

SUPERIOR COURT OF ARIZONA
MARICOPA COUNTY

October 2, 2025

CLERK OF THE COURT
S. Motzer
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: 10/08/2025

In re: Bingham Sacaton Ranch
Contested Case No. W1-11-2586

MINUTE ENTRY

Courtroom 301 – Central Court Building

10:30 a.m. This is the time set for a Status Conference to determine whether the property owners are interested in pursuing water rights before the Special Water Master Sherri Zendri.

The following parties/attorneys appear virtually through Court Connect:

- Property Owner, Larry Wilson (The Wilson Trust), is present on his own behalf
- Property Owner, Michelle Brobeck, is present on her own behalf
- Brett Pena on behalf of the Gila River Indian Community (“GRIC”)
- Joe Sparks on behalf of the San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Robyn Interpreter on behalf of the Yavapai Apache Nation
- Karen Nielsen and Dustin Rector for Arizona Department of Water Resources (“ADWR”)

- Kathryn Ust on behalf of the Salt River Project (“SRP”)
- David Brown observing on behalf of C-Spear LLC
- Rosemary Avila observing on behalf of the Tonto Apache Tribe
- Frank Wiggins for RDF Land & Cattle Company
- Callie Murray for Sacaton Ranch, LLC

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

Mr. Wiggins addresses the Court regarding the Statement of Claimant that he has submitted.

Discussion is held thereon.

Property Owners, Benny and Maricella M. Carrasco are not present today,

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED removing them from the Court-approved mailing list for failure to participate.

Ms. Brobeck addresses the Court and states there are no surface water impoundments on her property and she does not intend to claim any potential water rights.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED removing Michelle Brobeck from the Court-approved mailing list.

The Special Master addresses Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Murray regarding the scope of this case as it relates to their properties and potential water rights. The Special Master will include additional information in the “LATER” portion of this minute entry.

Ms. Murray requests information regarding where to obtain the map she needs.

Discussion is held regarding the location of the potential water rights for stockponds included in the watershed file report (“WFR”). For the reasons stated on the record,

IT IS ORDERED that **no later than December 1, 2025**, ADWR shall file a notice, along with a map that shows the water features/potential water rights that they found in the 1991 WFR. Additionally, ADWR shall include any water features that may be shown in current aerial photos but were not included in the WFR.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Mr. Wiggins and Ms. Murray shall file **no later than January 30, 2026**, final statements of claimants with ADWR. Copies shall be sent to all parties included in the Court-approved mailing list.

Parties interested in receiving courtesy emails should contact the Office of the Special Master at Emily.Natale@JBAZMC.Maricopa.Gov and provide their email address.

IT IS ORDERED setting a status conference for **Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** The status conference will be held using the Court Connect program. Instructions for Court

Connect are attached as Attachment A. If you receive this Order by email, click on the red box “Join Court Connect Hearing” on the attached instructions to make an appearance. If you do not receive this Order by email, log into the Court Connect program on the internet by typing <https://tinyurl.com/specialwatermaster>. If you do not have access to the internet, you may attend telephonically using the telephone number and access code included in the instructions for Court Connect.

The Court addresses all Objectors and Claimants who indicate that they have no issues with how this case is moving forward.

Mr. Wiggins addresses the Court and states there are no surface water impoundments on his property, and he does not intend make any other claims

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED removing Frank Wiggins from the Court-approved mailing list, the previous order for Mr. Wiggins to file documents is vacated.

10:58 a.m. Matter concludes.

LATER:

The following information is reiterated for the convenience of the new landowners for the Sacaton Ranch.

To pursue water rights, a property owner must **both** file a Statement of Claimant, and present to the Court evidence of a legal right to the water they claimed on the Statement of Claimant. If the property owner proves to the Court the existence of a legal water right on their property, the Court will recognize enforceable water rights in a “Final Decree.” ARS § 45-257(B). Parties wishing to move forward with historical water rights claims on their property must ensure Statements of Claimant are current and that legal authorization to use water, also known as the “basis of right,” is presented to the Court.

1) Statement of Claimants (SOCs)

A SOC is a landowner’s or lessee’s (“claimant’s”) written statement to the Court that provides details about their water right claim. This claim to use public water is filed with the Arizona Department of Water Resources (“ADWR”). Although a water right generally remains attached to the land, the SOC must reflect the current claimant’s name and contact information as well as any changes to the original claim. The SOC as filed does not list current property owners or lessees. To update an SOC, parties may make an SOC amendment, obtain a SOC assignment from the original claimant, or file a new SOC for their use. See Ariz. Rev. Stat. §§ 45-254. Forms may be found on ADWR’s website at:

<https://www.azwater.gov/adjudications/statement-claimant-new-use-summons-forms>

2) Basis of Right

To obtain a water right, a claimant must also provide a “basis of right.” To begin this process, the claimant must file a document with ADWR either registering a water right, applying for a

permit to appropriate water, or applying for a stockpond claim of right. See Arizona Revised Statutes (“Ariz. Rev. Stat.”) §§ 45-182(A), 45-152(A), 45-273. -

