



MUSEUM of
NORTHERN
ARIZONA

Celebrating the Colorado Plateau



GRAND CANYON
TRUST

PRESS RELEASE

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Future of the Colorado Plateau Forum Water Challenges—Part 1

(Flagstaff, Ariz.) – December 29, 2016 – Join the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) and the Grand Canyon Trust for the next Future of the Colorado Plateau Forum, “Water Challenges—Part I,” Wednesday, January 25, 2017, from 6-8 p.m. in MNA’s Branigar Hall. Space is limited to 100 participants and pre-registration is required. To register, email forum@musnaz.org or call MNA at 928.774.5213. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the forum begins promptly at 6 p.m.

The American Southwest is drying out. The white “bathtub rings” around Lake Powell and Lake Mead, the two big reservoirs in the Colorado River Basin, are the most visible signs of our water shortage. But there is also an invisible bathtub ring below ground—in our aquifers. In part one of this two-part series on water, forum presenters and participants will explore the hydrology of our aquifers, their condition, who owns them and who controls their use.

Here on the Coconino Plateau our regional water future depends largely on two regional ground-water flow systems, the shallow C aquifer and the deep Redwall-Muav aquifer. Ground-water withdrawals have been steadily increasing since 1975, with about two-thirds of the withdrawals from the C aquifer. A 2014 study using NASA satellite data showed that ground-water in the Colorado River Basin is now being depleted six times faster than surface water. Some of these ground-water losses will take thousands of years to be recharged naturally.

This forum will address concerns being raised among hydrologists, state water planners and decision-makers about the future availability and sustainability of our water supplies. Participants will be asked to engage directly with the presenters, including **Ron Doba** (Coconino Plateau Watershed Partnership), **Jamie Macy** (USGS), **Jason John** (Navajo Nation), **Doug Dunham** (Arizona Department of Water Resources) and **Brad Hill** (City of Flagstaff). The forum will be hosted by **Dr. Abe Springer**, Professor of Hydrogeology in the School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability at NAU.

The Future of the Colorado Plateau Forum is designed to address the region’s environmental and demographic concerns. The series enables citizens and professionals to share ideas and perspectives on important concerns affecting the region, including land management, water availability, wildlife conservation, energy production and economic sustainability.

For more information, call 928.774.5213. The Museum of Northern Arizona is located at 3101 N. Fort Valley Road in Flagstaff.

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