

A State of the State, A Budget Proposal, and Bad Legislation



Arizona House Floor.

January 12, 2024

Hi all!

The Arizona Legislature is not off to a very good start. This last week they advanced bills to weaken the Douglas Active Management Area (AMA) and allow more groundwater pumping and this coming week, they will be considering a plethora of bills to create loopholes for development relative to assured water supply determinations. Our water laws are already as leaky as an old bucket. Now they want to create more holes in them. Please don't forget to sign in against some of them -- see the information below.

The Governor delivered her State of the State address on Monday to kick off the legislative session. There was limited mention of environmental protection, but she did emphasize water and said she would do something if the Legislature does not act on groundwater issues. The

border rhetoric in the speech was not great. You can watch [the speech here](#).

The Governor also came out with her [proposed budget](#) today. We are still reviewing it, but it appears to provide some funding again for the Water Quality Fee Fund to help address water quality issues via the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, and limited funding for the Water Augmentation Fund, which is good, although we would rather see that zeroed out and have these dollars go to conservation. The budget provides no funding for the State Parks Heritage Fund and the Arizona Trail, unfortunately. There is funding for addressing our state implementation plans on air quality, which is a good thing too. You can review a [summary of the executive's budget here](#).




This week, please sign in on the [Request to Speak system](#) to oppose SB1005, SB1010, SB1011, SB1012, SB1013, SB1014, SCR1002, and HB2002, HB2003, HB2017, HB2019, HB2028, HB2029, and HB2057. Support HB2004.

You can see more bills we are tracking [here](#). Note we are still populating the tracker.

THURSDAY, JAN 25TH

Environmental Day at the Arizona Capitol

- DISCUSS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS
- LISTEN TO EXPERTS ON THE STATUS OF OUR CLIMATE IN AZ
- MEET LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

[RSVP for Environmental Day Here](#)

**Environmental Day at the Capitol
Thursday, January 25th**

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM
Wesley Bolin Plaza
Phoenix

[RSVP for Environmental Day at the Capitol here.](#)

To prepare for Environmental Day, we are hosting informational webinars. Coming up next week are the following:

- January 17th at 6:00 PM - [RSVP for Democracy and the Arizona Legislature with All Voting is Local here](#)
- January 19th at Noon - [RSVP for Learn about Rainwater Harvesting here](#)

We have recorded the webinars that have occurred already. You can view them here.

- Recording of the Volunteer Lobby Workshop is [here](#).
- Recording "Start the Year Off Right with Water" [here](#).
- Recording of Arizona Groundwater and the Arizona Groundwater Management Act [here](#).

For more information, reach out to Sandy Bahr at sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.

Many thanks for taking action!

All the best,



Sandy Bahr
Chapter Director
Sierra Club - Grand Canyon Chapter

Coming Up This Week at the AZ Legislature



Historic Capitol courtesy of Sandy Bahr

Monday, January 15th

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

- **Day of Service from 8:00 AM -11:00 AM in the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, Phoenix. [RSVP here.](#)**

Tuesday, January 16th

Senate Transportation, Technology, and Missing Children Committee at 9:00 AM in SHR2

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting [here](#).

Presentation

- Arizonans for Community Choice
Shelly Gordon, State Director, Arizonans for Community Choice
Douglas Fant, Arizona Energy Attorney
Garrett Weaver, Systems Engineer

- [SB1010 vehicle mileage; tracking; tax; prohibition](#) (Hoffman: Wadsack, Chaplik, et al) prohibits the state, a city, town, county or political subdivision of the state from considering or establishing any reduction goals or targets for vehicle miles traveled in developing any transportation or land-use planning or selecting transportation or transit projects. This is a repeat of a bill from last year that died in the House. It preempts cities from doing more to clean up the air and reduce climate emissions. **OPPOSE**
- [SB1011 general plan; transportation; independent study](#) (Hoffman: Wadsack, Heap, et al) prohibits cities from reducing system capacity for vehicles, meaning they could not take out a lane and provide a bike lane and pedestrian access. It also removes the bicycle element for general plans for larger cities and takes out provisions relating to multi-modal transportation from the growth element of a general plan. **OPPOSE**
- [SB1012 transportation system performance; ADOT](#)(Hoffman: Wadsack, Heap, et al) de-emphasizes congestion management and promotes mobility as performance standards and includes specific provisions for how these and other factors are considered. **OPPOSE**
- [SCR1002 prohibit tax; monitoring; vehicle mileage](#)(Hoffman: Kern, Petersen, et al) refers to the ballot a proposed constitutional amendment to prohibit fees based on vehicle miles traveled, an alternative to gas tax or other fees to pay for roads. **OPPOSE**

Joint House and Senate Appropriations Committees at 10:00 AM in HHR1

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting [here](#).

