

## ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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### **Prescott Active Management Area 4<sup>th</sup> Management Plan** Charting the direction for management of groundwater resources

Since 1980 with passage of the Groundwater Management Act, communities in central Yavapai County and the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) have dedicated thousands of hours and millions of dollars to manage groundwater resources in the Prescott Active Management Area (PrAMA).

The PrAMA, established with passage of the Act, includes the City of Prescott; Town of Prescott Valley; Yavapai-Prescott Indian Reservation; the Towns of Dewey-Humboldt and Chino Valley; and portions of Yavapai County. The PrAMA is the only area within Yavapai County under the regulatory authority of ADWR for management of its groundwater.

A series of five management plans from 1980 to 2025 were mandated by the Act. Communities in the PrAMA are currently implementing the 4<sup>th</sup> Management Plan. It will be in effect until the 5<sup>th</sup> and final management plan for the PrAMA is adopted.

Over the last four decades, plans have progressed to include more rigorous management requirements.

The 298 page management plan, available for download from the Upper Verde River Watershed Protection Coalition website at [www.yavapaiwatersmart.org](http://www.yavapaiwatersmart.org), is a comprehensive representation of the groundwater situation in the PrAMA. It delineates strengths and threats covering everything from hydrology, and water demand and supply; to municipal, industrial and agricultural uses and water conservation requirements.

According to John Munderloh, water resources manager for the Town of Prescott Valley, the 4<sup>th</sup> Management Plan is the primary planning document for the PrAMA. It is the roadmap for management of finite groundwater resources and achievement of Safe Yield by 2025. Safe Yield is reached when the amount of groundwater annually withdrawn from the aquifer is equal to the amount of water annually recharged.

Munderloh provided specific examples of how PrAMA communities, both individually and in partnership, have worked to achieve a groundwater balance and implement provisions included in management plans.

“Communities in the PrAMA actively develop and participate in water conservation programs,” he said. “They regularly report progress to the ADWR, adhere to state programs that limit development, reclaim and reuse water, adopt and utilize ADWR best management practices, and

partner with other communities in the AMA and Yavapai County to investigate alternative water supplies, and manage the Upper Verde River Watershed. The broad agreement with Salt River Project to import water from the Big Chino into the PrAMA, at some future date, was finalized in 2010.”

According to the plan, the PrAMA is trending toward Safe Yield. To reach and sustain Safe Yield, it will require continued water conservation, importation of water from the Big Chino Sub-basin or other source, water reuse and reclamation, and an aggressive effort to convert residential homes with exempt wells to municipal water systems.

There are 13,000 exempt wells exempt wells in the PrAMA. Homes that use exempt wells for water are not subject to ADWR regulations.