

Comments and Responses - Public Meeting Transcripts

ID	Comment	Response
Alamo Public Mtg Transcript		
33462-1	Number one, is this needed? Is this pipeline up through here, is it needed to come up and try to suck some of these valleys, and we think it will suck them dry in time, to take them down and put them into Las Vegas? I don't know it's needed, for one thing.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33462-2	And another question I have is there going to be a trigger mechanism to where out in these aquifers, when they do pull down to a certain level, are we going to shut down a billion dollar pipeline? And that's a question to me that the only way you can deal with that is have money already set and a bond in place to where if it does go below that certain point, then the money goes to the counties to pay for it. I don't know, because they're not going to shut it down. Does anybody believe they'll shut it down until there's nothing else to suck? I wouldn't think so. I'm glad you think that. And then we'll have all -- if the time comes they do put this pipeline in, there's going to be all kinds of mitigation that are going to come right across.	An applicant-committed protection measure listed under Adaptive Management Measures would be an option for reducing or ceasing groundwater withdrawals. This measure would determine a reduction or cessation of pumping on a case-by-case basis for individual production wells or well fields using technical and consultation process identified in the stipulated agreements. Mitigation measure SE-6 also would involve SNWA creating a fund for financial assistance to affected ranchers and public water systems. This mitigation measure is outside of the BLM's jurisdiction.
33462-3	Of course they'll travel right through the white sage flat, I would bet, because that makes -- that's the easiest place to go. It's downhill. And it will flat destroy these things. It will destroy some of the plants and different things that we have out in these valleys. It will never been the same.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and Veg-2 for information on this topic.
33462-4	But I know it will never be the same. You can't make any of these roads back to where they ever was originally. It's not going to happen. So we need to be very careful on that, where this thing goes. I would like to have some input of local people, where some of these -- even this transmission line we're dealing with. If we could have a little more help where that goes would be helpful to us.	Thank you for your comment.
33462-5	And some of these hydrologists out here in the other room, where does this water come from? I know it doesn't rain enough around here to make these aquifers full of water, so do we know where it comes from? So I think that needs to be answered. I would like this to be stalled until we know where this water comes from. And if there's any chance that the aquifer can be recharged, maybe it can, I don't know. Does anybody? Nobody is raising their hand. This isn't a give and take, it's my comments.	See Section 3.3 of the EIS for a summary of water resources including a discussion of recharge to the groundwater system.
33462-6	And if this could be done scientifically, I would like it to be done scientifically and not politically. We know that if Clark County, they have the votes to do about anything they basically want to in the state of Nevada. So if we can do this scientifically, and if it can be proved it will never pull these aquifers down and cause desertification to us up in the lands then I guess I can go with it. I don't mind people, you know, having progress in this life. But if it's going to pull these aquifers down and it's going to make us all a worse desert than we already are and change what we are and who we are, then I'm going to have to oppose it. So thanks.	Thank you for your comment.
33462-7	Would it be possible to -- they gave no information. What is this process for the BLM in the whole process? What is the beginning? What's the end? From talking to these people outside, they're saying that this is already been predetermined, that Congress has declared this pipeline is legal to be built through the BLM land, so are we just wasting our time here? Is that true? What's the process?	Information relevant to this comment is found in section 1.3.1.
33462-8	Where is it in the scheme, the whole scheme, this whole project from beginning to having to the thing built and water running? I'm not talking about the timeframe, I'm talking about actions. Who has authority? Where does it start? Where does it end? Where is the BLM in this process?	The BLM decision-maker will direct actions going forward in the Record of Decision. Please see Standard Resource Response Gen-2 for details regarding the tiering process.
33462-9	Do we have an oversight committee for this or is it already established or is there going to be an oversight committee established that communicates directly with the locals on some of their concerns ongoing, not just now? I mean, it's clear that Clark County has got some desperate needs but we have had these concerns for quite some time and really no place to voice them, other than midair, because we're finally getting to the part where here we are. We've all known about it. There's been major concerns in the community, and we need someplace that doesn't take this another year or two to find out what kind of contingency plans may be established in this community and every other community that may be impacted by this.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
33462-10	And I have several concerns about this. I've seen several projects similar to this turn sour on the people that lost their water. And I won't live long enough that it will have a big effect on me, but I think on the young people living in this area and those who come here future time, there will be an effect.	Thank you for your comment.

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33462-11	Las Vegas wants the water so that they can grow, they can bring in more people and sell them a connection to their water company for an exorbitant amount of money and collect water dues for those people and make a big profit on them. These are people who own the water company who want to make the big profits. I think we need to look where the money is going for this project. Right now Las Vegas water rates are about one quarter of what we pay for the same amount of water here in Alamo. Why have they got a big water problem down there and we don't have an even bigger one? We need the water as much as they do. Sure, we're not supposed to grow, right? We're supposed to stay stagnant or actually become a ghost town so that they can have the water that's here.	Thank you for your comment. The underlying subject of this comment relates to the allocation of water resources in the state (see Standard Resource Response Gen-8). As noted in the Executive Summary (paragraph 2.7 and 2.8), Section 1.4 and elsewhere in the EIS, the responsibility for administering water in Nevada rests with the Nevada State Engineer, and consideration of public interest is one of the factors to be considered in the water rights appropriation. Given the state's authority in this matter, the subject is beyond the scope of the EIS and does not require further agency response.
33462-12	Where did the water come from? I'll tell you where it came from, it's been accumulating in these valleys for thousands of years. The water table that's here has not built up over the last couple of years or ten years or a hundred years, but it's been building up over thousands of years.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered. Section 3.3 (water resources) discuss the conceptual understanding of water discharge and recharge.
33462-13	I asked the question earlier will the water table be affected by drawing down huge amounts of water that they want to draw down, and he showed me charts. And, yes, it will. The water table will go down.	Comment noted.
33462-14	What does that mean to you? That means that if your water comes from a well, it's going to cost more to pump it, you're going to have to go deeper to get it, and eventually it may be so deep that it's not even worthwhile doing it so let's get out. No way we can get water anymore.	Proposed mitigation measures SE-6 and GW-WR-1 address concerns brought up by this comment. Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1, Gen-7 and Gen-8 for information on this topic.
33462-15	It was asked what does the BLM have to do with it. Yes, they have to do with the land. So are we going to destroy the land? Well, let me ask a question there. Was there a threshold put on if we make this study and it goes beyond the threshold, we do not do the project or will it just be approved anyhow? Who makes that decision? Who makes it for the BLM? Is it somebody that's going to be affected by it? I don't think so. I don't think they're going to be affected at all by it. Who makes the decision as to whether to give out the permits for the water? It's somebody in Carson City, and we should know who it is so that we can get rid of them and get them dis-elected if they don't do what we, as a people, are going to benefit from.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-7 and Gen-8 for information on this topic.
33462-16	You've never seen one of these projects be reversed or turned off. It never will be. And if you lose your water for these people, they'll suck it dry and they don't care because they'll be making their big bucks. And look at who some of the people who benefit. I think you'll find some of our leaders in our government will be benefitted by it, them and their families and so forth. I think you need to look where the money is going to be flowing before this decision is made.	Thank you for your comment.
33462-17	Let me ask you a question. You know, it's important that we know who makes these decisions but is there criteria establish for these decisions?	Many laws and federal acts direct the actions of the BLM in regard to land decisions; including the NEPA, FLPMA, and LCCRDA.
33462-18	Can we trust their judgment?	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33462-19	Who's familiar with the desert tortoise? You know what they did, they spent a lot of money and they studied whether the desert tortoise was going to be able to survive while these subdivisions were being made and they found out that, well, we have to charge everybody that's going to do a subdivision some money to study the impact. Now what did they do with the tortoises? They went out and charged people money to gather up the tortoises and put them in a tortoise place and then that wasn't a good place for them so what did they do with them, they killed them. They killed the tortoises. What are they going to do with you? You're kind of like a tortoise.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33462-20	You're not important. If you don't like it, we're going to do it anyhow. And if it's not good for you, we'll get rid of you somehow.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33462-21	I think we ought to fight tooth and nail to not let them take this water, because those aquifers that have been there for thousands of years are not replaceable. The amount of water we get in this Great Basin will not replace them in thousands of years to come. And every time we draw down below the level that's usable for us, we're in trouble. And they'll never allow it to build back up because they won't allow it to build back up long enough.	Thank you for your comment.
33462-22	On this one handout that you gave us, it talks about the SNWA proposed project to develop more than 176,000 acre feet per year for five different basins. At this point I am aware of only one basin that they've even began the process of determining how much water yield there is and how many they can take. Delamar Valley and Dry Lake Valley, which concern the operation that I'm on the south end, I'm aware of no applications or any production wells being proposed.	The proposed GWD project development in Dry Lake and Delamar Valleys is described in Section 2 of the EIS.
33462-23	There were a number of monitoring wells that went into the ground. They told us they were monitoring wells. They broke state water regulations. Monitoring well is no more than a three-inch casing. These wells were drilled with 21-inch casings. We asked them if they were production wells and they assured us, oh, no, no, no, they're not production wells.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.

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33462-24	<p>This comment that you have right here saying 176,000 acre feet out of five basins shows that they have intentions of pumping. So my question becomes to the BLM is how is it possible to develop an environmental impact statement when we don't even know where they're targeting to pump in these other valleys? We can approve it and then they we can drill more wells or whatever they need to do and it wasn't involved in the study. So I think there's some very important issues that they need to identify exactly where these production, this, you know, groundwater mining activity is going to go on, and that needs to be included before this EIS can even be complete. Can't make any decisions on it. The other end of the ranch is in Spring Valley, North Spring Valley. We're completely surrounded by production wells on this project that will be filling the pipelines.</p>	<p>The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown will be analyzed in future NEPA.</p>
33462-25	<p>You talked a little bit on page five about the mathematical computer monitoring. I'm wondering exactly how familiar the BLM staff is on this water model that they've produced. I don't know if you realize that there's a thousand kilometer area, thousand square kilometer area per square on the grid. That means that they can make some general, very general observations and predictions of what might happen, but that one spring that produces a gallon a minute that my ranch depends on, that is so valuable that we might have 20 or 30 or 40 miles of buried pipeline to maintain to carry that water and distribute it around the range, that one spring that produces one gallon a minute may not even show up on their modeling. And if it does, will it be affected, yes or no plus or minus 50 feet drawdown? You know, they can say, oh, no, it won't be affected, it will only be 48 feet drawdown but that spring might be adversely affected in 12 feet drawdown. We don't know. And so those critical water sources have not been identified in the study. The mathematical model is not sufficient to make any determination on those. And I think the BLM needs to be looking at the specifics of that water modeling.</p>	<p>The BLM staff is quite familiar with the water model. In addition, water model experts reporting to the LBM have been heavily involved in model review. Please see Gen-1 which discusses programmatic analysis and subsequent NEPA. The detail you r</p>
33462-26	<p>That will be addressed I'm sure in Carson City, but BLM also needs to be looking at that, because when the springs start drying up on the hillside, it's going to affect everything, not just our cattle operation but all the wildlife and recreation and vegetation and everything</p>	<p>The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. Please refer to standard resource response Gen-8 for information on this topic.</p>
33462-27	<p>I have a question about mitigation. You know, we talk about mitigation. You know, a lot of times, well, if you're going to put a gate, well, we'd really rather have a cattle guard than a gate because cattle guards are designed to be left open, right? Makes a lot of sense. But when we're talking about this spring, what's our mitigation? Is BLM going to approve me to spend a hundred thousand dollars to drill a well to pump water for my cattle to replace what the spring has lost? You know, the state water engineer may require them to help pay the bill, but does that not exacerbate the problem? If the springs are going dry, we don't need to drill another well, you know. So looks like to me like the only mitigation that we have is one that continues to complicate, you know, the problems that might arise from this.</p>	<p>Mitigation measure SE-6 involves the consideration that SNWA create a fund that would be a source of financial assistance to affected ranchers and public water systems. This measure is outside of the BLM's jurisdiction.</p>
33462-28	<p>You know, we talked a little bit about -- Mr. Higbee talked a little bit about these white sage flats. From a nutritional standpoint this is the critical backbone of these ranching operations. These white sage flats are high in protein, they're highly palatable. The ability of that plant to maintain its production level year in and year out through the drought is important to our ranching operations, as well a how well it sustains its nutritive value. You know, it can sit there for three years with no rain and when you turn it on it still has some feed value as opposed to a lot of the other forages that dry up and turn to straw and are depleted over time. All you have to do is drive during hunting season, have somebody drive across the flat and three more cars drive after it and you have a permanent road. This white sage will not come back. We can go to places that had fires a hundred years ago and there's still no white sage. I don't know what causes the germination and the establishment of the seedlings, but those factors are not present in our environment today. If it's rain, if it's temperature or whatever, white sage does not germinate, it does not establish and will be lost forever. I guess we have to decide are golf courses in Vegas more important than white sage flats. For me and my operation and my personal belief, we need to be maintaining this and I think that's what the BLM has been charged with is maintaining the value, the intrinsic value of these ranges up here. Thank you.</p>	<p>Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1, MM-2 and MM-3 for information on this topic.</p>

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33462-29	<p>You say, Historically Southern Nevada has relied primarily on the Colorado River to meet its water needs. That's normal. New Orleans relies on the Mississippi River. They're not constructing a pipeline to Oklahoma to bring water to New Orleans. Chicago relies on Lake Michigan. Las Vegas relies on the Colorado River. Yes, it's the only city on the entire Colorado River in the entire Colorado – large city on the entire Colorado River system. So there's nothing wrong with that. And then you say, Reductions in flow over recent years, I'll go into the -- let me just finish the sentence, complicated river water rights allocations, ongoing drought, and past growth in both population and businesses in the southwestern U.S. threaten to overuse available Colorado River water. Reductions in flow and this ongoing drought are the two basic -- it's the same thing. It's the basic lie that's being told. There is 14 million -- there are 14 million acre feet of water in the Colorado River system. The upper states use about seven million and the lower states use the other seven million that's left. There's a drought, yes. In the Southwest there's always periods of drought, but there is no serious drought on the Colorado River. And plus we have a lake that holds 25 million acre feet of water to put us through these periods when there possibly might be a drought. The river carries -- there's at least six million acre feet of water to get down to Lake Mead, and usually it's around seven or eight million acre feet of water. And so there is no shortage of water. Las Vegas only uses 300,000 acre feet, draws 300,000 acre feet of water out of the lake. That's the allocation for the State of Nevada. And right now I think we're using like 200 or 220,000 acre feet per year. So they don't even -- the use for Nevada is way below what's needed. But there's a big difference between seven million acre feet and 300,000. And so where does the rest of this water go? It goes down primarily to the farms and where it's wasted, where a lot of it is wasted with antiquated irrigation processes in the Imperial Valley and in Arizona and other valleys in Southern California. So the notion of drought is totally false. They've drawn down -- it's just bad resource allocation. They've drawn down this 25 million acre foot lake down to where it's about 10 or 11 million is all that's left in the lake now. Now because of the huge snow this year, yes, it's coming up, and there will be other huge snows. There's basically because of global warming, or whatever you want to call it, there's 25 percent more water in the rivers of the world than there was before the -- then there has been in the past, which is natural. As the oceans heat up, they will have more evaporations, more evaporation and there will be more fresh water on the land. So it's a total lie.</p>	<p>New information addressing this comment has been added to the Executive Summary. In addition, Appendix A and section 1.6.2 contain information relevant to this comment.</p>
33462-30	<p>Complicated river water rights allocation. That's the main issue. Complicated river water rights. These are created by the federal government. These are immutable rules that the federal government says can't be changed, and there resides the problem.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>
33462-31	<p>Las Vegas offered to go down and pave the -- cement the irrigation ditches going into these farms because they weren't before, and 300,000 acre feet of water was being lost in the irrigation ditches, which is the same amount of water that Las Vegas says it needs now. Well, so that could have doubled the water supply and it would have cost almost nothing, much cheaper than this project.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
33462-32	<p>Well, what happened? The complicated federal water river rights rules prohibit that. You cannot make a change of water between two states in that way. So this is not rocket science, this is all politics and incompetence and, etc.</p>	<p>This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.</p>
33462-33	<p>Okay, past growth of both population and businesses threaten to overuse the water. That's just not true. There's plenty of water, it just has to be allocated differently in the river, or from the river I should say. And with that this pipeline is just totally unnecessary.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment regarding the use and allocation of water. The subject of this comment is beyond the scope of the EIS - see Gen-3, Gen-8 and SocEcon-2 for additional information on this topic. Statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, however, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>
33462-34	<p>Let's discuss the economic aspects of it with the water authority. I pay for most of the water I use, I pay \$4 per thousand gallons. That's about \$1300 per acre foot of water in Las Vegas. And even with that charge of water, this agency is so incompetent that it has borrowed \$5 billion to do projects, who knows what. It only has to transport the water 20 miles, and it still can't finance itself. It has to take from its reserves. It has to increase its rate. It increased the rates last year and the year previous, \$18 million each year. Southern Nevada Water Authority just raised their rates two weeks ago or four weeks ago. This whole project is to cover up the incompetence. Now imagine -- Okay. Just imagine if it costs all the money that they make and charging \$4 per thousand gallons to transport water 20 miles, how much is it going to cost to transport water 300 miles? Twenty times as much? \$80 per thousand gallons? That's like \$10,000 per acre foot. That's what this agency -- that's what this agency is so incompetent, that's what they'll do. And, sir, there's no profits with this agency. Yes, Patricia Mulroy make \$350,000 a year but there are no profits. There's all losses, incredible bureaucracy, just full of lies.</p>	<p>This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.</p>
33462-35	<p>I think the EIS should say right on the front page, introductory, This is the cost of the environmental impact statement process, the NEPA process, and it's all moot. This has already been approved by Harry Reid in the Lincoln County Conservation Recreation Development Act, and all of this money is spent for not. And I think that needs to be on the front page. I think that's right in front so that everybody knows it, not just us but anybody that picks the document up.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>

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33462-36	Secondly, and this is kind of what drove me down here tonight, I'm very offended by your BLM ranger armed and present at these proceedings. It is offensive. It is intimidating and coercive and I formally protest the entire hearing process that has had an armed ranger present. He has no more authority here than I do. He acts under no color of any kind of legal backing. He has no jurisdiction, and it is a personal affront to me and an insult to the people here that you have to have an armed mall cop at the Denny's across the street trying to enforce whatever he's doing. I would ask, and I think it should be included, that any hearing that had a BLM ranger at it should be re-held with local law enforcement. If you need security, have your local law enforcement take care of it, but he does not belong. That is totally and completely inappropriate. It was my intention to show up here armed tonight. Because Nevada is an open carry state, I fully respect his right to carry a firearm in an open manner, as long as I get the same privilege. Now in the school in Pioche, that's a different story. He violated the law and we'll see yet whether the D.A. will take him to court over it or not.	Bracketed in error. No response is necessary.
33462-37	Third point, what is the socioeconomic impact of a ghost town? Is that included in your economic analysis of what this project encompasses and what it will do? How do you count the loss in real estate value? How do you count the loss in infrastructure and jobs? How do you count the lost opportunities? You know, it's really kind of strange, in the early days the federal government had policies and laws in place to dispose of land, put people out there so that they can manage it and so that there would be an effective, safe infrastructure throughout the country. Now we're talking about removing people. We're talking about a project that will in effect demolish whatever communities there are here, because water is the lifeblood in the west. It cannot exist without it. Good enough.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM appreciates your time in identifying specific concerns regarding the potential long term social and economic effects associated with groundwater pumping and drawdown. The risks of such effects are addressed programmatically in this EIS due to the uncertainties and long-time frames involved (see Figures 3.3.2-7, 3.3.2-8 and Section 4.3 of the Executive Summary) and would be subject to further analysis as part of future NEPA. See Standard Resource Response Gen-1 and Gen-2 regarding tiering.
33462-38	I had a neighbor, well, two neighbors, one had a dairy and he had his well on one corner section of his property, and another neighbor drilled a well up about a quarter of a mile from him. And as soon as within two or three days of him starting to pump that big well, pumping five or six acre feet of water to irrigate his alfalfa field, he dried the dairyman's well up and he had to go in and punch another hole down to the depth that they had drilled the big well just to get water back to that dairy.	This comment was bracketed in error. It does not directly pertain to the Project or the DEIS.
33462-39	I've got two or three little pieces of range out here that got real small springs on them, same as John Sanders was saying. Minimum amount of water that runs and runs. If they put these wells in and they drop that water table 10, 12 feet, is that going to dry up all my springs? Part of them is in rough country. The cows ain't -- one good spring there, a little sheep on the other side of the mountain, cows ain't going to go over the mountain to get that other water.	Dropping the water table 10 feet or more could reduce the flows of springs and streams. Please refer to table 3.X in the Water Resources section to determine areas of 10 foot or greater groundwater drawdown.
33462-40	So is Las Vegas going to take and reimburse us or put in some kind of a -- something in there that they're going to supply water for our cattle in these places where they're inaccessible? I can't haul water to them. I've got one well out here, I pump the water 720 feet. If they drop ten feet, that well may be dry. Who's going to pay me for hauling all the water out to my cows? I think that needs to be included in the information, that they need to supply the water for our livestock operations. That's all I've got to say.	Thank you for your comment. Potential adverse economic effects to ranchers are noted in Section 3.18 and elsewhere. See suggested mitigation GW-WR-6 (water resources), Standard Resource Response MM-1, suggested mitigation SE-6, and the discussion of the COM Plan in Section 3.20.
33462-41	Water authority is saying well, maybe we won't really need it but we want to proceed with it as if we did. And how long is the information from the EIS good? How long would we be sitting and wondering how long, if the water authority will come in 15, 20 years from now and activate their application when they don't need it now.	The EIS would need to be reviewed and updated throughout the process: at the issuance of the ROW grant; whenever notices to proceed would be issued, etc. This is described in detail in sec 1.3.4.
33462-42	What is the timeframe that we're looking at for permits, rights-of-way and that type of thing being issued?	Please note the response to the above comment.
33462-43	How long is the data good for? What's the life of this EIS?	Please note the response to the above comment.
33462-44	I just have a question. And the two questions are this: Las Vegas wants the water so they can grow. What gives them the better chance to take the water so they can grow than we can survive? Have they got more rights than we have? Are we not important?	Information relevant to this comment is contained within section 3.18.
33462-45	The next question is somebody was paid to do this piece of work, and supposedly they were working to get things accurate, and yet I look at this map on the very front, and Moapa, part of Lincoln County, Caliente seem to be on the Utah side of that line that's right at the top of that picture. If they have that kind of accuracy in what they do, how can we trust that what's in here is even accurate?	Thank you for your comment.
33462-46	This project reaches such a level of insanity that one has to ask what is really behind this. And I'm sure some of the people know answers to that but I would ask some questions about that. One can only conclude that there are political reasons behind this.	Thank you for your comment.

