

## **LAS VEGAS WASH COORDINATION COMMITTEE**

Virtual Meeting Conducted via Microsoft Teams

October 26, 2021

8:30 a.m.

### **Members Present:**

Sajjad Ahmad, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV, alt.)*  
Michael Arrasate, *City of Henderson (COH, alt.)*  
Elizabeth Bickmore, *Clark County Parks & Recreation (CCPR)*  
JD Dotchin, *Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP, alt.)*  
Sharon Harney, *City of Las Vegas (CLV)*  
Zane Marshall, *Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA)*  
Angela Slaughter, *Colorado River Commission (CRC, alt.)*  
John Solvie, *Clark County Water Quality (CCWQ)*  
David Stoft, *Clark County Water Reclamation District (CCWRD, alt.)*  
John Tennert, *Clark County Regional Flood Control District (CCRFCD, alt.)*  
Andrew Trouette, *Bureau of Reclamation (BOR, alt.)*  
Cody Winterton, *Lake Las Vegas Resort*

### **Also Present:**

Steven Anderson	Deena Hannoun	Abigail Sumanis
Jason Bailey	Nalleli Herrera	Todd Tietjen
Keiba Crear	Julia Lantow	Debbie Van Dooremolen
Christine Dudas	Joe Leedy	Xiaoping Zhou
Jason Eckberg	Ryan Pearson	
Dan Gerrity	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 8:30 a.m.

#### **2. Introductions**

Keiba conducted a roll call of attendees.

#### **3. Approve April 27, 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 Lake Las Vegas**

Cody Winterton, representing Lake Las Vegas, gave a brief report on his involvement with and an update on the property, its infrastructure and some of its unique challenges relating to the Wash. He gave an overview of the lake and stated that the Las Vegas Wash (Wash) passes underneath it through two 84-inch pipes where the Wash meets Lake Las Vegas Parkway. He stated that the Wash flows daily at approximately 350 cubic feet per second

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(cfs) through these pipes, under the lake and daylights on the backside of the dam. He reported that a lot of time and resources are spent on ensuring the water flow is not obstructed, and that staff performs quarterly inspections and necessary repairs on the pipes to ensure the water passes through and debris has not caused damage. He stated that the two 84-inch pipes can only pass approximately 1,200 cfs through them, so when there is a significant storm in the valley and the Wash fills up, once it exceeds 1,200 cfs, the water backs up into a sedimentation basin. He added that during these storm events, staff closely monitors the lake and water levels. Cody stated that a lot of the work done upstream in the Wash by the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) has significantly helped with managing water levels and flow, especially during storm events. He also briefly discussed the property's wetlands area, stating that Lake Las Vegas maintains a seven-acre wetland that was originally built to offset and mitigate against the wetlands that were in existence at the time of construction and were displaced by the lake. This wetland is currently owned by COH, but Lake Las Vegas' homeowners association maintains the area. He mentioned that the land to the north of the wetlands will be developed for housing and, in partnership with COH, improvements will make the area more accessible and will include a parking lot and signage. He also reported that significant improvements were made to the lake's dam in 2014, and due to an analysis conducted by CCRFCD, the outlets were enlarged so twice as much water could pass through, and an automated system was also installed at that time to detect lake levels and adjust accordingly. He also mentioned that staff has noticed more debris in the Wash over the past few years, both vegetation and trash. Elizabeth Bickmore asked if Lake Las Vegas is willing to share the wetland plan improvements with the Wetlands Park. She also inquired with whom they are working at COH. Cody said he would be happy to share the city-approved plans and is working with Priscilla Howell, along with the Parks Department. Joe Leedy stated that there was discussion in the past to use the lake's water to produce electricity and asked if that was still under consideration. Cody responded that there was a firm from out of state that submitted an application to do so, but Lake Las Vegas was not involved and to his knowledge it is no longer in consideration.

## **5. Receive Update on Recent Activities**

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

Jason Eckberg 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), including conducting night snake and amphibian surveys and creating outreach videos for schools. He reported on bird surveys, noting that 173 species were detected during point counts in the 2020/2021 study year, with approximately 245 different species detected at the Wash since 2005. For threatened and endangered bird surveys this year, Wash Team staff detected a record population of Yuma Ridgway's rail (6), identified a southwestern willow flycatcher on territory (the first since 2013) and made three detections of yellow-billed cuckoo. He reported on the herpetofauna surveys, which included night snakes and amphibians. The snake species identified were sidewinder, gopher snake, desert nightsnake and speckled rattlesnake. Amphibians identified were the American bullfrog and Woodhouse's toad. He also reported that staff just concluded fish collections to aid in CCRFCD's effort to create a site-specific selenium standard for the Wash and that samples have been sent to the lab.

