

LAS VEGAS WASH COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting Conducted via Microsoft Teams

January 25, 2022

8:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Sajjad Ahmad, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV, alt.)*
Elizabeth Bickmore, *Clark County Parks & Recreation (CCPR)*
Michael Boyles, *Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)*
Keiba Crear, *Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA, alt.)*
Lee Farris, *Basic Management, Inc. (BMI)*
Dan Fischer, *Clark County Water Reclamation District (CCWRD)*
Sharon Harney, *City of Las Vegas (CLV)*
John Hiatt, *Desert Wetlands Conservancy (DWC)*
Carlton Parker, *Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP)*
Peggy Roefer, *Colorado River Commission (CRC)*
John Solvie, *Clark County Water Quality (CCWQ)*
Andrew Trelease, *Clark County Regional Flood Control District (CCRFCD)*

Also Present:

Steven Anderson	Alisa Kelly	Carrie Ronning
Jason Bailey	Joe Leedy	David Stoft
Edward Dichter	Jeff Mills	John Tennert
JD Dotchin	Bryan Moore	Todd Tietjen
Laura Dye	Ryan Pearson	Andrew Trouette
Dan Gerrity	Nick Rice	Debbie Van Dooremolen
Deena Hannoun	Tim Ricks	Xiaoping Zhou
Nalleli Herrera	AJ Rodrigues	

Comments by the General Public

There were no comments by the public.

1. Welcome/Call to Order

Keiba Crear called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

2. Introductions

Keiba conducted a roll call of attendees.

3. Approve October 26, 2021 Meeting Summary

Keiba asked if anyone had comments on the meeting summary. There were no comments, and the summary was posted to the website following the meeting.

4. Receive Presentation on the Cadence Master Planned Community

Edward (Eddie) Dichter, with the City of Henderson's Community Development and Services Department, gave an update on the nearly 2,200-acre Cadence Master Planned Community and other projects near the Las Vegas Wash (Wash) and Clark County

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Wetlands Park (Wetlands Park). He gave an overview of the site's size, dwelling units and planning parcels and showed a number of parcel maps. The community has 21 parcels which are divided into a series of neighborhoods and mixed use and will house six schools and one firehouse. The site will have a maximum of 13,250 dwelling units (with a minimum of 11,250) and 10 parks, with Central Park being the largest at 42 acres. He highlighted the Cadence Sports Park which is adjacent to both the Wetlands Park and property owned by the City of Henderson. Eddie also highlighted the many different home builders developing on the site, including Toll Brothers, Richmond Homes and Harmony, while also noting the Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas school that will be built on-site. He concluded by speaking about Rainbow Canyon in Lake Las Vegas which has been approved for a maximum of 3,500 units, but only 2,988 are anticipated to be developed.

5. Receive Presentation on the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Carrie Ronning, Wildlife Group Manager for BOR, gave a report on the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCRMSCP). Her overview included the purpose of the program, stating that it is a federal and non-federal partnership that focuses on balancing the use of lower Colorado River water resources and the conservation of native species and their habitats in compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). She stated that there are state and federal agencies, water and power users, municipalities and Native American tribes that all get water and power from the lower Colorado River and need ESA coverage. As so many of these activities are interrelated, it is not feasible to separate them out to each organization in Arizona, California and Nevada; therefore, the LCRMSCP is a partnership that allows conservation to be done at a larger scale. This 50-year program includes sections 7 and 10 of the ESA and covers delivery and diversion of nine million acre-feet of water annually. She stated that BOR is the implementing agency and there are 56 permittees and stakeholders. The program area extends over 400 miles of the lower Colorado River and Lakes Mead, Mojave and Havasu. She added that program costs are shared between jurisdictions, and BOR provides the federal share, which is 50%, with California (25%), Arizona (12.5%) and Nevada (12.5%) providing the remaining share. A work plan is developed each year that outlines the activities, anticipated costs and accomplishments from the prior year. In 2022, funding for the program will be \$31,271,830.

