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September 21, 2011

Bureau of Land Management, Interior  
SNWA Project, Attn: Penny Woods  
PO Box 12000  
Reno, NV 89520

Ms. Woods,

I am writing you as Secretary of the Nevada Board of Agriculture to inform you of the Board's position on the Southern Nevada Water Authority Project and the BLM Environment Impact Study. During the August 30, 2011 Department of Agriculture Board meeting, the Board of Agriculture took action stating that the Nevada Board of Agriculture opposes the BLM allowance of a seven foot pipeline in eastern Nevada due to the permanent impact it will have on the agriculture industry and the wildlife population, as well as the health, safety and welfare of Nevada's citizens.

The Nevada Department of Agriculture has a legislative mandate to protect agriculture. Eighty percent of today's agriculture production is associated with water resource management resulting in \$2 billion dollars of annual economic activity in rural Nevada.

Nevada's agriculture production occurs from two basic sources; irrigated agriculture and the conversion of range resources into red meat. Commodities produced as a direct result of irrigated agriculture, including row crops, grains, hay, hogs, milk, etc., generated a gross income of \$299 million in 2006. Cattle and sheep sales produced \$198 million in 2006. Approximately \$49 million of irrigated crops were consumed by livestock in 2006. Thus, it is safe to assume, that the total value of irrigated crop production in 2006, the latest data available, amounted to \$348 million, or 78% of total agriculture gross sales.

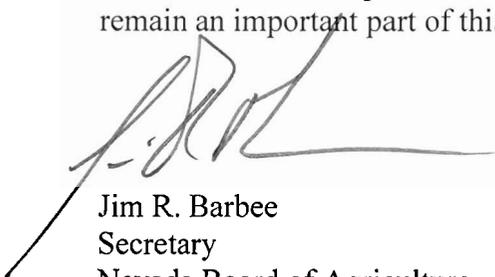
Table 3.18-38 clearly states that "Energy use and costs related to irrigation and domestic use increases as pumping depth increase. In some instances, drawdown could require installation of large pumps and/or new replacement wells, involving additional capital investment, with no assurances that a new supply could be developed. Increased irrigation costs may result in reductions in the amount of land irrigated, which would

result in lower overall crop or livestock production and thereby lower farm income.” The stated water drawdown figures present a clear danger to sustainable agriculture, wildlife populations, and associated tourism in rural Nevada. Table 4.0-1 clearly supports this significant rural Nevada impact.

Southern Nevada Water Authority contemplates mining and exporting up to 57 billion gallons of water annually out of Eastern Nevada. Removing this non-renewable resource from Eastern Nevada does not provide a long-term solution to the water shortage in Las Vegas. However, the SNWA project will unnecessarily and permanently destroy agriculture, the economy and environment of Eastern Nevada as well as potentially create an irreversible health and safety debacle in the nature of dust particulate.

The Taylor Grazing Act directs that these lands should be utilized for the improvement and advancement of the agriculture industry. The SNWA project would have an adverse affect on sustainable agriculture industries due to spring and sub-irrigated pasture drawdown, and increased air pollutants as grounds become void of water resources and loss of vegetation across this region.

The Nevada Board of Agriculture encourages the BLM to consider the impact of this project on rural Nevada, agriculture production, the environment and the health, safety and welfare of Nevada’s citizens. The Board of Agriculture is passionate for the advocacy of rural Nevada and the agriculture industry. We want to be a positive part of the economic development of Nevada, but believe that the agriculture industry must remain an important part of this solution.



Jim R. Barbee  
Secretary  
Nevada Board of Agriculture