



Biannual Wash Green-Up Ushers in Fall

Even though many trees and shrubs are turning yellow and brown with fall, more than 13 acres of the Las Vegas Wash experienced a recent explosion of green. The 17th Wash Green-Up event was held on Saturday, Oct. 16 with nearly 450 volunteers fanned out across the planting site located between the Historic Lateral Weir and the C-1 Channel.



Volunteers dig in at the fall Green-Up event.

In a matter of hours, these helping hands planted more than 5,000 trees and shrubs while combating unseasonably warm temperatures. However, the timing of the planting was ideal as the hot temperatures were quickly replaced by a week of rainfall, which will help get the plants' rooting process off to good start.

The event area was cleared of overgrown, non-native tamarisk stands by the Bureau of Reclamation construction crew earlier this spring. Once matured, this revegetated area will not only help stabilize the soil from storm runoff and erosion, but it also will contribute toward a more diverse and complex habitat for local wildlife. Funded by grants from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, these biannual Wash Green-Up events continue to grow in participation size and success. By utilizing eager volunteers, the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee has not only helped reduce revegetation costs but the event also is used as an educational outreach tool connecting the community with the Las Vegas Wash. Over the years, families, high school groups, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, UNLV students, church groups and other organizations have revegetated nearly 140 acres of the Las Vegas Wash. To get involved in future volunteer events, sign up at LVWash.org.

Partners in Conservation Award Presented at LVWCC Meeting

Many agency representatives attending the October Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) meeting were presented with federal awards. Lorri Gray-Lee, the Bureau of Reclamation's Lower Colorado Regional director, officially presented the LVWCC with the Partners in Conservation award. The award is issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior and recognizes cooperative conservation achievements that involve collaborative activity among a diverse range of agencies and organizations.

"The Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee is recognized for its extraordinary contribution to solving water resource challenges facing Southern Nevada and preserving this valuable ecological resources for present and future generations," said Gray-Lee. "For [more than a decade], the Committee has been instrumental in implementing solutions to address water quality, habitat management, erosion control and other key issues."



Erosion control is just one of the many accomplishments of the LVWCC.

The award citation highlighted many of the LVWCC's key restoration and enhancement activities, including channel stabilization, revegetation, water quality improvement, wildlife monitoring and cultural resource management accomplishments. Furthermore, the Department of the Interior identified the Las Vegas Wash as one of the most unique wetlands parks in the country. The award was received by Gale Fraser, the co-chairman of the Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee, which oversees the LVWCC. The Partners in Conservation award is usually presented by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar at an annual awards event in Washington D.C.; however, this year's event was canceled due to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. This national award serves as a testament of the many successes related to the Las Vegas Wash and is a tremendous honor for all 30 members of the LVWCC.