production; and potable water reuse. Each of the other four finalists received \$5,000 to pursue their solutions and here is more about the projects they pitched:

Arizona State University Foundation for a New American University

Team members collectively provide the required technical, financial, regulatory, environmental, research, education, design, development and market expertise, resources and authority to implement this solution and create an excitement to propagate it throughout Arizona and the Southwest.

Video storytelling

View the [team video](#).

Description of the team solution

It is the "Perfect Storm" in which to introduce game-changing, onsite water reclamation to meet Arizona's water needs. Marrying ASU's aggressive sustainability goals with City of Tempe's pro-active wastewater collection and treatment system planning, overlain with the drought-stricken Colorado River, has created the perfect launch-pad for an innovative 1.5+ million gallons per day water reclamation facility. Termed "WaterWorks@ASU", this project will reduce ASU's potable water demand by 36% and offer unparalleled community engagement to transform water culture and promote replication.

But this "flood" continues. ASU's 127 water-focused faculty and institutes, coupled with the largest student body in the country, will research and learn technologies to further expand our water supply.

The community partnership and precious resource development doesn't stop at the campus boundaries. Team member Catellus will develop the new ASU Athletics Facilities District (AFD), with purple pipes as the foundation: toilets, landscapes, and cooling towers all using reclaimed water!

City of Phoenix

The Arizona Water Exchange Platform team is composed of a diverse group of water professionals, technical experts, and community leaders with the experience to design and implement a trading platform that conforms with the realities of Arizona water law, policy, and infrastructure.

Video storytelling

View the [team video](#).

Description of the team solution

Arizona's leadership in water management innovation has helped to ground the state in diversified supplies, a revolutionary storage system, and extensive water delivery infrastructure. Growing water scarcity and expanding uncertainties in the Colorado River Basin now challenge this legacy.

Recognizing that flexibility, resilience, and resource sharing are powerful antidotes to uncertainty and scarcity, the City of Phoenix is seeding a team of experts to create the Arizona Water Exchange Platform. This data-driven and market-based technological tool will illustrate the range of local water supplies, demands, infrastructure, and sharing solutions within the current context of Arizona water law, drought dynamics, and Colorado River conditions. The New Arizona Prize offers an opportunity to invite managers and stakeholders to participate in the development of this dynamic tool and envision collaborative opportunities to move, share, exchange, and deploy the state's rich water assets to meet a broad portfolio of needs under scarcity.

Friends of Verde River Greenway

A community organization recognized for effective collaboration in the Verde Valley will lead the project team which includes municipal leaders, conservation organizations, community leaders and area irrigators.

Video storytelling

View the [team video](#).

Description of the team solution

Groundwater use in rural Arizona is largely unregulated, and few management tools are available. Groundwater is the only potable water supply for the Verde Valley, and it provides the base flow of the Verde River—itsself critical to fish and wildlife, local residents, and the Phoenix-area communities that rely on the river for municipal and irrigation water. Unmanaged groundwater use can dewater streams and jeopardize water and economic security. Our proposed solution is the Verde River Exchange, a voluntary community-driven program that allows groundwater users to "offset" the impact of their water use by purchasing credits. Credits are created when an existing user reduces historic water use. Our diverse team will build on two successful pilot projects to create an innovative program that offers a scalable solution for reducing the impacts of groundwater pumping on Arizona's rivers and for stabilizing water supplies for future Arizonans.

Freshwater Systems

This team includes public and private partners, community leaders, scholars and experts in water conservation.

Video storytelling

View the [team video](#).

Description of the team solution

Think of a sponge as a farm field area and how it needs to be saturated to grow crops. What if tomorrow you could water just the crop root and not the whole sponge or farm field around it? How much water would you save? How many new food crops could you grow? Drought conditions in the Southwest and the uncertainty over the next 50 years in the amount of available water and changes in food demand anticipated throughout the Colorado River watershed necessitate new solutions.

Freshwater Systems (FWS), through its patent-pending Crop Guardian (CG) systems:

Addresses drought-stricken farming areas by using up to 80% less water per crop root.

Uses solar power vs. costly desalination systems to convert brackish water to freshwater.

Increases farm production by: 1) adding farm growing seasons beyond current conventional cropping periods and; 2) adding to existing or creating new farming regions in Arizona.

Pima County Southwest Water Campus

This team consists of water professionals representing local government, water utilities, academia and private partners.

Video storytelling

View the [team video](#).

Description of the team solution

With increasing demands placed on existing water supplies, potable reuse requires exploration. Our solution culminates the efforts of the Steering Committee on Arizona Potable Reuse (SCAPR) and ADEQ's current regulatory review by establishing a mobile, performance based reference facility that is desperately needed for addressing public perception and demonstrating the protection of public health. If potable reuse is done incorrectly, even just once, it could set back

regulation and public confidence for years to come. Our solution will ensure that it is done right, every time.

Our bold entry will tackle these key issues by launching public discussions about water in every town, city, county, and tribal region throughout Arizona. Our refreshingly unique, educational approach will engage discussion and public acceptance by incorporating local bottlers and brewers through a Pure Water Brew Challenge competition to coincide with the national WaterReuse conference to be held in Phoenix. Please, come join us!

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