



## Mabel Hoggard Program has Growth Spurt

For the past several years, the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee has sponsored the fifth grade students at Mabel Hoggard Math and Science Magnet Elementary School. The sponsorship supports day-long field trips to the Las Vegas Wash and Lake Mead aboard the Forever Earth science houseboat.

### Upcoming Meetings

**Las Vegas Valley  
Watershed Advisory  
Committee**

Dec. 8, 2009 3 p.m.

Although students experience both the Las Vegas Wash and Lake Mead during the field trips, time is usually quite limited at each site. Therefore, organizers have extended the annual field trip into two full days.



Mabel Hoggard students learn about the Las Vegas Wash at the Bostick kiosk.

The new schedule will allow students to participate in the whole Forever Earth program, which details the local water cycle and provides a hands-on experience in collecting water quality samples from Lake Mead. A day will also be spent at the Las Vegas Wash where students will learn about being biologists for the day and participate in biological collection methods. Field notebooks and backpacks – complete with GPS units and binoculars – are provided to help students record observations and collected data throughout the two-day field trip. Funding assistance for this program is provided by a grant through the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

## Water Reuse and the Salt Assault

Water resources in the arid West are often described as “liquid gold.” Las Vegas has gone to great lengths to manage this valuable resource as efficiently as possible. Recycling water is one of the strategies utilized in Southern Nevada. When dealing with recycled water, however, water quality is a major focus, and one potential water quality concern that may come as a surprise is salt.

Salt is found at relatively high concentrations in the soils of the Southwest. These concentrations can be flushed into the water systems through storms, urban runoff, and shallow groundwater where they enter the water reuse loop. Salt, also known as salinity, has been a major concern for the seven Colorado River Basin states and Mexico for decades. Since the 1970s, the Colorado River Basin states have been successful in significantly reducing the amount of salt being flushed into the Colorado River system. Since salt tends to be difficult and expensive to remove through treatment, it can pose specific challenges to regional water recycling programs.



Local agencies work hard to address the high salinity levels of the Las Vegas Wash and Lake Mead.

Last March, the Las Vegas Watershed Advisory Committee approved the Southern Nevada Regional Water Recycling Study, which further emphasizes the importance of effective water recycling programs. Some of the recommendations of the study include developing a salt management strategy to address salt accumulation challenges, expanding and maximizing the use of recycled water, continuing to advance recycled water research, and educating the public.

## Fire Station Bank Protection Work to Begin

Capriati Construction was recently selected to conduct work on the Fire Station Bank Protection project near Lake Las Vegas to protect the south bank of the Las Vegas Wash from erosion. The project is being coordinated with the City of Henderson. The project will reinforce approximately 630 feet of bank line, providing enough protection to withstand a 25-year flood event. The work will also slightly realign flow direction of the Las Vegas Wash into the main channel, which will help further reduce erosion. Capriati’s winning bid came in at just over \$293,000, more than 50 percent below the engineer’s estimate. A grant from the Bureau of Reclamation will help fund this work.