

In Person In Situ: Letter to ADWR re Douglas AMA (6 October 2023)

I'm writing to strongly recommend that the Agency respond positively to the request made by members of the public at the 28 September 2023 DAMA Mgt Plan meeting in Douglas, namely that the department assign a staff member to be in Douglas one or more days per week, to answer questions and discuss issues in person with members of the public.

As an official from Douglas said, the City would be glad to offer a space for this.

While it is understandable that the Agency should hesitate and emphasize existing availability of staff via the web and telephone, establishing a flesh and blood presence in Douglas is both reasonable and appropriate.

Not only are many people here in the Douglas Basin not at all adept with digital technology and not comfortable discussing technical and legal issues by phone, many -- as is obvious from the kinds of public questions and comments -- find the AMA process very confusing and find ARS language and organization essentially impenetrable. They require a more hands-on process, especially when their issues involve personal matters of livelihood, financial capabilities and water rights.

The added expense such a liaison would cost the department -- even at times like the present, when the department may already be somewhat understaffed -- would be minimal compared to the value of increased human communication and understanding of all involved,, and could easily be subsumed along with other novel expenses associated with implementing this first "subsequent AMA."

I would go so far as to suggest that the person or persons assigned to the position be fluent in Spanish.

Sincerely,

Michael Gregory

Premise Eight: The needs of the natural world are more important than the needs of the economic system.

- Derrick Jensen

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