Carrie stated that LCRMSCP implementation will benefit at least 27 species, including the Yuma Ridgway's rail (YRRA), southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL), yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU), bonytail, humpback chub, razorback sucker, desert tortoise and the northern Mexican gartersnake. The program has goals to augment existing populations of razorback sucker and bonytail in the river, with the goal to release 660,000 razorback suckers and 620,000 bonytail into the river over the course of the permit. To date, the program has stocked more than 200,000 razorback suckers and more than 100,000 bonytail. In addition to developing and managing conservation areas, and augmenting fish populations, the program includes maintenance of existing habitat and research and monitoring. Since inception, the LCRMSCP has helped establish 17 conservation areas and created more than 6,500 acres of habitat. YRRA has been detected in three creditable marsh conservation areas, which is a great indication that the marsh has been designed well. Staff

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also conducts surveys for SWFL annually, noting that only migrants have been detected in the created habitat, and the species has not been detected below Parker Dam since the 1990s. Results have been different for YBCU. Prior to the program, most YBCU were found at the Bill Williams River which flows into Lake Havasu, but by 2015, YBCU began to colonize many of the habitat conservation areas. At the Mojave Valley Conservation Area, staff have installed passive integrated transponder (PIT) tag readers to track fish; staff implanted the fish with PIT tags and as they go in or out of the channel, the tags are read and tracked. Future monitoring priorities of the LCRMSCP include evaluating restoration sites to see if they are meeting conservation goals and requirements and assessing where adjustments can be made to maximize the created habitat. She concluded by stating that all information and reports are posted on the program's website at www.lcrmscp.gov.

6. Receive Update on Recent Activities

a. Las Vegas Wash Project Coordination Team

Nick Rice presented on environmental programs and outreach activities that the team has participated in over the last several months. He presented recent accomplishments for the Las Vegas Wash Wildlife Management Plan (WMP), giving the upcoming schedule for threatened and endangered bird surveys and reporting on recent surveys. He noted that five YRRA were detected in 2021, while no more than one had ever been detected in prior years. Staff identified a resident SWFL on territory (the first since 2013) and made three detections of YBCU. Nick reported on the avian point count study conducted biweekly by the Great Basin Bird Observatory, stating that approximately 170 species were detected in the 2020-2021 study year. He reported on other upcoming surveys which include a rodent and shrew study that will begin in spring and stated that the bat survey has been postponed until 2023 due to COVID-19 permitting restrictions. Staff concluded fish collections to aid in CCRFCD's effort to create a site-specific selenium standard for the Wash, and the samples were sent to the lab. Fifteen common carp and one green sunfish were collected from the Wash. Nick gave an update on invasive weed management, stating that SNWA's contractor, Soil-Tech, is removing noxious and non-native weeds from recently planted revegetation sites, and that tamarisk, once highly abundant, has been reduced to less than 25 acres. To date, more than 570 acres have been revegetated. Activities under the long-term revegetation site management plan are set to begin in fiscal year (FY) 2022-2023 and will focus on additional plantings and enhancements for wildlife. He also reported that the 38th Wash Green-Up will be held on March 12 at Sunrise Mountain North and that 9.3 acres will be planted by participants. Overall, to date, nearly 13,000 volunteers have planted about 150,000 plants on 313 acres during Wash Green-Ups. Nick reported on the new Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) website (lvwash.org), stating that the redesign reduced the number of pages by 90% and has improved navigation. The site is more visual and mobile friendly, and is Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. Data shows that user engagement has increased on the site since the rollout, with visitors spending more time on it and viewing more pages and a greater percentage of the site. He gave an update on Basecamp, which will be the online platform that members can use to view meeting agendas, summaries, presentations and announcements and share other information. He gave an overview of upcoming outreach, much of which will be rescheduled due to the COVID-19 surge. Nick reported on grant funding, highlighting

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BOR's \$150,000 grant for revegetation, water quality monitoring, WMP implementation and LVWCC program management, and the NDEP's grant of \$42,500 for Mabel Hoggard student field trips and Wash Green-Ups. He concluded by stating that Las Vegas Wash Long-Term Operating Plan (LTOP) implementation will begin on July 1.

Xiaoping Zhou gave a Wash water quality monitoring update and stated that programs are conducted either bi-weekly, monthly or quarterly. He reported on water quality improvements in the mainstream Wash, showing data for 2020 versus 2021 for temperature, pH values, dissolved oxygen (DO), conductance, total dissolved solids, total suspended solids (TSS), perchlorate, selenium, ammonia, nitrate, orthophosphate, total phosphorus, boron, silica and trace metals (aluminum, iron, barium, zinc, manganese, arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, antimony, molybdenum and vanadium). In summary, temperatures were higher in 2021 compared to 2020, while pH values and DO were lower. Ammonia and nitrate were low at most sites and orthophosphate declined at the end of the Wash. While some trace metals increased, the concentrations were still relatively low. In addition, selenium and perchlorate decreased at most of the sites and TSS stayed low at most sites.