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33462-47	And I've heard that Senator Reid, that the development that's going to benefit the most is Coyote Springs, and that Senator Reid is, I think it's a fact that he's very good friends with Harvey Whittemore, the owner of Coyote Springs. And several of his sons work in the same law firm as Harvey Whittemore, and I'm wondering does anyone here know that there's a real connection there and that that's really the reason. Is it true that the L.A. Times article that said he had the power line, apparently there's some power line that was built somewhere in this area, was switched away from that project? Is that true? I mean, are there underhanded, under table deals going on where people on the inside are buying property at a cheap price and then selling it to the water district for a high price? Has the BLM been influenced by Senator Reid? Is that how we're in this position today because he has passed something through the Congress to support this? What is his real motivation in doing that? I would like answers to those questions. Because this can only be explained, this insanity can only be explained by someone making a lot of money somewhere or gaining a lot of power. I'm sure the BLM has some answers.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33462-48	I know there's a lot of concern there's going to be dust storms and other things in Utah. That's a heavily populated area. The wind stream, the wind, I don't know what you call it, the wind currents from this area over to Utah, there are a lot of people in the path. The reason why, Owens Valley or Death Valley is in the path of the dust storms.	Please see common responses Air-4 and Air-10.
33462-49	I know we citizens are very stupid compared to you government bigwigs, but why can't we have the answers to the 50 or 60 questions that have been asked?	This comment was bracketed in error. It does not directly pertain to the Project or the DEIS.
33462-50	I will be really honest with you, I am extremely distrusting of my government. I have seen abuses, you have seen abuses. We have seen abuses all the way from the top all the way down to our local police departments. We see abuses every day. I'm sick and tired of being screwed by my government. I want a project that has to happen, not because somebody along the way palms are getting greased or somebody is going to make money off of it, but us little people are going to get the shaft, as we do frequently from our government as of the last 75 years. I'm sick and tired of it. I have become an extremely hostile individual, and I can assure you that I am just one of many. I'm tired of it. We've got questions. It seems to me that, yes, there's a lot of paperwork and that's part of the problem. It's so complex that we never really know the truth. And I'm sick of that too. Because every single project that gets started, whether it's at a federal level or a state level, we have these kind of complexities, and I want every, God damn it I hate to say it, but I want everybody's name, I want to know who they are, I want to know what their affiliation is. Because, you know what, I don't trust anyone anymore. And I'm being honest. I'm letting you all know. I go to bed every night wondering who in the hell is running this thing. We ain't got enough money to feed our families let alone start a project like this. Who is running this? And I'm sorry if that offends you, because I'm sure that you all have high integrity with the project that you're doing, but we, the people out here, we're getting a little fed up.	This comment was bracketed in error. It does not directly pertain to the Project or the DEIS.
33462-51	You're supposed to be, in my estimation, working for us and yet I hear that we have a deadline that is not sufficient for we, the people, to examine this issue thoroughly. Now where do you see that is freedom of choice?	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33462-52	What are the reductions in flows in the Colorado River that they're talking about?	An evaluation of flow changes in the Colorado River over time is not within the scope of this EIS.
33462-53	PHIL ANDERSON: There's been several periods of reduction in flows in the Colorado River. ED UEHLING: It goes up and down. PHIL ANDERSON: It goes up and down and that's true whenever moisture is involved.	An evaluation of flow changes in the Colorado River over time is not within the scope of this EIS.
33462-54	PHIL ANDERSON: There's been several periods of reduction in flows in the Colorado River. ED UEHLING: It goes up and down. PHIL ANDERSON: It goes up and down and that's true whenever moisture is involved.	An evaluation of flow changes in the Colorado River over time is not within the scope of this EIS.
33462-55	To take your example, if you put too many straws in this aquifer here, we're going to be in the same situation.	Comment noted.
33462-56	I need to see this. When I first moved here, I was involved with the chamber and we got a piece of paper that said that this valley can only grow to this extent, 2,000 some odd people. Okay, that's not very much. We're very dependent on the water here. Every little community all the way up the state is the same as we are. Now let me ask you this question: Who becomes more valid as a citizen of the United States and a citizen of the state and of each county, the one down there that has three million or we? Whose voice seems to be louder in this condition? That's a question I don't like.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33462-57	It almost seems like we're getting the cart before the horse, because as of yet the state water engineer hasn't given them a drop, so why are we even talking about this now? Until water has been allocated, we shouldn't even be talking about a pipeline. And the allocation of that water probably isn't going to happen for years and years and years, which takes me back to Mrs. Hughes' comment of all this stuff we're putting together will be so outdated by the time that happens.	Updated section 3.3 and chapter 1 have incorporated the current NSE rulings.
33462-58	Did we, the people, get any discussion with BLM or anybody in that process?	Please review Chapter 5 in the FEIS for information on public involvement used with this document.

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ID	Comment	Response
33462-59	Penny, I understand you say that but if you will go and look at the monitor sites that you approved and those wells that are drilled, those are production wells, those are not monitoring wells. Guaranteed. I'm a licensed well driller. Those are production wells.	Each exploration well approved by BLM for SNWA has followed the NEPA process. The ROW for these wells was for exploration only. If in future, they are converted to production wells, a new ROW would be required with the appropriate NEPA.
33462-60	A lot of them were drilled on Delamar Valley cattle permits, and I saw them test pumping all of them, full pipes of water shooting out 20 feet, so they came in.	The BLM does not contest that test wells are being drilled by the SNWA. Rights-of-way have been granted by the Ely District for these test wells.
33462-61	Yes. Monitoring wells under a permit.	Thank you for your comment.
33462-62	-- because as a monitor or an exploration well they don't have to file logs with the State of Nevada so it maintains the propriety of the information. Only -- I don't know, did you find out if you had information or not? Good deal. But that information is not available like on the state engineer's website or those kind of things because those wells were not logged.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33462-63	State engineer controls how it's drilled, where it's drilled and how much. If it's done a pump test on it and all that other kind of stuff, look at the state engineer.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33462-64	Bought and paid for it? Bought and paid for all we need to do --	Comment noted.
33462-65	I guarantee you'll have some peers show up in Carson City disputing everything you said. It is the nature of models, it's the nature of what we're doing; however, I would like to say that along with these monitoring wells, the state statute says monitoring wells can only be three inches. These are 21 inches. Unless they granted a waiver. The waiver was not granted when they drilled the wells. The question wasn't asked until a public meeting after the wells were in the ground by Mike Davis up there, and then they said, We didn't even know about that in the meeting, and then magically everything appeared.	This comment was bracketed in error. It pertains to test wells permitted as a separate action at the BLM field office level and does not address the Project or the DEIS.
33462-66	But here's my question: To grant that right-of-way for them to drill those monitoring wells that were actually preproduction wells, the BLM advocated their responsibility by granting those right-of-ways because they were not in legal compliance with state law. We are going through a little pipeline on irrigation water that we own that goes across a small stretch of BLM land, we're five and a half years into it, not nearly as far along as these guys are with this huge project. We're not going to disturb anything, it's our water and it's between two pieces of private property. Everything is in compliance, and every step of the way the BLM is questioning us, Are we in legal compliance with the state water engineer and making us provide a letter from the state water engineer every step of the way. That obviously did not happen. The BLM advocated that responsibility when those wells went in without a waiver and without you checking on them.	Each exploration well approved by BLM for SNWA has followed the NEPA process. The ROW for these wells was for exploration only. If in future, they are converted to production wells, a new ROW would be required with the appropriate NEPA.
33462-67	Well, you don't even know how big the well is. You don't even know if there's any water in it. The right-of-way to drill it. There should have been an EIS on the right-of-way. It doesn't necessarily have to be an EIS, it could be an EA, it could be in a CX. They're the ones holding us up. Somebody has standing, somebody doesn't.	This comment was bracketed in error. It pertains to test wells permitted as a separate action at the BLM field office level and does not address the Project or the DEIS.
33462-68	What Penny was trying to say is that scoping five years ago kind of set the ground floor on what questions they were going to address in the EIS process. And then they gathered science and dealt with other agencies and things in the process, and so they've come out with a draft document of basically the science, for what it's worth, but really to address the questions raised in scoping. And so now they have these sets of hearings to hear other questions, to hear comments on what they have compiled and then they'll go back and supposedly answer those questions, look at those issues that have been raised and then it comes back as a final EIS and then you get to comment on it again. That's kind of how the process works. It's really elongated here because we've got six years in this part of it. I imagine we'll be at least a year in redoing the final and so we're going to be out here some more time but that's how the process works. For us, most importantly, and what NEPA allows us to comment on and what forces the BLM to recognize is affects to the environment and the custom, culture and economy of the area. So if you have questions, if you have concerns and comments, focus on those areas: Custom, culture, economy and environment. And, I mean, yeah, we can argue the water part of it but it's a moot point with the BLM. That's a whole other venue with the state engineer but the basis for what we can do is in those areas.	This comment was bracketed in error. It summarizes the NEPA process but does not specifically address the Project or the DEIS.
33462-69	And I think the economic questions, there's no way, they can't project. You can't even try to model what the economic impacts to this county or White Pine County a hundred years down the road might be if a project like this goes through. You simply can't do it.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered. Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-2, SocEcon-5, and SocEcon-6 for information on this topic.
33462-70	And I agree with that. And the premise that most of the information and conclusions that you brought out, no argument with, my problem is is it doesn't matter. It's all a moot point because it's a done deal. So, I mean, I understand how all this process works, but Harry Reid already bypassed the process.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33462-71	Yeah, what are you looking at when you got -- At the long-term consequences considered in the overall analysis?	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.

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ID	Comment	Response
33462-72	No one has answered the question as to why an armed guard has to be here. I'd be interested in that. And also there was a pipeline -- there was, I think there was a pipeline built from Coyote Springs that the water district brought water.	Comment noted.
33462-73	The answer to your question, there is a pipeline, a 30-inch pipeline that goes from Coyote Springs basin, water basin, to the Bowman reservoir in Moapa, and that is water rights that were given to the Coyote Springs investment that were in the basin in Coyote Springs. The state engineer granted them the opportunity to pump that water, to do pump testing. You have to pump test your wells to see if your basin can sustain the pumping. They were given the amount of time to pump it. It cost them about \$30 million to build that pipeline down to the Bowman reservoir. They pumped that water specifically to see what the water table in Coyote Springs water basin will do. They released it into the Bowman reservoir, which now goes through Moapa irrigation system and then ends up in Lake Mead. Southern Nevada Water Authority has done this. They get return credits that they can pull out of Lake Mead because that water is going into it so they can pull the water out. That is a period of time pumping. I don't know the exact time. I believe it's a year or maybe two years that they can pump that, and then they receive data from the pumping of that well as to what the water table is. They started pumping last fall, this last fall. Early winter is when they actually started to pump that water. It took them a year or so to get the pipeline built.	Comment noted regarding the Coyote Springs water pipeline.
33462-74	When I've driven up here before, one of Pahrnagat lakes was looked like it was dry or was empty, and when I drove today it looked like it was full. Does this pipeline have anything to do with that?	The groundwater development project has not been constructed. Therefore, and changes observed at Pahrnagat Lake can not be attributed to the proposed project.
33462-75	Yeah, there's more important questions than that one. What about this armed guard?	This comment was bracketed in error and does not pertain to the Project or the DEIS.
33462-76	And the reason I bring the issue up is because we have local law enforcement -- -- that have legal jurisdiction that could arrest somebody. He can't. Sorry, he has no authority. And his exercising authority on someone would create far more controversy in this group than you will just saying, hey, we need to settle down.	This comment was bracketed in error and does not pertain to the Project or the DEIS.
33462-77	He is more likely to insight problems in this setting. Well, he is tonight because there was no room but in Pioche he was sitting right there. And I'm sorry but, like I said, it's more -- that situation is more likely to insight a problem than it is to settle a problem. If you want to settle the problem, I know the county sheriff, I've got his cell phone in my address book, he would have been more than happy to be here or send a deputy. Him and I discussed it and it's a simple thing just to say, hey, we're having a meeting, would you send somebody down. Are you going to be having more of these meetings to keep us informed?	This comment was bracketed in error and does not warrant a response.
Baker Public Mtg Transcript		
32953-1	My concern about this document, looking at it, is that it's the least the BLM had to do. They went through and they did what they had to do, what NEPA required them to do, but I don't think they went beyond what they -- they did not do what this project, what we deserved should have been done.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. BLM followed NEPA, CEQ regulations, DOI NEPA regulations and the BLM NEPA handbook to develop this FEIS which discloses the impacts of this project. Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2 for information on this topic.
32953-2	I think they should have done much more of an analysis of the socioeconomic portion of the EIS. If you haven't had a chance to, if you do read through the socioeconomic portion, to me it is very cursory. They didn't go into depth. They didn't analyze what the applications have done to the economics of White Pine County. Those applications have sat there since 1989 and has put a stranglehold on some economic developed.	Section 3.18 acknowledges the identified concerns on the part of some residents and officials of White Pine and Lincoln counties. It is our understanding that previously approved water rights remained available for economic development. Furthermore, applications for additional water to support local economic development could have been, and can continue to be filed with the NSE, which would then be processed in consideration of local economic development needs. Finally, as noted, water is but one factor necessary to support growth and development. Consequently, there are no assurances that growth and development would have occurred in the proposed groundwater production basins absent SNWA's applications. SocEcon-5 also addresses this concern.
32953-3	I think the EIS should have addressed that, what the effects of the applications have been, what the effects of this pumping is going to be. It did not really go into depth about the agriculture or the business, what the draw of the ground water will do.	Chapter 3 in the DEIS (and FEIS) provides an evaluation of the potential impacts to water resources and water dependent resources.
32953-4	They're projecting out 200 years of what the water drawdown will do, but I think these effects are going to happen much sooner than what they're predicting.	Please refer to standard resource response WR-2 for information on this topic.
32953-5	This document took about five, six years to put together, and by my calculations they spent about six months studying the socioeconomic portion of the study. They did not fully address what the effects will be on White Pine County nor did they study the effects it will have in Clark County.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
32953-6	The EIS model could not achieve a steady state of equilibrium for the aquifer, so the 75 and 200 year timeframes are somewhat arbitrarily assigned.	See response WR-2 regarding the future time frames considered for the programmatic analysis of potential effects to water dependant resources.

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ID	Comment	Response
32953-7	The DEIS has not considered a sustainable yield scenario as one of the alternative actions. All the actions in the DEIS could be considered groundwater mining because they don't allow the aquifer to reach equilibrium in the foreseeable future, and all the actions modeled for the DEIS show permanent and irretrievable impacts.	Thank you for your comment. Please see general comment response Gen-5.
32953-8	The EIS should show an alternative action based on sustainable amount of water withdrawn from the aquifer. The hydrologist at San Diego State University states that an average sustainable yield is about 40 percent capture of recharge. He also said a reasonable conservative estimate would be ten percent in capture recharge, and this is based on way higher figures than that.	The BLM feels that it has presented and analyzed an adequate range of alternatives in the Final EIS.
32953-9	Another concern I have is the only time drought is mentioned is the alternative action C is based on drought on the Colorado River where they would actually pump more from the Great Basin, but if there's a drought on the Colorado River, there's also a drought in Great Basin. And I think the DEIS should have a model based on a drought scenario in the pumping area.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Please refer to standard resource response Air-15, Air-16, and Air-17 for information on this topic.
32953-10	Another one I have, a comment, is about mitigation. J.C. Davis, the spokesman for the water authority, said the feared effects from water levels won't happen because BLM officials don't take into account the planned mitigation efforts or groundwater monitoring, like the quote from the Las Vegas Review-Journal. This is a theme song we've heard from SNWA and they've presented no evidence that the statement is true. In fact, we have topnotch hydrologists, such as John Brederhoeft, that say management and mitigation will be extremely difficult to do. Quoting Brederhoeft he says, Monitor for control has fundamental problems. The maximum impacts are larger than those observed at the time pumping stops and they occur sometime after the pumping stops. So the DEIS discusses required monitoring and refers vaguely to a few mitigation programs that would be initiated in the future, but there's very little solid information about the mitigation and no information about the effectiveness of mitigation in the DEIS. So the DEIS should include a study about the effectiveness of specific mitigation and management procedures.	Effectiveness statements are provided for all mitigation measures including those recommended for groundwater pumping. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
32953-11	Drawdown are not major until they reach ten feet. The model used for the DEIS can't differentiate between drawdown of six inches or six feet. That's unacceptable. Drawdowns of two to three feet in shallow wetland areas makes a significant difference. We need a better model that shows more precise drawdown levels.	See Standard Comment Response WR-1 regarding groundwater modeling and the use of the model simulated 10-foot drawdown contour to define the drawdown area for the regional programmatic analysis.
32953-12	The maps used don't cover all the effected areas. They go to the hydrological boundary and stop, even though the drawdown is right up at that boundary is ten feet to twenty feet. We need a map that really shows all of the areas that will be affected by groundwater pumping, whether it's within the hydrological model or not.	See response WR-6 regarding establishment of the model boundary. The EIS (Section 3.3) evaluates potential effects to resources Pine Valley and Fish Springs located outside the model boundary.
32953-13	You also ask for comments regarding Snake Valley's inclusion in the groundwater project in the Great Basin National Park. Snake Valley is going to be affected whether SNWA actually pumps from it or not. In fact, southern Snake Valley may be more severely impacted if SNWA pumps only from Lincoln County, depending on what the Nevada State Engineer grants them. Leaving out Snake Valley does not mean we'll not experience severe impacts.	Comment noted. The DEIS water resources impact analyses indicate that impacts to water resources in Snake Valley could result from pumping in Spring Valley.
32953-14	The DEIS also leaves me confused about how senior water rights and Great Basin National Park will be protected from the massive amounts of water withdrawn. I would like to see the BLM make some hard and fast decisions that protect rights from this water grab. Nothing in the DEIS gives me hope that this will happen from this draft.	Comments noted. The Nevada State Engineer is responsible for the allocation of water rights and protection of senior water rights. Potential impacts to water resources in GBNP are addressed in Section 3.3 of the EIS.
32953-15	Livelihood depends upon tourism, but I'm at the bottom of the rung, so I'm also interested in mitigation, which I don't feel has been addressed in this DEIS.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
32953-16	First, the EIS does not adequately analyze the impacts of the destruction to this area that it will have on our local based tourist economy and businesses.	Thank you for your comment. Section 3.18.2.1 addresses the effects associated with construction and operation of the main pipeline and facilities; the actions tied to decisions to be made by the BLM on this EIS. Few impacts to agriculture and tourism are expected from those activities. Long-term risks to agriculture and tourism associated with drawdown are noted in 3.18.2.8. Additional text regarding such risks, as well as the long-term uncertainties associated with these risks, have been added in the latter section and further assessments could occur as part of subsequent NEPA (see Gen-1) Furthermore, the long-term risks associated with groundwater drawdown would be subject to further analysis in subsequent, tiered NEPA analysis to be done in conjunction with future facilities.
32953-17	Second, if BLM is truly a steward of public land, it cannot approve the right-of-way for this pipeline because of the documented devastating effects on communities, the natural resources and environment, wildlife and people. And I also believe that if you went back and considered Tim Durban's model that was funded by Southern Nevada Water Authority when this first started and then disregarded at the Spring Valley hearings because it showed the devastation, that maybe that would help your model also.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-8 and MM-1 for information on this topic.

