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From the Phoenix Business Journal:
<https://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/news/2020/02/21/my-view-water-sustainability-isvital-to-wm-phoenix.html>

My View: Water sustainability is vital to WM Phoenix Open

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As a company that is invested in the future of both the state of Arizona and the ever-popular Waste Management Phoenix Open golf tournament, Waste Management knows fresh water is essential for golf, the broader tourism and recreation industries, and our region’s future. As Arizona has endured nearly two decades of drought, the WM Phoenix Open’s water-positive impact — which puts more water into the Verde River than the week-long golf tournament uses — is especially important. Our two organizations have partnered since 2014 to make the tournament as green an event as possible with water conservation at the helm of our sustainability efforts.



JIM POULIN | PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL
 Signage showing the Waste Management logo at the

Waste Management Phoenix Open, in this file photo.

Together with the Thunderbirds, Swire Coca-Cola, M Culinary Concepts, Coors Light, Hunter Industries and Microsoft, we also collectively fund upstream projects with the Nature Conservancy that support farmers and keep the Verde River flowing through the "WMPO Change the Course" initiative. In fact, our collective efforts have helped restore 320 million gallons of fresh water to Arizona ecosystems and communities, improving habitats for native species and helping farmers use more efficient irrigation.

Water conservation measures at the Waste Management Phoenix Open ensure water is used responsibly throughout the tournament and that we limit pressure on the municipal water supply. On-site at the tournament, water from the kitchens is recycled for portable toilets, and hand-washing stations use hand sanitizer instead of water. Since 2011, these practices have saved more than 37,000 gallons of fresh water.

In addition to on-site conservation, the WMPO Change the Course partners are contributing to the restoration this year of an additional 50 million gallons of fresh water to the Verde River valley through support of projects like the Nature Conservancy's Eureka Ditch Project. The Eureka ditch is an 8-mile-long earthen irrigation ditch that serves more than 350 irrigated acres in the Verde Valley. On average, there is a 20% loss in water through ditch seepage and evaporation each year. Piping the ditch will help to reduce maintenance costs and improve water delivery efficiencies for Verde Valley water users. It will also reduce the amount of water diverted from the Verde River, increasing river flows and supporting fish and wildlife habitats.

Combined, the efforts to raise awareness and conserve water at the WM Phoenix Open as well as raise money to fund water stewardship and river restoration help to make sure our rivers and communities remain resilient and drought proof. Doing business in Arizona means we are aware of the looming water challenges from ongoing drought, population growth and shrinking groundwater supplies which is why so many corporate partners have joined us in these efforts.

By using the platform of the tournament, the aim is to drive awareness and resources to further conserve water, reuse grey water, and restore fresh water to nature in a state and at a time when it matters most. Planning for a future with a robust and resilient economy dependent on limited water resources will take the leadership of the business community. Which is why we will continue to make events like the Waste Management Phoenix Open as

sustainable as possible.

Susan Robinson is the senior director of sustainability and policy for Houston-based Waste Management Inc. Todd Reeve is the director of the nonprofit Business for Water Stewardship, based in Portland, Oregon.