EPAC Items of Interest

Mitch Basefsky, Central Arizona Project (CAP), provided a status report on the hydrology of the Colorado River and its improvements this year. Efforts of many of the Lower Basin’s largest users to reduce the overdraft of Lake Mead resulted in a recent declaration by the Bureau of Reclamation that there would be no shortage in 2018. This is the third year that protection efforts at Lake Mead have helped Arizona postpone a mandatory shortage reduction of more than 20 percent of the Colorado River water imported annually by the CAP system.

An overview of Tucson Electric Power’s 2017 Integrated Resource Plan was provided by Jeff Yockey, TEP’s Manager of Environmental and Long-Term Planning. This plan describes the Company’s long-term strategy to build a more responsive, sustainable resource portfolio by reducing its reliance on coal, while expanding low-cost renewable resources and investing in efficient, flexible natural gas plants and energy storage. TEP’s goal is to deliver 30 percent of retail load from renewable energy by 2030, using its diversified portfolio.

Other items included a follow-up on the Water Innovation Challenge, aimed at helping people understand and trust the advanced technology used to create purified drinking water from renewable reclaimed water, and progress on the PAG 208 Plan Update that includes modernized online geo-database features. As early as February, EPAC will be provided a final draft for action. A clear list of changes will be provided, and members will be asked to verify that no local ordinances conflict with the procedures.

EPAC Subcommittee and Program Updates

Air Quality

The Air Quality Subcommittee met on Oct. 31. Presentations were given by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality staff on the new Pima County air quality forecast program, a collaborative project with the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ); results from the new PDEQ/Eastern Research Group’s Ozone Precursor Inventory for Pima County and updates on the County’s 2017 air quality monitoring data were presented by PDEQ staff. Additionally, University of Arizona faculty discussed research findings on the media’s depiction of the link between air pollution and asthma.

PAG air quality staff is conducting comparative analyses of pollution control strategies that impact the release of ozone precursors.

Watershed Planning

PAG held a kick-off meeting with the Designated Management Agencies on Oct. 20 to discuss updating PAG’s wastewater facility inventory, review ways to streamline the procedures in the PAG Areawide Water Quality Management Plan, and discuss proposed fee changes.

The Stormwater Management Working Group is planning to meet on Nov. 9 to engage in the PAG 208 Plan update and provide feedback on uses of PAG data acquisitions.

The Lower Santa Cruz River Basin Study annual public meeting and the Stakeholders Advisory team are each scheduled to occur in early 2018. Study progress will be shared including water demand scenarios, supply/demand assessment model (CAP:SAM) results, climate projections and scope for the riparian assessment.

Future EPAC Agenda Items

The next EPAC meeting is currently scheduled for December.