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ID	Comment	Response
32953-18	Concerning the monitoring of springs, I would like some ironclad guarantee that if the spring levels begin to drop, pumping would stop immediately and mitigation would begin immediately. As we all know, the process of getting the pumping stopped by any kind of litigation would mean the death of any plant, animal or human life dependent on that spring. Of course we also know that regeneration of the water table would take longer than it took to go down and the spring might never regenerate.	The monitoring and mitigation for this project is complex and extensive. The BLM is looking at two separate processes for the development of the monitoring and mitigation plans for this project. Currently there are stipulated agreements that have been developed through the Nevada State Water Engineer that BLM is a member. BLM also manages surface and mineral resources for federal lands it administers under FLPMA and therefore BLM has developed a project-wide COM Plan to protect federal resources that may be impacted by construction, operation, maintenance and abandonment of the project related facilities, see changes to section 3.20. This section outlines the process that BLM now and in the future will follow for mitigation for this project. Mitigation related to groundwater development will be included in subsequent NEPA and associated valley-specific COM Plans as described in section 3.20.
32953-19	Think about what would happen if they were pumping and had budget constraints. No matter what SNWA promises, we have no guarantees for our property and our way of life. Can a document that absolutely protect the owners of water rights be crafted? Perhaps by establishing a non-revokable escrow account or non-revokable bond.	SNWA would be required to comply with NRS which protect senior water rights holders. Water rights issues and potential infringements would be addressed by the Nevada State Engineer. Failure of SNWA to comply with the terms and conditions of a ROW would result in BLM taking appropriate action in accordance with Federal law and regulations. If SNWA is unable to perform under the ROW due to budgetary issues, Clark County and SNWA's member agencies are required to underwrite their obligations. Please note the discussion in section 3.20 concerning the mitigation, management, and monitoring process.
32953-20	Number two, how would the loss of the evapotranspiration from the phreatophytes that are peeled by water drawdown effect the climate and precipitation stream at downwind locations such as Salt Lake City? Will the loss of this humidity affect the local climate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data exist to indicate any significant change in climate or weather downwind of the proposed Project area due to groundwater development. It is anticipated that phreatophytic vegetation will be replaced with more xeric species in some areas subject to drawdown (See Standard Resource Response VEG-5 for a full discussion of potential species replacement and associated variability). While this floristic change will likely alter both the amount and timing of evapotranspiration at local spatial scales, it is not anticipated to affect climate or weather at either local or regional levels. Regional climate drivers (synoptic-scale drivers) include air masses, fronts, pressure systems, wind patterns, ocean surface currents, and regional topography. These factors have a far greater effect than local drivers (e.g. flora) on downwind climate. • A potential "loss of humidity" is speculative, as per the discussion above. The proposed project area is located in arid and semi-arid ecosystems. Relative humidity levels in these regions are generally low and can be extremely variable; fluctuating with regional weather conditions, season, length of day, and other factors. The relative contribution of existing phreatophytes in the region of study to relative humidity values is likely greatest at the scale of an individual plant, and declines exponentially with increasing spatial scale. • Wildland fire behavior is affected by weather, fuel characteristics, and topography. Humidity is an important component of fire weather. Low relative humidity can increase the rate at which fine fuels dry or cure, which may potentially increase probability of ignition or rates of fire spread.
32953-21	How will lower humidity affect fire suppression?	Wildland fire behavior is affected by weather, fuel characteristics, and topography. Humidity is an important component of fire weather. Low relative humidity can increase the rate at which fine fuels dry or cure, which may potentially increase probability of ignition or rates of fire spread.
32953-22	What is the result on local temperatures from the loss of the phreatophyte communities that provide more shade than shorter and sparser replacement vegetation?	No changes in local temperatures are anticipated as a result of this project. Over time, phreatophytes will likely be replaced by species that are not dependent on groundwater resources (See Standard Resource Response VEG-5). The amount of shade provided by these plants will vary by species and density. Potential differences in microclimatological response due to changing floristics is likely negligible.
32953-23	What is the impact on species dependent on the greasewood, which is one of the major phreatophytes they're trying to get rid of?	Potential impacts to upland wildlife species are documented in Section 3.6, Terrestrial Wildlife.
32953-24	As regards radionuclides, on page 3.1-35 you cite no studies of what fallout might or might not be in the soil. You make a pretty general statement that there would be no effect. Could you address this question more thoroughly with studies and, etc.?	Section 3.4.1.2 cites an investigation of radionuclides in the study area (Converse Consultants 2007) and describes the outcome of the study.
32953-25	About the Shoshone ponds, this is just something that I noticed that kind of makes me wonder about the rest of the data in the thing. It's stated there would be likely impact, and one of the mitigations proposed is to drill a new well in the aquifer currently used as a source of water for the ponds. Huh? If the source of water has already been drawn down, what good will drilling new water to that same aquifer do?	Thank you for your comment. Please see section 3.20 for additional information on monitoring, management, and mitigation related to this project.
32953-26	I haven't yet found any discussion of the impact on the insect communities dependent on the surface water in Spring Valley. Some might say that's a good thing but other species in the valley depend on them, particularly bats, birds, etc. In other words, the whole web of life in the valley should be concerned.	Section 3.6.2.9, Pumping Effects General Terrestrial Wildlife Discussion of the FEIS, describes the general impacts of groundwater pumping including impacts on prey availability.
32953-27	I strongly request that there be a 90-day extension of this process to give us time to redigest and understand the document more fully.	Please refer to standard resource response Gen-4 for information on this topic.

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ID	Comment	Response
32953-28	I haven't read even the small, reduced document, so I can't say whether or not it addresses the need in Las Vegas for this water. I know that I believe it's true that that factor does need to be taken into account, not just by the state engineer but in the EIS. And so I'm hoping that that's covered, because from everything that I've read and understood recently, that's questionable whether Las Vegas needs this water.	Please note the discussion in Chapter 1 and Appendix A of the FEIS.
32953-29	If Las Vegas would undertake conservation, as most other large southwestern cities have done, they could have a per capita consumption that is predictable and under control. And as far as I know that has not been attempted. And I've heard Pat Mulroy allude to this, the answer was that somehow that didn't apply, that per capita consumption couldn't be applied in Las Vegas. So I'd like to have that thoroughly discussed.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
32953-30	And I think with the world population the way it is and the food situation in the world where thousands of people are starving for lack of food, that this agricultural land should be valued for what future importance might be, which would be something simply to feed human beings, because we're fortunate enough to have some water and a lot of land. And I don't think we should be restricting our comparisons to what's going on now around here because there are a lot of years ahead of the world population, and water is the most precious thing that we have; can't be overvalued.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32953-31	I would like to address a geological point. It points out that subsidence of five or more feet is possible, that subsidence will take place within the aquifer. My question is that there has been no study done on what it's going to do, the ability for that aquifer to recharge and/or be able to move water through it. That also does not address what it's going to do to the park's topography which includes up into the park as far as what it's going to do to the limestone formations, because there's caves, not only with above surface but there's other caves below ground. What's going to happen there to the flowage and is it going to increase, decrease or what is this going to do? Nothing has been done on that at all.	Please refer to updated section 3.3 (water resources) and 3.14 (special designations) for information on this topic.
32953-32	I went through the geologist portion very carefully, many areas in there, my opinion, were glossed over. They were not that, and this has been pointed out by Mrs. Rountree, it's been pointed out by Mrs. Hill and several others, that this was get it over with, get out of here, they'll pass it. Huh-uh. I want it looked at and I want it looked at much more carefully.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Please refer to standard resource response Gen-8 for information on this topic.
32953-33	And I'm here to say that I don't think any action should be taken that's going to take water from my ranch or anyone else's ranch in this valley. And I think that's precisely what a pipeline and taking the water out of here is going to do.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32953-34	To say that there's surplus water is ludicrous. It's ridiculous. So this whole fiasco about the water is essentially about nothing, about something that does not exist. And we perpetuate ourselves in this charade, this game, only simply because the people at SNWA simply don't know how or understand "no." The science has said no. The courts have said no. The Indian people have said no. We, the ranchers and the citizens, have all said no. So why do they continue to perpetuate this thing, this effort? The reason is simple: Somebody is getting paid an awful lot of money to keep the damn thing alive. It's wrong. There's no surplus water. It's immoral. And we should simply stop it because there's no reason for it. You can't do what my wife and I have done for the last 37 years and not feel passionately opposed to this thing. Do whatever you can to stop it. And the simple fact is that there is no surplus water in this valley. None. I can prove it because I know where the springs were. I know they're not there. I know where the water table is. I know what our rapid increase in the use of water agriculturally is concerned. So believe me, folks, it's just not here.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Updated section 3.3 discusses the potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
32953-35	The groundwater project states it is a right-of-way application for a pipeline that is of unknown nonspecific sources of a size up to 96 inches in diameter that could be resized during final design. In chapter two, and if you look at section 2.5.1.2 and table 2.5-2 and in the executive summary, ES page 17 is the page, the first paragraph and the last sentence states, The final size of the pipeline would be determined during facility design.	Thank you for your comment.
32953-36	I would ask that the No Action alternative be selected for this project because we don't even know the source of the water. None of that has been examined.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
32953-37	We do not know what will be done, what happens when you drill these wells. What are the surface affects when we don't even know where they are? We are using a very generalized model. That doesn't tell us specifics.	Please refer to standard resource responses WR-8, WR-10, MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
32953-38	Other people have already addressed the fact that the water rights have been held up, that we've been interfered with since 1989.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
32953-39	One other point I'd like to ask for the No Action alternative on is the fact that the BLM groundwater project DEIS does not adequately address alternatives being used in Las Vegas. There are alternatives they haven't even used yet covering swimming pools. At least 19 golf courses when I was working there in -- I left there in 2008 -- were using primary water to water their golf courses. There are very few cities left who can afford to do that. They can't afford it using our water or any of the rest of the state's water. We also have not looked adequately at alternatives. Desalinization would be one alternative.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning. Please refer to standard resource response Gen-3 for information on this topic.

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32953-40	We also have a declining population in Las Vegas now. That needs to be addressed. Nowhere in this DEIS has it addressed a declining population for Las Vegas. In other industries we are required to address what's happened at present and what we would anticipate in the future, whichever direction it may go, negative or positive, increase or decrease. That has not been addressed.	Thank you for your comment regarding long-term economic and demographic projections and the potential for unforeseen events to result in actual changes that vary from those projections. Standard Resource Response SocEon-2 provides additional response to this comment.
32953-41	When you look at the Lincoln County bill, it was put through by legislation for a pipeline in Lincoln County. That's what it clearly said. It didn't say White Pine County.	Thank you for your comment. This point is discussed in Chapter 1 of the FEIS.
32953-42	Southern Nevada Water Authority and others have not come to agreements on letting it go, nor would the state engineer or anything else. So you have to, in my opinion, look very strongly at the environmental, but livestock, agriculture in White Pine County, but also there will be the effect in Millard County, Utah, Utah State. And with a pipeline of that size I think also in other parts of Nevada, if they have to keep it full and functional.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32953-43	And yet when you talk about in your thing, the little you talk about agriculture, you pull that water level down even five feet, that meadow will be essentially gone and its productive level, those springs will be gone and that will mean the cows can't go to the desert. The springs on the desert may well be gone so you need to put more emphasis on agriculture, wildlife, production and everything else.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-5 and GR-1 for information on this topic.
32953-44	This will be a disaster for us.	Thank you for your comment.
32953-45	I want to point out that the visual impact of this project was addressed in a separate chapter by itself but the concept of a historic landscape was not.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Please review updated section 3.15 (visual resources).
32953-46	The landscape of Spring Valley will be drastically altered if this project goes forward. The story of Spring Valley is the story of the American cowboy. Picture Lee Whitlock in the 1940s chasing wild horses in Spring Valley. It's essentially the same valley today. And if this project comes along with its power lines and its buildings and its new roads, that's going to disappear.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32953-47	Also the document indicates that they don't know how many historic sites are out there. I mean, there will be inventories and there will be as many studies as you can do but there are sites that nobody knows about and probably will be turned up when they start digging. The document indicates that unknown archeological sites will be located; and if sites are found, they will excavate and preserve the relics but they'll take them someplace else. My argument is they belong here. And it says they will mitigate it. How do you mitigate something once it's gone, whether it's a relic or historic landscape?	A Programmatic Agreement has been prepared that describes how historic and cultural resources would be protected.
32953-48	In a couple of places the document refers to the possibility of a pipeline rupture and flooding, which could damage or destroy cultural sites. My question is how likely is that event? It's not one I've thought about. And is there a way to prevent such an occurrence?	Please see the public health and safety section for a description of potential effects of rupture and flooding. The likelihood of such a rupture event is low. The use of flow monitoring systems, and block valves to limit the volume of water released would limit the scale of the event, but would not prevent the event.
32953-49	The document does address Native American sites and religious sites, which is really important. And I know the white man has only been here a couple hundred years but I would argue that I've had religious and spiritual experiences in Spring Valley and on the Snake range and on the Schell range that other people haven't had a chance to have and might not when it's disturbed and it's a different landscape entirely.	Thank you for your comment.
32953-50	I'm a historian by training and I read the bibliography on that chapter. There's one reference to the history of Lincoln County. There's none to White Pine County, Millard County, Utah or Nevada. I would recommend that you read or look at realignment history of Millard County because it's strong on economics and the agriculture of the county. And then Elliot and maybe for McGill is a strong Nevada historian that has talked about White Pine County.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
32953-51	I worry about negative impacts on the park, the visuals, the caves and how that will affect the tourist traffic and ultimately the traffic on the road.	Please refer to updated section 3.16 (visual resources) and 3.14 (special designations) which discuss potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
32953-52	The socioeconomic section of this is pretty light. It needs a lot of work. One thing it mentions is the stress that has been caused in the communities, political differences. People who have sold ranches were afraid of what their neighbors were going to say, things like that.	Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-5 and SocEcon-6 for information on this topic.
32953-53	I noticed that the cost of the project is not addressed, and I'm told it isn't necessary to address it but I find it strange that at least a couple of projects' potential alternatives were rejected because they were going to be too expensive. Seems to me if they're saying that's going to be too expensive, you need something to compare it against.	Thank you for your comment. Please see general comment response SocEcon-1.
32953-54	And I agree with some of the speakers that we need an additional 60-day extension to the comment period.	Thank you for your comment. Please see general comment response Gen-4.

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32953-55	I don't know if this is covered or could be covered in the DEIS or in a future tier but I hope it's addressed if the project is approved that when it's built it's phased in as the need in Las Vegas becomes necessary; that if the project is built but there's only a modest increase in need in Las Vegas, that means of water then isn't going to be necessary and we're going to be winding up buying our own water back in bottles, if it comes from Las Vegas if that's the case.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, groundwater drawdown, and mitigation are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
32953-56	I think too that we need a broader independent legal review of the language in the Lincoln County Land Act. The EIS assumes that a right-of-way is required because of that act, but I don't know how far they looked for legal advise on that but I think they need to look a little further. In fact, even the EIS is a little bit ambivalent. Some places it says we must grant a right-of-way, other places it says we may accept or we may reject the right-of-way. So seems to me they need to make sure that it is absolutely necessary.	Based on this comment, the text of the FEIS has been revised for clarity.
32953-57	I also think the study area is too small, that they should expand it further into Utah.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
32953-58	And the quote that Kathy brought up about SNWA's spokesman J.C. Davis, he said the feared affects on water levels won't happen because BLM officials don't take into account planned mitigation efforts of groundwater monitoring. I find this kind of strange. Did SNWA withhold information when they ran their models or are they just trying to blow smoke or what? Seems like that should be addressed. And I think that chapter four that Denys mentioned, irreversible effects, that section alone should be reason enough to go for the No Action alternative.	Please refer to standard resource responses WR-10 and MM-1 for information on this topic.
32953-59	I am in the emissions program so I know what the problem is. It is not pollution coming from cars, all our bad air days in Las Vegas is dust. Dust. My question is here, when the people steal all the water around me here in Baker and generate at Death Valley around me, what's my quality of air here in Baker? It is not good. That's what I would like to take up, it is not good.	Please see common response Air-8.
32953-60	Eskdale is on the edge of the impact area for the proposed action. It actually cuts through about the middle of Eskdale's farming area. And so that causes me to wonder if that's the ten-foot impact line.	See general response WR-1 regarding the use of the model simulated 10-foot drawdown contour to define the drawdown area for the programmatic analysis.
32953-61	Then, number one, like Kathy said, what's ten to zero look like, what's that impact area? And also how accurate is that? You know, if that shifts a half a mile, it takes the entire Eskdale area into account at ten feet and can spread even farther.	See Standard Comment Response WR-1 regarding groundwater modeling and the use of the model simulated 10-foot drawdown contour to define the drawdown area for the regional programmatic analysis.
32953-62	One of the things that concerned me in section three where it's talking about the inter-basin flows between Spring, Hamlin and Snake Valley, there are a number of studies that are referenced in there. There's Rush and there's I think it's Kazmi, there's the BARCAS study, and then SNWA in 2009 created their own estimates, which I have to presume were included in the modeling. And I have no way to be assured of how those values were chosen, what was used, what priority was given to them. I find it interesting that the recharge numbers between BARCAS and SNWA's study are very close to each other at about 160,000 acre feet per year, but the recharge from Spring Valley through Hamlin into Snake Valley in the BARCAS study is estimated at roughly 33,000 acre feet and the SNWA study it's about 5700 acre feet per year. There's a considerable range of difference in the way that the inter-basin flows and the ET rates that are used. I think at a minimum the EIS needs to state more clearly how the values were chosen that were used in the modeling.	Reported estimates of inter-basin flow within the model domain are presented in Appendix H of the CCRP conceptual model report (SNWA, 2009a), but were not used in the model calibration as observations or calibration targets.
32953-63	Secondly, in looking at all of the alternatives, the impact in the Big Spring areas is significant. And the Big Spring area is the headwaters of the flow into Snake Valley. Dean talked about the impact on the wet meadows, but it extends far beyond that. That wet meadows area also feeds Pruess Lake, the creek that goes into Garrison, and there are also impacts in the Roland Spring area, a lot of the other areas in the foothills and the recharge areas. So I have a real concern that all of the alternatives show some impact in that area, and that's a critical area to all of Snake Valley.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered. Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping. Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-8 and MM-1 for information on this topic.
32953-64	One of the other things that bothers me, it's been mentioned here too, is we talked about this impact of drawdown on the phreatophytes, what that does to the soils. Those of us who live here, like Denys said, the wind blows a little, and you get to see what happens in dusty areas. Now if the greasewood and the other phreatophytes in this area, but it's primarily greasewood, if they're reduced in volume, their ability to keep the wind from scouring the soils in this area is also going to be reduced and you're not going to see the kind of surface vegetation that ties down the soils, the surface soils. So I think air quality is a significant issue. It doesn't even have to get as far as Salt Lake to be an issue, it's going to be an issue right here. And we've seen this in the drought years in '97 through 2000 where we didn't have enough surface rainfall to generate weeds to help tie it down. We had tremendous amounts of blowing soil.	Please see common response Air-4.
32953-65	Also as I was looking through it I noticed there is no soils information mentioned for Millard or Juab County. The analysis in Utah, like Ken said, is woefully inadequate for what's being done, but the initial emphasis that SNWA made on only Nevada still shows up in this EIS. And so those holes have got to be filled in for this to be called complete in any way.	The analysis of impacts in the Utah counties was performed to evaluate the potential impacts to hydric soils from projected groundwater drawdown. This analysis considered only the hydric soils within the moderate to high risk zones defined in the Water Resources section (Section 3.3). There are a few acres in the moderate risk zone identified in Juab County and a slightly larger amount in the moderate or high risk zones in Millard County. However, because no hydric soils are identified in the SSURGO data within these risk zones, there would be no effect on hydric soils due to drawdown using the methodology for analysis applied in the EIS. The Utah counties were evaluated but it was determined that no impacts to hydric soils were projected.