- Presentation
 - Executive Budget Proposal by Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting - Sarah Brown, Director

House Natural Resources, Energy, and Water Committee at 2:00 PM in House Hearing Room (HHR) 1

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting [here](#).

- [HB2002 power plants; transmission lines; definition](#) (Griffin) excludes switchyards and substations from review by the AZ Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee. This is one of the few entities that considers environmental factors relative to siting. We're concerned that they are adding even more exemptions to siting after exempting some lines in 2023. **OPPOSE**
- [HB2003 replacement lines; structures; commission hearings](#) (Griffin) allows utilities to replace structures on a transmission line without pursuing new or amended certificate of environmental compatibility. This could mean replacing a low voltage pole with a much higher one and with significantly more impact. **OPPOSE**
- [HB2004 utilities; electronic filings; corporation commission](#) (Griffin) allows a utility to submit an application for a certificate of environmental compatibility for a power plant, transmission line, etc. in an electronic format. This would save a lot of paper! **SUPPORT**
- [HB2017 assured water supply; commingling](#) (Griffin) requires the AZ Department of Water Resources to consider any water a developer brings for an assured water supply. This would allow more development in areas where development is clearly not sustainable. It is effectively creating another loophole. **OPPOSE**
- [HB2019 groundwater model; public inspection; challenge](#) (Griffin) requires that groundwater modeling be made available to the public and requires that ADWR

provide a way to challenge it. This is more backlash against ADWR for having the audacity to say there is not enough water to sustain development in certain areas. I believe we will oppose this too.

- [HB2028 groundwater model; unpledged storage credits](#) (Griffin) requires ADWR to assume that unpledged long-term storage credits are available for use in a groundwater model and relative to evaluating whether or not there is an assured water supply. This is another way to allow for unsustainable development in areas that really do not have an assured water supply. **OPPOSE**
- [HB2029 groundwater model; unpledged effluent](#) (Griffin) requires the ADWR Director to assume, for purposes of groundwater modeling, that unpledged effluent will be used to replace the groundwater demand in the basin. This is similar to the bill above. **OPPOSE**
- [HB2056 appropriation; on-farm efficiency fund](#) (Dunn) appropriates \$30 million for this water efficiency program. Unfortunately the program requires that they continue to grow the same crop. We would like to see this be available for those who grow a crop that is less water intensive and for which they reduce their water use. **MONITOR**
- [HB2057 appropriation; long-term water augmentation fund](#) (Dunn) appropriates an additional \$143,800,000 to the water augmentation fund, which is for augmentation projects outside Arizona. **OPPOSE**

Senate Appropriations Committee at 2:00 PM in SHR109

[Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here.](#)

Presentation

- Joint Legislative Budget Committee – Baseline

Wednesday, January 17th

House Government Committee at 9:00 AM in HHR3

[Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here.](#)

- Sunset Review of the Arizona Department of Administration
- [HB2100 administrative completeness review; licensing](#) (Griffin) includes provisions that deem a license application administratively complete if an agency issues a written notice of deficiencies during the review time frame. Provisions that deem things complete that may not be seem like a bad idea to me. We are still reviewing this.

Senate Committee on Government at 10:00 AM in SHR1

[Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here.](#)

- [SB1005 public monies; ideology training; prohibition](#)(Hoffman: Wadsack, Chaplik, et al) prohibits public entities from requiring or spending public monies on a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) program. **OPPOSE**
- [SB1013 government investments; products; fiduciaries; plans](#) (Hoffman: Wadsack, Heap, et al) prohibits the state treasurer from considering any social or environmental factors when investing state dollars. **OPPOSE**
- [SB1014 business; discrimination prohibition; social criteria](#) (Hoffman: Wadsack, Chaplik, et al) prohibits a financial institution, insurer or credit reporting agency from considering political affiliation, or social credit, environmental, social, or governmental score or similar values-based or impact criteria in their decisions. This would include not being able to divest from fossil fuels. **OPPOSE**

Thursday, January 18th

Senate Natural Resources. Energy, Water Committee will not be meeting.

Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Local Resources at 9:00 AM in HHR5

[Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here.](#)

Presentations on Border Security:

- Joint Legislative Budget Committee Staff
- Additional Presenters



Diamondback Rattlesnake photo courtesy of USFWS

