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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Ely, Nev.:* The long-running dispute over plans to pump groundwater from eastern Nevada and Utah's west desert to fuel development in Las Vegas is headed back to court.

Today, a broad coalition of 59 organizations and individuals opposed to the Las Vegas water grab pipeline filed a petition for judicial review in Nevada's Seventh Judicial District Court in Ely. The petition, led by White Pine County and Great Basin Water Network, appeals the Nevada State Engineer's August 17 Ruling on the Southern Nevada Water Authority's water rights applications for the pipeline. While the protestants agree with the ruling's denial of water rights applications for the project, they object to a monitoring and mitigation program for the project that was approved at the same time. They say the so-called "3M Plan" is grossly deficient and would set a dangerous precedent for the future of Nevada's groundwater.

In a most unusual move, the State Engineer is challenging his own ruling, claiming his decision to deny the water rights for the pipeline was unduly constrained by previous court requirements. The board of directors of the project proponent, the Southern Nevada Water Authority, voted last week to also file suit to overturn the decision that left them with no water for export.

While Great Basin Water Network and White Pine County say that the State Engineer's decision is essentially a death-knell for the roughly 300-mile pipeline proposal, they have filed a petition for judicial review because they believe SNWA's monitoring, management and mitigation plan is inadequate.

"Earlier iterations of the 3M plan were struck down by Nevada courts, and the small changes made this time leave it no less deficient," said the coalition's attorney, Simeon Herskovits of Advocates for Community and Environment. "Allowing approval of the 3M plan to go unchallenged could have dangerous implications for Nevada, and facilitate a future iteration of SNWA's proposed pipeline."

In their petition for judicial review, the coalition has asked the Court to uphold the State Engineer's denial of SNWA's water rights, but also to order him to deny the applications on the additional ground that SNWA's 3M Plan is inadequate under the law. The 3M Plan would allow springs, wells, and wetlands to go dry while only providing token and temporary compensation for senior water rights holders and the environment.

The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, Ely Shoshone Tribe, Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, the Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Millard and Juab Counties, Utah also have filed petitions for judicial review of the State Engineer's decision, which similarly challenge the State Engineer's approval of SNWA's monitoring and mitigation plan.

**Great Basin Water Network works to protect the region's water resources for current and future residents – human, animal, and plant. They are a broad coalition including ranchers, farmers, local and tribal governments, conservationists, businesspeople, and urban and rural residents across the political spectrum.**

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