LAS VEGAS WASH COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting Conducted via Microsoft Teams
October 22, 2024
8:30 a.m.

Members Present:
Dawn Boyer, *City of Las Vegas (CLV)*
Mike Boyles, *Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)*
Dan Fischer, *Clark County Water Reclamation District (CCWRD)*
Matt Flores, *Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)*
Danielle Greene, *Colorado River Commission of Nevada (CRC, alt.)*
Joe Leedy, *Clark County Water Quality (CCWQ)*
Joemel Llamado, *City of North Las Vegas (CNLV)*
Zane Marshall, *Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA)*
Alan Pineda, *Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP, alt.)*

Also Present:
Erik Anderson
Steven Anderson
Alisa Blaylock
Tambi Calvert
Keiba Crear
Shonna Dooman
JD Dotchin
Jason Eckberg
Dan Gerrity
Deena Hannoun
John Hiatt
Kenneth Isakson
Jordan Jarrett
Grant Kornrumph
Catherine Miles
Jamie Moeini
Elise Nguyen
Michael Phillips
Nick Rice
Tim Ricks
AJ Rodrigues
Maurice Solis
Todd Tietjen
Andrew Trouette
Charles Trushel
Isabel Valadez
Charlotte van der Nagel
Debbie Van Dooremolen
Carissa Wilkerson
Toshihiko Yoshida
Xiaoping Zhou

Comments by the General Public
There were no comments by the public.

1. **Welcome/Call to Order**
   Jason Eckberg, SNWA, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

2. **Introductions**
   Jason conducted a roll call of attendees.

3. **Approve the April 23, 2024 Meeting Summary**
   Jason asked if there were any comments on the meeting summary. There were no comments, and the summary was posted to the website following the meeting.

Note: Summary was edited for accuracy, clarity and brevity.

4. **Receive Presentation on Phytoplankton Community Compositions in Lake Mead during Two Decades of Severe Drought**

Charlotte van der Nagel, SNWA, provided her findings on phytoplankton and water quality in Lake Mead during two decades of severe drought. Drought can change water quality parameters including temperature, nutrients, and clarity which can change the phytoplankton community structure. Phytoplankton are an essential part of the aquatic ecosystem, being that they are the base of the food chain. Charlotte's research focused on spatial variability of phytoplankton in Lake Mead, water quality and phytoplankton trends, and how machine learning can be used as a tool to predict phytoplankton communities. Of the nine monitoring stations at the lake, the station closest to the Las Vegas Wash (Wash) inflow had the highest chlorophyll levels and nutrients for the phytoplankton to feed off of, resulting in higher total biovolume. Total biovolume significantly decreases moving away from the Wash inflow. There are no significant trends of phytoplankton for the majority of Lake Mead, indicating stability. Charlotte went into more detail on how machine learning can aid in further understanding and predicting phytoplankton community dynamics. Her research indicates that machine-learning models are most reliable for predicting peaks in chlorophyll-a. Charlotte concluded her presentation comparing Lake Mead and Lake Mohave phytoplankton levels. There are more detections of cyanobacteria in Lake Mohave than Lake Mead, and Charlotte will be researching what is causing this difference.

Jason asked what Charlotte's hypothesis is for the difference in cyanobacteria levels between the two lakes. Charlotte said that from early modeling she has done, it seems that higher levels of nitrogen in Lake Mohave might be a factor. She plans to conduct more research on this next year.

5. **Receive Update on Recent Activities**

a. Las Vegas Wash Project Coordination Team (Wash Team)

Nick Rice, SNWA, provided the update and reviewed the schedule of threatened and endangered (T&E) bird surveys for the year. The Wash Team or its contractors have surveyed annually for Yuma Ridgway's rail (YRRA) since 2000, southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) since 1998, and yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU) since 2013. Great Basin Bird Observatory (GBBO) conducts biweekly point counts every other year; these will begin again in spring 2025. Nick went into detail on the T&E bird surveys. Marsh bird surveys covering the endangered YRRA were conducted in April and May, and five individuals were identified. SWFL surveys were conducted from late May through June: two territories were identified and one successfully fledged one young. YBCU surveys were conducted from late June into August, with one detection. There has been a general upward trend for T&E bird species detections in recent years. The increase in detections and breeding records required re-initiation of section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act for compliance coverage for Las Vegas Wash Long-Term Operating Plan (LTOP) activities. In January 2024, the Wash Team received a biological opinion with an incidental statement for the three T&E birds on federal lands. They are also working with Clark County on measures for YRRA, which is not covered by the MSHCP, on non-federal lands.

Zane Marshall, SNWA, asked the nature of the GBBO contract and if it is something we plan to continue moving forward. Debbie Van Dooremolen, SNWA, said that they decided to move to alternating years because of the large data set and the move to LTOP conditions,

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but project activities may still affect the bird community and tracking those changes is important.

