



PROTECT OUR WATER

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CWAG 2025 Candidate Forum Questions

Prescott Council & Mayor Primary Election

The purpose of the Candidate Forum is to insert water issues into the political and electoral dialogue, to educate voters and candidates about water issues, and to inform the public about the candidates' knowledge and positions on water issues. In general, we pose open-ended questions, avoid yes/no answers, and encourage debate and discussion among the candidates. The questions address important local water issues and attempt to create awareness, in both the candidates and audience, of the potential solutions. We pose questions that generate explanations and discussion about policy – this isn't a technical quiz. The candidates are given the questions and a "Basic Facts" document in advance. CWAG offers to discuss these documents with candidates (please send a request to info@cwagaz.org) in advance of the Forum.

I. Prescott Water Issues and Priorities

A. Question:

1. What do you see as the major water management issues facing Prescott?

II. Prescott Water Policy

A. **Introduction:** In 2022 the Mayor established the Mayor's Commission on Water Policy Review and Monitoring. The Commission recommendations were approved by the Council on March 26, 2024.

B. Questions:

1. One key recommendation was to use a water budget to manage growth at a controlled rate that permits the City to provide necessary services. What do you think of this strategy and why?
2. Another recommendation supported the policy that no new municipal water and sewer services outside the city limits shall be approved, with specified exceptions. What do you think of this strategy and why?

III. Big Chino Pipeline

- A. **Introduction:** In April, 2024 the City of Prescott updated the cost of the Big Chino project to an estimated \$360 million which did not include the cost to mitigate likely damage to the Verde River. Prescott voters must approve the financing before the pipeline can be built.
- B. **Questions:**
1. Please share your opinion about the BC pipeline.
 2. Before committing additional resources to the pipeline, should the City carefully evaluate and compare all of the potential alternative solutions?
 3. Big Chino discussions are now closed to the public so we have no idea what is going on. Do you support greater public transparency?
 4. Prescott agreed to mitigate any impacts to Verde River. Do you support this agreement?

IV. Regional Cooperation for Water Management for PrAMA

- A. **Introduction:** Although the cities in the AMA share a common water resource, they continue to compete for more water to facilitate growth. CWAG believes that regional planning and management of water resources is the best strategy to preserve a shared water resource and assure long-term quality of life for all current and future citizens.
- B. **Questions:**
1. Do you support working with other cities in the AMA to design a regional water augmentation and conservation authority for the PrAMA?
 2. CWAG believes that a regional water resource management plan should be based on a scientific evaluation and comparison of all available alternatives to assure an economical and sustainable water supply. Will you support a comprehensive study to help identify the optimal combination of solutions? Please explain your answer.

V. Conservation

- A. **Introduction:** Although Prescott has the best water conservation program in the PrAMA, it can be improved. Water conservation alone will not solve the overdraft, but it is easy to implement and the least expensive strategy - a foundation for all other measures.
- B. **Questions:**
1. Do you support continued funding for Prescott's water conservation program?
 2. What policies would you propose to reduce landscape water use - 28% of our water pumping? Carrot or stick?
 3. How would you explain to a citizen why they should conserve water?
 4. How could the conservation program be improved?

VI. Water Quality:

- A. **Introduction:** We have contaminated our aquifer. Some of Prescott's municipal wells have tested high in PFAS. One source of the PFAS is treated wastewater recharged at the airport. Prescott has hired a consultant to help plan to remove PFAS from the treated wastewater for recharge and/or from drinking water. Also, some wells in Chino Valley are high in Arsenic, a naturally occurring contaminant.
- B. **Question:**
1. Wastewater is now contaminating our aquifer. What should the city do?...Wait until better solutions appear? Study solutions? Remove PFAS from wastewater? Advanced Water Purification....?
 2. Prescott is able to comply with all EPA requirements because PFAS contaminated water is blended with well water that is high in Arsenic, thus diluting both contaminants. Are you satisfied that the current blending strategy adequately protects public health or should the contaminants be removed? Please explain your answer.

VII. Prescott long-term water management planning

- A. **Introduction:** The Water Policy Review Commission recommended that the City prepare a long-range water plan. Prescott city staff has begun to develop a long-term water management plan using grant funds from the US Bureau of Reclamation and city funds. Plan development is now beginning and is scheduled for completion in December 2026. The plan process has been reported to the Water Issues Committee. It will include public and stakeholder participation.
- B. **Questions:**
1. What will you do to support this planning effort? Who are the stakeholders that should participate in this process?

VIII. Closing statement

- A. In your closing statement, please summarize the key points where your views differ and/or agree from the other candidates on water policy.