

Att. Susan Joseph-Taylor

Chief hearing Officer, Office of the state engineer.

From: Mr. Andre Bouchard
331 Tin Street
Henderson, Nevada 89015

190 Belfort Avenue
Ely, Nevada 89301

November 8, 2011

My letter states my concerns and alternatives, to the SNWA pipeline project. I oppose the project because of its detrimental effects to the water tables in the area, the cost, and that the pipeline would not be able to deliver, the amounts of water needed for the Las Vegas valley.

(First)

The Colorado river water allotments could be better managed. Nevada has given some of its water share from the Colorado, to California and Arizona when at the same time the water levels at Lake Powell, were the highest in many years.

(Second)

The development of Coyote Springs in Clark county, 50 or so miles from Las Vegas. They have drilled wells, and built water storage tanks, put in a golf course and irrigation, and have very few residents. This location has a aquifer which has millions of acre feet of water. Some of this abundant water supply could be piped to Las Vegas.

(Third)

I would think that the states that obtain water from the Colorado river could work together, and build desalination plants on the Pacific coast. It would be more cost effective than the 15.5 billion for a pipeline, that would destroy the ecology of White Pine county, Great Basin, and other surrounding areas, that would be impacted by the proposed pipeline.


The SNWA states that pumping water uphill from the California coast, is not cost effective. I disagree, now with renewable energy, and progress in this technology in the coming years, these cost will become much lower. The water could be piped directly to the Colorado river.

Saudi Arabia and their new modern cities are using desalination as their main water source, surely we in the United States, can be just as innovative.

I own a home in Ely, and spend most of the year there, I am retired and enjoy hiking, camping, and enjoying the peacefulness and beauty of the area. A year or so ago, the main water source of Ely (Murry Springs) failed to supply the needed water to the community, the cause of why this happened was researched, but a definite cause was not found. The local mining company used its resources to restore (new casings and pumps) three existing wells that were not being used. These articles relating to this event can be found in past issues of the Ely Times newspaper.

I have included a printing of a article on the Owens Valley, and hopefully, history will not repeat itself.

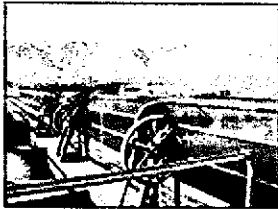
Thank you for reading my letter Sincerely,



STATE ENGINEER'S OFFICE
2011 NOV 14 PM 2:54

L.A. Returns Water to the Owens Valley

by CARRIE KAHN



Carrie Kahn, NPR

This is the point at which the aqueduct breaks off from the Owens River and

out of the river into the

over this city of Los



Carrie Kahn, NPR

Before long, the bone-dry banks of the Owens River will come alive with desert sage brush and salt

Department of Water and Power Chief Biologist Brian Tillemans



Carrie Kahn, NPR

plans right near the Owens River. They are expected to

by the hundreds — or even

water is back in the river.

Los Angeles Department

Los Angeles Department

Los Angeles Department

At the dawn of 20th century, Owens Valley was a prime piece of California nature. Located between Mount Whitney and Death Valley, the land was lush with lots of runoff from the snow-covered Sierra Nevada mountains. But then, Los Angeles got its hands on the water and everything changed.

William Mulholland, L.A.'s visionary water engineer, dreamed of diverting the vibrant Owens River into a 233-mile-long aqueduct pointed at Los Angeles. And in 1913, after a decade of planning and construction, he did it.

Standing before a gathering of eager farmers and residents as the first water poured into Los Angeles, Mulholland stood next to the cascade and shouted, "There it is! Take it!"

Nearly a century later, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa arrived Wednesday on the same banks of the Owens River to put the water back.

"By opening these gates today, we will demonstrate to the world that the great city of Los Angeles is prepared to own up to its history and that we can thrive in partnership and in balance with our neighbors and with the environment of the eastern Sierra," Villaraigosa said. "We are here today because we need to change course. We need to move with these waters."

On the mayor's command, thousands of gallons gushed into the dry channel of the Owens River. And in a perfect bookend to Mulholland, David Nahai, president of the L.A.'s Water and Power Board, had some equally immortal words for valley residents who were there to watch the water flow.

"There it is... it's yours!" he said.

Plans call for the water to flow unimpeded along 62 winding miles of river. Before long, the bone-dry river banks will come alive with desert sage brush and salt grasses, says the L.A. Department of Water and Power's Chief Biologist Brian Tillemans.

"This section here is probably going to have the greatest transformation of any reach of the river," he says.

Downstream from the ceremonies, Tillemans walks through the brittle brush. He says it will take days for the new water to make it to this spot — and years before the willows and wildlife make a comeback.

'There it is! Take it!'

With those words, William Mulholland, L.A.'s visionary water engineer, announced the start of water flowing from the Owens Valley in 1913.



Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

William Mulholland, seen in an undated photo from the early 20th century, surveys the Owens Valley where he would get the water for the young city of Los Angeles.

• Los Angeles Aqueduct History



The aqueduct opened with great fanfare as about 30,000 people looked on.



Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

"Within a short span, in 5 to 7 years, you are going to see this desert brush die off and you will see the water-loving species of plants overtake the desert shrubs you see right now."

Along with the plants will come warm water fish and shore birds. And that could help turn around the valley's depressed economy, says Kathleen New of the Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce. She hopes that once the river is running again, tourists will start flowing, too.

"Families can come here from the south and see what water really looks like when it's not coming out of a faucet... and get an idea of the water that they drink," New says.

But this massive effort to return some of the river's water has not erased the animosity that runs deep in the valley.

"I think it's just a facade, it's a band-aid job," says Sandra Jefferson-Young, a tribal leader of the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Indians, who've been fighting Los Angeles for decades.

Besides siphoning the river, Los Angeles also drained Owens Lake, leaving a huge dry bed of white dusty sediment laced with heavy metals. On windy days, tons of toxic dust sweeps across the valley. Jefferson-Young says the dust caused her asthma. She points out that Los Angeles is now settling the dust because of a court order.

"So it's not because they want to do it, it's because they are forced to do it," Jefferson-Young says.

In fact, the latest river and wetland restoration project was also the result of decades of litigation. And the work is three years behind schedule. Los Angeles officials picked up the pace only after a judge began fining the city and threatening to block its water.


But in spite of the contentious history, many environmentalists say there's much to celebrate. Standing on the still-dry banks of the Owens River, Tillemans hopes the water will give the valley a new environment and a new life.

"Once you build the habitat they will come," the biologist says. "It's kind of a famous saying, but it's really true."

On this spot, Tillemans stops to watch a small Sora rail marsh bird. He calls it a good sign.

General construction of the 233-mile aqueduct began in 1908.



 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Mule teams hauling sections of steel pipe during construction of the aqueduct.

Related NPR Stories

- [Water Policy Around the World](#) Oct. 13, 2008
- [In the West, the Watermaster Plays Solomon](#) Aug. 23, 2008
- [Colorado River Water Shifted to San Diego](#) Dec. 15, 2003
- [The St. Francis Dam Disaster](#) March 12, 2003
- [Mojave Desert Aquifer to Supply L.A. Water](#) May 24, 2001
- [L.A. Agrees to Return Water to Owens Valley](#) July 16, 1998
- [Southern California's Water War](#) June 16, 1998