

**COCHISE GROUNDWATER STEWARDS**

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**Mid-September 2022 Newsletter**

The **C**ochise **G**roundwater **S**tewards are thankful that you have chosen to receive occasional emails from us and for your concern in preserving our *Groundwater* in the Sulphur Springs Valley.  We are a community based volunteer organization working for a sustainable water policy for all Cochise County.

Upcoming Action Opportunities:  (Please pass this information on to your friends and neighbors. )

1) **The Future of Groundwater in the Sulphur Springs Valley**

**Dates/Times: Sept. 22—5:30pm, Sept. 27-- 5:30pm**

Sunsites Library

Pearce/Sunsites

A 90 minute in person educational session on the groundwater facts for the Sulphur Springs Valley and an overview of the AMA process. A great opportunity to get informed before the November 8 General Election. Must sign up through the Sunsites Library – call 520-826-3866.

2) **Yard Signs – we will have a limited number of yard signs in support for the AMA, if you get traffic by your house and are willing to post a yard sign, let us know, send an email to** [**cochisegroundwaterstewards@gmail.com**](mailto:cochisegroundwaterstewards@gmail.com) **. Include address and phone number. We also encourage you to make your own homemade signs and there will be a sign painting party on Saturday September 24 – send us an email if interested and we will get you the details.**

**3**) ***What’s Happening with our Water?*Free Public Water Meeting -- Douglas**

**Date/Time: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 5:30 - 7:30 PM**

YMCA Plaza Esmeralda, 1000 Pan American Ave, Douglas

Speakers: Kristine Uhlman, Hydrogeologist  and Dr. Susanna Eden, UofA Water Expert

Everyone Welcome! No reservatons necessary.

Sponsored by the Arizona Water Defenders PAC

**4**) ***Groundwater/AMA Informational Meeting* -- Bisbee**

**Date/Time: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 5:30 - 7:30 PM**

Central School Project(CSP) – 43 Howell St. Old Bisbee

Sponsored by Cochise Groundwater Stewards (for more information call 520-249-1416)

Old Bisbee and Saginaw will be voting on Proposition 422 Douglas Basin AMA

**FYI**- **What do we know an AMA will do? –**

As we mentioned in our last newsletter the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) lack of answers at the recent Willcox informational meeting left the impression that the AMA process was so wishy-washy that you really won’t know what you are voting for when you vote “YES”. A comment was made by a representative of the Farm Bureau to the effect that “How can you ask me to vote for something when you can’t even tell us what it will do?” – that comment was followed by loud cheers from those opposed to the AMA and this sentiment has been shared widely by the AMA opposition. This comment is misleading in a number of ways since there are many things that we know the AMA. Here’s our top five countdown of what we know the AMA will do to help protect our groundwater future:

**#5:** **Requires metering on all non-exempt irrigation wells (pumping >35gpm)** Non-exempt well owners will be required to install metering devices and report water usage annually to ADWR. How can you manage something if you can’t accurately measure it? This requirement does not impact domestic wells (known as “exempt” wells pumping less than 35gpm).

**#4**: **Implements well spacing requirements**: Currently there are essentially no restrictions on where a new well can be drilled in relation to an existing well. Under the current rules a large irrigation well could be drilled just a few feet across your property line close to the domestic well you depend on for your daily water needs. Look up “cone of depression” and you will understand why these spacing requirements are a good thing.

**#3:Establishes a long term goal and a management plan:** The goal and management plans will be structured to reduce the overdraft of our groundwater and insure future water security. The goal and management plans will be specific to the needs of our groundwater basins.

**#2: Creates an advisory council and requires public meetings:** To insure local residents/farmers/municipalities have input into the goal and management plans.

**#1: Freezes irrigation at current levels – no new irrigation will be allowed! A big step to saving our water. Just think of how much more land will be cleared and deep wells drilled if the AMA fails and there is no irrigation freeze in place. The depletion of our groundwater will just keep accelerating….the AMA halts the increase in irrigation and requires a plan be developed to reduce overall irrigation levels.**

**VOTE YES for AMAs. VOTE YES on Propositions 420 and 422.**