Nick continued his update and shared that acoustic bat monitoring is ongoing until December 2024. Three stations were installed at the Wash in January 2023. The stations collect echolocation calls nightly, and data is downloaded monthly. The Wash Team finalized a contract with Vesper Bat Detection Services to analyze the acoustic data and identify the species. Mist-netting surveys were completed from March to September and 148 bats were captured. All swab samples collected in 2024 came back negative for the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome. Quarterly benthic macroinvertebrate samples were collected in September at 11 sites along the Wash. The 2022 vegetation monitoring report has been finalized and is available on lvwash.org. The 2023 report is under internal review and describes recommended modifications to reflect the move to LTOP conditions. The 2024 surveys began in September and were completed in October. BOR awarded $350,000 for fiscal year (FY) 2024 for revegetation, water quality monitoring, wildlife management plan implementation, and Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) program management. BOR also awarded a $900,500 grant for riparian restoration downstream of Pabco Weir. Staff is working with a design firm for engineering and construction will begin in the winter. NDEP awarded $34,750 to cover FY 2023/2024 Mabel Hoggard field trips and the Wash Green-Up and $28,000 to cover the Wash Green-Up in FY 2024/2025. The Wash Team is seeking additional grant funding for riparian restoration at Three Kids Weir and Powerline Crossing Weir, invasive weed removal, and more. Zane added that the two potential restoration sites will provide habitat continuity where the SWFL are nesting. Nick shared that the spring Green-Up was the 40th event and volunteers planted 3,500 plants on four acres in the Lower Narrows and Homestead South area. The spring 2025 event is scheduled for March 29 and volunteers will continue their work in the same area and plant an additional 4,000 plants on another five acres of land. Annual reports for education and outreach began in 2023 and summarize all events conducted within the year. Upcoming 2025 events include Mabel Hoggard field trips in March and World Wetlands Day in February.

Next, Xiaoping Zhou, SNWA, reported on water quality monitoring of the Wash and tributaries. He reviewed the sampling and monitoring schedule for all programs and noted that they are all on track. Xiaoping shared water quality data using the Power BI application. For the mainstream, total dissolved solids (TDS) are stable. Total suspended solids (TSS) concentrations are low and dissolved selenium is high at urban runoff sites and stable at all other sites. Orthophosphate concentrations have been higher likely due to remodeling work at the CLV discharge plant. The LW6.85 site had an increase in TDS, arsenic, and perchlorate levels because the Burns Street channel has been redirected due to housing development. The Burns Street channel used to flow into the groundwater and then make its way to the Wash, but it now has a direct flow to the Wash.

Xiaoping shared water quality data of the urban runoff tributaries. TSS and orthophosphate concentrations in the tributaries have decreased over the last three years. Perchlorate in the Burns Street tributary has decreased in the last three years but is still the highest concentration compared to all other tributary sites. Xiaoping shared groundwater quality data from the monitoring wells along the Wash. The south side wells have higher TDS and

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arsenic concentrations. Perchlorate concentrations have increased at some wells along the south side of the Wash.

Joe Leedy, CCWQ, asked why there was a peak in arsenic levels at one of the testing sites. Xiaoping theorized that the increase is part of the effects from the Burns Street channel redirection.

Dan Fischer, CCWRD, asked if the LW6.85 site is above City of Henderson's wastewater discharge plant. He also asked if he sees the spike in concentrations as a problem. Xiaoping confirmed that it is above City of Henderson but below CCWRD facilities. Xiaoping is not worried about the spike in concentrations because the levels are diluted moving downstream.

Zane asked if the water quality data has migrated to the new application, Aquarius. Xiaoping said the plan is to migrate to the new application, but it is still in the early stages.

Lastly, Tim Ricks, SNWA, gave a Wash stabilization update. The work on the stockpile sites along the Wash has been postponed and will now be included as part of the winter maintenance plan. The Wash maintenance contract identifies sites that need work and the Monson bankline and DU Wetlands No.1 Weir are of first importance. The contract has gone out to bid and will be awarded in November, with the work to be completed by March. Tim highlighted areas that will be updated according to stormwater best management practices.

b. Clark County Wetlands Park (Wetlands Park)
Representatives from the Wetlands Park were unable to attend to present an update. Jason encouraged attendees to look at the SNWA website for updates they provided at the LVVWAC meeting.

c. Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee (LVVWAC)
Charles Trushel, CLV, provided the update on the LVVWAC. At the April meeting, he was selected as Chair and Joemel Llamado, CNLV, was selected as Vice Chair. During this meeting, the group approved the 2022–2023 Regional Water Quality Plan Accomplishments Document. Charles highlighted some of the major accomplishments including expanding Lake Mead Model forecasting capabilities, surpassing permit requirements for phosphorus removal, and investing in maintenance work ensuring efficient operations. The Accomplishments Document was posted to the SNWA website. Each of the wastewater dischargers shared that they are investing in capital improvements to expand their facilities and capacities. Clark County Regional Flood Control District (CCRFCD) updated the group on the Stormwater Quality Management Committee and included updates on the Construction General Permit and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit, as well as an update on the revised Stormwater Management Plan. The LVVWAC had a special meeting on May 14 to approve the five-year Interlocal Agreement to establish funding allocations and the budget for LTOP actions. At the October meeting, the committee approved the FY 2025/2026 LTOP budget, received an update on LVWCC accomplishments, an update from Clark County Wetlands Park, an update on regional water quality, and an update on the Lower Las Vegas Wash. The next LVVWAC meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2025, at 2 p.m.

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d. Lake Mead Water Quality Forum
Deena Hannoun provided a brief update and shared that the September meeting, the first in years, had a high turnout, and they are expecting the same for the next meeting, which is expected to be held in December. She invited anyone interested in presenting on water quality to attend the next meeting.

e. Emerging Issues
There were no emerging issues presented.

6. Set Next Meeting Date/Time and Propose Items for the Next Meeting's Agenda
The next meeting will be the Wash tour and is scheduled for April 22, 2025.

Comments by the General Public
Seeing no request from the public to comment, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

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