



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### PROTESTS REVEAL BROAD OPPOSITION TO LAS VEGAS WATER PLAN

A new analysis of the protests against well applications filed by the southern Nevada Water Authority for its proposed groundwater development and pipeline project in eastern Nevada reveal a broad and surprisingly diverse range of interests.

The analysis by the Great Basin Water Network ("Network"), a leading opponent of the Las Vegas "Water Grab", found over 2300 individual protests were filed by the April deadlines by 150 individuals and families, 16 ranches and 7 tribes in areas projected to be impacted by SNWA's water grab. Sheep rancher Hank Vogler filed 100 protests himself, saying "This to me is so important for the protection of Eastern Nevada. This is the equivalent of an environmental holocaust. Please buy Pat Mulroy a map of the Pacific Ocean. Last I looked, it was bigger than Cummins Lake in White Pine County. Desalinization is the only answer for Las Vegas."

Nine counties in three states plus other local governments and government agencies and the State of Utah filed protests more regionally. Utah filed against all nine well applications in Snake Valley, while Inyo County protested those applications in other valleys of Southern Nevada. White Pine County, the most seriously impacted county, filed protests for all of SNWA's White Pine County applications.

Conservation groups including the Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Audubon Council of Utah, Nevada and Utah chapters of Sierra Club, Great Basin Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and Utah Rivers Council filed over 400 protests. "If approved, this project would seriously jeopardize Nevada's hunting and fishing heritage, as well as causing the likely extinction of several of Nevada and Utah's rarest species", added Rob Mrowka, conservation advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity and member of the Network .

Dozens of civic or religious organizations protested as well. Notable among these were the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which protested four applications in Spring Valley that could affect its large Cleveland Ranch stake farm operation. Some of the more unusual protests were filed by the National Mustang Association, the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, Scenic Nevada, the Indian Springs Civic Association, the Long Now Foundation and Post Carbon Salt Lake.

Federal government agencies, including the U.S. Air Force, filed 558 protests. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Bureau of Land Management had all protested the original water

applications back in 1989 in each of the affected Nevada basins, but since 2007 had dropped their protests in Spring, Cave, Dry Lake, and Delamar Valleys in favor of stipulated agreements with SNWA for monitoring and mitigation measures.

The renewed protests mark a change of direction by the federal agencies that could have significant implications for the future of the pipeline project, according to Susan Lynn, spokesperson for the GBWN. “We are pleased that the federal agencies have re-filed their protests and we hope they will reconsider the stipulated agreements, which are inadequate to protect the regions’ resources,” Lynn said.

Steve Erickson, Utah coordinator for Great Basin Water Network, suggested that, “The diversity of interests: cowboys and Indians, Mormons and the military, farm bureau and environmentalists, business folks and retirees, represents the widespread concern in Nevada, Utah and eastern California. SNWA is affecting a huge area of the West, not just eastern Nevada and western Utah. It means folks want to participate for their personal futures and survival.”

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