

ASU [®] **Kyl Center for Water Policy
at Morrison Institute**
Arizona State University



Planning Session

Yavapai College, Verde Valley

November 15, 2019

Mission: promote informed public dialogue on critical **water issues in Arizona and the West**

- **non-partisan**
- **research & analysis**
- **historical understanding**

Advisory Board Oversight

Lisa Atkins, Commissioner, AZ State Land Dept.

David Brown, Brown & Brown Law Offices

Thomas Buschatzke, Director, ADWR

Guy Carpenter, VP, Carollo Engineers

Ted Cooke, General Manager, CAP

Ron Doba, NAMWUA

Sandy Fabritz, Water Director, Freeport McMoRan

Kathleen Ferris, Distinguished Fellow

Grady Gammage, Jr., Gammage & Burnham

Pat Graham, State Director, TNC Arizona

Joe Gysel President, EPCOR Water USA

Rhett Larson, Professor, ASU College of Law

Sharon Megdal, Director, WRRC, UofA

Richard Morrison, Manager, Morrison Ent.

Wade Noble, Noble Law

N.W. Bill Plummer, AZ Agribusiness & Water

Phillip Richards, APS

Steve Seleznow, CEO, AZ Community Found.

Kathryn Sorensen, Director, Phoenix Water

Dave Roberts, Water Director, SRP

Tim Thomure, Director, Tucson Water

Margaret Vick, Inter Tribal Council Arizona



- Funding from USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative
- 4 years (2018-2021)
- Multi-institution partnership
- 5 communities in PA, NE, AZ (Verde Valley)





