SLIDES: The Urbanizing West: Limits to Water, Limits to Growth
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The Urbanizing West – Limits to Water, Limits to Growth

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American Planning Association
Not a new story!

**MAJOR PREHISTORIC INDIAN CULTURES**

The three major Indian cultures in the prehistoric Southwest were the Hohokam, who lived in river valleys in the southern desert and were an agricultural group; the Mogollon, who were hunter-gatherers; and the Anasazi, who were cliff dwellers. The Sinagua lived near Flagstaff and the Verde Valley and comprised traits from all three major cultures. The Salado lived in east-central Arizona and are thought to be a blend of two or more major cultures.
Rainfall Over 2000 Years in New Mexico

Tree rings from El Malpais National Monument (Henri Grissino-Mayer)

- Average rainfall 14.5 inches/year
- Chaco Canyon abandoned
- Mesa Verde abandoned
- Last Quarter Century
Future Challenge: Population Growth in the Southwest 2005-2025

Expect a Reduction in Surface Water Inflows
Three Counties; Three Watersheds
12 Tribes
18 Local Governments
More than 130 public water supply providers
More than 30 acequias
40% of the state’s population
Substantial agricultural interests
Habitat for several endangered and threatened species
More un adjudicated paper water than wet water
55,000 Acre Feet is 18 Billion Gallons
Enough to Fill a Football Field 7 Miles Deep, Every Year!

- **Inflows**: 261,000 af/yr
- **Deficit**: 55,000 af/yr
- **Consumption**: 316,000 af/yr

**Ongoing Deficit Spending of Water 15-20% Last Quarter of the 20th Century**
Aquifers in the Albuquerque Area are Drawn Down 1960 to 2000


Puts a Substantial Drain on River Flows
Is this the Rio Grande?

… or is this the Rio Grande?
SunCal to develop 55,000 acres!
Power struggle for the future of the region
Plans Galore!

- State Water Plan
- Regional Water Plans
- 72-1-9 water dev’t plans
- Local water plans
- Comprehensive plans
- Regional land use plans
- Transportation plans
The Disconnects

- Outcomes not connected to plans.
- Development regulations not connected to the plan.
- Development decisions and budget expenditures inconsistent with the plan.
- Conflicting plans and regulations within the same jurisdiction.
- Gaps and conflicts between jurisdictions.
Connecting land, water & growth in the 21st century requires:

- Breaking down silos
- Connecting federal, state, sovereign tribal governments, local governments, farmers, and a multitude of others in a new way
- Connecting plans, regulations, development decisions and actions as well as financial resources
A smarter process requires, at a minimum:

- Integrated planning systems
- Inclusive and participatory processes
- Informed decision-making **consistent** with the plan(s)
- A feedback loop and mitigation monitoring
“The motion has been made and seconded that we stick our heads in the sand.”
Hundredth Monkey