



Bioassessment Collections Begin



Bird eggs are being collected for the current bioassessment survey.

Biologists recently began collections for the fourth round of the bioassessment study. The study has been conducted semi-annually with water, sediment, bird egg and whole fish samples collected in 2003, 2005 and 2007 along the Las Vegas Wash and its tributaries. Samples also are collected from the Pahranaagat National Wildlife Refuge to serve as a regional reference.

To further the study, monthly zooplankton collections were added to the current round of collections from razorback sucker spawning locations in Las Vegas Bay and the Overton Arm of Lake Mead. The bioassessment study provides valuable data in evaluating whether the installation of weirs and consequential alteration in flows of the Las Vegas Wash have undesired effects on environmental contaminants.

Although studies have shown that certain water quality criteria of the Las Vegas Wash has improved significantly with the installation of weirs, which slow water flow and create upstream impoundments, there is a potential for contaminants to accumulate and impact water quality and local wildlife.

Once collected, samples are sent to the laboratory and analyzed for a variety of organics and inorganics. Sampling several different environmental components helps determine if any contaminants of concern are present in the system and whether they are magnifying through the food web. The current round of collections is being conducted with the consultation and cooperation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and with partial funding through a grant from the Bureau of Reclamation. For more information, visit www.lvwash.org.

Upcoming Meetings

Administrative Study Team

July 7, 2010
8:30 a.m.

Operations Study Team

July 7, 2010
10:30 a.m.

Research and Environmental Study Team

July 7, 2010
1:30 p.m.

Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee

July 13, 2010
3 p.m.

Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee

July 27, 2010
8:30 a.m.

2009 Year-End Report Available

If you didn't make it to the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) tour at the end of April, you likely missed the announcement that the 2009 Year-End Report was completed and available for distribution. This annual report provides a summary of all of the major accomplishments of the LVWCC over the year and serves as a convenient reference tool. Fewer copies were printed this year to support sustainability goals. The 2009 report, along with those from previous years, can be found at www.lvwash.org. To request a printed copy, call (702) 822-3300.

Upper Diversion Weir Adds Another Award

Despite having the word "diversion" in its name, the Upper Diversion Weir has been getting a lot of attention. In April, the Nevada Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) named it "Project of the Year." The weir was then recognized as a 2010 Engineering Excellence Award national finalist, one of only two Nevada projects to receive such recognition.

The ACEC considers the Engineering Excellence Awards the "Academy Awards" of the engineering industry. A panel of 28 judges representing a variety of built-environment disciplines in the United States selected the 2010 award recipients based on criteria such as originality, technical complexity, social and economic value and public awareness. Last year, the project was recognized by the American Public Works Association with the Environmental Project of the Year award for its innovative design and aesthetic value.