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32953-66	The last thing that I'd like to mention is when you look at the trend lines that are over there on the pumping in the various valleys, and you look at the decreases from pumping that goes through the 75-year to the 200-year curve, you'll notice that they all go down. There is a curve and if you fit that curve, it's going to go down a long, long ways, probably to the bottom of the well intakes. But one of the things that's missing in this analysis, in addition to the lack of precision that was mentioned before, is there is no forecast of what happens when the pumping stops. Originally when this project was proposed, SNWA said its useful life would be 75 years, and that's reflected in the first set of maps that talks about drawdowns and impacts. But what happens if, indeed, that's true and pumping stops at 75 years? There should be a forecast, a modeling forecast, of what happens at the stoppage of pumping at 75 and a hundred and a hundred and a quarter, whatever we assume this project might use, because if technology comes in that's more cost effective than refurbishing this pipeline, that pipeline will cease operating. We need to have some idea of how long, if ever, the impacts of that pumping will be seen and recovery.	The discussion of potential residual impacts provided under the proposed action discusses a hypothetical case of ceasing pumping after a period of time and simulating the recovery of water levels. This hypothetical test case was provided in Appendix F3.3.5 and indicates that recovery after an extended period of pumping could take years or decades after the pumping ceases. The water resources impact evaluation for each of the project pumping alternatives refers back to the discussions provided under the Proposed Action regarding unavoidable residual impacts. The results of this hypothetical recovery simulation are relevant to all of the GWD pumping alternatives in general terms to disclose that recovery would take an extended period of time if pumping ceases. However, the Proposed Action and the other alternative pumping scenarios do not include cessation of pumping. Therefore, there is no basis for simulating an arbitrary cessation of pumping and allowing the system to recover for each of the seven GWD pumping scenarios as suggested in the comment.
32953-67	And as we stated before also, we know that springs, once they stop flowing, are very difficult to regenerate. So there needs to be a lot more attention paid to the recovery from stopping pumping and that needs to go into the monitoring and mitigation plan.	Thank you for your comment. Please see section 3.20 for additional information on monitoring, management, and mitigation related to this project.
32953-68	I don't see how you can expect us to have read it and thought about it in the time that you've allotted, and I would request an extension of at least the 90 days.	Please see general comment response Gen-4.
32953-69	The summary is the main thing I've read and it talks about how many miles of perennial springs are in the affected areas and how many springs that would be dried up, but I don't know how you can approve any kind of project without knowing what drying those springs up will cause, what kind of things it will affect as in plants, animals, people. It doesn't make sense to me to approve it without knowing some kind of an answer to those questions.	The drawdown effects to springs, streams, and phreatophytic vegetation have been analyzed in this EIS and the impacts associated with the proposed development have been presented therein. The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
32953-70	As I look at the maps, and people have mentioned it here, that the ten feet of drawdown is the smallest that you show. A lot of springs, wet meadows, are affected by less drawdown than that, and also it just shows it within the boundary of your study and we don't know if your ten-foot goes right up to that or even 20.	See response WR-1 regarding the use of the 10-foot drawdown contour for the programmatic impact analysis.
32953-71	And how do we know how far away that goes beyond the boundaries of your study? And you have numbers for the number of springs and miles of streams, but that doesn't -- how many more are out there that you're not counting for? And I don't see how you can approve it without doing a more thorough study of the boundaries of the affects.	See response WR-6 regarding establishment of the model boundary. The EIS (Section 3.3) evaluates potential effects to resources Pine Valley and Fish Springs located outside the model boundary.
32953-72	And then you can talk about the unknowns and things that you have no idea how the effects are going to occur or what will occur, and I don't see how you can approve any alternative besides the No Action alternative with that many unknowns.	Thank you for your comment
32953-73	And in it they talk about mitigation. I spent a lot of time every day moving water in the valley and looking at the effects, and in this country any time you draw up, take water away from one spot and put it in another, you just dried up the spot you took away from, and the only way to change that is to put the water back where you dried it up and then you dried up the place where you took the water from. And using underground water you can change that a little bit, but given enough years you're not going to mitigate anything if you've taken the water away from this country.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
32953-74	And in the case of this specific park, it is not only that we are to preserve unimpaired the resources within the lands of the park, we are also to preserve unimpaired the vistas around the park that represent the basin portion of the Great Basin of the United States. The language doesn't say that we would preserve sort of unimpaired or mostly unimpaired or kind of unimpaired, it's very specific and very clear. And there's a lot of case law about what it means.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. Updated section 3.14 (special designations) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
32953-75	One little aspect I want to bring up, I don't know if -- I haven't seen it in the executive summary, I don't know if it's in the full document, but when you speak about dust and quality of air, one of the resources that is becoming known throughout the world, and specifically here at Great Basin National Park, is dark skies. So the impact of this project on dark skies ought to be analyzed.	Section 3.15 includes information from the Plan of Development, which indicates that nighttime lighting during project operations will be activated only if needed for safety and security, either manually or motion activation; and thus would have minimal effects to dark skies of the GBNP and surrounding region. In addition, lighting will be shielded and directed downward, thereby eliminating or greatly reducing the visibility of lights when activated. Section 3.15.2.2 is revised to indicate that the proposed lighting is consistent with the International Dark Sky Association guidelines for lighting to minimize sky glow in night skysskies.
32953-76	The coalition's position was against the project in Spring and Snake Valleys. And as you know, the BLM and the National Park Service both entered into a stipulated agreement to withdraw their protest. I understand this is not the venue but it covers the project in Spring Valley. It was very troubling to the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees that the National Park Service took that position and that BLM took that position, along with the sister agencies. The stipulated agreement withdrew the protest in Spring Valley before there was a complete EIS. We don't have a complete EIS yet. And for the agency, BLM, that is responsible for completing, for preparing, completing and deciding the EIS, to take a position in a stipulated agreement to withdraw their protest in Spring Valley seemed very troubling. Some people would call it a conflict of interest.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-8, MM-1, MM-2 and MM-3 for information on this topic.

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32953-77	I understand that the models that are in the full EIS which I have not reviewed do identify, and Jerald Anderson mentioned this, that the inter-basin flow between Spring Valley and Snake Valley exists. Many people reviewing the EIS may not read the full document. Some of us may not. And I think that particular fact needs to be in the executive summary because it will inform what one's position is with respect to the alternative that includes Spring Valley versus the alternative that excludes Spring Valley, if you see what I mean. If it isn't clear in the executive summary that water flows between Spring Valley into Snake Valley, then how can people make an informed decision? I recognize that it is in the document but I think it should be reflected and emphasized in the executive summary.	The Executive Summary was provided to supply general project information. Due to the size and complexity of the project, adding the level of detail you request to the summary document would be inconsistent with the BLM's intent for the document. The information is described and mapped in section 3.3, Water Resources.
<u>Delta Public Mtg Transcript</u>		
33017-1	To start out I would just like to say that it's Millard County's position that we support, we would support the BLM in either alternative D or E with preference to alternative E, which would be two alternatives which would not, I guess you would drop the Snake Valley portion. We feel like that even pumping in Spring Valley, let's see, just to make sure that I have this right, alternative D would be that they would still pump in Spring Valley, alternative E would mean that they would not pump in Spring Valley or in Snake Valley or I have that backwards, don't I? Can you verify that for me so I get it right? The reason why I would also support D I guess, or E over D is we feel there's something in Spring valley that will have a negative effect on Snake Valley in the future also. There is a relationship between those valleys and in the long run there will be a negative effect.	Thank you for your comment.
33017-2	The reason why I would also support D I guess, or E over D is we feel there's something in Spring valley that will have a negative effect on Snake Valley in the future also. There is a relationship between those valleys and in the long run there will be a negative effect. The reason that we support those alternatives, a couple of points I'd just like to bring out is you've all heard that before any water can be transferred out of that basin, there would have to be an agreement between the two states, Utah and Nevada, and presently there is no agreement at this point. And so right now it is basically illegal to divert water out of that basin until there would be an agreement, so I feel like this EIS is premature in making a decision that would affect that valley because legally it can't happen yet.	This issue has been discussed in Chapter 1 of the FEIS. Your comment has been considered in the selection of the agency preferred alternative.
33017-3	Number two, if there was an agreement, this draft does not address the relationship between the basins. In the Lincoln County Land Act it actually states that the inter-basin water flow or the flow systems between the basins need to be studied, and they have not and they're not addressed in this EIS. Millard County has been funding, helping to fund a study that the USGS is doing to look more closely at the relationship between the basins. That will be out later this year. Their initial map that is out that's in peer review shows that there's less of a friendship between those valleys, so there would be more impact by pumping than if the flow systems are not as much as BARCAS showed. I think that's important information.	Lincoln County Land Act does not have a provision for a study, however, Lincoln County Conservation Recreation and Development Act (LCCRDA) did require the USGS study known as BARCASS, which was completed in 2007. This EIS relies on the information generated by the BARCAS Study and is referenced in section 3.3. The LCCRDA uses the term "groundwater basins" when describing the study.
33017-4	I also think that the development of the Snake Valley portion is too far out in the future really for this EIS, this draft really to address the impacts. In your newsletter, on the back page it actually shows the NEPA process in Spring and Snake Valley really not happening until 2040, 2035. That's a long time, a long time out there. So we feel like the NEPA would have to be done all over again. There a lot of factors that could change between now and then. And, you know, if the agreement between the states, you know, was signed and was out there, if they had an agreement that states that Nevada, Southern Nevada Water, the Nevada State Engineer will not even advertise those applications until 2019, that's another ten years. And when that happens, they're probably going to have to do NEPA over again then because that will all change.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33017-5	You know, I made comments before. I've been involved in this project for a couple of years, looking at Millard County as a cooperating agency involved in the development of the EIS, been able to read the material, and I know there's been a lot of work done by a lot of great folks trying to do a really good job but the fact is that there is no extra water out in that valley. It's in balance now. We can talk and model and do whatever, you know, we do to come up with the best science, but the fact of the matter is in our opinion there is no extra water out there to be taken out of that valley. Thank you very much.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33017-6	The alternative I like is No Action.	Thank you for your comment.
33017-7	I know that the water is appropriated by the state engineer's office but this pipeline will carry water out of the Great Basin.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33017-8	And we have evidence that the Spring Valley, the Snake Valley, the aquifers are connected. We don't have evidence that all the aquifers in the Great Basin are interconnected. We don't know that. And I tend to believe that they are. There's some evidence that they are, there's no evidence that they are not.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.

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33017-9	And so I believe that this pumping and pipeline project would have a huge impact on the rangelands in the Great Basin, which at this point I'm just emotionally involved with. I just love them and I'd like to see them stay intact.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-5, GR-1 and MM-1 for information on this topic.
33017-10	I hate to see a sagebrush or whatever, flat, turned into a bunch of blowing sand. I hate to see a wild meadow dried up, a spring dried up. Those things from purely an esthetic point of view would be very disturbing to me personally.	Please refer to standard resource responses Air-6 and Air-9 for information on this topic.
33017-11	And also I'm the president of a small mineral company. We have some geothermal prospects on Millard, Beaver County line. They're in the Great Basin. I think this project would affect anything in the Great Basin for the reasons I've previously outlined. And I understand that geothermal is a mineral right, and the Supreme Court of the United States says that it's minerals and not water, but I doubt very much that we'd have steam without water. And I believe that this would impact those mineral rights and also possibly other mineral rights that we own in that.	Text has been added to adress this comment. Please refer to updated section 3.11 (mineral resources).
33017-12	You know, the impact from blowing dust might be a little hard to -- might make it a little hard to work these things and also we might need water to process some of those minerals.	Please see common response Air-4.
33017-13	I believe that there's an alternative for Southern Nevada Water Authority, if they wanted it, it's not one that the BLM could outline for them. The No Action alternative is the one I favor, but if they wanted water, they can pipe it out of the Pacific Ocean. There's plenty of water there. Great Basin is one of the driest areas on earth. I don't believe a project pumping water out of one of the driest areas on earth is sustainable and that's all I have to say.	Thank you for your comment.
33017-14	I have a feeling you got the horse behind the cart until the state engineers of Nevada and Utah declare that Las Vegas has some water to transfer. And it's a matter of law, I can't hardly see how you can come up with a decision to do it. To me, I've been an old rancher all my life, and if I take a neighbor's calf and transport him across state line, it becomes a federal offense without the neighbor's permission. And I think the same would be applicable with water.	Please refer to section 1.4 which discusses the current NSE rulings related to this project.
33017-15	We know what happens when water is taken out of an area, it just turns into basically a dust bowl. And I don't believe I have any more to say, but study your case, gentlemen.	Please see common response Air-10.
33017-16	I'd just like to ask is there anybody here that's in favor of this Southern Nevada Water project, raise your hand. So what are we doing here? Nobody is in favor of it. What are we getting out of these comments we make? We can complain and bellyache all we want, all we're doing is letting off steam so then we all feel a little better, we think we've done our thing. I heard a story the other day about a guy who went to the doctor. He says, I went, thought I'd have the doctor check me over because I didn't feel just right, aches and pains that were annoying and they wouldn't let me sleep at night, and the doctor checked me over and he couldn't find anything wrong. But he wouldn't let it rest. He says, With Medicare and let's go call Blue Cross just so we have some tests. So that's kind of what we're doing, we're just having some tests. So he says he sent me over to the hospital, although I didn't feel that bad, he ordered every test that could be had. I was fluoroscoped, cystoscoped, my aging frame displayed, and laid upon an isoscope table while my gizzard was x-rayed. He checked me for worms and parasites and fungus. He stabbed me with big, long needles taking samples of my blood. The doctors came and poked and probed and pushed around. Then to make sure I was still alive, they wired me up for sound. When we got the results, took a whole darn page. The thing I have would sometime kill me. The diagnosis is old age. So, I mean, it just seems to me that that's kind of what we're doing, we're just letting the doctor check us over, make us feel good and it's all for nothing. Still going to die of old age. So for what it's worth, that's how I feel about it. I'm just here to represent Millard County Water Conservancy District because I happen to have the unfortunate job now to be chairman, and if anybody would like to have a place on that committee, we'd like to know about it.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33017-17	I want to thank BLM for extending the comment deadline by an additional 30 days, but I do want to reiterate our request for an additional 90 days beyond the comment deadline of September 9th, and there's a reason for that, and that is that there will be significant new information come out of the state engineer's hearing in Nevada on the four valleys that are in question with water rights applications that will begin the 26th of September and run through around the 18th of November. We think that the BLM ought to at least push the deadline for comments back to be able to incorporate that new information into the draft environmental impact statement.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33017-18	It's interesting that if you have the DEIS, unknowns, there's a significant number of what you actually refer to as inadequate or unknown information, including rather important things like the hydrology of the region isn't well characterized, particularly the Snake Valley interconnection is not well characterized. It's odd that you've got now the USGS coming out with a study, the draft of which will be presented publicly next week, two weeks from now, the 18th of August, and you can't wait to have that peer reviewed and published and then incorporated into your study. Commissioner Smith mentioned ongoing work in the state of Utah that characterizes Snake Valley. That's not going to be done in time for inclusion into the draft EIS. There is data on soil, visual resources that are unknown. You don't know where the water comes from that goes into the caves in Snake Valley. There are critters in those caves that are being characterized and they're a unique species. I don't know if you're aware of that.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Comment Responses WR-1 and Gen-2.

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33017-19	What was mentioned earlier about inter-basin flows by one of the speakers, you may not be aware that your sister agency, the BLM office in the state of Utah, the Fillmore office, has just completed an environmental assessment on the severe Dry Lake proposal for mineral extraction, and in that they stated that there may be inter-basin flow that will affect the severe Dry Lake basin. That's a particular interest now that there's actually a little bit of water in that lake. But you might want to take a look at that.	This EA was reviewed by BLM staff and information was incorporated as appropriate.
33017-20	You should have been informed by the decision that was done in the Cave Valley by the state engineer and the subsequent reversal of that decision by the Nevada courts in which it was determined that the recharge, the duration of time before the Cave Valley to reach equilibrium after pumping, was into the thousands of years. We're talking about possibly 2,000 to 2500 years estimate by hydrologic studies and modeling, yet you've decided that the impacts are only going to be measured out to 200 years. So I think you ought to go back and take a hard look at that.	See response WR-2 regarding the future time frames considered for the programmatic analysis of potential effects to water dependant resources.
33017-21	We believe that this project, with its distributed pumping, is a moving target which you cannot identify specific impacts because of the fact that you don't know where the wells are going to be, and five of the alternatives are dealing with where are the wells, so how can you move forward in this tiered fashion making a critical decision at this point with a lack of information about what the impacts are going to be.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33017-22	They're your three M's: Monitor, mitigation and management of stipulated agreement style is simply inadequate to deal with these irreversible, irretrievable and unacceptable impacts.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1, MM-2 and MM-3 for information on this topic.
33017-23	Lastly I just want to say that in deference to the gentleman who mentioned going to the Pacific Ocean, you wrongly narrowed the scope of your study to simply whether or not we grant this right-of-way this far north or that far south. You didn't take a hard look at whether or not, in fact, there's an economic ability for Las Vegas to pay for this pipeline, whether they can justify the need for the pipeline at this time, and you did not take a hard look at any of the potential alternatives, and there are a number of those. And I would hope that you would reassess that analysis and decision when you do a supplemental EIS, unless you have the wisdom to do what you should do, which is protect the public trust under your management and find with the No Action alternative and deny the right-of-way.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and the lack of BLM authority or need for the BLM to independently analyze project costs, or the potential long-term implications on ratepayers, in conjunction with the ROW application. With respect to the alternatives water sources listed, see Gen-3. The BLM is processing an application by SNWA for a right-of-way. Processing that application does not provide a sufficient nexus or need for the BLM to examine alternatives potential sources of water to SNWA's proposed groundwater development. See also Section 2.14.3 of the Executive Summary and Section 2.7 of the FEIS for additional discussion of this topic.
33017-24	Grateful for the progress that the Nevada BLM has made in the development of this EIS, in that they started out with either proposed action or variations of the proposed action but no real flexibility in terms of which groundwater basin they went into. From that beginning point they heard our concerns about coming into Snake Valley and they fashioned alternative D and E, which in each in their own ways stay out of Snake Valley. That is very much appreciated and it shows that the cooperating agency process has validity, and hopefully they'll continue to hear that.	Thank you for your comment. Alternative F would also preclude development in Snake Valley.
33017-25	But just touching briefly on some of the points that Commissioner Smith made, as I speak for Millard County, Juab and two other counties on the Utah side, as well as all counties in the state of Utah who are united on this issue, the Lincoln County Land Act of 2004 really means what it says. It says there shall be no transfer of groundwater out of a basin that's shared by two states. And the only basin that comes to mind out of all six basins that are being studied, five basins, is Snake Valley. No groundwater shall be taken from that basin unless there's an agreement. What kind of an agreement? An agreement between the two states to share the basin, Utah and Nevada. What's the scope of the agreement? The Lincoln County Act is crystal clear. The agreement must be an agreement to allocate the groundwater not just of that basin but of the entire flow system of which that basin is a part. What is the flow system of which Snake Valley is a part? That's the Great Salt Lake Valley flow system, includes several valleys, several basins on both sides of the state line. The whole system terminates of course at the Great Salt Lake, so even if the tentative agreement that's been hammered out on paper and then stepped away from by Governor Herbert in January 2010 when Nevada courts started saying there were problems and Utah stepped away, even if somehow that draft were resurrected and signed in the foreseeable future, which there seems to be no indication of that, it will still be flawed. It will still not be a sufficient basis for BLM to proceed into Snake Valley. Why? Because the four corners of that document make it abundantly clear that the only thing that document tries to do is to divide up groundwater resources of Snake Valley. It doesn't even attempt to divide the groundwater of the entire flow system, a several valley flow system. It doesn't even attempt to do that by its own terms. It's only a division of the groundwater in the Snake Valley. So, number one, there's no Snake Valley agreement. That means there's no basis really to do anything other than choose alternative D or E. But even if by some stretch of the imagination it were signed in the foreseeable future, it's inherently improperly scoped, so there's no way to satisfy the Lincoln County Land Act. That's black letter statutory law.	This issue has been discussed in Chapter 1 of the FEIS and has been considered in the development and selection of the agency preferred alternative, Section 2.8.
33017-26	So BLM really, under NEPA, it's black letter NEPA law that a federal agency shall not adopt an alternative which is neither feasible or legal. And it just ain't legal to come into Snake Valley without any supporting agreement. So I hope that the decision makers, you know, at the state level, the Utah state BLM, Nevada BLM, all the way up to Director Abbey, Secretary Salazar, everybody who's going to make a decision takes a hard look at that real flaw.	Thank you for your comment.

