

New committee to advise on water issues in Iron County

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(Photo: Asher Swan / The Spectrum & Daily News)

A newly-formed citizen advisory committee will help chart the future course of water use in Iron County.

Last month, the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District asked 20 community leaders from various educational and professional backgrounds to take part in an ongoing discussion of water-related issues from conservation to population growth.

The group met for the first time last week to begin the process of learning and understanding water resource issues. CICWCD General Manager Paul Monroe presented a history and overview of Iron County's water resources to the group to serve as a foundation for future discussions.

Monroe explained that action must be taken to maintain groundwater levels, saying that they have significantly declined since 1940. He said that 375,000 acre-feet of water has been taken from the groundwater system over that time. An acre-foot of water is a volume of water covering one acre at a depth of one foot. Monroe suggested thinking of the area as about the size of a football field.



(Photo: Spectrum & Daily News File)

Currently, the district draws about 28,000 acre-feet of groundwater per year. The system naturally recharges about 21,000 acre-feet, creating a deficit.

Monroe outlined plans for several [recharge and pipeline projects](#) including the West Desert Water Development Project. A combination of recharge projects and importation must be used to balance the aquifer, he said.

The committee is composed of representatives from Cedar City and Enoch City, the Bureau of Land Management and SUU as well as a variety of community leaders from the private sector. The group will hear from guest speakers at the monthly meetings to gain further understanding on how the system works, and what tools are available to the district to ensure an adequate water supply for Iron County.

Part of their mandate is to discuss what they've learned with the community groups they currently interact with and to provide recommendations to the district.

State Engineer Kent Jones, director of the Division of Water Rights will present Groundwater Management Plans and discuss the regulation of water rights at the October meeting.

For more information on [CICWCD](#) and the Water Advisory Committee visit [CICWCD/Committees](#) or call 435-865-9901.

The next meeting of the Water Advisory Committee will be held Oct. 25 at 3 p.m. in the conference room at the CICWCD offices, 88 E. Fiddlers Canyon Road.