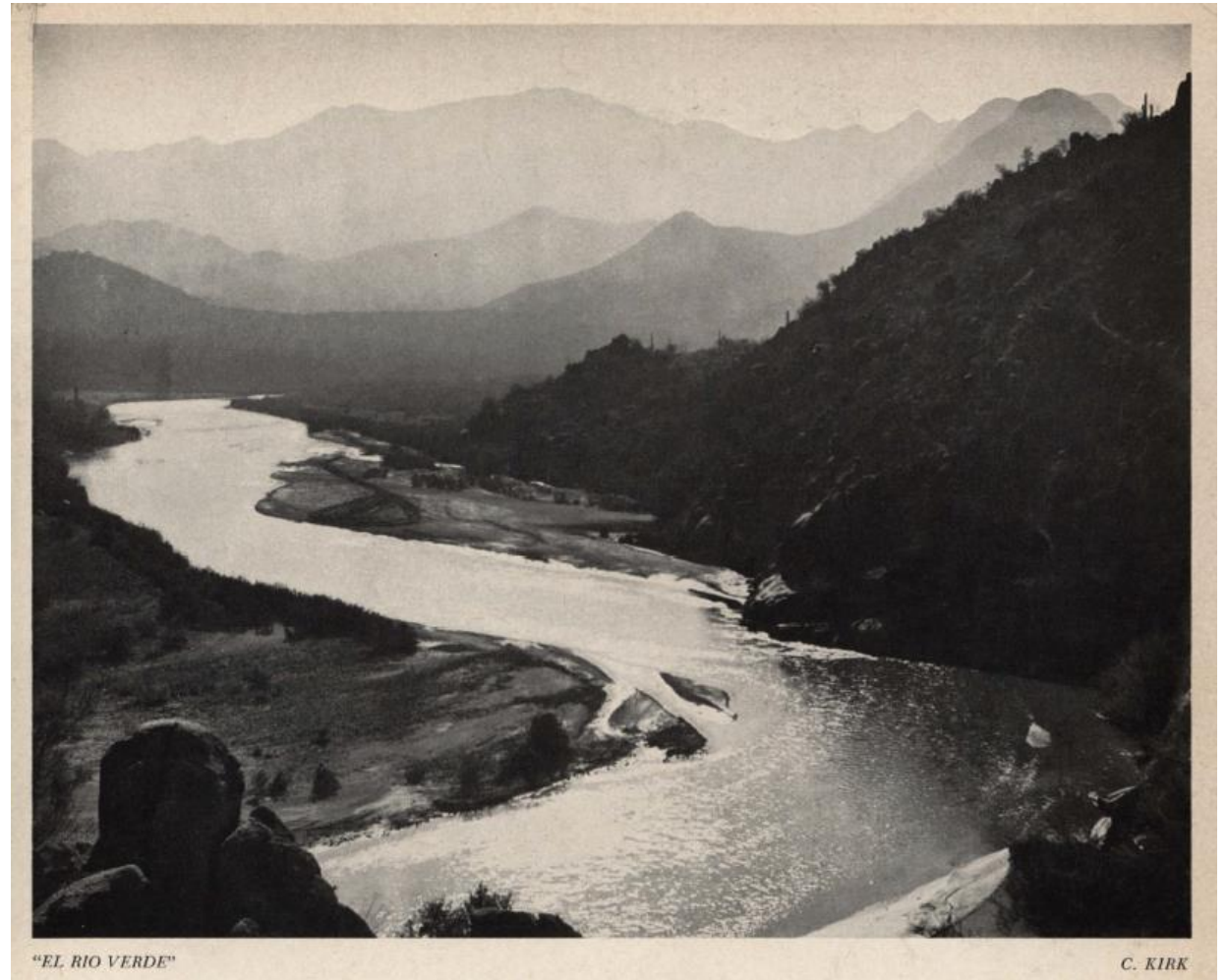
Project Goals

1. Establish pathways to better support rural communities through USDA research and outreach.
2. Identify and address partner communities' concerns and interests related to agriculture and water.
3. Develop community-led research project(s).
4. Understand the impacts of engagement on community capacity.

Why the Verde Valley?

Representative of rural
communities in transition

Agricultural research
opportunities



"El Rio Verde" Arizona Highways, March 1943

Interview Participants

50 participants

Identified by recommendation (snowball sample), and at water/ agriculture meetings and events

Criteria for agriculture/water stakeholders:

- Live, own land, have water claim in Verde Valley
- Work in/have expertise on the Verde Valley
- Represent landholders, farmers, ranchers, residents, environment of Verde Valley

- Farmers: 7
- Ranchers: 8
- Residential irrigators: 6
- Ditch managers: 8
- Conservation group reps: 9
- Educators, consultants: 9
- Local & county government: 9
- State & federal government: 6
- Ag representatives, lobbyists: 6

