

RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHERN NEVADA WATER AUTHORITY, BIG BEND WATER DISTRICT, CITY OF BOULDER CITY, CITY OF HENDERSON, CITY OF LAS VEGAS, CITY OF NORTH LAS VEGAS, CLARK COUNTY, CLARK COUNTY WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT, AND LAS VEGAS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF IN-STATE, NON-COLORADO RIVER WATER RESOURCES IDENTIFIED IN THE WATER RESOURCE PORTFOLIO OF THE SOUTHERN NEVADA WATER AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Nevada is the most arid state in the nation, receiving an average of only nine inches of precipitation each year, with only 4.3 inches per year in Southern Nevada; and

WHEREAS, the State's immense size, in combination with its small amount of water resources relative to other western states, means that water supplies are often far removed from the places where water is needed, whether for agriculture, mining, municipal or other uses; and

WHEREAS, in order to allocate its scarce water supplies among the diverse and competing needs of its population, while balancing individual rights with the State's obligation to protect larger public interests, Nevada adopted a policy in 1913 that water belongs to the public, with water allocations administered by the State according to the doctrine of prior appropriation, otherwise known as "first in time, first in right," consistent with beneficial uses approved by the State; and

WHEREAS, the ability to move water, whether by interbasin transfers or other means, is a critical and long-standing component in Nevada's approach to water allocation, which has been highly efficient and effective in meeting the State's diverse water needs for more than a century; and

WHEREAS, many Nevada communities, including Carson City, Virginia City, Wendover, Tonopah, Fernley, Lovelock, Fallon and Eureka, as well as Nevada's mining and agricultural industries, would not exist in whole or part today without access to water transfers; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a vibrant economy in Clark County is important not only to the county's residents and businesses, but also to the rest of Nevada; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition, development and sustainable use of additional water supplies is of critical importance to the public welfare of the citizens of the Las Vegas Valley and to the continued economic prosperity of Clark County; and

WHEREAS, since 1991, the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) and its

1 member agencies have cooperated in the preparation of a regional water resource portfolio that
2 includes an assortment of water supply options, both surface water and groundwater, which can meet
3 the water needs of the greater Las Vegas Valley for the foreseeable future; and

4 WHEREAS, since 1995, supply options within this portfolio have been implemented
5 consistent with public direction that emphasized the phased development of Colorado River
6 resources first, followed by the phased development of other supplies as needed, all in a manner that
7 will maximize overall system reliability and water quality, encourage and enforce strong
8 conservation, and minimize infrastructure costs; and

9 WHEREAS, in 2000, the Colorado River Basin entered a period of drought that is
10 still ongoing and is considered one of the worst on record, the severity of which has underscored the
11 need to offset southern Nevada's current reliance on Colorado River water with additional
12 non-Colorado River water supplies, providing a more drought-tolerant supply-and-delivery system;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, in 2004, this need for greater drought tolerance, coupled with projected
15 increases in future regional water demands, led the SNWA to begin implementation of three
16 separate, in-state water resource projects that will make available several in-state, non-Colorado
17 River water supplies identified in the SNWA water resource portfolio; and

18 WHEREAS, existing studies suggest that substantial quantities of unappropriated and
19 unused water are available from these in-state resource projects for development in conjunction with
20 monitoring and management plans designed to ensure that senior water rights are protected and that
21 impacts to the environment are minimized; and

22 WHEREAS, completion of all three in-state water resource projects has the potential
23 to provide more than 200,000 acre-feet of additional water each year to Southern Nevada, thereby
24 substantially reducing the region's dependence on Colorado River water; and

25 WHEREAS, implementation of these in-state water resource projects is critical to
26 the future of the State, both in terms of the drought protection and additional water supply that will
27 be provided to Southern Nevada and in terms of Nevada's credibility in negotiating for additional
28 flexibility on Colorado River supplies with the other six states in the Colorado River Basin; and

1 WHEREAS, the SNWA and its member agencies have an established record of
2 developing and using water resources in a manner that is highly sensitive to environmental concerns,
3 ensures protection of the resources well into the future, and addresses the needs and concerns of
4 relevant stakeholders.

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE PARTIES TO THIS
6 RESOLUTION DO DECLARE THAT:

7 1. We fully support the ongoing efforts to develop existing in-state, non-Colorado River water
8 rights and water applications within the SNWA water resource portfolio, including the development
9 of groundwater in Clark, Lincoln and White Pine Counties and surface water from the Virgin and
10 Muddy Rivers.

11 2. We will develop and use in-state, non-Colorado River water resources in a manner that meets
12 Southern Nevada's need for future drought tolerance and additional water supplies, while remaining
13 highly responsive to environmental concerns such as the protection of endangered species,
14 consistent with federal, state and local policies such as the Clark County Multi-Species Habitat
15 Conservation Plan.

16 3. We will develop and use in-state, non-Colorado River water resources only in a manner that
17 ensures the sustainability of these resources into the future, and preserves current and future
18 socioeconomic opportunities for the areas of origin.

19 4. While developing and using in-state, non-Colorado River water resources, we will continue to
20 pursue future opportunities for additional Colorado River water, whenever available, as well as
21 opportunities for increased water conservation within the Las Vegas Valley.

22 5. We recognize the unique nature and vital importance of other counties within the State,
23 particularly those in eastern and central Nevada, and the need to preserve and protect their valuable
24 contributions to the State, as well as the lifestyles that they provide to their residents.

25 6. We understand and respect the role of the many federal agencies involved, and hereby encourage
26 federal agencies to fairly and expeditiously process the SNWA request for rights-of-ways and
27 environmental approvals, consistent with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

28 7. We understand and respect the role of the State of Nevada, and hereby encourage the Nevada

1 Division of Water Resources to fairly and expeditiously process all outstanding SNWA applications
2 for water rights within the basins of interest, in a manner consistent with Nevada's laws of prior
3 appropriation and beneficial use.

4 8. We hereby request support from the Governor and Legislature in encouraging White Pine County
5 to hold meetings with SNWA in an effort to resolve water issues of interest.

6 9. The General Manager of the SNWA is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to Governor
7 Kenny C. Guinn; the Nevada Legislature; and the Lincoln, Nye and White Pine county commissions.

8 PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED this 5TH day of October, 2005.

9 CITY OF LAS VEGAS

10 BY 
11 OSCAR B. GOODMAN, Mayor

12 ATTEST:
13 
14 BARBARA J. RONEMUS, City Clerk

15 APPROVED AS TO FORM By: Beverly K. Bridges
16  9-26-05
Date

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18 (This Resolution may be approved and executed in counterparts)
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