



## COUNTY SUPERVISOR Ramón Valadez

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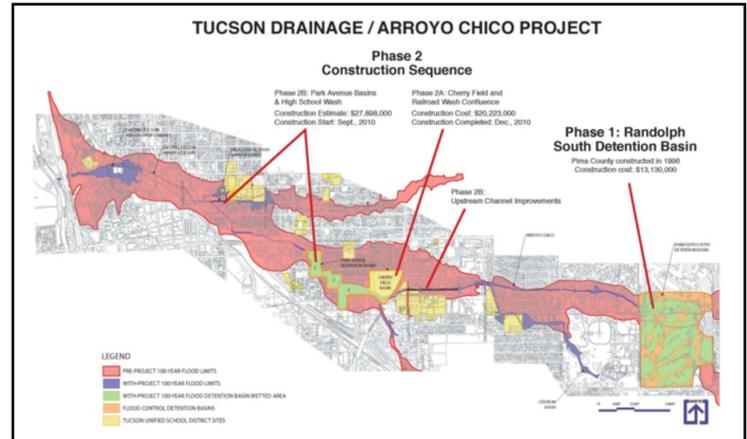
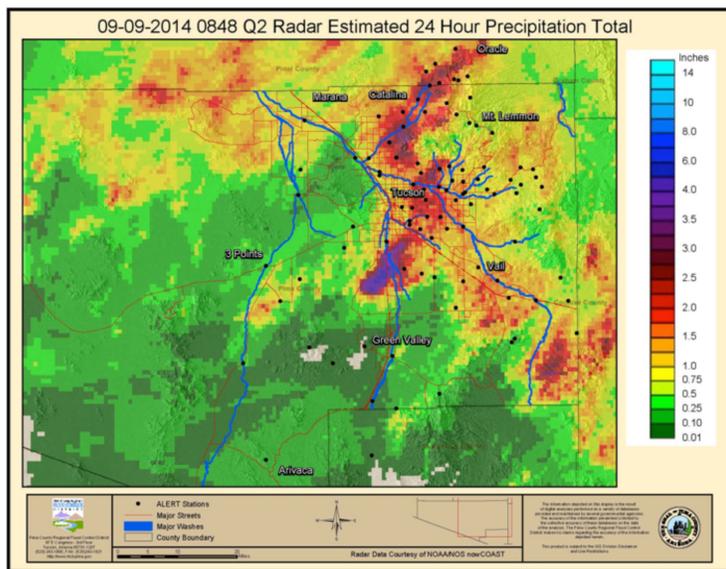


## District 2 News

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Fall Edition

On September 8, 2014, Pima County was hit with a wide area storm event. An estimate of the severity of the event in the Arroyo Chico Basin rates it as a 50-year flood event, meaning the chance of a flood of that magnitude happening in a year is 1 in 50. The most intense rainfall occurred in central and east Tucson as well as the San Xavier District. This storm put to the test the Tucson Drainage/Arroyo Chico project and whether it would keep our neighborhoods safe.



Dell Urich Golf Course into a series of detention basins. This was followed by the construction of a detention basin on Tucson Unified School District's Cherry Field and then additional basins downstream in the area of Park Avenue and Highland Avenue. The goal was to create an overall system that allowed for slow and safe drainage of storm water.



The Pima County Regional Flood Control District's Arroyo Chico project, which today is almost complete, drastically reduced public and private property damage as a result of the storm. As you may know, the project began in 1996 and has almost eliminated flood damages that most certainly would have occurred in the Arroyo Chico Basin. More than 1,315 residential, multifamily, commercial and industrial properties have been removed from the floodplain because of these improvements.

The improvements began with the reconstruction of the

*The picture shows that there was ponding in the detention basins at Dell Urich Golf Course. The basin system worked beautifully and they drained slowly and safely within a 24-hour period.*



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A project study conducted by Pima County shows that without the improvements of the Tucson Drainage/Arroyo Chico project the impact of the rain would have caused major damage to Reid Park downstream. Estimates show that this single event could have caused over \$83 million in damage if the project had not been done.

Let's compare the pre-project numbers for a 100-year flood event. It is estimated that a stormwater flow would be about 3,400 cubic feet per second (cfs). In that case, it is very likely that many, if not all, of these properties would be severely damaged. As a result of the combination of detention basins, the flow in the case of a 100-year flood event would be reduced to 269 cfs or a 92% reduction. The actual flow on Sept. 8 shows that it peaked at 250 cfs and that the detention basins drained slowly and safely over the 24-hour period.

Any time that a project of this magnitude is brought forward to the public, neighborhoods, and community, there are many concerns. I am very happy that Pima County was able to work with the Army Corps of Engineers as well as many neighbors to make this project happen. Although we are never truly prepared for Mother Nature, we can certainly be happy that this project worked and kept our neighborhoods and neighbors safe.

If you would like to learn more about this project or if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call my office at 724-8126.



*Drained detention basins*