



# WATERWAYS

NEWS ABOUT SRP WATER STEWARDSHIP

FEBRUARY 2009

## ROOSEVELT FILLS, WATER RELEASES BEGIN

Winter precipitation has been significant enough that SRP's reservoirs on the Salt River were all near capacity as storms arrived in February. This made it necessary to begin releasing water from Roosevelt Lake on Feb. 6 to make room for additional runoff. On the Verde side, reservoirs still have significant space available.

The weather system responsible for this good fortune is something of a meteorological curiosity – a wet La Niña winter. Actually, this marks the second year in a row that a wet La Niña has visited Arizona. Typically, a La Niña system would mean drier conditions in the Southwest.

With the four reservoirs on the Salt River nearly full at the early stages of the January-to-May runoff season, additional precipitation or runoff from melting snow soon will bring the elevation of Roosevelt Lake to its highest recorded level — 2,151 feet — and likely higher.

Runoff now has filled New Conservation Storage space, which consists of 272,500 acre-feet (af) of space behind the dam allocated for the Valley cities of Chandler, Glendale, Mesa, Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe. This storage space was made possible by modifications completed in 1996 which raised the dam's height by 77 feet. This is only the third time since modifications were completed that water has been stored in this additional space

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# WATER RELEASES

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The water releases on Feb. 6, while relatively small at 300 to 500 cubic feet per second (cfs), will have some impact on Valley residents. As the amount of spill required increases and water is spilled from Granite Reef Diversion Dam, east of Mesa, the water will move west down the Salt River and eventually will close the river crossing at McKellips Road. This situation could last through spring.

Water released helps to recharge the regional aquifer as a result of its passage down parts of the Salt River bed, which are normally dry. In addition, the water moving through the

various dams' generating stations generates about 500 megawatt-hours of electricity per day. That is equivalent to running one of SRP's gas-fired units like Kyrene Generating Station Unit 7 or Santan Generating Station Unit 6 for two hours.

Early February storms follow one of the wettest Decembers in SRP history, when more than 4.3 inches of precipitation fell on the Salt and Verde watersheds. The wet La Nina runoff season has significantly improved SRP's water-supply situation. As of Feb. 6, the reservoir system on the Salt and Verde rivers stands at 93% of capacity, compared to 85% a year ago. Roosevelt Lake, which holds about 70% of SRP's reservoir system storage capacity, has now reached 100%.

# WATER EXPO BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

After a successful event last year, SRP will again hold the DesertWise™ Water Conservation Expo. Area residents can learn about water conservation, talk with municipal water conservation experts, and receive a discounted price on a "smart" irrigation controller (pictured below) at this year's event.

Smart controllers use weather data to manage your outdoor watering



schedule more efficiently, resulting in healthier home landscapes. The device is easy to set and saves up to 25% of the outdoor water use, which accounts for about 70% of total household usage.

## 50% DISCOUNT ON IRRIGATION CONTROLLERS

For the first time, the expo will have two locations and dates:

### Saturday, March 7

8 a.m.– noon

SRP PERA Club in Tempe

### Saturday, March 28

9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Glendale Main Library

The Glendale Green Festival will be held at the same time as the expo and will feature the Radio Disney AM 1580 "Team Green" Family Zone.



SRP power customers and water shareholders who register for one 30-minute workshop at either expo can purchase the smart controller for \$143, discounted from SRP's cost of \$286.

Training workshops will cover installation and programming of smart controllers; these are required to receive SRP's discounted price. The first 100 customers or shareholders to make reservations for either the Tempe or Glendale expo workshops will receive a water-efficient showerhead at the event.

Visit [www.srpnet.com/discount](http://www.srpnet.com/discount) or call **(602) 236-3333** for workshop reservations or for more details about water-saving controllers and the expo.

# SRP FILES SUIT OVER APPROVED BIG CHINO PUMPING

For more than 25 years, SRP has expressed concern about the impacts to the Verde River resulting from proposed projects to pump groundwater from the Big Chino Sub-basin to the Prescott area. Several scientific studies have shown the link between the Big Chino aquifer and spring flows that form the headwaters of the Verde River.

The shareholders of SRP have a senior property interest in the form of vested prior water rights to the historic flows of the Verde River, including its tributaries, under the Kent Decree and other legal bases.

On Jan. 12, SRP filed a legal complaint against two state agencies and the City of Prescott over the pumping of Big Chino Sub-basin water. The complaint filed by SRP in the Superior Court of the State of Arizona in and for the County of Maricopa contains five counts against the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR), the Arizona Office of Administrative Hearings and the City of Prescott.



*SRP shareholders' rights to surface water arising from the Salt and Verde river watersheds are well documented through the Kent Decree (for normal flow) and the development of the Salt River Federal Reclamation Project (for stored water). SRP always has guarded its shareholders' water supply closely.*

SRP is challenging ADWR's recent ruling that denied SRP participation in the City of Prescott's application for a modification of its designation of assured water supply. The approved application authorizes Prescott to transport 8,067.4 acre-feet per year from the Big Chino.

The complaint also questions the validity of the 1991 state legislation

that granted Prescott the right to pump and transfer water from the Big Chino Sub-basin.

For more information about this legal complaint or other water rights issues, please contact

**Dave.Roberts@srpnet.com.**

# NO QUAGGA MUSSELS FOUND IN SRP LAKES AND CANALS

While adult Quagga mussels were observed in the siphon at the SRP/Central Arizona Project interconnect near Granite Reef Dam in January, adult mussels have not been seen in SRP lakes and canals during recent inspections.

The probable source of the adult mussels and larvae (veligers) spotted at the interconnect site is the CAP Canal. CAP pulls water from Lake Pleasant and Lake Havasu, both are infested with Quagga mussels.

In addition to lakes along the Salt and Verde rivers, Lake Powell is clear of the invasive mussels. SRP's Navajo Generating Station uses water from Lake Powell, so we are coordinating with the National Parks Service to keep the lake mussel-free.

During the recent canal dry-up period, which began in November, SRP crews looked for signs of Quagga and Zebra mussels. None were found.

*Quagga mussels are prolific breeders. Populations can reach several hundred thousand per square yard, interfering with structure water capacities and operations.*

## STAYING WATCHFUL

As part of the continuing monitoring efforts, sample substrates are in place in all SRP reservoirs and in the canal system to collect adult mussels. Water samples also are being examined for the presence of veligers.

Outreach efforts have become extremely important. We are actively coordinating with other agencies to help contain the spread of the mussels with the "Don't Move a Mussel" campaign. SRP is developing signs for all the boat launch ramps at our reservoirs. These signs will inform boaters how to prevent the spread of

mussels or other aquatic invasive species in our lakes.

SRP retained a consultant to evaluate all of our facilities that could be at risk if adult mussels enter our water system. The facilities include our dams,

hydrogeneration facilities, reservoirs, canals and power plants. Control methods are being reviewed and discussed. SRP is studying the approaches used across the Southwest to contain the spread of the mussels and protect water infrastructure.

