zephyr partners

October 3, 2011

REC'D - BLM - NSO
9:00 A.M. OCT 14 2011

Penny Woods
BLM Project Manager
PO Box 12000
Reno, NV 89520

Dear Ms. Woods:

As a business owner and resident of Nevada, I am concerned about the ability for Nevada's economy to recover from its current downturn. The health of the economy is paramount in the ability of many businesses, including my own, to flourish.

The current economic slowdown has caused Nevada to experience job and population loss. As a result, foreclosures and short sales now dominate the Las Vegas real estate market. This state must address many issues in order to re-establish itself, especially Las Vegas, as a desirable place to live, work and play. A big step in this direction is the promise of a safe and reliable water supply in the future for Southern Nevada.

To prepare for the future, despite unpredictable conditions like drought and climate change, Southern Nevada must diversify its water resources and reduce its reliance on the drought-plagued Colorado River. The Southern Nevada Water Authority's (SNWA) Groundwater Development Project is a critical component of this resource diversification.

I support the Bureau of Land Reclamation's Draft Environmental Impact Statement. However, I noted that it does not address what the economic impact will be to Southern Nevada should the SNWA's applications be denied. As Nevada's largest producer of tax revenue, it is imperative to the entire state that Southern Nevada remain economically stable. If Southern Nevada continues to rely mainly on the Colorado River for its water supply, more than Lake Mead will run dry. So will its real estate industry, its development and construction industry, its tourism industry—just to name a few.

For Nevada to rebound from the economic conditions it has recently endured, and for Southern Nevada to be assured of a stable and reliable water supply in the future, I am in support of the SNWA groundwater project and the proposed action in the BLM's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

Omar Palacios
Business Owner

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