

LAS VEGAS WASH & WETLANDS CLEAN-UP NETS HUGE HAUL - Volunteers Remove More than 100 Tons of Trash -

Several areas around the Las Vegas Wash were transformed this spring from eyesores to sources of pride, thanks to the efforts of approximately 1,400 Las Vegas Valley residents who spent a Saturday removing more than 200,000 pounds of garbage from the environmentally sensitive areas.



The day's activities also included a Wash Information Fair featuring more than a dozen exhibits from organizations with interests in the Las Vegas Wash. Zikmund, who staffed the coordination committee's display booth, said visitors were genuinely interested in learning more about the wash and wetlands.

"I had the sense that people came out just because they knew it was a good thing to do for the environment, but they weren't really sure why the Las Vegas Wash is important. The exhibitors, who included the Clark County Parks & Recreation Department, the City of Henderson and Friends of the Desert Wetlands, showed the volunteers how protecting the wash and wetlands helps protect Lake Mead and how the wetlands serve as a habitat for many plants and animals not found elsewhere in the valley."

The second annual event was sponsored by Friends of the Desert Wetlands Park and the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC). This year's efforts more than doubled those in 1998, when more than 600 volunteers pulled approximately 80,000 pounds of trash from the wetlands.



"We were overwhelmed by the level of community support," said Kim Zikmund, project manager for the Las Vegas Wash Project Team, a group formed to support the ongoing efforts of the newly-formed LVWCC to develop a comprehensive plan for the Las Vegas Wash. "They removed a phenomenal amount of trash. That kind of effort just shows how much residents care about the environment."

Plans for next year's clean-up event are already under way. For more information about how you can help protect the Las Vegas Wash, visit the LVWCC Web site at www.lvwash.org.

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Las Vegas Wash Web Site Proves Popular Information Source

Thousands of southern Nevada residents are catching the wave to the Las Vegas Wash – the information wave, that is. The Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee’s (LVWCC) Web site, lvwash.org, is quickly becoming a popular source of information for students, interested citizens and environmental professionals alike.

“I think people like the Web site’s immediacy. It allows us to get a lot of information out to the public very quickly and provides a forum through which they can be heard in a timely manner,” said Stephanie Lien of the Las Vegas Wash Project Coordination Team. “The Las Vegas Wash is such a dynamic issue that it really demands a vehicle like the Internet that can keep up with the coordination committee’s progress.”

The LVWCC formed in September 1998 after a citizens’ panel studying regional water quality issues recommended to the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) that a comprehensive management program be created for the Las Vegas Wash. The wash carries floodwater, urban runoff, treated wastewater, and water from the shallow ground water system into the Las Vegas Bay of Lake Mead. Although flows from the Las Vegas Wash represent less than 2 percent of the water in Lake Mead, managing the wash effectively is important to protecting southern Nevada’s primary water supply. The wetlands surrounding the Las Vegas Wash serve as a “finishing” filter for water as it flows toward Lake Mead and as a habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals.

The *lvwash.org* Web site includes an overview of the coordination committee and its study teams, background on the wash’s environmental significance, and public involvement information such as a schedule of

coordination committee meetings and an e-mail address for comments. Two features of the site are an extensive photo gallery with more than 300 images and a “virtual tour” of the wash.

Lien said communicating through the Web site is essential to encouraging public participation, a high priority for LVWCC members.



Visit the Wash Web site at www.lvwash.org

“There are so many misperceptions about the Las Vegas Wash, its

condition, and what is being done to protect it that we felt it was important to get the facts out as early as possible,” she said. “Developing a comprehensive management program for a resource as complex as the wash requires a lot of coordination, but it also requires input from the public. The Las Vegas Wash is one of southern Nevada’s most important environmental resources. The members of this committee need valley residents to be informed and involved.”

Workshop Draws Committee Closer to Management Plan Outline

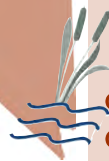
A recent workshop helped the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC) make significant strides toward the development of a comprehensive adaptive management plan for the Las Vegas Wash.

During the all-day forum, the committee reviewed each study team's "problem statement" while members of individual study teams discussed issues that will ultimately determine how the Las Vegas Wash is managed. The problem statements, presented as questions, represent the underpinnings of the entire plan development process by ensuring that all

study team members possess a shared understanding of the central issues.

Las Vegas Wash

Coordination Committee



The LVWCC is working diligently to ensure that the plan reflects the wash's dynamic nature.

Each team has been tasked with developing a "chapter" for the comprehensive adaptive management plan, which will ultimately serve as the blueprint for managing environmental issues relating to the waterway that carries treated wastewater, shallow groundwater, urban runoff, and storm water into Lake Mead. Las Vegas Wash Project Team Manager Kim Zikmund said the LVWCC is working diligently to ensure that the plan reflects the wash's dynamic nature.

"The words 'adaptive' and 'flexible' have emerged as committee members delve into the issues surrounding the Las Vegas Wash," she said. "While developing a management plan to address the Las Vegas Wash's current environmental needs is the primary focus, the coordination committee is also working to determine how to effectively manage the Las Vegas Wash so these issues don't recur."

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The Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee includes representatives from:

- City of Henderson
- City of Las Vegas
- City of North Las Vegas
- Clark County Sanitation District
- Clark County Health District
- Clark County Comprehensive Planning
- Clark County Parks & Recreation Dept.
- Clark Co. Regional Flood Control District
- Clark County Conservation District
- Southern Nevada Water Authority
- Basic Management Inc.
- Water Quality Citizens Advisory Committee
- Lake Las Vegas
- Las Vegas Bay Marina
- Friends of the Desert Wetlands
- University of Nevada Las Vegas
- Nevada Division of Wildlife
- Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
- Nevada State Health Division
- Nevada Bureau of Health Protection Services
- Colorado River Commission
- National Park Service
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Corps of Engineers
- U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

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Much of the workshop centered on identifying issues and placing them within the scope of one or more study teams. This was accomplished by reviewing a matrix of issues for conflicting objectives and gaps. Timing was a recurring theme, as members weighed the need for immediate action against the importance of completing necessary studies that may influence the management plan's direction.

Avoiding redundancy among the various study teams' efforts was another key topic of discussion. "There is so much activity associated with the Las Vegas Wash that it takes a tremendous amount of coordination to avoid duplicating efforts," Zikmund said. "Different study teams may be approaching the same issue from different perspectives, so it's essential they communicate."

Zikmund said the LVWCC's resolve and enthusiasm have only increased since its formation, citing active participation from the various entities. "The committee is united in what issues need to be addressed, and the participants are motivated. Now we face the more complicated questions of 'how' and 'when.' The true value of the comprehensive adaptive management plan is that it will definitively answer those questions."

WASH FACTS

The Las Vegas Wash is 12 miles long.

The wash provides habitat for many kinds of animals, including foxes, coyotes, rabbits, snakes and lizards.

More than 200 species of birds have been identified in the Las Vegas Wash.

Evidence of American Indian use 5,000 years ago has been found near the Wash.

Several different sources of water feed the Las Vegas Wash, including storm water, shallow groundwater, urban run-off and water reclamation facility outflows.

Las Vegas Wash



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For more information, visit our website at www.lvwash.org or call the project office at 892-3800.



LVWCC meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 9:00 a.m.