

The reporter continues to have some problem with his quotes...



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Chino Valley officials reach out for support of pipeline

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By Doug Cook

CHINO VALLEY - After Chino Valley's groundbreaking deal with a Missouri- based developer to build a multi-million dollar water pipeline for the town, Mayor Karen Fann has offered support for regional cooperation in Verde River water conservation.

At the second "Community Forum on Chino Valley's Water Resource Future" Thursday night at Chino Valley Community Church, Fann and Water Resources Director Mark Holmes assured the public the town would use strict mitigation measures to preserve flow for the river the pipeline could affect.

During its meeting this past week, the Town Council signed an emergency resolution letting Chino Grande LLC build a pipeline to bring groundwater from the Big Chino Sub-basin on the old CV/CF Ranch near Paulden to Chino Valley.

The deal gives the town an additional 3,000 acrefeet of water to its revised 4,400 acre-feet water portfolio.

In addition to working toward conservation, Fann said she wants Prescott and Prescott Valley to have a role in Chino's pipeline.

"We have offered our hand out to the City of Prescott and to Prescott Valley that we would be certainly glad to work with them on this pipeline so that we would be able to save the Prescott and Prescott Valley taxpayers a lot of money on that, also," Fann said.

Holmes says the water would serve the town's projected residential and commercial business growth over the next 25 years.

In an effort to conserve water, town officials say they will work with the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University, a think tank that will help Chino Valley create and improve water conservation and watersaving technology codes, ordinances and policies as the town's population grows.

The City of Prescott has been working on another Big Chino pipeline for several years, which has been controversial because downstream users and environmentalists fear that pumping Big Chino water will inhibit the flow of the Verde River.

A federal study concluded that the Big Chino provides at least 80 percent of the flow of the upper Verde River.

Joanne Oellers, Verde River program coordinator with the Center for Biological Diversity said if the town significantly reduces the river's flow, it will harm endangered species for decades to come.