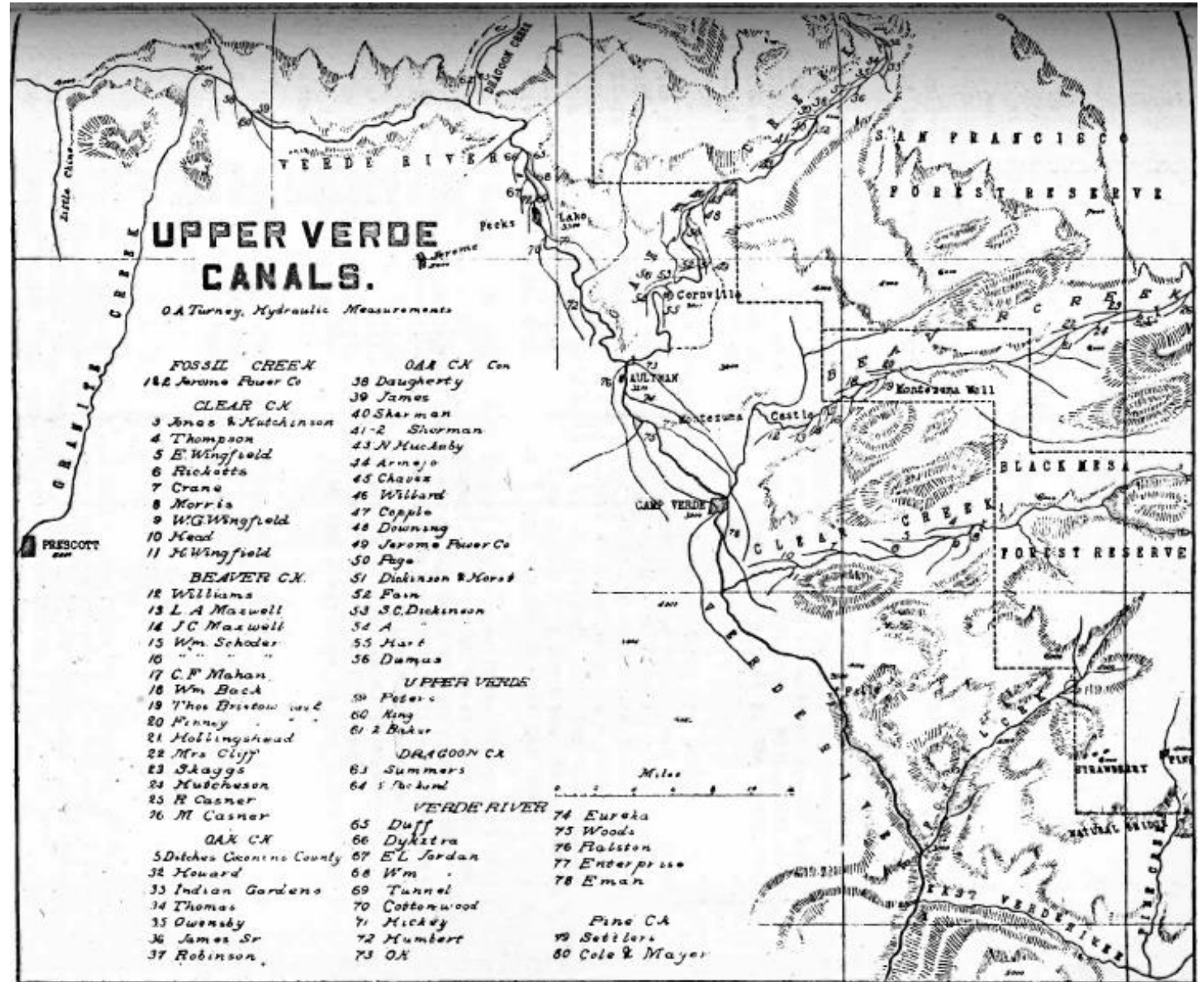
Interview Methods

- **Objective:** identify the range of issues related to agriculture and water in the Verde Valley
- **Data collection:**
 - In-person interviews, 45 minutes to 3.5 hours
 - Completed March 2018 – June 2019
 - Audio-recorded with participants' permission; confidential
 - Topics covered: key water/ag issues, collaboration, information sources, history of collaboration, opportunities for engagement, adjudication
- **Qualitative Analysis:**
 - Grounded theory approach (inductive coding) using NVIVO software

Main Themes

- **Economic concerns**
 - Profitability, land prices, labor, etc.
- **Parcel-level issues**
 - Pests, inputs, soil management, manure management, adapting to drought, etc.
- **Ditch and irrigation issues**
 - Ditch maintenance; coordinating & educating shareholders; scheduling; irrigation efficiency; expansion, etc.
- **Grazing on public lands**
 - Interfacing with govt. agencies; sharing with recreationalists, etc.
- **Health of the Verde River**
 - Sustaining flows; riparian vegetation; species habitat; flood risk; effects of groundwater withdrawals; etc.
- **The Adjudication**
 - Unsettled claims; uncertainty; forfeiture; conflict; poor understanding; limited information; etc.

