

SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA
MARICOPA COUNTY

September 18, 2025

CLERK OF THE COURT
A. Parmar
Deputy

SPECIAL WATER MASTER
SHERRI ZENDRI

In Re The General Adjudication of
All Rights to Use Water in the Gila
River System and Source
W-1, W-2, W-3, W-4 (Consolidated)

FILED: 10/2/2025

In re: Arthur Verdugo Jr.
Contested Case No. W1-11-002397

and

In re: Roy and Helen M. Verdugo
Contested Case No. W1-11-002396

MINUTE ENTRY

Courtroom 301 – Central Court Building

10:31 a.m. This is the time set for a Status Conference receive an update from the property owners regarding their progress with ADWR and their Statements of Claimant and Basis of Right Forms before the Special Water Master Sherri Zendri.

The following parties/attorneys appear virtually through Court Connect:

- Property Owner, Augustine Vargas, is present on his own behalf
- Property Owner, Patricia A. Garcia, is present on her own behalf
- Property Owner, Arthur Verdugo Jr. (of Arthur Verdugo Jr. Properties LLC and Arthur and Olivia Verdugo Living Trust) is present on his own behalf
- Property Owners, Gilda Marquez and Carlos Marquez, are present on their own behalf
- Michael Carter on behalf of the Gila River Indian Community (“GRIC”)
- Susan Montgomery on behalf of the Yavapai Apache Nation and observing for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe

- Katrina Wilkinson on behalf of the Salt River Project (“SRP”)
- John Burnside on behalf of BHP Copper
- Mark Widerschein on behalf of the United States Department of Justice, Environment and Natural Resources Division
- Laurel Herrmann on behalf of the San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Bradley Pew observing on behalf of the St. David Irrigation District
- Rhett Billingsley on behalf of American Smelting and Refining Company (“ASARCO”)
- Karen Nielsen on behalf of the Arizona Department of Water Resources (“ADWR”)
- Margaret Hirschak on behalf of the Tonto Apache Tribe

A record of the proceedings is made digitally in lieu of a court reporter.

The Special Master addresses the parties regarding a small administrative change in the contested case numbers. The parties are advised that moving forward, all contested cases in regards to the general adjudication of all rights to use water in the Gila River System and Source will have two leading zeros, i.e. W1-11-2396 will become W1-11-002396 and W1-11-2397 will become W1-11-002397.

The Court notes that it received an updated map and inquires if the property owners would like to proceed.

Augustine Vargas, Pat Garcia, Arthur Verdugo, Gilda Marquez and Carlos Marquez all indicate that they would like to proceed.

Mr. Vargas informs the Special Master that his well was drilled in 2006 and inquires if the correct well, no. 55-904301 is included in this litigation.

The Special Master will provide further guidance after hearing from the rest of the parties.

Mr. Verdugo and Mr. Marquez both believe they have filed and paid.

Counsel Nielsen provides an update. They have received 33 filings from Carlos and Gilda Marquez, Arthur Verdugo Jr. Properties LLC, and Arthur and Oliva Verdugo. The administrative review period will be finished next week and they will be informed if there are any missing documents. Patricia Garcia and Augustine Vargas also both submitted applications but she does not have any further update on those.

Ms. Garcia inquires if ADWR will be maintaining the wells once this is over. The Special Master clarifies that no one is trying to take any water rights away and reiterates the purpose of this adjudication.

LET THE RECORD REFLECT that Ms. Garcia's daughter, Grace, provides an email to the Special Master and requests to be added to the email list for this contested case.

The Special Master calls for any additional comments or concerns.

Mr. Verdugo states he has nothing further to add but would like to note that they appreciate ADWR's staff as they have been extremely helpful to him and the Marquez family with this process.

IT IS ORDERED that ADWR shall provide Notice whether the property owner's applications are complete or if there has been a request for additional information and the anticipated timeframes for completion on or before **November 21, 2025**. Once the Special Master receives this information the parties will be advised of the next steps through a separate order.

10:52 a.m. Matter concludes.

A copy of this order is mailed to all persons listed on the Court-approved mailing list.