



## 2018 Arizona Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Christopher B. Leone

---

Campaign Address 20309 N. 96th Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85255

---

Campaign Telephone/Fax 480.242.8643

---

Campaign Email Address chrisbleone@gmail.com

---

District 23

---

Office State Senate

---

I request to be considered for endorsement by Sierra Club's Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter.

  
(Candidate Signature)

**Please return the completed questionnaire no later than April 30, 2018.**

Emailed replies are requested. Send to [grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org)

Thank you for your interest and time in completing the questionnaire.

Since Arizona's statehood, pumping and diversions have severely and negatively affected major groundwater basins and seriously degraded five of Arizona's major perennial rivers: the Colorado, Gila, Salt, Santa Cruz, and much of the San Pedro. Additionally, future perennial flow in the upper Verde River is deeply threatened. Researchers<sup>1</sup> predict that in 2050 groundwater demand in seven river basins will exceed base flow, thus endangering the Agua Fria, Babocomari, San Pedro, upper Verde, and Little Colorado Rivers. One indicator of the declining health of Arizona's rivers and streams is the status of native fish populations. Reduced river flows and deterioration of riparian habitats have detrimental effects on hunting, fishing, boating, birding, and other water-based recreational activities that significantly contribute to Arizona tourism – a growing \$20.9 billion industry bringing revenue from outside Arizona.

- 1. Would you support legislation to protect Arizona's remaining perennial rivers and springs from groundwater pumping and surface diversions and sustain environmental flows (water for the rivers themselves)? Please answer "Yes" or "No" and explain as desired.**

Yes. Forward-thinking legislators, independent of partisan and private interests, can forge new opportunities that are win-win, opportunities that preserve groundwater levels and Arizona's riparian ecosystem while allowing for growth and development.

Like much of the Southwest, Arizona's climate is changing in ways that can be attributed, at least in part, to human-caused emissions of greenhouse gases.<sup>2</sup> The 2000-2009 period registered annual temperatures warmer than any decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Since 2010, temperatures have continued to rise.<sup>4</sup> Multiple regional climate models show that the Southwest will likely experience some of the greatest climate change into the mid and late 21<sup>st</sup> century compared to other regions of the United States.<sup>5</sup> Surface temperatures across the Southwest are projected to continue to increase 0.6 to 2 °C (1 to 4 °F) by 2021-2050, 0.6 to 3 °C (1 to 6°F ) by 2041-2070, and 1 to 5 °C (2 to 9 °F ) by 2070-2099 (ranges depend on specific climate models).<sup>6</sup> Inland areas of the Southwest, including the Colorado Plateau, will likely experience the upper end of these ranges with summer temperatures projected to increase by 2.5 °C (4.5 °F) by 2050 and 4.0 °C (7.4 °F) by 2090. Winter temperatures are projected to increase 2.5 °C (4.5 °F) by 2050 and 3.0 °C (5.4 °F) by 2090.<sup>7</sup> Winter cold snaps are projected to become less frequent, though not necessarily less severe.<sup>8</sup> Higher temperatures will lead to increased evaporation and less surface moisture which will likely amplify drought conditions.<sup>9</sup> Snowpack and related hydrologic processes will also be impacted (see below), particularly in the low to middle elevations of the southern Colorado Plateau.<sup>10</sup> As a result, a significant drying trend is projected to continue for the region, leading to increasing likelihood of unprecedented multi-decadal droughts after 2050.<sup>11</sup>

Importantly, “the magnitude and duration of future changes depends most on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted to the atmosphere, particularly carbon dioxide emitted by the burning of coal, oil, and natural gas.”<sup>12</sup> For this reason, it is important for Arizona and other states to have to curb carbon emissions, a critical component of protecting Arizona's population and land, and allowing our region to remain livable for generations to come.

- 2. Do you support actions to reduce carbon emissions from power plants and to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency? Would you support legislation requiring that the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality establish a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan for Arizona? Please answer "Yes" or "No" and explain as desired.**

I would support an ADEQ plan to protect our environment for future generations and would like to see the Federal EPA allow ADEQ to lead. Not all power plants are the same. I support actions to reduce and limit carbon emissions. I support utility-scale renewable energy efforts and zero-energy design for commercial and residential building . I support investments in a smart grid. I am a LEED AP.

Arizona State Parks' system consists of 27 parks and three natural areas and includes places such as Homolovi Ruins, Tubac Presidio, Lost Dutchman State Park, Kartchner Caverns, among many others. Arizona State Parks' natural areas, historic places, archaeological sites, cultural resources, and much more, are in trouble. Over the last decade, parks funding from the Arizona State Legislature has decreased significantly and most years the Arizona State Parks Department receives no general fund dollars.

**3. Would you support legislation to establish a sustainable funding source for Arizona's State Parks System? Would you support a small fee that could be paid when vehicles are registered that would allow people to visit parks at no additional cost and also fund the State Parks System? Please answer "Yes" or "No" and explain as desired.**

Arizona's state park system must be maintained and remain self-funding, without using a vehicle registration fee. State Parks Director Black has shown that the park system can be self-sustaining. Legislation should be written that protects park revenues from being siphoned off by the State General Fund.

