



## Homestead Hears a Whooooo



A barn owl burrow discovered during construction on the Lower Narrows and Homestead weirs.

Although work has slowed down over the summer, construction on the Lower Narrows and Homestead weirs continues to move forward on schedule. The new weirs are expected to reach completion by fall 2011. However, one interesting development is the recent discovery of a barn owl burrow located in the south cliff face adjacent to the work area. The owl was first discovered using the burrow last winter, and as evidenced by the large pile of mouse bones at the base of the cliff, has likely been there for some time.

Because protection of the owl falls under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the initial plan was for biologists to relocate it, protecting it from harm during construction and permitting the cliff bank to be sloped back to accommodate the new Homestead Weir. Biologists kept an eye on the burrow for several months while construction activity occurred in the surrounding area.

In September, biologists utilized a peeper scope that allowed them to explore the full extent of the site. Using the scope, biologists were greeted by two downy, barn owl chicks. Project engineers and biologists are now working closely with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel and the construction contractor to coordinate the necessary activities to protect the barn owls while also balancing the construction schedule.

Although the discovery of the barn owl and the recently hatched chicks has created interesting challenges to the project, all of the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee's construction projects undergo intense permitting processes to ensure compliance with environmental and cultural resource requirements. Engineers and biologists work closely together during all stages of the planning and construction phases to have the lowest amount of impact possible to the areas where work is conducted.

### Upcoming Meetings

#### Administrative Study Team

Oct. 6, 2010  
8:30 a.m.

#### Operations Study Team

Oct. 6, 2010  
10:30 a.m.

#### Research and Environmental Study Team

Oct. 6, 2010  
1:30 p.m.

#### Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee

Oct. 12, 2010  
3 p.m.

#### Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee

Oct. 26, 2010  
8:30 a.m.

## Green-Up Kicks Off Fall Season

The Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) will conduct its 17th semiannual Wash Green-Up event on Oct. 16 at the Las Vegas Wash. This event will include more than 500 volunteers helping to revegetate nearly 14 acres. Public participation has provided huge benefits in helping the LVWCC further the organization's mission. The revegetation process involves removing tamarisk and other non-native, invasive plants and replacing them with native trees and shrubs, which integrate with engineering projects to help reduce bank erosion and improve water quality in the Las Vegas Wash. Although volunteer registration for the fall Wash Green-Up is closed, another event will be held in spring. If you would like to find out more about the Wash Green-Up or register to be included in the LVWCC's volunteer database, visit [lwwash.org](http://lwwash.org).



A family of volunteers work at a recent Wash Green-Up event.