Ryan Pearson gave a Wash stabilization update, highlighting the areas downstream from Pabco Weir and near Three Kids Weir, where reconstruction, revegetation and repositioning of riprap will be focused. He displayed maps and photos of the areas where this work will take place and noted that this is the final capital improvement project on the Wash before the LTOP begins in July. Ryan gave a brief update on the consultant engineering service and stated that most of the consultant's work is complete with the exception of the Letter of Map Revision, which is waiting for approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He stated that staff did receive a notice of possible violation, which has been resolved, and expect a final letter of determination by March 8, 2022.

b. Clark County Wetlands Park (Wetlands Park)

Elizabeth Bickmore gave an update on the Wetlands Park and reported that the estimated park visitation for 2020 and 2021 were significantly higher than any previous year, with 536,790 visitors in 2021. She announced a partnership with NFL Green for a Pro Bowl Planting Event on February 2 which will help the park gain national exposure, and noted World Migratory Bird Day (March 19), BioBlitz (April 30) and Discovery Day (July 9) as other planned upcoming events. She stated that the Art at the Wetlands Park programs continue to expand with Migrate, a temporary art installation, and guest artist workshops each month. Elizabeth gave an update on the construction progress of the Nature Play Corner which will include interpretive signage, wayfinding and the play area itself, with the grand opening tentatively scheduled for April 2022. She stated that most of the play equipment is still on a shipping delay but is expected to arrive in the new few weeks. Wetlands Park improvement projects include paving the final section of the Wetlands Loop trail and completing crack repairs on the north side of the trail. She stated that nine wildfires occurred in 2021 and require some improvement to the area, including smoke damage repair to the Nature Center building, which is closed at this time. Other projects include fencing and gate installation near Wells Trailhead and the Hollywood Boulevard extension,

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which is at 70% design and is a new Wash bridge and roadway through the Wetlands Park. Elizabeth also reported on land management projects which include fuels management (a three-year study with UNLV), pond and stream maintenance, and work at the Mitigation Wetlands.

Keiba asked if the Wetlands Park's Friends group is different from the DWC, to which Elizabeth responded that the Wetlands Park Friends was created to support the mission and needs of the park, and the DWC has their own charter and goals, but staff coordinates with both.

c. Lake Mead

Todd Tietjen provided an update on Lake Mead and its water quality. He stated that even with the drought and low lake levels, water quality remains high in Lake Mead and Lake Mohave, primarily due to short residence time, and as long as there is a lot of water to release through the lake to California and Arizona, water turns over quickly which benefits its quality. He stated that chlorophyll concentrations, the measure for algae, continue to increase at a very slow rate and algal toxins were detected at very low concentrations in Lake Mead in 2021. Staff expect higher temperatures in the water that enters the lake. Todd presented lake surface elevation levels, lake temperatures, DO levels, pH levels and chlorophyll concentrations, which have not been a threat to water quality. He also showed total phosphorus concentrations, which have also remained low, and secchi depth or clarity within the lake. Staff continue to update and improve the base model as well as validate calibration for basic functions. Also, during the past year, staff has worked to model the impact on water quality of conceptual changes in lake surface elevation and future climate scenarios and carried out modeling of future inflow/outflow/lake surface elevations based on predictions prepared by BOR. Lastly, staff have begun preliminary simulations using the Lake Mohave model with a goal of expanding predictive capabilities downstream.

d. Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee

Keiba provided an update on the Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee (LVVWAC) and reported on the January 11 meeting, which included approval of the Wash's FY 2022-2023 budget. This budget is for the first year of implementing the LTOP and was approved at \$2,576,126. It was also approved with the commitment to include discussion of the formation of a work group to review the LVVWAC's funding formula at the committee's next meeting. The group received an update on 2021 accomplishments of the LVWCC, much of which was presented and highlighted at today's meeting. Lastly, John Tennert with the CCRFCD gave an update on the Stormwater Quality Management Committee reporting on the detention basin program and permitting, as well as fish selenium samples that were collected and would be presented to NDEP later. John also reported that there is no evidence that water quality is being impaired by stormwater. Keiba added that the next LVVWAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 19, 2022.

e. Emerging Issues

Andrew Trelease reported that Michelle French will be the CCRFCD's new Public Information Manager and will represent the CCRFCD on the LVWCC.

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7. Set Next Meeting Date/Time and Propose Items for the Next Meeting's Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2022 and is tentatively planned to be a tour of the Wash and related sites.

Comments by the General Public

Seeing no request from the public to comment, the meeting was adjourned.