

One Millionth Acre Foot of Colorado River Water Recharged and Restored
March 28, 2013
Tucson Water Clearwater Renewal and Resource Facility
(page one of two)



(above: Pete the Beak, Tucson Water's mascot, and guests watch as the valve is opened to allow the water to fill a dry recharge basin.)

Tucson Water Director Alan Forrest and Mayor Jonathan Rothschild, accompanied by Central Arizona Project representatives, elected officials, and water resource and conservation professionals, celebrated a milestone in our community's history: the one-millionth acre foot of Colorado River water recharged and stored by Tucson Water in its Clearwater Renewal Resource Facility.

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(above) The City's Channel 12 staff prepares for the opening of the valve and the first rush of Colorado River water into the dry basin.

This milestone signifies how renewable water supplies such as Colorado River water play a critical role in the present and future sustainability of our region. One million acre feet of water would cover the University of Arizona's football field and extend it into a column 189 miles high.

Colorado River water is delivered via the CAP canal from the river, which is 320 miles away. It then flows into the recharge basins to infiltrate down into the water table.

Before the start of recharge in Avra Valley, the water table was more than 300' below the land surface. Presently, the water level underneath both facilities has risen between 106' and 176'.

Tucson Water is recharging 144,172 acre feet of water, but we are only recovering about 100,000 acre feet. The remaining water is being stored in the aquifer for future use including times when the Colorado River may face a shortage and our allocation is reduced.