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Jason gave an update on invasive weed management, stating that annual vegetation monitoring will identify where upcoming efforts will be focused. To date, more than 580 acres have been revegetated, and activities under the long-term revegetation site management plan are set to begin in fiscal year 2022-23. He also reported that Wash Green-Ups returned in 2021 after being canceled in 2020, with nine acres planted in the spring and 12 acres planted in the fall, totaling about 400 volunteers and 7,500 plants between the two events. Overall, to date, over 13,000 volunteers have planted more than 145,000 plants on 310 acres during Wash Green-Ups. Jason reported on grant funding, highlighting BOR's \$150,000 grant for revegetation, water quality monitoring, WMP implementation and LVWCC program management, and the NDEP's grant of \$67,500 for Mabel Hoggard student field trips and Wash Green-Ups. He reported on completed outreach events, including a stormwater pollution poster contest and Wash virtual education experiences, where staff visited 54 schools and met with more than 1,600 students. The Wash Team also hosted Allegiant Stadium staff for a volunteer planting on October 11. Upcoming outreach events include a field trip and World Wetlands Day (February 2-3, 2022). Jason presented the newly redesigned LVWCC website (lvwash.org) and logo, stating that the new website recently launched, and its redesign gives a more modern look and improves user experience, while being mobile friendly, utilizing new technology to display information and better exhibiting photos and videos. He stated that the old LVWCC logo was approximately 20 years old and was not mobile friendly. The refreshed logo design is ideal for website banners, report covers, outreach materials and more, and represents the LVWCC well. He concluded by discussing the Las Vegas Wash Long-Term Operating Plan, stating that implementation will begin in fiscal year 2022-23 with an annual cost of \$2.4 million in 2019 dollars. This plan consists of 36 actions covering six core elements from the Las Vegas Wash Comprehensive Adaptive Management Plan (CAMP). Keiba added that the committee can submit comments or feedback on the new LVWCC logo. Zane Marshall asked for an overview of the roles of the LVWCC's Research and Environmental Monitoring (REM) and Administrative (Admin) study teams. Keiba responded that both study teams are comprised of members of the LVWCC. The Admin Study Team focuses on outreach and education, collaborating on events, programs and grant funding opportunities. The REM Study Team includes more technical staff and oversees biological and water quality monitoring, etc. Zane added that these study teams are the primary method for each of the member agencies to aid in accomplishing objectives from the CAMP, and that their roles are vitally important to the success of the Wash program. Elizabeth asked that with the redesign of lvwash.org if the members' website will be accessible soon. Keiba stated that a replacement for the member's website will likely be Basecamp, which will be used to post agendas and summaries, and access presentations and reports, but added that all members can continue to reach out with requests. John Tennert stated that the lvstormwater.com website was recently revamped and CCWRD would like to include some of the aforementioned poster contest images on their website.

Xiaoping Zhou gave a Wash water quality monitoring update and began by showing the sampling and monitoring schedule for all programs which are conducted either bi-weekly, monthly or quarterly. He reported on water quality improvements in the mainstream Wash, showing concentration trends of total dissolved solids (TDS), total suspended solids, phosphorus, perchlorate and trace metals (arsenic, copper, chromium, nickel). Xiaoping

reported on mass loadings from the six major tributaries to the Wash, showing flow rates which attribute 6.6 percent of the total annual flow of the Wash. He also presented TDS, trace metals, selenium and perchlorate mass loading rates and percentages from tributaries to the Wash. He introduced a new software, Power BI, that enables staff to run, organize and display water quality data in many ways. Xiaoping showed a few data examples of upstream versus downstream and a slide to show the different years of the selected data. This software can also create links to a map of the Wash and provide data, on click, as it relates to various parts of the map/Wash.

