

Patricia Gladman
PO Box 145
Baker, NV 89311

November 12, 2011

VIA REGISTERED MAIL

Division of Water Resources
901 S Stewart St, Ste 2002
Carson City, NV 89701

Attn: Susan Joseph-Taylor, Chief Hearing Officer

Dear Ms. Taylor:

Re: Comments for Snake Valley Water Rights Hearing of October 7th, 2011

I would like to have the following comments added to the record of the Snake Valley Water Rights Hearing of Friday, October 7th. Due to employment obligations, I was unable to travel to Ely for the public comments day.

Firstly, on a personal note of how granting water to SNWA will affect my life and that of my family, please know that my partner and I own a small acreage in Snake Valley, with water rights to the spring on the property. Our plan over the years has been to build a modest home for our retirement years. Although our land is in Snake Valley, the pumping of water out of Spring Valley by SNWA leaves our surface water rights uncertain and precarious. We are relying on our State Engineer to protect these rights! If SNWA lowers the water table here, we will not only be deprived of the use of our own water rights, our land will be drastically devalued as well, and our children's legacy will be forfeit. I ask you – how can this possibly be right?

The Nevada State Water Engineer probably has one of the most important responsibilities in the entire world at this time – the protection of fresh water – the most essential element for sustaining life. With so many factors having affected the supply of fresh water within the past hundred years, impeccable stewardship of this essential resource is now of paramount importance. We no longer can afford to “blow it” by giving way to corporate greed and short term gain thinking.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority is both of these. They have proven themselves to be utterly irresponsible stewards of their own water supply. There is no awareness or intention evident to undertake the development of a sustainable approach. No conservation measures of any significance have been implemented. Some grants for xeriscaping – that's about it. Apparently, also,

RECEIVED
2011 NOV 21 PM 1:23
STATE ENGINEER

they pay very low rates for their water. What incentives, then, of any weight, are in place for them to really work at conserving water? Their water has been a cheap deal for them to date. Why not make them increase Clark County water rates by 4 or 5 times to get local attention to conserve? I understand that they receive return flow credits for treated wastewater going back into Lake Mead, but implementing effective means to actually conserve water they already have seems to be a first step, not a last one. Please, do not allow them to squander our water as well!

With all of the swimming pools – both private and public, that there are in Las Vegas – where are the mandatory pool covers to reduce water loss from evaporation? If every public and private residence in Clark County had to use water conserving faucets, wouldn't that add up to large water usage savings? Just think of how many hotel bathrooms alone there are in that city. Shouldn't the multitudinous golf courses and hotels with mega fountains be required to pay a premium for non-essential water usage? Would that not get some effective attention on conserving the water they already have?

I've also been told that Las Vegas has its own huge aquifer beneath the city, but they will not draw on it further because there has already been subsidence from depleting it, and they want to keep the huge skyscrapers, which, by the way, they continue to build, from disappearing into sinkholes. Does it not sound just indecent, that, instead of solving their own self-created problems, they choose to take and rob from others?

We all understand how powerful SNWA is and how relentlessly they have exerted their influence to win this fight. It's truly a David versus Goliath battle for the rural citizens of Nevada. Unless SNWA's huge financial resources and political clout are acknowledged openly as the three hundred pound gorilla in the corner of the room, it's hard to imagine how the water grab can have remained an ongoing issue for so long.

Does anyone else think, as I do, that SNWA is after the water from the rest of Nevada not just for "ordinary" (in the case of Las Vegas, that means excessive, conspicuous) consumption? Fresh water is on a pace to become A REALLY BIG MONEY COMMODITY – and I think these folks are on to that. In my opinion, they are intent on appropriating our water with the ultimate plan to sell it elsewhere, down the road, for big profit - if they're allowed to take it from us. In the meantime, our environment will be ruined, and that could include the entire Western United States. Rural Nevada's water rights will be annihilated, and lives will be ruined. Do the State Engineer and the employees of The Division of Water Resources wish to be played, used and made party to dirty dealings? Is this the legacy we are going to leave to our descendants? At what peril?

Drawing down the aquifers of the Great Basin may very well result in an irreversible environmental disaster. The Earth's health and well being has its own tipping points that we do not yet have a grasp of, and this may be the abuse that throws more than we can possibly imagine out of balance.

The science is clear in indicating that over time, the water table in our area will be lowered by drawing these substantial amounts of water. It is so distressing to think of the beautiful, fragile place where I chose to live, becoming a wind blasted wasteland – and so unnecessarily.

I would love to have you come and stay with us for couple of weeks, to experience life here, then drive you down Highway 93, past Coyote Springs (self-sustaining?...I don't think so!), and on to Las Vegas. We could walk down "The Strip" (how apropos) and run the gauntlet of poor migrants trying to foist cards advertising 24 hour a day call girls whilst moving billboards hawking "Hot Girls Who Want to Meet You" drive past.

Here in the Baker area, there are no golf courses, there are no swimming pools. When the snowmelt water dries up, we quit watering lawns or we just don't have them in the first place. We are by choice and necessity self sustaining here. We have gardens, and they are primarily for growing food, not flowers. Most of the rest of the local water goes for ranching and agriculture – again, for producing food. Does Clark County realize that, if they get their way with this, they'll be importing their food from further and further away, and be more and more vulnerable in their refusal to be self sustaining, as time goes by? Why is it not acknowledged as utter madness to build a city in the middle of the desert, for the purpose of non-self sustained, conspicuous consumption, and with an expectation of unrestricted growth to boot?

Well, I think I've said my peace. We all know that the pressures your division must be laboring under have to be immense and you have my most heartfelt empathy and sympathy. We, the little people, the common folk, the citizens of rural Nevada have to trust and hope that our State Engineer has the will to protect us and our beautiful land against this myopic, but extremely powerful group that will more than likely destroy rural Nevada (and themselves eventually), if allowed to proceed.

Thank you for including my comments into the records for the Snake Valley Water Rights Hearing of Friday, October 7th, 2011.

Truly,



Patricia Gladman