Over the last decade the Arizona Legislature has passed and referred to the ballot several measures to attempt to win control of federal public lands and undermine their protections. It has also supported recent efforts by the Trump Administration to rescind or reduce in size national monuments.

Likewise, the Arizona Legislature has attempted to weaken and limit the recovery of endangered species in Arizona, particularly the Mexican gray wolf. It has even sent messages that ask to focus the animal's recovery in Mexico rather than in Arizona and New Mexico and has allocated funding for litigation to hinder wolf recovery.

**4. Do you support protecting federal public lands such as our national parks, wilderness areas, forests, and monuments? Please answer "Yes" or "No" and explain as desired.**

Yes, many if not all national parks, wilderness areas, forests, and monuments in Arizona deserve to be maintained and protect. I would not want to be precluded from evaluating individual cases that could shrink a monument's size for the benefit of surrounding communities.

**5. Do you support the recovery of the Mexican gray wolf in Arizona and throughout its former range? Will you oppose efforts to weaken protections for this and other endangered species? Would you support a state endangered species act? Please answer "Yes" or "No" and explain as desired.**

Yes, the Arizona Mexican gray wolf should be protected; though, I am fine with relocating it from its former range to accommodate growing communities and ranchers that live nearby. As a legislator, I would work toward preventing other species from becoming endangered in the most cost-effective manner and in ways that do not create problems with surrounding communities. Habitats change. I do not see the need at this time for a state endangered species act.

**6. What do you think are the top three environmental issues facing Arizona?**

1. Ensuring a clean and affordable supply of water for future generations
2. Managing our forests – money spent putting out wildfires should be used to prevent them, create jobs, and protect human life and property as well as wildlife
3. Urban sprawl is linked to a number of other key environmental issues. I support retrofitting, redevelopment efforts to make our communities more sustainable

## 7. Why do you want the Sierra Club endorsement?

To get elected to public office and support my efforts to legislate effectively

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions!

---

<sup>1</sup> Marshall RM, Robles MD, Majka DR, Haney JA (2010) Sustainable Water Management in the Southwestern United States: Reality or Rhetoric? PLoS ONE 5(7): e11687. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0011687

<sup>2</sup> Overpeck, J., G. Garfin, A. Jardine, D. E. Busch, D. Cayan, M. Dettinger, E. Fleishman, A. Gershunov, G. MacDonald, K. T. Redmond, W. R. Travis, and B. Udall. 2013. "Summary for Decision Makers." In *Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest United States: A Report Prepared for the National Climate Assessment*, edited by G. Garfin, A. Jardine, R. Merideth, M. Black, and S. LeRoy, 1–20. A report by the Southwest Climate Alliance. Washington, DC: Island Press.

<sup>3</sup> Garfin GM, Jardine A, Merideth R, et al. 2013b. *Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest United States*. Southwest Climate Alliance.

<sup>4</sup> IPCC. 2013. "Summary for Policymakers," In: *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*; Karl TR, Arguez A, Huang B, et al. 2015. Possible artifacts of data biases in the recent global surface warming hiatus. *Science* (80-) 348:1469–1472.

<sup>5</sup> Diffenbaugh NS, Giorgi F, Pal JS. 2008. *Climate change hotspots in the United States*. *Geophys Res Lett* 35:1–5.

<sup>6</sup> Garfin GM, Jardine A, Merideth R, et al. 2013. *Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest United States*. Southwest Climate Alliance.

<sup>7</sup> Garfin GM, Eischeid JK, Cole KL, et al. 2008. *Downscaled Climate Change Projections for the Southern Colorado Plateau: Variability and Implications for Vegetation Changes*; Garfin GM, Jardine A, Merideth R, et al. 2013. *Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest United States: a Technical Report Prepared for the U.S. National Climate Assessment*. Island Press, Washington, D.C., USA.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> Seager R, Ting M, Held I, et al. 2007. *Model projections of an imminent transition to a more arid climate in southwestern North America*. *Science* 316:1181–4.

<sup>10</sup> Hoerling et al. 2013

<sup>11</sup> Cook BI, Ault TR, Smerdon JE. 2015. *Unprecedented 21st century drought risk in the American Southwest and Central Plains*. 1–7.

<sup>12</sup> Overpeck, J., G. Garfin, A. Jardine, D. E. Busch, D. Cayan, M. Dettinger, E. Fleishman, A. Gershunov, G. MacDonald, K. T. Redmond, W. R. Travis, and B. Udall. 2013. "Summary for Decision Makers," pg. 5, In *Assessment of Climate Change in the Southwest United States: A Report Prepared for the National Climate Assessment*, eds. G. Garfin, A. Jardine, R. Merideth, M. Black, and S. LeRoy, A report by the Southwest Climate Alliance. Washington, DC: Island Press.