

CAP FAQ <http://www.cap-az.com/about-cap/faq/>

Q

: What is the length of the canal?

A

: 336 miles from Lake Havasu City to Tucson.

Q

: Where does the canal end?

A

: 14 miles south of Tucson.

Q

: How much did the project cost?

A

: CAP cost \$3.6 billion to construct. According to the contract with the federal government, \$1.65 billion has to be repaid.

Q

: How wide is the canal?

A The average size of the aqueduct in its beginning is 80 feet across the top and 24 feet across the bottom and the water is 16.5 feet deep. The oversized section of the canal, which acts as an internal reservoir system, is 160 feet across the top and 80 feet across the bottom.

Q

: How thick are the concrete panels in the aqueduct?

A

: The concrete is 3.5 inches thick and, in some areas, it is reinforced with steel rebars.

Q How much water is in the canal?

:

A
: The canal will deliver an average of 1.5 million acre feet of Colorado River water annually. If the canal were operated full-bore year round, the capacity would be approximately 2.2 million acre feet.

Q
: How much water is lost through evaporation (or seepage)?

A
: Due to the design, constant delivery system and efficient operation methods, CAP's average annual evaporation loss is 4.4 percent, or 16,000 acre feet from the aqueduct and 50,000 acre feet from Lake Pleasant. Seepage losses are 0.6 percent, or 9,000 acre feet per year.

Q
: Why isn't the aqueduct covered?

A
: The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) made studies of this possibility and found the cost to be prohibitive. Covering the canal would have quadrupled the \$4 billion the project originally cost.

Q
: Who gets CAP water?

A
: There are three classifications of users: municipal (e.g., cities such as Phoenix, Mesa, and Scottsdale), agricultural (we commonly deliver water to agricultural irrigation districts such as the Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation District), and Indian communities (12 tribes have allocations).

Q
: How is terrorism prevented?

A
: The entire length of the canal is fenced and CAP has a security force that patrols the canal by land and by air. There are alarms at all key structures, pumping plants, turnouts, and check structures. Regular water quality tests also would alert us to contamination.

Q
: Why was this project built?

A
: The state of Arizona is suffering from a 2.5 million acre foot groundwater overdraft. This means that 2.5 million acre-feet of groundwater are being removed from the ground faster than nature can replace it. This can cause serious structural damage to

homes, agricultural lands and industry. In an effort to offset this problem, CAP was authorized to counteract the overdraft by providing an alternative source of surface water.

Q

: What if the Colorado River dries up?

A The Colorado River system will never "dry up." However, below-average runoff or full-use development could occur. The river is nearly at capacity. If we had a drought tomorrow or next year, there is enough water stored behind dams to provide the needs for all the upper and lower basin states for three to five years depending on their usage. If low flows continued for years, all the users of Colorado River water in the different states would suffer cutbacks.

Q

: What about the wildlife (or environment)?

A Before any feature of the canal was built, there was a massive environmental impact study made to determine the possible impact on wildlife or the environment in that location. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation which built the project has a full staff of environmental teams to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations protecting fish, wildlife and native plants.

Prior to CAP construction, environmental teams from the University of Arizona and the Arizona Game and Fish Department were contracted with by Reclamation to perform wildlife studies and determine their migration patterns. The study resulted in the placement of wildlife bridges at strategic locations to ensure wildlife could cross the canal safely and without interference with their natural migration patterns. There also are fences, watering holes, and escape ramps in distribution canals, as well as a roughened concrete finish that allows the smaller animals to climb in and out of the canal. In some instances, such as a 2,157 acre parcel of land near Tucson, property was purchased by CAP to fully protect and preserve the natural habitats of animal and plant life.

Q

: Why isn't the canal open for recreation (fishing, swimming)?

A CAP has been fenced along its entire length to provide security for people and wildlife. The canal is not open for fishing or swimming to ensure maximum safety for animals and humans and to avoid subsequent liability issues. CAP security has to be maintained in compliance with all federal regulations.

Q

: When did repayment begin?

A The Secretary of the Interior declared CAP substantially complete October 1, 1993. This triggered the start of CAP's 50-year repayment period.

