



# ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Fifty-sixth Legislature  
First Regular Session

House: NREW DPA/SE 10-0-0-0 | 3<sup>rd</sup> Read 60-0-0-0

Senate: NREW DP 7-0-0-0 | 3<sup>rd</sup> Read 22-8-0-0

---

**HCR2012: support; ~~water management policies~~**

**NOW: support; water management policies**

**Sponsor: Representative Griffin, LD 19**

**Transmitted to the Secretary of State**

## **Overview**

States that the Legislature will continue the tradition of supporting water management practices and policies that protect property and water rights and provide for the safety and prosperity of Arizona.

## **History**

Different policies, laws and other institutions have shaped water management in Arizona since it was a territory. The 1864 Howell Code enshrined the doctrine of prior appropriation ("first in time, first in right") for surface waters. Territorial Arizona was also the site of one of the first five projects authorized under the Reclamation Act of 1902, which would become known as the Salt River Project. In 1919, the Legislature adopted the State Water Code which established the State Water Commissioner and a formal administrative process for filing surface water rights. This official's responsibilities were transferred to the State Land Commissioner in 1943, who also assumed authority for designating critical groundwater areas in 1948. The Arizona Water Commission was created in 1971 to oversee dam safety, watershed management and hydrologic data collection. The passage of the 1980 Groundwater Management Act was a significant development in Arizona water management. This act regulated groundwater usage in the most populous and economically productive parts of the state and centralized responsibility for all water laws involving surface water, groundwater, water planning and conservation within the Arizona Department of Water Resources.

The Legislature has also taken an interest in protecting Arizona's interests in its Colorado River water rights. It established the Colorado River Commission in 1927 to represent Arizona during negotiations with the six basin states over apportioning the rivers waters and, in 1948, created the Interstate Stream Commission to help prepare the state's successful case against California before the U.S. Supreme Court. Following the passage of the Colorado River Basin Project Act, which authorized the construction of the Central Arizona Project (CAP), the Legislature created the Central Arizona Water Conservation District to contract with the U.S. Secretary of Interior for delivery of Arizona's CAP water, repaying the federal government for the state's share of CAP construction costs, and operating and maintaining the project. The Arizona Water Banking Authority was created in 1996 to stored Arizona unused Colorado River entitlement to help meet the state's water management objectives and assist California and Nevada through interstate water banking.

These institutions, together with the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, and Arizona's tribal communities, continue to collectively work together to address regional and local water management challenges.

**Provisions**

1. States that the Arizona House of Representatives and Senate resolve to continue the tradition of leadership and support for water management practices and policies that protect property and water rights and provide for the continued safety and prosperity of Arizona. (Sec. 1)

Prop 105 (45 votes)     Prop 108 (40 votes)     Emergency (40 votes)     Fiscal Note