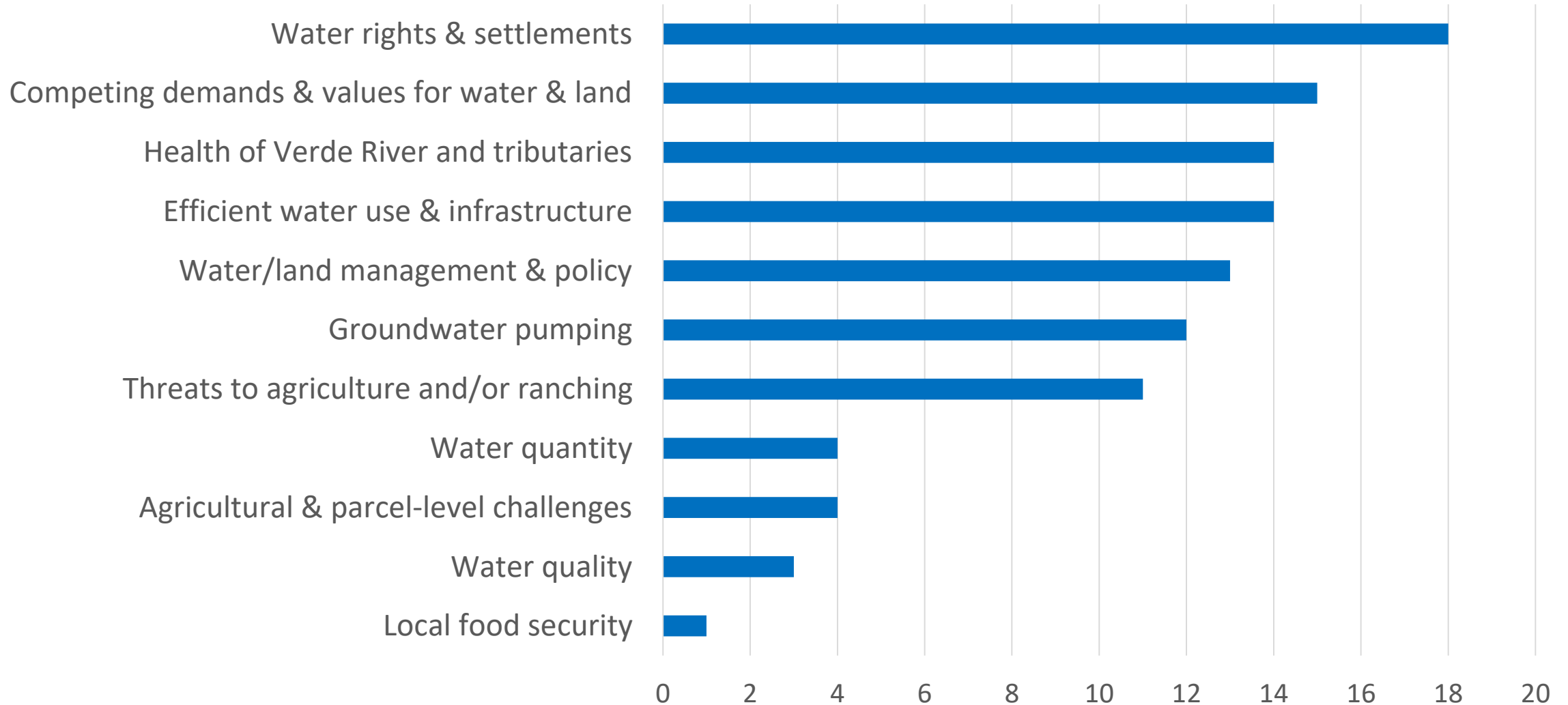
Stakeholder Survey



Survey Methods

- **Objective:** Prioritize information needs for broad issues identified in interviews
- **Targeted Sample:** interview participants, stakeholders identified at water/agriculture meetings and events
- **# of Responses:** 43 (small, not representative)
- **Data collection:** online (Qualtrics) and paper surveys

Q2. With respect to water and agriculture, which issue(s) would you like to see more information or data about?



Q3. With respect to water and agriculture in the Verde Valley, what are the most critical gaps in knowledge, data, or science? Select 2.

