

30 September 2017

Deputy Administrator Susan Joseph-Taylor
Office of the State Engineer
901 S. Stewart St.
Suite 2002
Carson City, NV 89701

RE: SNWA groundwater applications for Eastern NV

Dear Administrator:

I note in the current edition of the Review Journal that your office is accepting comments from the community until 20 Oct 2017 regarding this subject. Thank you for this opportunity.

Although I'm no longer directly involved in major water issues, my career has involved roles in the field of industrial and commercial water treatment, and I've worked in areas as NV, AZ and CA where water issues are paramount to our communities. I've seen examples of extreme water waste as well as examples of forward looking solutions that transcend short sighted regulators.

I object to the granting of permits to remove substantial quantities of groundwater from Eastern Nevada. The reason can be summarized in two words: Owens Valley (CA).

While the project by the City of Los Angeles to secure the water from the Owens Valley in the early 20th century was undoubtedly responsible for the growth of Los Angeles, in the 21st century we look back with a different view about "beneficial use" of water rights. Now we look at the environmental damage that happens as a byproduct of such megaprojects and wonder if another approach might have worked better. The answer to that questions is a resounding "yes".

We also have a unique situation in Las Vegas regarding our use of Colorado River water. We are the ONLY major metropolitan area that receives return water credits. No other city in the West, or perhaps anywhere in the US have such conditions. Because we have the potential to reuse and recycle the majority of our Colorado River water use we likewise have an opportunity to become the most water efficient city on the planet. We have only begun the process of considering how we might reuse and recycle vast quantities of our total water use while concurrently continuing to develop methods to improve landscape water efficiency in the desert. What was standard practice 30 years ago is now radically different than what we do today. We should strive for continued expansion of programs to control and enhance water efficiency in landscape in this high desert area – for our benefit, and for the benefit of future generations. We must adopt a view of a people looking forward not decades, but a century.

I recommend that instead of investing many billions of dollars of taxpayer money for a pipeline that is shortsighted and will likely decimate a huge swath of beautiful, pristine, and natural beauty that exists in the valleys of Eastern Nevada, we instead take those funds and invest in methods to 1) maximize water conservation, reuse and recycling, and 2) find a way to change the water laws in the West and in the US to figure out methods to construct projects to transport water from areas of extreme water supply (i.e. floodwater from the Mississippi) to eventual sharing of water from the Great Lakes. Over a dozen states in the US could benefit from the availability of using the Great Lakes for their total water supplies. Better, if we can identify methods to control, capture and use the daunting quantities of water that flow down the Mississippi and other great river

2017 OCT 10 RECEIVED

systems for beneficial use, the concept of drought could become a word relegated to a past century. Nobody has ever considered a project of such a scale. Perhaps it is time.

The West and Midwest have habitually overused water aquifers for the sake of beneficial use of such water without consideration of the larger picture. Our laws are all based on State's acting separately, as if the aquifers ended at the state lines. They do not. Further, water issues transcend State boundaries. Our State and National laws on water use must change for the 21st century to allow us to properly take areas where excess water is a problem and store/transport such supplies to areas of habitual drought.

The aquifer that stretches across the Midwest (Ogallala) has been over drafted to a level that brings back concerns of a repeat of the Dust Bowl of the 1920s. Short sighted State and Federal water regulations prevent much better solutions from even being considered. Those idiotic and shortsighted regulations must be abandoned for better solutions.

In short, I hope your office will consider either 1) drastically reducing the allowable use of groundwater in Eastern Nevada for the benefit of the Las Vegas metro area, and 2) help craft solutions that will transcend the 21st century into one of extreme foresight about water conservation and beneficial use concepts.

This may require the involvement of both the Nevada Legislature and the US Congress. However, it is incumbent on us to craft the solutions that will be the foundation of how water is used for generations to come. Let's get this one right – for a change.

Regards,



Stephen Lowe
600 Cypress Meadows Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89144
702-281-7678 cell

STATE ENGINEERS OFFICE
2017 OCT -4 AM 11:33
RECEIVED