Ryan Pearson gave a Wash stabilization update, highlighting the Bostick and Calico Ridge weirs' reconstruction efforts from earlier in the year, stating that the work focused on the removal of vegetation and sediment from the structures and repositioning and installing rip rap. Staff worked with Las Vegas Paving to clear vegetation from the island between Bostick and Calico Ridge weirs. This island had become overgrown and was no longer suitable habitat. Ryan gave a brief update on the consultant engineering service and stated that most of the consultant's work is complete, indicating that staff will work from the vegetation model that the firm provided. He added that the Letter of Map Revision is ongoing and waiting for approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Ryan also noted that the consulting firm, Louis Berger was acquired by WSP. Joe asked if there are any updates on the erosion control structures at Lake Mead. Ryan stated that an engineering firm has been hired to do the design and a contractor has been hired to get involved during the design phase. He also stated that staff is still working on the environmental compliance documents, and contractors will soon begin to drill borings for the first structure (Weir 5). He added that field activities should begin after the new year.

#### **b. Clark County Wetlands Park (Wetlands Park)**

Elizabeth gave an update on the Wetlands Park and reported that the park is fully operational, and the Nature Center is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. She stated that all regular programs have resumed with slight modifications and mentioned that park visitation remains strong, exceeding previous numbers. Elizabeth stated that there are now four options for field trips: guided, self-guided, virtual (eight schools totaling more than 1,900 students have requested the link to the Wetlands Park virtual field trip video) and fee-based private. She provided highlights of the Art in the Park program and will look to do this program annually. She also announced upcoming events including Haunt the Wetlands (October 29), the BioBlitz (spring 2022) and World Migratory Bird Day (spring 2022). She briefly mentioned the wildfire that occurred in the Nature Preserve last February and stated that vegetation has returned nicely. Elizabeth gave an update on the construction progress of the Nature Play Corner which will include interpretive signage, wayfinding and the play area itself, stating that the project will be completed in winter 2022. She gave an update on the park's signage project that will identify each weir, will provide location and direction and include safety aspects along with wayfinding. Elizabeth discussed a fencing and barrier plan to enclose specific areas of the park, and briefly reported on land management resources and partnerships with the National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Division of Forestry. She provided an update on a couple of Clark County Public Works projects that impact the Wetlands Park. These include the

proposed Hollywood Boulevard extension and the TransWest energy corridor right-of-way project that will cross through the south end of the park. She stated that access for this project is a concern for the park. Elizabeth also spoke about staff's coordination efforts with the Cadence community's Sports Park channel which may also greatly impact the Wetlands Park.

#### **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, 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 there are a few localized issues, especially where tributaries enter the lake. Todd presented lake surface elevation levels, lake temperatures, lake conductance, dissolved oxygen (DO) levels, pH levels, chlorophyll concentrations in the Colorado River and Las Vegas Bay and secchi depth (transparency) within the lake. He added that with the lake's temperature, if SNWA were still using Intakes No. 1 and No. 2 to draw water, it would be pulling much warmer water from the lake and treatment would require a greater effort and more resources. He also presented DO levels at the inflow from the Colorado River, showing slight concern where the river enters the reservoir. Todd stated that there are toxin-producing algae present in Lake Mohave that have caused NPS to close some areas to contact and added that while they are finding mostly low concentrations, the majority are a product of aggregation by the wind. He stated that this is an emerging problem that will need to be monitored. Todd concluded that modeling of Lake Mead is becoming more important and is helping guide staff's decisions and efforts.

#### **d. Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee (LVVWAC)**

Keiba provided an update on the LVVWAC and reported on the October 19 meeting. She stated that aside from the presentations given today from Elizabeth and Todd, Elizabeth also gave an update on the Clark County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife's recommendation to open the Wetlands Park for fishing. She stated that during the meeting, the LVVWAC unanimously approved a letter of opposition to allowing fishing, following Clark County, CCWRD, COH, CLV and the City of North Las Vegas, who all wrote opposition letters as well. She reported that this advisory board was given a tour of the Wetlands Park by park staff, CCWRD, SNWA, Clark County Park Police and CCPR, answering questions and discussing concerns. Keiba added that the next LVVWAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 11, 2022.

#### **e. Emerging Issues**

There were no emerging issues provided at this time.

#### **6. Set Next Meeting Date/Time and Propose Items for the Next Meeting's Agenda**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2022.

#### **Comments by the General Public**

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

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