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33017-27	And that's just not some technical piece of language that was seized upon and made somebody an offender for a word. There's a reason that agreement, that stipulation was put in there, sir. That's because all these valleys are interconnected. Any hydrologist worth his salt will tell you that what you do in one valley has a ripple effect in all the other valleys. It's like, you know, if you touch one part of the hole and the rest of the hole begins to shake. That's why it's important that you take an interconnected look at the groundwater as you divide it up so it's not just some hyper-technical agreement that Millard County is seizing on and saying, gotcha; it really means something. It really is important to have groundwater division of the entire flow system. And even if you get past those two grand hurdles, which is no agreement and no chance of an agreement that could possibly satisfy the statute, you've got this problem. It's going to be years and decades before they even begin to take water out of Snake Valley, assuming the state engineer even grants it, which makes a current EIS in 2011 or 2012 really insufficient in Snake Valley.	Discussion of the Interstate Agreement required under LCCRDA is included in Chapter 1 and in section 3.3. This comment has been taken into consideration in the revision of section 2.8, Agency Preferred Alternative.
33017-28	So I would say in closing, it's a good thing, it's a wise thing the direction the BLM is taking this slowly, building their alternatives matrix, a no Snake Valley alternative in some form or fashion, either D or E, that's a good thing. And you're now poised to do the right thing legally under NEPA and set up your matrix properly and just quietly stay out of Snake Valley.	Thank you for your comment. Alternative F would also preclude development in Snake Valley.
33017-29	Because, look, here are the realities: Two months from now the Nevada engineer is going to consider the groundwater applications for which valleys? All but Snake. Glaringly absent from that proceeding is Snake Valley. Because why? A couple of reasons. There is not the finances, there is not the will, there is not the need for the proponent to go to Snake Valley right now. The whole thing is absent from the hearings and there's no sense of when that's going to happen.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Please refer to section 1.4 which discusses the current NSE rulings related to this project.
33017-30	So it all fits together like a puzzle. I think it's the convenience, it's the right thing to do to simply choose the alternative. If Nevada wants to take water out of their valleys, that's their businesses. But here in Snake Valley, three-fourths of that valley is on the Utah side. I appreciate your time.	Thank you for your comment.
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33210-1	The agriculture in this country is shrinking so badly that, you know, we cannot feed ourselves. We're going to be totally dependent on foreign countries for food. And, I mean, it's just a bad idea to take from agriculture to feed to a city, and a city that's already shrinking, they don't need the water.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33210-2	The bottom line is this EIS pertains strictly to the drawdown contours. And again whether we're talking 75 years, whether we're talking 200 years, those contours, and again depending on the water basin, are excessive. It not only is causing declines in the groundwater gradients and those contour lines, we're also seeing I believe the EIS shows over a hundred miles of surface water flows and streams that will drop; a number, over 300, surface water springs that will eventually disappear with this dewatering.	Please refer to standard resource responses WR-2 and WR-10 for information on this topic.
33210-3	And I know we've had a lot of comparisons with this project compared to the Owens Valley project, but there is a big difference. The Owens Valley was surface water and it was replenished every year with surface flows. And we do know what happened there and what Southern California now has had to come back with to alleviate those dust problems and vegetation problems that were completely destroyed there.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33210-4	But what we're talking about in the White Pine, Clark, Lincoln plan is 175,000 acre feet of groundwater that will be exported, totally consumed because that will leave that basin and be moved three to 400 miles south. There is no chance for recharge, and it just becomes a matter of time when we start seeing the declines that will impact phreatophytes and the vegetation in that basin.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Section 3.20 for BLM-recommended mitigation measures and Standard Resource Response MM-1 for a discussion of monitoring, management, and mitigation.
33210-5	Water basins all across Nevada are presently -- I'm going to turn just a little bit because I don't like talking with my back to the room. I guess that's the politician in me. But water basins all across the state are struggling with declines. Declining water tables. You know a water basin is in balance before you drill the first hole. It's completely in balance when you drill the first well. So when we start talking about hundreds of wells and withdrawing thousands of acre feet of groundwater, you don't have to be -- it's not rocket science what will happen to that groundwater basin. It will be destroyed.	Thank you for your comment.
33210-6	I don't see how any agency, and I'm not throwing a rock at you guys, that is charged with maintaining public land and the multiple use concept for public lands that's to be held for all of us, all uses and for future generations, how you could look at this draft EIS and say it was acceptable.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered. Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1, Gen-2 and MM-1 for information on this topic.

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33210-7	I think we're all somewhat sympathetic with Southern Nevada Water Authority and their needs, there's no doubt. It's the fastest growing city in the nation. And they outgrew their water supply. They were charged by the Colorado River Commission to look in state for alternate sources before they could go to the Colorado River and either upper basin states or the lower basin states and look at either acquiring maybe water in the upper states or acquiring water in the lower states and maybe supplementing it with desalinization, which we clearly all of us understand the bottom line is the Pacific Ocean is just as close to Las Vegas as Ely, Nevada. So you can get there in a hurry. And we're talking about pumping water, piping water, maybe we better go where there's really a source. And the last time I checked there was a little more in the Pacific Ocean than there was in Cumins Lake.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33210-8	Clearly in-state importation of water is not the answer. It won't work for us. Why should we expend billions of dollars on a short-term fix that clearly won't meet Southern Nevada Water Authority's long-term needs? Even at 175,000 acre feet it won't meet any part of their needs if they continue to grow, but it will devastate central Nevada for the next 500 years. This project is not economically sound nor is it environmentally sound. It's not viable. I believe it's time for Southern Nevada Water Authority, the State of Nevada and the federal agencies to really face the facts. This isn't the solution. It isn't the answer. We have to come up with a plan that will meet Southern Nevada Water Authority's long-term needs, and that is not exporting groundwater out of the five basins in central Nevada.	Thank you for your comment
33210-9	First of all, what I'd like to say is that I take a look at this and I see at the full build-out there's a problem with drawdown. And the drawdown areas are anywhere from, you know, five feet to 50 feet to 70 feet. And it doesn't seem like I find within the document the drawdown representing what actually is going to happen on the surface. There's going to be some rain but with that drawdown what's going to happen is we're going to end up creating a real desert in those areas.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33210-10	You can look at the very dark areas, as it was explained to me by some of these folks, and we're going to see some of these really nice -- you may or may not like ranchers -- but some of these really nice ranches that they've purchased so that they could get the water there, and you're going to see them become a desert that's even not a high desert with all kinds of plants, but you're going to see a desert that is like something from another part of the world or something.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33210-11	Also the point I'd like to make is the problem I have with this whole process, and I understand the scope of it is you're looking at a right-of-way and what the impact is going to be to put the pipeline through and not necessarily the impacts of placing wells and sending water south, you're looking at the other impacts mostly, but I say the real problem is just as the state water engineer operates there's this attitude of we're going to start to draw it down and then we'll come back and see what happened and then we'll expect those folks to mitigate what's happening. Well, I'll tell you what, if you draw it down to where you have a desert, and the desert in this way over a long period of time, you're going to have irreversible consequences to the habitat, to the wildlife, to agriculture, to everything. In fact, some of those things you can't fix. And no one seems to be aware of this.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33210-12	And we see it in a microcosm within our state and the operation of our state water engineer, but in this project I see they're going to be drawing down huge areas over a period of time and then they're going to come back and expect it to look ten years from now or five years from now, and for some of those places it's just going to be too late,	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping. Please refer to standard resource response WR-10 for additional information on this topic.
33210-13	there's a viable alternative that I understand Southern Nevada Water Authority is already looking at in terms of making deals with Mexico or desalinization and other projects, they come through with a pipeline. That's another problem.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33210-14	Another problem I see is I was told today, and I didn't know this but it's logical, is a certain amount of water has to flow through that pipe, a huge pipe, to maintain the integrity of all the systems, and it's something like 10,000 acre feet. Well, it doesn't do any good to run 10,000 acre feet from the southern part of the state, the only way you can maintain that integrity is run it from the end of the pipeline, at the end of the pipeline, and the way the city area went, sure looks like it's coming to Elko County to me. I expect it to be there.	Comment noted.
33210-15	You guys are supposed to take care of this. And I don't see you looking at the mitigation, looking at that sucking monster happening as actually happening. I'm just really concerned and I continue to be concerned about those issues.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
33210-16	This pipeline I think will have a drastic affect. I was looking at the socioeconomics. Lincoln County especially, White Pine County to a great extent too, are very limited economically, and I do not see any benefits whatsoever for this pipeline coming through those two counties. They don't have the facilities to house people, to house workers. Very few of the workers will come from those areas, they'll come from out of state or from Clark County. That was noted on the one display. But beyond that there just is not the foundation in those counties to support workers that do come in there, and so there is absolutely no economic benefit to these counties.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Updated section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping. Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for additional information on this topic.

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33210-17	I learned when I was very young that historically, and now today even more so, water is controlled. Those who control the water control the land. So if we, as a people, and the BLM, just the impacts of the right-of-way on all of the different things that you see back there on the displays, to me I guess I'm prejudiced but I see all negative. I don't see anything positive for the people, for the animals, for the land. A lot of the land out there is very fine soil, a lot of dry lake beds in Spring Valley that with the drawdowns will just become a complete dustbowl in those valleys, in these basins. Those who control the water control the land and control the people.	Thank you for your comment.
33210-18	In this case we're messing with water. And water is really needed in Nevada: Underground, on top of the ground and the plants and animals, insects, they need that water. And when we start messing with the spring water, you're changing their migration patterns.	Updated sections 3.6 (wildlife resources) and 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) discuss potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33210-19	And we also was taught by our grandpas and grandmas that all these waters underneath the ground is connected. And the scientists said, no, it's a pocket here, a pocket there. No, it's all connected. So if you draw water up from somewhere, somewhere the water is going to dry up. It could be a hundred miles away.	Your comment has been noted.
33210-20	And what's going to happen then when all the water gets depleted? We're going to have sinkholes and this will be a lot of sinkholes.	Updated sections 3.3 (water resources) and 3.2 (geology) discuss potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33210-21	They can't graze -- you can't graze cattle anywhere because it's fenced off. And if this pipeline goes through, are they going to fence it off?	Temporary fencing would be used in and adjacent to the ROW where it would benefit revegetation efforts (approximately 2-5 years). Revegetated areas would be isolated and likely be approximately 5 acres in size. Additionally, temporary security fences would be installed around staging areas and open trenches. Permanent fences would only be installed around permanent facilities (valve stations, electric substations, etc...).
33210-22	And as far as Elko County, I think Elko County should say no, don't even allow it, because I've seen them drill water. They don't have to come in the county, they can drill laterally into the county. And who's going to check that? Nobody checks that.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33210-23	Well, if you don't have enough water in Vegas, maybe you don't need to expand. And I would rather that our Elko County Commissioners charge these people four times what it would cost for them to get that desalinization plant built in California and pump the water from California, desalinization plant to Las Vegas. And I think we should charge them four times that.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33210-24	I think it's going to happen. You know, money speaks. And people with big money stand to make big profits on this. And we're just people, you know. It's not going to matter what we say really, unfortunately, because the way it's set up is that they have one man deciding whether or not they get the water or not, and that's the state controller. Well, that's not America. That's not democracy, democracy by the people, not just one person. When you've got one person deciding who gets the water from these peoples' lands, that's not right. That's tyranny, you know. I think that our Elko County Commissioners and White Pine County Commissioners, the people of the land should decide who gets the water, I don't think one person should decide. You know, that's like the pullet bureau. That's not right. This is America, the people decide, not one person. And it's a bad system to have right here, one person gets to decide that they can take the water from us.	This comment was bracketed in error and does not warrant a response.
33210-25	These are all projections. This is the best science we have today but that doesn't mean what they're saying here is right. It doesn't mean that it's true, it just means they're projections. They were wrong before. They were wrong in Owens Valley as well, and they were wrong in Arizona. And what makes you think that they're not going to be wrong here? It doesn't make sense to take our water. It's not one person decides to take our water. And the BLM, well, they're good at what they do. They do permits, you know. They do permits for mining, all kinds of things. You know, they're good at that and they're good at doing all the science and all that. And I'm sure these folks worked a long time to do this work and that's the best state of the art that we have with these scientists that did all this work, and I applaud them for doing all that work but that doesn't mean it's right just because they did it.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1, Gen 2, MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33210-26	Vegas is big enough. If they don't have water, go to the ocean. Go to the ocean and get it and charge them four times what it would cost to go the ocean if they insist on taking it from us here.	Thank you for your comment
33210-27	The issues I want to raise are regarding the Lincoln County Recreation and Development Act which requires the BLM to approve this pipeline. It was passed by Congress but it's in direct conflict to me with FLPMA, NEPA, grazing regulations, other public land laws, and I don't know how the BLM can approve this project when it has so many negative impacts.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33210-28	Even if you just look at the summary, the summary says the preferred alternative has the highest impacts of any alternative of those proposed, and we are recommending the No Action alternative.	Thank you for your comment.

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33210-29	We do not understand how the BLM can separate a pipeline from the removal of water. Removal of water is something that is the lifeline to rural Nevada to public lands all over the West. And it's time to change that paradigm of removing water from rural areas for the benefit of urban areas. And I don't want to pit one against the other but to me agriculture is just as important as casinos and golf courses.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2 for information on this topic.
33210-30	This project could decimate and cause land subsidence of up to 200,000 acres over a 70-year period.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
33210-31	I also found that the draft environmental impact statement is very dismissive of other alternatives. And several people have talked about the alternatives of desalinization. Instead of building a pipeline from the cost, why not trade water. Build the desalinization plant for Southern California. They get the benefit of the ocean water and we get their share of the Colorado River water. And even if you don't believe in climate change, even if the river is dropping, even half of California's allocation of 500,000 acre feet equals 250,000 acre feet. That 250,000 acre feet out of the Colorado River will take care of Las Vegas for the foreseeable future instead of pulling it out of rural Nevada.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33210-32	Water is granted in perpetuity in this state. That is another thing to think about. Once it's granted, it's seldom pulled back, although this legislative session I will give credence to Mr. Goicoechea who made sure that now the state engineer does have a process for pulling back the water, but it's a ten year process, and how long is ten years? It's a very long period of time.	Thank you for your comment. The NRS Commenter refers to is 534.110 , Rules and regulations of State Engineer; statements and pumping tests; conditions of appropriation; designation of critical management areas; restriction. There is a 10-year process regarding critical management areas (subpart 7), which does not apply to this project. Subpart 6 allows the NSE to restrict water withdrawals as follows: 6. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 7, the State Engineer shall conduct investigations in any basin or portion thereof where it appears that the average annual replenishment to the groundwater supply may not be adequate for the needs of all permittees and all vested-right claimants, and if the findings of the State Engineer so indicate, the State Engineer may order that withdrawals, including, without limitation, withdrawals from domestic wells, be restricted to conform to priority rights.
33210-33	For these meetings you should be giving a presentation on what you have found, the major findings of the EIS.	Thank you for your comment.
33210-34	First of all, you need to have hearings on the right-of-way decision itself. You need to have public notice of thee hearings that lists the factors that BLM has to take into account when it makes right-of-way decisions. I'll mention a few of those. We need to have the record of decision out before that hearing so people have the record of decision. We need to have the final environmental impact statement in the public's hands before that hearing so they can comment on it. We need to have proposed conditions for the potential permit, if that's what's proposed to be done. We need to have those for public comment. We also need to have hearings outside the basin area.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the NEPA process. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the process.
33210-35	It's very good to have this mandated NEPA hearing but a NEPA is not -- a NEPA and hearing -- NEPA process is no substitute for having a hearing on the project itself where the public addresses economic efficiency, national security, historical factors, health and safety conditions, whether the project is or is not in the public interest. You can't issue this unless you find it is. If it's inconsistent with BLM purposes, and you have a regulation that says if an applicant doesn't have the financial wherewithal to go ahead with the right-of-way project, they can't do it, and you've been hearing about that.	Information on the funding of the SNWA Groundwater Development Project has been added to Chapter 2. The NSE, through the rulings, assesses water planning issues and financial ability to build the project within the public interest section.
33210-36	Now if you do, if you do issue this right-of-way permit, it will be illegal. You are required, the BLM is required, and I'll read from the right-of-way provisions of the Federal Land Policy Management Act, the secretary concerned shall issue regulations containing the criteria and procedures he will use in designating such corridors. There are no regulations about public involvement. There are regulations about the application. There are regulations about appeal.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities.
33210-37	The district offices of the BLM are operating basically deciding what to do by the seat of their pants at these hearings. It can't do it that way, you have to do it by regulation. The academics who wrote the book Forest Policy, Dana and Fairfax said, The regulations required by FLPMA, that's the BLM law, are even more extensive than those required by the National Forest Management Act.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities.
33210-38	Now it's not the Ely -- it's not the Nevada BLM fault or the Utah BLM fault but you should be pointing out to them that they need to have these regulations, and if they don't, this project will not be legal. Even if you deny it, the process would probably not be legal either because you don't have the regulations in place for public involvement.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities. The provisions of NEPA and implementing regulations, by both CEQ and DOI, cover public involvement.
33210-39	Multiple use. This use -- this would eliminate some multiple uses. The only uses on the BLM land that do not have to be multiple uses are those specified in FLPMA by Congress: Grazing, mining and wilderness. Water transportation, water corridor is not permitted which would destroy many uses, is not a multiple use and you cannot approve it.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities. Authorization for this action is contained in Section 501 of FLPMA.

