

30 November 2011

To Whom it may Concern:

I may be repeating what has been said already, but wish to add my voice in opposition to the proposed pipeline to bring additional water from the rural areas in Nevada to the Las Vegas environs. I have lived here for more than 32 years, and have seen the growth of the city and county. I have also watched as government entities have continually bowed to the interests of developers and big money. Although this pipeline is being touted as a drought hedge, there is no way that this will be the case. Developers and cities are just waiting for the water to become available to push ahead with more housing. What will we see when the next drought hits - if this one ever ends - and we have built the 400,000 extra homes the water from the pipeline is supposed to supply? They will not be keeping that water in reserve for the occasion of a drop in the water supply. No sir, they certainly won't. This is playing out almost exactly as the California water wars over the Owens Valley water played out, and who lost? It was the farmers, the environment, and the Owens Valley itself. When will people realize that an aquifer can not be replenished at the rate water is drawn from it when agriculture and big cities put in bigger and bigger straws to draw off water that took millennia to filter into the pores of the aquifer? The Ogallala Aquifer in the Central Plains is a prime example of this situation. One source says that it is being recharged at a rate of 0.024" a year in the driest areas and up to 6" a year in the wettest parts, while an estimated 21,000,000 acre feet of water is being drawn off (year 2000 figures). We have an annual rainfall in Nevada far below what can replenish our aquifer at the present time - why else is water being drawn off for agriculture if we were able to depend only on rainfall? Put in the pipeline, and the water will be gone, and probably even sooner than estimated. The water district is saying that it will help farmers whose wells dry up. Will they give them free water to meet their needs? Right now the farmers pump what they need according to their current water rights and needs. They don't have to pay for the water itself. The Water District probably wouldn't be as generous. Finally, we're on a migration route for wildfowl and other creatures. With the pumping of the aquifer, lakes, streams and wetlands will be affected and the natural world irreparable damaged. There is little that is really beautiful in Nevada, and you have to live here for a long time to really appreciate what beauty there is. Please don't allow the greed of the few to destroy what has taken thousands of years to create.

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