

# Talk of the Town: Message to elected officials: stop draining our water supply!

 [dcourier.com/news/2019/dec/29/talk-town-message-elected-officials-stop-draining-](https://www.dcourier.com/news/2019/dec/29/talk-town-message-elected-officials-stop-draining-)



During 2019 our elected quad-city area officials continued to promote policies that accelerate the depletion of our water supply, which is dependent on our Prescott-Chino Valley-Prescott Valley-region groundwater.

At the same time, citizens showed their growing concern about the negative impact of major developments on water sustainability. For 2020, citizens need to increase their pressure on elected officials to stop supporting unsustainable water policies.

A sustainable water future for the Quad Cities requires a stable local groundwater supply. This means that the amount of groundwater pumped annually needs to be replaced by the amount recharged naturally and with treated effluent. That full replacement has never happened, and, unfortunately, as Arizona's Department of Water Resources (ADWR) has reported, our groundwater supply has been overcommitted for decades and continues to decline at an alarming rate.

Commitments to supply water for new homes and developments in the region depend on approval from ADWR. These approvals are given, not with a concern for achieving a stable groundwater supply, but on the basis of a developer-friendly formula. This formula allows for draining water levels in the aquifer down by 1,000 feet in the vicinity of the wells that will supply the new homes. Yes, 1,000 feet! Absolutely not sustainable.

In 2019, the actions by Prescott to promote water conservation appear, at first glance, to be a positive step. However, it now appears that the city will apply any water conserved by citizens to serve even more new homes than the thousands already envisioned. So, your conservation apparently won't help protect our long-term water supply!

In late 2019 the City of Prescott hosted an event that was advertised as a water summit to show how towns and cities and Yavapai County were going to work together to stabilize our groundwater supply. Unfortunately, not only did the county not show up, but officials from Prescott, Prescott Valley and Chino Valley refused to even acknowledge that there is a problem with our declining water supply.

For anyone interested in securing a stable water future for our region, 2020 is shaping up to be a year with immense challenges.

Prescott is proposing a new water policy, apparently supported by ADWR, to pump an additional 10,000 acre-feet of groundwater annually to support developments outside the city limits. This will accelerate depletion of our water supply in the region. This proposed policy to supply water to developments outside the city limits without annexation must be opposed.

Let's make 2020 the year when citizens across the region take action and demand that their elected officials stop promoting policies that are destroying our long-term water future. Write, call, attend meetings. Join the Citizens Water Advocacy Group (CWAG) in advocating for a sustainable water future for the Quad Cities and for protection of the upper Verde River. Learn more at [www.cwagaz.org](http://www.cwagaz.org).

Please send your questions or comments to [info@cwagaz.org](mailto:info@cwagaz.org).

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