

GREAT BASIN
NATIONAL PARK *Foundation*

November 30, 2011

Jason King, State Engineer
Div of Water Resources
901 Stewart St. Suite 2002
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Mr. King,

The Great Basin National Park Foundation is submitting the attached comments regarding the water rights applications of the Southern Nevada Water Authority in Spring and Snake Valleys.

If you or your staff have any questions or need further information about the Foundation, please feel free to contact Mr. Dave Tilford at wprealty@mwpower.net or by telephone at (775) 278-0578.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely yours,



Robert B Morrill
Co-Chair

cc: Dave Tilford

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The Great Basin National Park Foundation Board of Directors adopted the following statement on November 6, 2011:

Statement regarding Great Basin National Park and the Southern Nevada Water Authority's Groundwater Pumping Project

The Great Basin National Park Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is "to support programs and projects that enhance the values of Great Basin National Park." In its Strategic Plan, the Foundation articulated a vision in which:

"The natural and cultural heritage of the Great Basin will be enhanced, not compromised, by individuals or industries that understand and appreciate the beauty, diversity, or fragility of this high desert region. Future generations will enjoy wide open landscapes, clean air, dark night skies, vigorous and diverse native ecosystems, and thriving local cultures. Cheatgrass and other invasive weeds will have been eradicated, groundwater will be used locally and conservatively, and sixth and seventh-generation cowboys will still ride the range. ... The Great Basin is enjoyed for its space, silence, and solitude and given protection on par with its diverse and unique natural and cultural resources."

We are aware that the Southern Nevada Water Authority proposes to pump groundwater from rural eastern Nevada to the citizens of Southern Nevada. Two of the valleys from which groundwater is proposed to be pumped are situated on either side of Great Basin National Park. We know that scientists have studied and reported on this complex project and its potential impacts, and that the best science available is not yet conclusive with regard to potential adverse impacts on Great Basin National Park's treasured resources, in particular those values mentioned in our Vision statement: "wide open landscapes, clean air, dark night skies, vigorous and diverse native ecosystems, and thriving local cultures." We believe that when the science is undecided, we should adopt the precautionary principle. Therefore we believe that the project should not proceed in the valleys adjacent to Great Basin National Park until it can be demonstrated that the project will not impact the sustainability of the Park's ecological, economic, and social resources.