

Date: 11/22/11

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STATE ENGINEER'S OFFICE

RE: Deny The SNWA Water Permit Applications

I am writing to you to deny the SNWA water permit applications because I care passionately about the water dependent resources in the project areas and for the reasons below:

The Southern Nevada Water Authority water permit applications should be denied because it does not meet the criteria of "environmental soundness" because there was no in-depth analysis of the soils in the project areas. The composition of the soils affects water conductivity, velocity, permeability, and volume in the groundwater/aquifer water recharging processes. Depletion of the "old" water (aquifer) and groundwater reserves will alter and destroy the water dependent species and environment, there is a no information on how quickly the surface water and groundwater moves to replenish the aquifer (millimeters, inches, feet, per year), this could be miniscule compared to what is being pumped out. The water aquifer takes hundreds, thousands, or even millions of years to replenish and was not considered by the water developer in its plan and if too much water is removed, they will be emptied. This project strongly compares with mineral mining because when it is depleted, it takes billions of years to replenish.

The soils acts like a sponge providing moisture and nutrients for food, grass, trees, to grow, it is the basis for productivity of the food chain. The water, land, air, and Indian cultures are inextricably (incapable of being untangled or untied) related since time immemorial, to separate them would have disastrous consequences. I strongly suggest you take a strong look at the water applications based on a holistic view of water as an integral part of a larger natural and cultural environment and not take a narrow view of water as solely a commodity

The granite, sandstone, and various rocks are modified and disintegrated daily by the weathering process forming soils and this shapes landforms, alluvial plains, and soil texture capacity of the soil to furnish plants with moisture and nutrients. In the arid west plants need more water, when rain and snow falls on unprotected (denuded) soil, it runs off as quickly as rain from a tin roof, the soil is unable to absorb the water, and the runoff takes valuable topsoil with it.

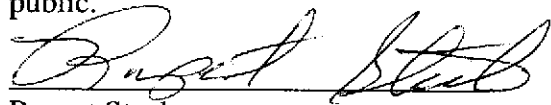
The properties of soils can only be analyzed by field work and collecting samples, they cannot be based wholly on inferences from the nature of the rocks or from climate or other environmental factors. The soils in the proposed pumping valleys support a variety of grasses, which is the important source of food for the animals and grass seeds provide food for the different species of birds.

The SNWA water applications permits should be denied because there is no “trigger point” in the monitoring and mitigation plan when is evidence of wide-spread destruction of the ecosystem caused by groundwater lowering and does not provide protection for property owners. The proposed water pumping sites under this plan is subject to being over pumped by the SNWA.

The SNWA water permit applications should be denied because it seriously diminishes and degrades the socio-economical conditions when large corporations exploit natural resources ultimately increasing the poverty level. Existing wells will dry up forcing well owners to dig their wells deeper, and forcing those who cannot afford it to go out of business affecting their livelihood and it will force us to change our diets drastically and rapidly to less meat, less dairy products and no vegetables.

The SNWA water permit applications should be denied because there is no mitigation in the event that there are inadvertent discovery of my ancestor’s remain, there are known Indian sites in the project areas. The American Indian archaeological sites are very sacred and non-renewable, once they’re destroyed, they’re gone. The Native American Indian Tribes, as most people do, believe that people should not dig graves. It’s about respect. There are dead people down there, even if they’re 5K years old, it’s still a person. We believe that one’s last resting place is hallowed ground, a place so sacred, blessed and to disturb this last resting place is morally wrong. When one is buried, we become part of the earth. They were people who were once loved and cherished. The DEIS and associated documents seriously lacks the integrity to provide mitigation towards the healing of the wound that will be caused by the SNWA GWD.

Please do the right thing by denying the SNWA water permits, it is not the best interest of the public.



Rupert Steele

Tribal member of the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Indian Reservation

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