If a claimant proves that the water right claimed was initiated prior to June 12, 1919, they do not need to file an “application for a permit to appropriate,” but must present a statement of claim registering their claimed water right. See Ariz. Rev. Stat. §§ 45-171, 45-182(A). ***Note that a statement of claim is a different document than a statement of claimant.***

ADWR can help the current property owners determine if former Claimants properly registered the potential water rights claimed on the SOC's for this contested case. If a claimant either cannot prove that the water right claimed was initiated prior to June 12, 1919, the claimant must file either an “application for a permit to appropriate public water” or an “application for a stockpond claim of right.” Ariz. Rev. Stat. §§ 45-152(A), 45-272(C).

If the claimed water right is for a pond constructed before 1977, less than 15 acre-feet, and used solely for watering livestock or wildlife (but not primarily for fishing or culturing of fish), the claimant should file an “application for a stockpond claim of right.” Ariz. Rev. Stat. §§ 45-271, 45-272. If the claimed water right is for any other use, the claimant must file an “application for a permit to appropriate public water.” Blank forms for either application may be found on the ADWR website at:

<https://www.azwater.gov/surface-water/surface-water-forms-and-documents>.

Because of the time and cost involved in pursuing an “application for a permit to appropriate public water” or an “application for a stockpond claim of right,” claimants should first gather as much evidence as possible to determine which, if any, of their water rights claims are for water uses initiated prior to June 12, 1919.

Federal land entry case files (e.g. homestead proofs and affidavits) may be useful for proving historical farming and grazing activity on your land. Resources for finding land entry filings are listed below:

- Federal land patents may be found here:
<https://gloreCORDS.blm.gov/search/default.aspx>
- Pre-1908 homestead proofs may be accessed from a physical FamilySearch location. See <https://locations.familysearch.org/en/search> for more information.
- Any other land entry case files can be ordered using the following form:
<https://www.archives.gov/forms/pdf/natf-84.pdf>.

3) Objections to Potential Water Rights Claims

Objections for this contested case were filed when ADWR published its findings. Claimants are encouraged to review these objections when filing pre-adjudication documents as some objections may be resolved simply by providing additional information. Objections for this contested case can be found on the General Stream Adjudication website under “Active Cases” at:

<https://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/SuperiorCourt/GeneralStreamAdjudication/docs/W1-11-2586-Objection.pdf>

4) Contact Information

To contact ADWR:

- Statements of claimant application and processing - 1-866-246-1414
 - Email: smitchell@azwater.gov
 - website: <https://www.azwater.gov/adjudications>
- Groundwater Well Registration – (602) 771-8527
 - Email: wells@azwater.gov
 - website: <https://www.azwater.gov/permitting-wells>
- Surface Water Permitting (Basis of Rights) – (602) 771-8621
 - Email: surfacewater@azwater.gov
 - website: <https://www.azwater.gov/surface-water/surface-water-overview>

University of Arizona - Arizona Adjudications Project

While it is not necessary, Claimants are free to seek their own legal counsel at any time should they decide to do so. In addition, The Arizona Adjudications Project is taking applications to provide free, limited legal representation in the adjudication. The team can help claimants who are not already represented by an attorney. You can apply for assistance here:

<https://law.arizona.edu/academics/clinical-programs/natural-resource-use-management-clinic/arizona-adjudications-clinic>.

To contact the University of Arizona Adjudications Project call (520) 621 6722 or via email at: law-azadjudicationsproject@arizona.edu.

To contact the Office of the Special Water Master please call (602) 372-4115.



Court Connect Hearing Notice for In re Bingham Sacaton Ranch

This hearing will be conducted through the new Court Connect program offered by the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County. This new and innovative program allows Court participants to appear online, rather than in a physical courtroom. Hearings are preferably conducted by video conference but can also be conducted by phone. Lawyers (and self-representing litigants) are responsible for distributing this notice to anyone who will be appearing on their behalf.

All participants must use the JOIN COURT CONNECT HEARING button or the dial in information below to participate.

Participants: Please follow the steps below to participate in the remote proceeding.

1. Click the JOIN COURT CONNECT HEARING button below.
2. Enter your full name and role in name field.
3. Wait for the facilitator to admit you to the proceeding.

Remember to keep this email handy so you can use it to participate in the following proceeding.

Case Name: In re Bingham Sacaton Ranch

Contested Case No. W1-11-2586

Start Date/Time: Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

JOIN COURT CONNECT HEARING

Dial-in Information: +1 917-781-4590

Private Dial-in Information: for privacy purposes, you can block your phone number by dialing *67 +1 917-781-4590

Dial-in Access Code: 688 970 203#

Tiny URL: <https://tinyurl.com/specialwatermaster>

To ensure an optimal experience, please review the brief Court Connect training prior to the hearing: [Here](#)