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33210-40	I ask that further investigation be made into any and all reliable long-term solutions to water supply needs for the State of Nevada. Though it is the largest consumer of water, Clark County is not the only Nevada jurisdiction with potentially significant shortfalls of water. Massive groundwater development within the net evaporative basin may not be a wise scientific or societal choice. Alternatives to that proposal should be thoroughly investigated as part of a state, regional and national decision making process.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33210-41	Desalinization, fresh water supply and groundwater supply all are cost competitive with each other. Groundwater is the least reliable, though politically the only one you find in large to the State of Nevada. The direction of this draft EIS is to present the politically most expedient and technically least reliable alternative. That approach must not be accepted blindly because a reasonable expectation is that it will result in mining the water, devastating agriculture with no long-term slaking of the thirst of Las Vegas.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping. Please refer to standard resource response Gen-5 for information on this topic.
33210-42	I grew up in Ely and ranched in that area, and there just isn't enough water down there to fill that pipeline.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33210-43	So what's going to happen is that they're going to come into Steptoe Valley, and one of those farms is right on the Elko/White Pine County line, and from there it's just a hop, skip and a jump into Ruby Valley and Clover Valley. We all know that's where the real water supply is in those two valleys. And so that's where they're going to come to is here in Elko County. I don't think there's any question about it. But they will not look at desalinization or things that make really a lot of sense and so I think that the people in this county and all the counties, White Pine and Lincoln and all the rest of them, that they're going to mine this water to the detriment of the ranching industry and the wildlife, that we really need to fight this thing so we can be just like the Owens Valley. We're going to be a wasteland up here, and certainly we don't want that.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33210-44	Water is critical to habitat, biodiversity, multiple use and the overall fabric of growth in rural communities and counties. We feel the impacts to over 300 springs and hundreds of miles of streams will devastate the multiple use of our public lands, the biodiversity, the wildlife and wild horses. With the loss of water comes the loss of vegetation, soil cover and infiltration. The importance of water in ranching and recreation, hunting, viewing of wild horses and other outside recreation opportunities are important to the rural fabric and communities of Elko, Eureka, White Pine and the other corridors down to Las Vegas. We support the No Action alternative as it is the only logical answer to this pending socioeconomic and ecological disaster.	Thank you for your comment.
33210-45	The hydrology projections are, as many have indicated, quite dramatic in my view. Under a worst case scenario one could envision significant groundwater drawdowns from perhaps the Ruby marshes, but given your EIS, at least perhaps Cherry Creek north of Ely all the way down to Alamo and perhaps extending from Pahranaagat Valley over to the Utah border. But the interesting thing to me is that these projections have been based not upon actual well sites or drilling locations but I gather some modeling techniques and perhaps currently available information generally speaking about such groundwater distribution.	Your comments have been noted.
33210-46	I've also noticed in the draft EIS that the Great Basin National Park, which no one has mentioned yet tonight, but which is literally in the bull's eye of this drawdown area, is apparently doing hydrological work. UNR I gather is participating in that and apparently studying water flows in and out of the park. That information, as I understand it, is not yet completed.	Your comments have been noted.
33210-47	So I guess my question is isn't this draft EIS premature? Aren't major, in fact, huge, ominous decisions at hand without really sufficient technical information? No well sites, no Great Basin hydrologic study, lots of information missing. Isn't this whole issue several steps ahead of itself? And should that have any bearing on how things proceed?	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities. Please also refer to Standard Comment Responses Gen-1 and Gen-2.
33210-48	And the additional question is if Nevada rolls forward, if the state engineer grants water rights to Southern Nevada Water Authority, and well site locations are determined, wouldn't there need to be additional NEPA analysis for further public comment based upon actual well site locations so that it would be possible to see even more clearly than we can now what is likely to happen?	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33210-49	I just want to mention that because from what I understand one of the assumptions in the model is that it takes the last 30 years of climactic change and precipitation, averages that out and projects that forward for the next 75 years and then the next 200 years. And I just want to say that we can't predict that. The model is based on the past. We cannot predict the future.	Comment noted. Model uncertainty with respect to future climate is discussed in Section 3.3.2.8 in the EIS.

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33086-1	We also have a lot of help within the county. I want to point out those individuals. Bill Butts and Robin Bell have been part of the water community, done a lot of work, helped me. Also in particular Karen Real has done a lot of great work in making those comments. Unfortunately many of those comments weren't instituted or put into the place where we're hoping that they go. Maybe this time. We'll keep on trying.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-2	Reading the document and having gone through this process, I am disappointed in the outcome or the product of this document.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-3	But one of the areas that I spent most of my time on was the socioeconomic portion of the EIS, because I felt like I had more knowledge and was able to maybe address some of those issues that come up. And I was disappointed in that section. Over the five, five and a half, six years that they worked on this document, what I can figure is the BLM only spent about maybe six or seven months on that section. It seems to me that deserved a lot more than that. Those water applications have been established since 1989, and having those applications just sit there has had an effect on the economy. And I think that should have been more fully analyzed, and also the fact what is the pipeline going to do, water withdrawal going to do to the economy in these valleys? I don't think they addressed it. I don't think they addressed it adequately. So I would hope that you all would look at that.	Section 3.18 acknowledges the identified concerns on the part of some residents and officials of White Pine and Lincoln counties. It is our understanding that previously approved water rights remained available for economic development. Furthermore, applications for additional water to support local economic development could have been, and can continue to be filed with the NSE, which would then be processed in consideration of local economic development needs. Finally, as noted, water is but one factor necessary to support growth and development. Consequently, there are no assurances that growth and development would have occurred in the proposed groundwater production basins absent SNWA's applications. SocEcon-5 also addresses this concern.
33086-4	There are some good portions, parts of the document. The County did hire a hydrologist, Tom Myers, who looked at the document on our behalf and came up with some comments. And the hydrology model shows the impacts but I believe that the impacts will happen much sooner than what the document is saying, so I hope that you maybe will all take a look at that as well.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-5	And I think, you know, this water project is full of steps, this is just one step, but it's an important step and I hope that you all take a real good look at those comments. And if you do have some comments, I would say that not only should you give those to be BLM but I would like a chance if you give it to me and/or to the County, come to our water committee meetings and let us know some of the things that you're concerned about, it may be something that we missed. So thank you and I'm glad to see everybody here.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-6	I'd like to echo the County Commissioner's concerns our association has about the socioeconomic impacts in this document as well. I don't feel that perhaps they were adequately addressed. As he alluded to, what's going to happen to these ranching and agricultural communities in these valleys? Over the years those communities have maintained our cities and our towns in times of up and down economics. This document says that there will be over 300 springs and a hundred miles of stream that will be negatively impacted. That's going to negatively impact the ranching community for sure. That goes to your grocery stores, your parts stores, your hardware stores, everything right on down the line. Those are going to disappear.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33086-7	The other thing that is a little bit concerning to us, the BLM is charged with maintaining multiple use of our public lands. And as I read through this, yeah, we know the impacts and we talk about mitigation, but yet recreation, wildlife, wild horses, ranching, they're going to go away in a vast area. There's hundreds of thousands of acres of shrub land and surface vegetation that are going to be impacted by this. And we can talk about mitigation but I think we all know Nevada is a very unforgiving state. And if we're going to try to re-vegetate, that's probably not going to work, especially for pulling so much groundwater out.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-8, MM-1, MM-2 and SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33086-8	We talk about the subsidence of the land. We're already seeing a lot of ground subsidence in a lot of basins across the state that aren't pulling this amount of water.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. Please refer to section 3.2 (geology) for further information on subsidence impacts.
33086-9	And I know that this isn't about the water rights permitting process but unlike the Field of Dreams I believe if we don't build it, they won't come. So I think we really need to take a look at that permit process. And are we going to grant them a right-of-way through here, because once the pipeline is there and the right-of-way is there, they're going to fill it up with water and they're probably not going to stop here, we all know that.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-10	So I would encourage the BLM to slow down. It's six years in the process. Let's take a good look at this. And I commend you on allowing us to extend the comment period. I understand it's already been extended. Our association will be submitting formal comments. So let's slow down, let's take a good, in-depth look at the socioeconomics of what it's going to do to our rural lifestyle out here.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33086-11	I know you're dealing not with them but if our neighbors to the south would be more neighborly and go and find the ocean water and desalinate like Florida and Holland and the Middle East and many countries too, where I just saw a documentary on TV about Norway having the most water. If they went and had them send water over to Clark County, that would be lovely, and leave us the heck alone.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.

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33086-12	If they left us alone, you wouldn't need these meetings, you wouldn't need a pipeline that would be disturbing the vegetation, you wouldn't threaten our lifestyle, our rural heritage, the cattle, which is feed for America, until somebody does something against that, and there's plenty being done against America at this point but that's another story.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33086-13	But as far as I'm concerned it's just too much to ask of neighboring counties to destroy their lands that the BLM administrates. And that's about it, without keep repeating myself.	Thank you for your comment.
33086-14	Just if you don't allow it, that helps our little cause.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-15	And Pat Mulroy and Harry and Rory and all them, they need to be a little bit more considerate than just pillaging and plundering of their neighbors.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-16	And I have to agree with Mr. Goicoechea that the farming and everything is going to -- it's going to impact it because of these water rights and everything that have been holding. We can't get any more water rights. There's a lot of DLEs out there that would be being used, it's a desert land entry, if they had water available. And I believe that it's really crimped our style a little bit here in White Pine County.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33086-17	The biggest thing though, I've got several issues with it, but, you know, you can't grind the whole axe at one time, but the thing that concerns me is there is an inter-basin transfer between Steptoe Valley and Spring Valley. The USGS says it's a lot of water. The Southern Nevada Water Authority says it's a little water. So we had a discussion here tonight and they can't tell you how much it is. Now the USGS says that they were going to be able to tell us because they had two new test pumps and everything that they put in, but so far nobody has said. But if you take over the years the head pressure that the water would gain if they pumped down Spring Valley, how much water is going to run out of Steptoe Valley into Spring Valley, and is that going to impact the water in Steptoe Valley. And when it gets a head pressure, who knows how much it's going to go, but I believe that's something you've got to look at because once it's done, it's done. And I don't think that there's any way to back it up. But like I say, if you take the USGS, which you have to defend and take what they say, they say it's a lot of water, thousands of acre feet. SNWA says, oh, it's hardly anything. So that's a big stretch from one to the other. But anyway, I think that we really need to have an answer for that.	Available information regarding potential interbasin flow between Steptoe and Spring Valleys is discussed in the Conceptual Model Report (SNWA 2009a).
33086-18	And all I can say is if we had more water rights and others get used, there's a lot of DLEs out there that weren't used because they couldn't get a water permit. Thank you.	Comment is noted.
33086-19	And I'm speaking tonight as a concerned citizen of White Pine County and at the request of Great Basin Water Network. My comments are specific to the socioeconomic section. And I would like to give some general comments. My specific comments will be submitted in writing that will be itemized by page and subsection. I would like to echo the concerns of the previous speakers in terms of the inadequacy of the socioeconomic analysis and the long-term impacts on our economy, but I would like to know a couple of things in terms of the way that the section is structured. Throughout section 3.18, there is several instances where conclusions are drawn about social impacts, economic impacts, community attitudes, and those conclusions are not supported by where that information came from, who the sources were, and how those conclusions were derived. I think the section would be stronger if that background was provided for the reader.	Thank you for your comment. A number of changes to the text of 3.18 have been made to respond to the concerns expressed in this comment. At the same time, it is noted that while the comment suggests that the analysis could be stronger, the comment does not contradict or challenge the underlying conclusion of potentially significant, long-term adverse social and economic effects in the rural areas or the uncertainty associated with the timing and magnitude of those effects.
33086-20	Secondly, I just want to note that the rural counties are dependent on the state demographer's population projections. White Pine County has worked with the state demographer for a long time on those population projections, especially as we looked at how to predict at 50-year planning window for our own water resources plan. That methodology is based on a regression analysis that looks back 20 years and what the patterns are in order to determine the multiplier to look at population projections in the future. But it does a great job at predicting the past and what our previous and continuing economic structures have been, both for us and for Clark County, but it does not do well in predicting merging economies and economic change, and we found that over the years. In fact, the state demographer projected a steady 20-year decline in our population at the very time that we were growing with the opening of the prison.	Thank you for your comment regarding underlying challenges in developed long-term economic and demographic projections and the potential for unforeseen events to result in actual changes that vary from those projections. The opening of the prison cited in the comment is a case in point, as is the onset of a national recession. Such unanticipated events don't invalidate the value of projections, but rather result in uncertainty and require further analysis of the underlying trends, much as described in the comment regarding White Pine County's work with the demographer. The uncertainties associated with the effects of groundwater drawdown, including the actual timing of development and pumping limit the value of the kind of detailed cataloging of ranch production data of the type suggested elsewhere in this comment.
33086-21	So just as a caution, especially for the rural counties that don't have the resources to have other studies done, it's important to consider and to include in that document the limits of those projections and how they're used.	Thank you for your comment. The specifics of SNWA's projected water demand, the population growth projections embedded therein, and its consideration of alternative sources of water are outside the scope of this EIS. As noted in Sections 1.1 and 1.6, SNWA is acting within its statutory obligations and responsibilities in the development of its water plan, recognizing the long lead-times and uncertainties associated with securing additional water resources and major capital facility development. Standard Comment Responses Gen-3 and SocEcon-2 provide additional response to this comment.

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33086-22	Related to that the applications were filed in 1989. SNWA purchased ranches in Spring Valley in 2006. The very time period that has provided the baseline data for that population history is a timeframe during which the county was already being impacted by this proposed project, and I think there needs to be more discussion about the previous impacts up to this point as well as the future impacts.	Thank you for your comment. Section 3.18 acknowledges the identified concerns on the part of residents and officials of White Pine and Lincoln counties. SocEcon-5 also responds to this comment. The underlying subject of this comment relates to the allocation of water resources in the state. As noted in EIS, responsibility for administering water in Nevada rests with the Nevada State Engineer, with consideration of public interest one of the factors to be considered in the water rights appropriations. Given the state's authority, the subject is beyond the scope of the EIS. Text has been added in Section 3.18.2.8 noting that appropriations may limit the certain types of large-scale development in the groundwater production basins, although water is but one factor necessary to support growth and development.
33086-23	The socioeconomic section relies heavily on published data that's available through census, state agencies and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Having helped White Pine County put together the socioeconomic discussion for the state engineer's hearing in 2006, I can certainly attest to how hard it is to find information on a valley. Nobody but the state engineer apparently thinks in terms of hydrographic basins. We were down to working with not only all the agencies but calling the individual property owners and asking them how many cows they had in Spring Valley so that we can assess how much that economic impact was.	See the response to comment PT-33086-22-22 above.
33086-24	I would suggest that this document need to pay more attention to the contributions that our valleys have made, even when they don't have an established community within them, as Spring Valley. Our best estimate based on the information that we collected in 2006 prior to the purchase of the ranches by SNWA, Spring Valley alone accounted for about 25 percent of our agricultural sector's economic impact in White Pine County and its contributions. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM acknowledges and doesn't seek to diminish the contributions of the agriculture industry to both the economic and social fabric of White Pine and Lincoln counties. At the same time, the long-time horizons and uncertainties associated with the water analysis, effectively limit the value of quantitative analysis of the potential effects of drawdown beyond that presented in the DEIs. See also the response to comment PT-33086-22-22 above.
33086-25	Finally I would just like to say that this draft EIS appears to be such a large scope geographically and in geographic diversity and also in the timeframes that it almost defies being able to do an adequate job of that analysis for all of the areas over time. If we're looking at an EIS needing to be updated because it's five years old, and the prediction is that they won't use the water from Spring or Snake Valley until the 2040 time to 2050 timeframe, how can we look that far ahead? There's too much incomplete and unavailable information on how to look at what those future economic conditions and impacts are going to be, not only in our rural areas but in Clark County as well.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2 for information on this topic.
33086-26	Because we can't be sure that those issues will be adequately addressed in the future tiered EIS process, I think it's important that those issues be raised now within this current document.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33086-27	And finally in conclusion, there are numerous areas of very specific points that after 27 years of doing economic compilation of data for White Pine County, I can tell you they need to be strengthened, they need to be improved, and I will submit those also in my written comments. Thank you.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. Responses to specific comments provided as part of White Pine County's package are addressed separately.
33086-28	In your executive summary, 2.10, are other agencies' approvals and consultation required before the project will go forward: We learned quite a lot of things with this power line now where there needs to be open communication between the counties and BLM when they go through and do a right-of-way grant. And we'll probably be sending some new practices on how that open communication needs to improve, so I would make a suggestion that when you look at that executive summary and talk about 2.10 and then you go into chapter 1 page 1-8, area 1.5.1, cooperating agencies, which we are listed as a local agency, Nevada counties, Clark, Lincoln, White Pine, that you speak to us on a regular basis as to what the motives and directions and changes that are going to take place in this EIS statement so that we are involved along the way so we don't have the surprises that we're having now with the right-of-way grant to the Smith south line. That's one issue.	Thank you for your comment.
33086-29	Second issue is that when you look at the local agencies you need to take a look at a lot of things that BLM has promised our county. First of all, you know, 45,000 acres of land that's allocated in land sales that we here in White Pine County are going to try to produce, what part of the land is going to be on the eastern side of our county? What portion is BLM going to future look at and allocate to us?	The SNWA Plan of Development specifies the development being assessed in this Final EIS. The BLM cannot make assumptions regarding other actions by the SNWA or other parties.
33086-30	A lot of that property is in the wind energy corridor, which BLM identified. We have geothermal in the top section that's in the groundwater shed study. How is that going to be effected? That geothermal is not going to be feasible once the groundwater drops. So these are things that I think you kind of need to take into consideration when you go in and approve both zones for wind zones, for geothermal zones, biomass, solar, that you take a look at those past history documents to see how this new EIS is going to affect those applications, because that's a concern for us, especially since this is a big wind corridor going through.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1, Gen-8 and SocEcon-5 for information on this topic. Additional information has been added to section 3.11 (minerals resources) concerning the geothermal resource.

