

## Wash removed from “concern” list

The environmental picture for the Las Vegas Wash now looks far brighter than it did just a decade ago, when severe erosion had reduced more than 2,000 original acres of wetlands to just 200 acres. Thanks to the stabilization efforts of the multiagency Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee, sedimentation has been dramatically reduced.

The committee recently earned a long-awaited “reward” for those efforts, when



the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP) removed the wash from its list of “waterbodies of concern”—those streams, rivers and lakes that require measures to achieve or maintain water-quality standards.

Construction of weirs—structures that slow flows through the wash, reducing turbulence and the amount of sediments that reach Lake Mead—and planting of trees and shrubs along wash banks have reduced erosion and the amount of total suspended solids (TSS) in the wash by more than 50 percent.

Reducing the amount of TSS means less sediment is present to harm creatures in the waterway, said Peggy Roefer, regional water quality supervisor with the Southern Nevada Water Authority. NDEP considers the wash beneficial as a habitat for aquatic life, excluding fish.

NDEP’s decision came after tests conducted by the SNWA and the City of Henderson showed a reduction in sediment, and at the request of the Clean Water Coalition, a consortium of wastewater-treatment agencies in Southern Nevada. Learn more about wash restoration and enhancement at [lvwash.org](http://lvwash.org). 



## Bird lovers flock to Henderson preserve

Nature is nearer than you think: Located near the Las Vegas Wash, the Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve is an ideal place to view numerous migratory fowl as well as many species of resident desert birds. Open daily from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Preserve is at 2400 B Moser Drive, on the grounds of Henderson’s water reclamation facility near Boulder Highway and Sunset Drive. For details, visit [cityofhenderson.com](http://cityofhenderson.com).

## Wash field trips immerse students in learning

Beyond the classroom, students of all ages are getting an up-close view of the Las Vegas Wash—and hands-on learning, too.

Continuing a partnership with the Mabel Hoggard Math/Science Magnet School, staff and scientists from the Southern Nevada Water Authority’s Las Vegas Wash project team recently presented fifth-grade students with new field guidebooks with information and exercises about the wash and its wildlife.

The books are included in backpacks students use on field trips to the wash, along with global positioning units, binoculars, gloves and pH strips children can use to test water for chemicals, said Sandra Harris, assistant management analyst with the wash team.



“It includes everything they would have if they actually were scientists, which is what they can be for a day,” Harris said.

Funding for the materials was provided by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

The wash team also conducts programs to educate students and the public about the wash and its important role in Southern Nevada’s water supply. The team hosts classrooms from elementary through college-age, and has even visited senior citizens at community centers in the valley, who have been keen learners.

Outreach even extends across state lines: The wash team has hosted students from the University of Arizona in Tucson, who conducted a field trip to the wetlands, Harris said.

Visit [lvwash.org](http://lvwash.org) to learn more. 