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33086-31	And, yes, wind does not utilize a lot of water but it does during the construction processes but there are other uses that this county looks at it in its economic, you know, income of revenue.	Thank you for your comment. The underlying topics of this comment are outside the scope of the EIS. Temporary groundwater withdrawal authorizations, e.g., to meet construction needs associated with wind farms, are commonly approved by the NSE and the future economic development needs of local communities are considered by the NSE during appropriation hearings. Such hearings, including those on SNWA's applications in Spring, Delamar, Dry Lake and Cave Valleys in which White Pine County participated, are the appropriate venue for this argument, not this EIS.
33086-32	There's some things that I think when this model was put together, I myself would love to see the model how the state engineer put his thoughts together as to how much linear feet of groundwater was allocated for Spring Valley and those uses and didn't take a lot of things into consideration.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. Updated section 1.4 discusses the current NSE ruling.
33086-33	We're in a serious economic distressed state as a nation. Many changes in economics are occurring right now. And the model that he used ten, five years ago, I am sure I can show that it cannot be implemented today with several different factors. One, rural America, that's where it's being pushed and you need to understand what that means. That means us, White Pine County, can benefit and grow because there's going to be a big push of population out of metropolitan areas into rural America. How does that affect our land uses in those areas?	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-2 and SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33086-34	What are the top ten industries in the United States that we capitalize on as a nation wanting us to capitalize on that you're going to affect us by going in and doing this water, you know, grab and now we can't do it? Agriculture is huge. Import exporting.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-35	You know, in Nevada, I just read a report today, Nevada is the number one state with the possibility of import of exporting, and that's, you know, a very interesting comment. And, you know, we have a huge -- we have a company in Eureka that exports pet food. You know, it's a hay product, and so when you go in and take the water away from that whole eastern section of Nevada, you just wiped out the possibility of farmers going in there and raising that crop and taking advantage of an industry that the nation is trying to push. It's probably number six motive right now in bringing this economy back on line.	Thank you for your comment. The underlying subject of this comment relates to the allocation of water resources in the state (see Standard Comment Response Gen-8). As noted in the Executive Summary and elsewhere in the EIS, the responsibility for administering water in Nevada rests with the Nevada State Engineer, with consideration of public interest as one of the factors to be considered in the water rights appropriation. The NSE's administrative procedures also address protection of existing water rights, including that which presumably supports the hay production cited. Finally, note that applications can still be filed for additional water rights in Spring and Snake Valleys to support local economic development. The text in Section 3.18 has been revised to clarify some of the economic development issues related to water availability.
33086-36	New jobs. You know, where are the new jobs going to go? They're going to get pushed in rural America. Where? Renewable energy. What are we? We're probably one of the best areas in the nation for renewable energy growth. Granted you're not going to see a lot of jobs be produced by wind, you know, but you will see those construction periods. But being that, a lot of funding is going to go into that direction over the next ten years and that wind corridor goes right smack through that area. And how is that going to get affected for us, you know, to capitalize on that national initiative? What is that national initiative? How does White Pine County play a part in that? How do we help our neighboring states? How do we develop new jobs?	Updated section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33086-37	Every ounce of acre in our county is very valuable right now because of the word rural America. And our best and highest use of that land needs to be considered, not just, you know, from the last ten years model, it needs to be considered from the future model. And the state engineer needs to understand what that is and maybe the allocation of linear footage of per acreage would be a lot different. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33086-38	It is common knowledge that the Great Basin native people were driven from their homelands by settlers and the U.S. cavalry. Those who were not eradicated in numerous massacres were denied their traditional lifestyle. In order to just survive, our ancestors performed menial labor where they could find it. Ranches, mines, railroads and such benefitted from the cheap labor on the land they had taken by force from the natives. But the oppression isn't over. In this 21st century there are two generations from the last massacre of Nevada's Indian tribes, and my great grandmother was one of two little girls who survived the final Swamp Cedars massacre. That's a short time ago. The aforementioned tribal lands were sold at auction for some very high prices.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33086-39	Adding insult to injury of Nevada's native people, a major portion of the SNWA auction funds from the tribal lands sale were allotted to Southern Nevada Water Authority for the construction of a huge 96-inch diameter pipeline that will drain and destroy our traditional homelands. I have a reference there if you need that.	Under the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, SNWA was allotted a percentage from the proceeds of the sale of public lands for "water treatment and transmission facility infrastructure in Clark County, Nevada".
33086-40	I find this systematic trend of exploration thoroughly disgusting and I hope you do too. For the draft environmental impact statement the Bureau of Land Management wants the tribes to designate sacred sites that will be disturbed by the SNWA pipeline right-of-way. What the American society doesn't understand is that our native people do not have manmade churches, temples and the like. Tribal sacred land is not limited to a 200-foot wide swath of land, the right-of-way. Our beliefs are in the Earth Mother and all that she provides. All nature is sacred. Fresh water springs are extremely sacred. Animal, plant life are sacred.	Updated section 3.17 (Native American values) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.

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33086-41	In the West, each tribal band has its sacred mountain. Ours is Ward. Asking a native which fresh water spring, herd of animals or stand of Pinions to save is equivalent to asking Mother which of your children should we save. However, SNWA has no problem making the choice. SNWA has no problem throwing the rural ranchers and Indians to the wolves, or should I say to the desert, in favor of speculators and developers in Southern Nevada.	Updated section 3.17 (Native American values) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33086-42	In addition, the Supreme Court found in the Winters Doctrine that an Indian reservation, this is a quote, an Indian reservation may reserve water for future use in an amount necessary to fill the purpose of the reservation. Reservation use has not been recognized by SNWA nor does SNWA recognize plant and animals life, nor does SNWA recognize what we tribal people believe in: The next seven generations of people who live here in rural Nevada.	The BLM acknowledges that in addition to adjudicated federal reserved water rights identified in the DEIS, unadjudicated federal reserved water rights in the hydrologic study area exist, but further determined that they were of an "unknown nature...regarding both locations and quantities of water" which limits "the ability to further describe water use of this type in the hydrologic study area." See DEIS at 3.3-65. There is no federal authority prohibiting the grant of federal right-of-way on BLM land prior to the adjudication of tribal federal reserved water rights. Congress specifically mandated by statute that a right-of-way be granted by the BLM for the GWD Project. The tribal water rights have not been asserted by the BIA, and, the BIA cannot be forced to assert such rights and have them adjudicated by a court. The cost of adjudicating all of the federal reserved water rights would cause significant delay or non-fulfillment of the Congressional mandate that a right-of-way be granted to the GWD.
33086-43	It is the consensus of many tribal folks that there's only one action that the BLM can make on this draft environmental impact statement, that is the No Action decision. And thank you.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-44	They tell we live in a democracy, and yet I don't really believe that the people of American would vote for this. I don't think the people in Nevada would vote for this. And I used to live in Las Vegas, I really don't think the people of Las Vegas would vote for this. It almost feels a bit like a travesty, the whole systematic way this is being done. It's not something that I'm saying has just been created recently, this has been going on for over a hundred years. But the people of Las Vegas, I'll go back to that, they don't want Las Vegas -- most of them don't want Las Vegas to grow like a virus or like a yeast in a wine bottle, because everybody knows what happens to yeast in a wine bottle, it grows and grows until one day there's just no resources left and everything dies. We're smarter than yeast.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-45	And I feel that there are better ways of dealing with this issue than just taking what is closest. Twenty years ago when Southern Nevada Water Authority or its predecessor applied for these water rights, the cost of desalinization was a lot more expensive than it is now, close to ten times as much. And we know now that even Southern Nevada Water Authority is using desalinization down in Yuma. It's a viable option. But when you ask them or you talk to anybody about desalinization, they're not even willing to talk about it, offshore desalinization to give California water in trade for more water from the Colorado River. It is a good option. They won't talk about it.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33086-46	I would like to see Las Vegas, Southern Nevada and that whole area live well. I'd like to see them grow a little bit but not a whole lot. There is a point where it's too much, and the people of Las Vegas, the last I heard, 70 percent of them don't want Las Vegas to grow anymore.	The updated section 3.18 addresses this issue. Please see standard resource response SocEcon-4.
33086-47	I'm not unhappy with the BLM. I'm not unhappy with any of the people here. What I'd like to see is a system that gives us what we really want, not what works for those who control it. And the sad truth is I don't think the people control this because the people wouldn't have it this way. And I think that the people in the BLM, they don't have the authority to actually make a difference in something like this.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-48	Maybe they can do the No Option for the water pipeline. But the only authority they have right now is the authority over the pipeline, not the taking of the water. We consent that the State has that responsibility but we're the State, aren't we?	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-49	I really feel that to some extent this whole process is a travesty, that we're being given the opportunity to stand up here and vent and in the end what they want is what they're going to get, and it isn't really what they want. It's what the people who committed 20 years ago wanted.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-50	And the game has changed. The price of desalinization has dropped so much that it's now cheaper to desalinate water than it is to take it from here. It's going to cost billions of dollars. And the people of Las Vegas don't want to pay that. They sure don't want to pay it all up front. If you do desalinization, you can do it incrementally as needed as the city grows.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33086-51	Las Vegas, well, Southern Nevada Water Authority bought water rights in Mesquite, Nevada. They paid almost \$10,000 an acre foot. The price of desalinization is being quoted around \$2,000 an acre foot. It doesn't add up. It seems this is more about greed than it is about need.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Information was added to the EIS on desalination in Appendix A and chapter 2.
33086-52	Everyplace they're talking about taking water from is beautiful. Even Delamar Valley, it's dry but there's Yucca forests down there, just they go on for miles. They're all going to die.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Updated sections 3.3 (water resources) and 3.6 (vegetation) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.

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33086-53	And, you know, you can't replant antelope. Even if they do put other plants out there, it's not going to be the same. It's not going to be as good, it's not going to be as beautiful.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33086-54	It doesn't have to be that way. And I would like to see, if the BLM has the authority to actually do it, to tell Southern Nevada Water Authority to go back to the drawing board because there are better options. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33086-55	If you don't read any of it except chapter four, please read chapter four, which is the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources. It tells why this will be an economic disaster.	Chapter 4 has been updated and revised.
33086-56	But the thing I forgot to say in Baker and why I said I'd speak tonight was people might not realize that this document addresses only the 96-inch pipeline, not all of the auxiliary pipeline, all the right-of-ways going to be granted for electrical facilities. It doesn't address how many wells there's going to be. All of those little auxiliary things are going to require an additional EIS. So why should we have action on this when there are so many unanswered questions about the entire size of the pipeline? The 1500 pages is just the tip of the iceberg and this is a Titanic of environmental disaster and it should be a No Action. Thank you.	Power lines are almost entirely co-located with the pipeline and would utilize the same ROW. Future facilities (wells, lateral pipelines, etc...) will require a separate NEPA analysis and will tier off of this EIS.
33086-57	First, there is no cost estimate included, and at the outset that might seem like not a big deal but the project costs are going to have to be known to identify whether or not the economic impact of those in the Las Vegas region is acceptable. Whatever this project costs is going to be paid by the ratepayers in Las Vegas, and so it will have an affect on local consumers there.	Thank you for your comment. The underlying concerns in your comment are outside the scope of the EIS. However, because of comments received to the EIS, information on project costs are included in the FEIS - see also Standard Comment Responses SocEcon-1 and SocEcon-6. Additional information can also be found in information filed by SNWA in conjunction with the water hearings -- http://www.water.nv.gov/hearings/past/springetal/documents.cfm?DIR=exhibits.SNWAExhibits
33086-58	There will also be required growth rates to come up with the total amount of funding necessary to pay for the financing. There is certainly some question in this economic environment as to what the municipal tax free bond market might be or government subsidized funding, given our current credit rating.	Please review standard resource response SocEcon-6.
33086-59	And there are also questions about the pumping locations, the rates. Alternatives that were developed are good, you have something to study, but I don't know that they necessarily reflect any sort of reality as far as the specifics of the areas that are going to be impacted. I think Bill Butts mentioned inter-basin flows. There's a large question as to how the flow model actually operates in this area. And to evaluate based on one set of assumptions may or may not prove to mean anything in the future as we go about dealing with the impacts of this project.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS. Well field development areas have not yet been determined; however, the siting of these areas should not change the main pipeline ROW or groundwater drawdown analysis. Further NEPA analysis will be required for well development areas and lateral (collector) pipelines. Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33086-60	I think Denys mentioned subsidence, or somebody did, Mr. Goicoechea mentioned subsidence. It struck me that subsidence is the result of doing the same thing Las Vegas did to itself when it pumped all the water out from underneath themselves in the Las Vegas Valley. Subsidence is an issue that has to be dealt with. If you have subsidence in farming areas, even if you have water you have ground that isn't going to work the same anymore. You just have a completely different terrain.	Please review updated section 3.2 (geology) for a discussion on subsidence.
33086-61	There's uncertainty as to the vegetative impacts. I think someone mentioned that these areas are going to look completely different in some 50, hundred year period. And they're not likely to recover. If you look at the drawdown curves that are portrayed in the EIS, they never reach equilibrium. They're unsustainable. They simply pump until you reach the level of the pump intakes.	Please review updated section 3.5 (vegetation) for information regarding this comment.
33086-62	And in section, I think it's 3.3 in appendix F, it talks about the fact that a lot of these impacts never recover, that they're areas that, regardless of when you stop pumping, they simply don't recover. And that applies to both the springs and the groundwater itself. So there are a large number of uncertainties in this that I believe deserve much more consideration.	Please review updated section 3.0.3 for a discussion on incomplete and unavailable information.
33086-63	Also one of the things I noticed is that a lot of the studies that are used are aged at this point. Many of them were done in 2007, and we're four, almost five years from that point now. As Karen Rajala mentioned, that's a long horizon when you're trying to do trending.	In accordance with NEPA, CEQ regulations, DOI NEPA regulations and BLM's NEPA handbook, this EIS was developed using the most current information available.
33086-64	One of the things in particular is that groundwater has become a permanent plan or part of SNWA's resource plan. If you look at their resource requirements, there is no way to achieve what they want without this groundwater. That means that pumping will never stop, and so whatever negative impacts are depicted in this document will come to pass if their assumptions are correct.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.

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33086-65	However, there are a couple of things. The population studies that SBER put together that were used in this study, I looked at their current data forecast for Las Vegas population for 2012 this afternoon, it's now 80 percent of the value that's used in the EIS. It's five years behind what the study said would be the situation at this point in time. So like Karen Rajala said, the population estimates, all those kinds of forecasts are essentially useless. If you take that 20 percent, it amounts to about 420,000 in population. If you use their 2005 target of 250 gallons per day per person, that equates to 110,000 acre feet per year out of the 177,000 for the proposed action, and out of the hundred and I believe it's 14,000 that's requested in alternative A almost negates the reason to have the project in the first place. And if they do achieve the 200 or 199 gallons per day per person in 2035, that's still 88,000, that's more than half of the project that is taking care of by the change in population. And we know at this point, or I think we pretty well should, that the economic recovery in Las Vegas is not going to proceed even with a five-year delay at the rates that were assumed in those initial projections.	Thank you for your comment. Standard Comment Responses Gen-3 and SocEcon-2 each address aspects of this comment. Furthermore, as noted in Sections 1.1 and 1.6, SNWA is acting within its statutory obligations and responsibilities in the development of its water plan, recognizing the long lead-times and uncertainties associated with securing additional water resources and major capital facility development. Consequently, the specifics of SNWA's projected water demand and alternative sources of water are outside the scope of this EIS.
33086-66	So I would encourage the BLM to go back and rework this, cast a lot of the irretrievable and irreversible impacts into this document, look at what happens in the long run.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
33086-67	If you look at the uncertainties in the drawdown that's part of the modeling, you'd have 125 years of uncertainty in the impact in the Snake Valley area. That's multiple generations of people that are effected simply by the uncertainty in the modeling that's being done.	Comment noted.
33086-68	That doesn't represent anything that gives me any confidence in whatever might be selected here so I have to recommend the No Action alternative as well.	Thank you for your comment.
33086-69	In my studies this area is one of the best areas for renewable resources. So to project that we should take all the water out of here when we don't even know where we're going, I've seen just in the last six years I've seen phenomenal changes in the technology.	Please see common response Air-19.
33086-70	I can't imagine what's going to happen in the next five to ten years, like Rick was talking about desalinization and other processes that are being put in place around the world.	This comment was bracketed in error and warrants no response.
33086-71	If we relinquish our rights to this water and send it down to the desert where it wasn't intended to be in the first place, we're going to relinquish a resources that this area can use to grow and possibly in the future meet all of the energy demands of the western states. That's how good the resources are in this area.	Please review updated chapter 1 for a discussion of Nevada Water law.
33086-72	So once again I'm going to, you know, chime in with everybody else. I don't think the BLM should allow this, if they have any input. As far as SNWA goes, I've got other names for it, however we look at it, moving this resource has lasting impacts that I can't even begin to think about, because I grew up in those mountains with those springs. Noting that those springs are gone, I mean, it's just how dare they take that away from our heritage. Anyway, I'm just going to let it go at that and I guess I'll be the last guy, unless somebody else has something to say.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
33086-73	I think that two points that we're discussing earlier that may help strengthen these portions of the DEIS, the first one is the purpose and need section. The purpose of the document is explained, it's mandated, the rules and regulations of the BLM is required to analyze impacts. And the need is for the same thing. And then in that same section it goes down and begins, without real clarification it doesn't say purpose and need, but it's the Southern Nevada Water's need for the pipeline. But it continues from the purpose and need section like the pipeline is the only way that they will solve their water problem, and I think that's misleading. Perhaps the EIS could perhaps copy some from the Southern Nevada, they have their own website with their options and plans for additional water, and even being referred to that would help the reader understand it's not do or die for the BLM to approve this project. Also in sort of this press release PR from Southern Nevada Water it stresses that the pipeline would be most important during drought years. But the EIS I don't believe mentions anywhere that drought years for the water supply for Southern Nevada is also drought years for recharge in this part of the country and, therefore, the impacts in chapter four may be magnified but are having less recharge capability.	The BLM purpose and need statement has been revised to more clearly characterize the BLM's role in this action.
33086-74	The other topic that is interesting is the disconnect between the BLM and the state engineer. The EIS analyzes all the impacts, the state engineer analyzes all the water, but there's no one that says that, well, this will be the area of least impacts so the engineer should allocate the water to this particular area. And it's left with people like us that wonder, you know, where do we fight the battle, because there's a big void there in coordinating the water supply with the impacts. I think that's my two main points. Thanks.	Please review updated chapter 1 for a discussion of the Nevada State Engineer's role regarding this project.
33086-75	that if Las Vegas just shut down its golf courses, they would have enough water to supply the human population. We only have two percent of the water on this planet that is drinkable, and our populations are increasing. We are like a terrarium and we're drinking the same water the dinosaurs did. We're going to have to be a little bit thoughtful and careful of what we do to take care of the human civilization or it's going to be extinct like the dinosaurs.	Thank you for your comment.

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33086-76	And since my family has been there, and all the families that moved into that area, wildlife has increased, just life springing up there. And so my concern today is with being next door to this pipeline. And of course in some of the models it shows that we will be impacted somewhat by groundwater.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
33086-77	I do focus more on what's up above: Grass, trees, other types of forage because of the cattle ranch, but I'm looking at the future, I'm looking at the future of the area, where we are and where we're headed.	Please review updated section 3.5 (vegetation) for information on the impacts to these resources.
33086-78	Of course everybody has made comments towards that too, the socioeconomic aspects of it all.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33086-79	I teach my children. I have four children, one on the way. I hope that they can continue to stay here and be within this area. I hope it's still here and the stores. I teach them, along with our entire family, to support our local communities. I'm a believer that the rural communities hold our country together. People move in and out of cities all the time, but in rural communities it's different. And this groundwater movement to Vegas will impact us severely economically. We hire many people to work on our ranch and other business that we have, and they also support the communities in the local areas.	Please review updated section 3.18 (socioeconomic and environmental justice) for information relevant to this comment.
33086-80	And it would be a devastating thing to us and so the No Action approach is what I support.	Thank you for your comment.
33086-81	I think the actual application that SNWA submitted for the right-of-way should be included in the documents, both the executive summary and the published volumes as well.	SNWA's original application was posted on our project website at www.blm.gov/5w5c . SNWA's latest conceptual plan of development (POD) which provides supplementary information for the application is in appendix E of the FEIS.
Las Vegas Public Mtg Transcript		
33369-1	The concerns I have today is the draft environmental impact study failed to identify the legal questions concerning the multiple federally recognized tribes that have cultural ties to this region. For example, the federal government entered into treaties with tribes to allow non-Native Americans passage into tribes' traditional homelands but tribal leaders never, and the key word here is extinguished, our water rights to any federal government, agency or state government agency, nor has the United States Congress enacted laws transferring administrative authority to administrate Indian fiduciary trust assets to a state agency such as the Nevada State Water Engineer. Federally recognized tribes maintain water as an Indian fiduciary trust asset, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs' responsibilities is to safeguard our trust assets. Prior to BLM moving forward with this proposed action, the United States Congress needs to address the Indian Fiduciary Trust Act Indian water right's legal question.	BLM has the necessary authorizations from congress to consider the ROW application by SNWA which is the subject of this EIS. BLM is aware of the Treaty of Ruby Valley and acknowledges it as a treaty of Peace and Friendship. This understanding of the treaty was considered in the analysis for the EIS.
33369-2	Nevada congressional representatives who initiated the LCCRDA failed to address Indian water right issues prior to proceeding with the provisions in the LCCRDA. It will take years for both the House of Representatives and the Senate to initiate a bill to amend Indian water rights or a water settlement to the federally recognized tribes within the proposed project area.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-3	But in the event BLM fails to address this legal question prior to the record of decision, tribes will appeal the BLM's ROD potential to the United States Court of Appeals in the Ninth Circuit.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-4	We feel they have fallen short on disclosing the economic impacts, and I'll get into that shortly.	Please review updated section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) for information relevant to this comment.
33369-5	If you read the document closely, you'll find out that almost 200,000 acres of our beloved Great Basin shrub land that provides habitat for mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, sage grouse, pygmy rabbits and a number of other species will be destroyed and replaced by, quote/unquote, more dry species.	Please review updated sections 3.5 (vegetation) and 3.6 (wildlife resources) for information relevant to this comment.
33369-6	The Southern Nevada Water Authority, as part of their mitigation plan, says we're going to aerial seed dry land species to replace this very lush shrub land habitat that exists there now.	Please review standard resource responses MM-1, mm-2 and MM-3 for information relevant to this topic. Updated section 3.20 describes a process where reclamation standards are to be set.
33369-7	Along with that, over 8,000 acres of wetlands is going to be destroyed. There is going to be over 120 miles of streams, including streams that are valuable for the Bonneville cutthroat trout, a species that is protected by the Endangered Species Act, will be negatively impacted by this pumping, along with 305 springs. Many of those springs are home to endemic spring snails and other aquatic species that are found nowhere else on Earth, and they too will go extinct if this project moves forward.	Please review updated sections 3.5 (vegetation) and 3.7 (aquatic resources) for information relevant to this comment.
33369-8	We're also concerned about the impacts to human health. You may realize in taking a look at the map that the basins that will be pumped dry are going to be -- the same basins that are downwind from the Nevada Test Site, the site of over 200 nuclear explosions in the past, nucleoloids have been bound up in the soil and are being held in place by the soil and vegetation.	See Standard Resource Response Air-1.

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33369-9	The draft environmental impact statement discloses, however, that over 34,000 tons of dust per year will be generated by the drying out of these groundwater basins. That in turn will release in that dust the radioactive nucleoloids as well as heavy metals that have the potential to be carcinogenic and create negative health consequences to those downwind and receiving the dust. The folks, our good friends in Utah, Salt Lake City, will be the primary benefactors of this aspect.	Please see Standard Resource Response Air-1, -8, and -9.
33369-10	The other thing that the environmental impact statement does is that it hypothetically places where the well sites are going to be located. The models for groundwater models are very specific to their impacts depending upon where the water is pumped. So rather than waiting for the state engineer's hearing to grant or not grant water rights, and for them to disclose where the well locations are going to be precisely as part of this project, the BLM and SNWA have taken up a major guessing game on what the impacts will be.	Additional assessment of the impacts associated with specific well locations and pumping defined quantities of water from specific basins will be analyzed in subsequent NEPA. A conceptual analysis of distributed pumping and other alternatives is contained in the FEIS. Please review standard resource responses WR-1, Gen-1 and Gen-2.
33369-11	So the catastrophe that has been disclosed in the draft environmental impact statement is only a guess and could be much worse. We feel that it ought to be delayed until the water rights are known and the exact well locations are known so proper modeling can be done of the environmental impacts.	Additional assessment of the impacts associated with specific well locations and pumping defined quantities of water from specific basins will be analyzed in subsequent NEPA. A conceptual analysis of distributed pumping and other alternatives is contained in the FEIS. Please review standard resource responses WR-1, Gen-1 and Gen-2.
33369-12	I mentioned previously that the draft environmental impact statement failed in one case, and that is to disclose the economic consequences of the action. Nowhere in the document will you find any cost estimate for the pipeline. We know that in the past it's been said to be \$3.5 billion several years ago. We're estimating that it's going to be many times that. And it's a case of the Southern Nevada Water Authority feeding at the trough of public funding.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. The underlying concerns in your comment are outside the scope of the EIS. However, because of comments received to the EIS, information project cost are included in the FEIS. See also Standard Resource Responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6. Additional information regarding SNWA's cost estimates and potential financing can also be found on the Nevada State Engineer's website: www.water.nv.gov/hearings/past/springetal/documents.cfm?DIR=exhibits.SNWAExhibits
33369-13	You know, the economic engine of this state is driven by Clark County. And anybody that knows anything about Nevada knows that the economy in Nevada is in shambles. The concern is without this project moving forward, the entire economy of the state of Nevada is at risk because unless Clark County recovers, with almost 50 percent of the state's money generated on the Las Vegas Strip, with that being in jeopardy, the state's economy will never recover.	Please refer to the updated section 3.18 and standard resource response SocEcon-4 which addresses this topic.
33369-14	So with that, I'm not going to take the five minutes, but we're very concerned that this project move forward, especially now given, you know, what's happened in this last legislative session where, you know, our number one industry has been devastated with the recession.	Comment noted.
33369-15	The BLM scientists and resource experts and contract scientists that conducted the studies on impact and, you know, these people in their own words say that we don't know how much water there is.	Comment noted.
33369-16	Another statement out here about your computer modeling which has the experts all in it, it says the computer model shows that groundwater levels will decline under all pumping alternatives.	Comment noted.
33369-17	Realistically the negative effects of proceeding with the withdrawal of water might not show for decades. Owens Valley is an example. It took 10 to 13 years before anybody really ever saw the impact of this and then it's too late. And now it will take centuries for it to recover, if that happens.	Please review the updated section 3.3 (water resources) for information relevant to this comment.
33369-18	I live in North Spring Valley. I find it quite incredulous or fortuitous that any biologist worth his onions can walk across my front yard and come up with half a dozen endangered species, a dozen endangered plants, animals, insects, reptiles. And we have a pipeline that's 300 miles long and there's no problem.	The Endangered Species Act consultation is ongoing. The record of decision will include terms and conditions developed by the Fish and Wildlife Service through the Biological Opinion to protect ESA listed species potentially impacted by the project.
33369-19	And most of all the one endangered species that you folks missed when you did your wonderful environmental impact statement was me. Sheep herders. There's only 12 of us left in the state.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM recognizes that projects such as the proposed GWD can have very personal social and economic concerns and consequences for individuals which the EIS is not able to capture, and so wishes to extend its appreciation to the individuals that attend public meetings and submit oral and written comments .
33369-20	How are we going to mitigate those kind of damages?	Please review standard resource responses MM-1, MM-2, and MM-3. Section 3.20 has been reworked to include development of objectives and benchmarks to provide an ongoing adaptive monitoring and mitigation process.
33369-21	There's nothing in here for the economic impact of me.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM recognizes that projects such as the proposed GWD can have very personal social and economic concerns and consequences for individuals which the EIS is not able to capture, and so wishes to extend its appreciation to the individuals that attend public meetings and submit oral and written comments .
33369-22	If we're going to spend this kind of money, why don't we spend it on something that will create just as many jobs for you, sir, and your people, keep Vegas, the engine of Nevada, growing but also protect the second and third other industries in this state. The second industry in this state is mining, the third industry is agriculture.	Please review updated section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) for information relevant to this comment.
33369-23	But it is very clear from Vidler's website that the company has strategically acquired groundwater resources in the Dry Lake Valley and Lincoln County for beneficial use. What we have here is a massive transfer of wealth and resources, our dollars as water users in Southern Nevada, to one of the richest and best positioned corporations in the state.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.

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33369-24	Finally, the draft environmental impact statement, as they said, points out the disastrous effects that this project will have on the region. And this project is a great example of why we need the National Environmental Policy Act. It was designed to prevent projects like this from being built.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-25	This groundwater grab project will negatively impact hundreds of miles of desert, the delicate balance between life and death for all plant life, and all animal life of the Nevada desert will be thrown from its natural course.	Please review updated sections 3.5 (vegetation), 3.6 (wildlife resources), and 3.7 (aquatic resources) for information concerning this comment.
33369-26	We don't have a water problem in this country, we have a distribution problem. Why don't we build a pipeline from the flooded Midwest, they're drowning out there. Why don't we build a pipeline from there to here? We'd be helping our neighbor states and we'd be helping Nevada.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33369-27	In Baker, Nevada, I don't have dust related problems. But if you take that water and create an Owens Valley, create a Death Valley up there, yes, I will have dust problems. And it will be, I'm sure you have seen on television here three or four weeks ago that dust storm in Phoenix where everybody was demanded to stay inside, not to go outside and breathe the air. That storm didn't come from lush landscaping, it came from the desert. It came from deserts like the Owens Valley and the Death Valley. That's what we must eliminate.	Please see standard resource response Air-10 for information relevant to this comment.
33369-28	As I talked with one gentleman earlier today, all I ever hear about is the water coming down the Colorado River. That is our water that we use here. My question is is that the only place we get the water?	The preface to the Executive Summary provides an overview on this issue. Also, please review updated chapter 1 which provides some additional background on the Colorado River allocations for Nevada. SNWA's water resource plan in Appendix A also provides information on the Colorado River issues.
33369-29	Where is the headwaters of the Green River? The headwaters of the Green River is within 30, 40 miles of the headwater of the Clear River, the headwaters of the Jackson Hole River and the headwaters of the Columbia River. That is excess water running to the ocean that should be then moved down to Las Vegas.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33369-30	I just think that we need to take a look at what's going on. We really need to take a look at the infrastructure that we have in the water here in the country and redo the water so that we have it where we need it.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. Updated chapter 1 contains information on the Nevada State Engineer's role related to this project.
33369-31	There's an inadequate analysis in the report of the actual costs of the pipeline including the sources of funding.	Thank you for your comment. Please see SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and lack of authority or need for the BLM to independently analyze project costs in conjunction with the ROW application.
33369-32	The Southern Nevada Water Authority is pushing the project to be approved but they can't tell where the \$3 billion budget for this project will come from. Some portion of this will have to come from public funding, which will eventually mean higher bills for ratepayers and taxpayers in the state. This will undoubtedly have a disproportionate impact on low income communities in Las Vegas. Why isn't a physical analysis included in the DEIS? And I am a low income person that will be heavily impacted with this. My 20-year-old disabled daughter and I live on \$126 a month. I can barely afford the water that I pay for now.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS. The underlying concerns in your comment are outside the scope of the EIS. However, because of comments received to the EIS, information project cost are included in the FEIS. See also Standard Resource Responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6. Additional information regarding SNWA's cost estimates and potential financing can also be found on the Nevada State Engineer's website: www.water.nv.gov/hearings/past/springetal/documents.cfm?DIR=exhibits.SNWAExhibits
33369-33	What is the purpose and need of this enormous project if Las Vegas can't even adequately manage its own water supply?	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised
33369-34	The DEIS is a highly technical document with more than 1200 pages, and more than 2,000 pages if you include appendices. The agency had more than six years to prepare this document, yet only four months of approval time have been granted to review the project. Will the BLM extend the comment period to allow a full six-month review?	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33369-35	Also there could be drops in the water table as much as ten feet or more in many parts of Nevada. This means that any vegetation that has shallow roots would wither and die, and with them many creatures, large and small, who depend on this vegetation for food, shelter and water will die.	Please review updated sections 3.3 (water resources), 3.5 (vegetation), 3.6 (wildlife) and 3.7 (aquatic resources) for information on the potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33369-36	This massive project will have a major human impact. Families who depend on well water may find that their well has gone dry when the water table drops. Local businesses and Native American communities will suffer, and ranchers may lose their livelihoods.	Please review section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) for information on this topic.
33369-37	And I also want to give some credit to Pat Mulroy from this article that was in the RJ that says, I will quote this, She had an idea that borders on zany. A massive Public Works proposal to divert water from flood stricken regions of the Midwest to aquifers as far west as Colorado so that they may be tapped by people who draw from the Colorado River basin. That strategy would allow others, including Southern Nevadans, to get more water out of the river.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope. This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33369-38	There is no question that Southern Nevada's construction industry must have a reliable and dependable water supply. For the past decade we've witnessed the adverse effects of drought and realize how important it is for Southern Nevada to protect itself from drought conditions. Beneath this project is severe economic and social consequences that could occur in Southern Nevada should the groundwater development project not proceed are enormous.	Thank you for your comment expressing concern for the potential implications for the state should the GWDP not proceed. The concern is identified in Section 3.18. Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 notes that issuance of a ROW grant provides no assurances that the project would go forward, or that the anticipated economic benefits would be realized. Furthermore, SNWA could pursue other sources of additional water should the project not proceed.

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33369-39	Southern Nevada, as it's been stated earlier, is Nevada's economic engine. It must be stressed that this engine cannot drive new economic development opportunities benefitting the entire state without the precious resource of water.	Thank you for your comment alluding to the potential implications for Clark County should the GWDP not proceed. The concern is identified in Section 3.18. See also Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 which notes that issuance of a ROW grant does not assure the project would go forward, or that the anticipated economic benefits would be realized. Furthermore, SNWA could pursue other sources of additional water should the project not proceed.
33369-40	The availability and sustainability of resources for quality water are essential to our residents. And beyond the importance of water to all of us as residents, the business community relies on adequate and stable water supplies for operations and development in order to support a vital economy.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33369-41	Southern Nevadans have answered the call already to conserve and have decreased our water dependency by a third. And while we've had one good year of snow pack, that doesn't ensure a permanent, adequate supply of water. We need to prepare for the delivery system needs of tomorrow for our community, and that's good public policy.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-42	The economic slowdown over the past few years has been especially challenging for businesses in the state of Nevada, and we need to have a dependable, sustainable water supply, and that's a key to our economic recovery and attracting new investment in Nevada. And I'd just like to point out that this is one issue where the business community and the union organizations stand firmly together in support of this. We need to do everything we can to help our economy rebound and flourish again, and this sustainable delivery of water system is the way to help that happen.	Thank you for your comment expressing concern for the potential implications for the state should the GWDP not proceed. The concern is identified in Section 3.18. Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 notes that issuance of a ROW grant provides no assurances that the project would go forward, or that the anticipated economic benefits would be realized. Furthermore, SNWA could pursue other sources of additional water should the project not proceed.
33369-43	One of the things that I'm most bothered by is looking at your book in this section here where it shows the drawdown levels. Your drawdown levels for Snake Valley show essentially there is very little effect, zero affect.	The drawdown effects analysis provided in Section 3.3.2 of the EIS show that a substantial drawdown could occur in Snake Valley under all alternatives that include pumping in Snake Valley.
33369-44	We have dried up springs and other things. Our neighbors have dried up springs and other things, so we watch that very clearly. So to put in this book that nothing has to be considered until you have a ten-foot drawdown.	See response WR-1 regarding the use of the model simulated 10-foot drawdown for the programmatic analysis of potential effects to water dependant resources.
33369-45	Southern Nevada's economy is dependent on the hotel, gaming and convention industry, and the viability of the Clark County economy is dependent on the volume of visitors to the region. A water shortage in Southern Nevada would have a devastating impact on the gaming and resort industry as well as the state economy. That's why the Nevada Resort Association fully supports the Southern Nevada Water Authority's groundwater development project, and we feel that while the draft environmental impact statement does address some of the economic impacts to Lincoln and White Pine, we are concerned that it doesn't address the ramifications in Clark County on the economy should the project not go forward.	Thank you for your comment expressing concern for the potential implications for the state should the GWDP not proceed. The concern is identified in Section 3.18. Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 notes that issuance of a ROW grant provides no assurances that the project would go forward, or that the anticipated economic benefits would be realized. Furthermore, SNWA could pursue other sources of additional water should the project not proceed.
33369-46	So essentially my family and I have lived here in Clark County for quite some time and we have just as much right to the water as the people who live in White Pine or Lincoln counties. And from what I understand, they have no plans to put that water to use. They just don't want us to have it for whatever reason.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-47	If Clark County were to run out of water, the impacts would be felt across the entire state, especially the rural counties.	Thank you for your comment expressing concern for the potential implications for the state should the GWDP not proceed. The concern is identified in Section 3.18. Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 notes that issuance of a ROW grant provides no assurances that the project would go forward, or that the anticipated economic benefits would be realized. Furthermore, SNWA could pursue other sources of additional water should the project not proceed.
33369-48	People in Clark County also love this state and this country and should be allowed to use water that isn't being used to support our economy. Please don't forget that not building the project will have a huge impact on this state, and the BLM needs to take that into consideration when they issue their decision.	Please see Standard Resource Response SocEcon-4 regarding the issue of social and economic implications for Clark County/ LVV if the proposed GWP does not move forward.
33369-49	You know, a city like Las Vegas is here because of some amazing engineering feats but we actually did a really good job in creating Lake Mead and I think that we have a right to use that water efficiently. We're not really using it efficiency. We can do a lot more with what we have. And I think it's a really big mistake to look at expanding the footprint of Las Vegas ever outward taking additional resources from people and other living things that are already living in harmony with those resources. It's just a moral mistake. It is the wrong thing to do.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-50	Now the other thing that I'm not clear about in the draft EIS, because I haven't read every page of it, is are we looking at the economic and environmental impacts of the actual city of Las Vegas in the long term, because sustainability is all about looking at long-term, thriving and survivability. I mean, what would the impact be, for example, if we went ahead with this project? We know it's going to drive growth, it's going to drive short-term profits for a few industries, for a few companies, for some businesses.	Thank you for your comment regarding sustainability and possible ties between water availability and growth. Section 3.18.2.9 addresses the "Relationship of the GWD Project to Potential Growth Inducing Effects."
33369-51	And let's say that that growth results in a valley full of five million people instead of two million, and now what if we, you know, made the mistake, actually it's not even a mistake because we know in the EIS report it says it's going to draw down the water, so eventually that's not a sustainable resource. It's a desert. There's not an unlimited water supply laying around under the ground in Nevada. So down the road, 20 years, 30 years or a hundred years, that water supply runs out, but we've got millions more people here. What is the impact of the decisions that we make now on future generations? We're only going to give them a bigger problem to deal with in the future. That is not a sustainable option.	Please review section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) for information on this topic.

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33369-52	Nevada Test Site is probably the most studied hydrological area in this country and we don't know what's happening with the water up there. So regardless of all the beautiful computer models, I don't think they tell us the true picture.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-53	The models here trying to reach out 200 years, within that 200 years we may well need those acres and that water to produce food for the human base, and that's well within the term of the project. If this project goes ahead, depletes those water supplies, those water supplies can't be used to raise crops and five million people in Las Vegas can starve.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-54	These springs only provide enough water to create small streams. They're dependent on underground aquifers, rainwater, rainfall and snowfall. We all know that the amount of rain and snowfall has been at drought stages over the last eight to ten years so they now depend on existing aquifers more than ever. These springs will dry up if the aquifers are depleted.	Comment noted. The potential effects to springs were evaluated as summarized in Section 3.3 of the EIS.
33369-55	These springs will dry up without these natural springs, and the native Bonneville cutthroat will die without sufficient water in these streams.	The impact analysis discloses that groundwater pumping could reduce flows in some streams inhabited by Bonneville cutthroat trout. The analysis is not able to predict the magnitude of flow change in streams, which could range from slight to high magnitude reductions. The analysis focuses on miles of perennial streams that may be at risk from drawdown.
33369-56	If they're wrong will they agree to stop pumping before they've completely wiped out the area?	An applicant-committed protection measure listed under Adaptive Management Measures would be an option for reducing or ceasing groundwater withdrawals. This measure would determine a reduction or cessation of pumping on a case-by-case basis for individual production wells or well fields using technical and consultation process identified in the stipulated agreements.
33369-57	There are other areas that I'm sure will be greatly affected also: Lehman Caves and other surrounding cave systems, whose creation and stunning features are formed by underground flows of water, the many different species of plants, birds, wildlife who depend on the water supply, the farmers, the ranchers and all the other people who have economic impact in that area.	Updated sections 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) and 3.14 (special designations) discuss potential impacts to Great Basin National Park from groundwater pumping.
33369-58	in this case I have to say that I strongly support the No Action alternative. I don't think that carving up and selling off or trading off our heritage, our environmental heritage and our recreational heritage is worth what is referred to as several hundred jobs to build a pipeline that we don't need.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-59	The reason we just don't need it is because we have an utterly reliable source of water right now. We have the Colorado River. The Colorado River is a strong river. The only reason it's in danger is because of overuse, and not by Las Vegas but by other consumers along the river.	Information on this issue has added to the Executive Summary.
33369-60	The relationship between the water agency and Coyote Springs investment is very close. In fact, SNWA has paid Coyote Springs investment tens of millions of dollars in an ongoing contractual partnership with this developer. I'm concerned that one of the primary movers for this particular project is actually the relationship with Coyote Springs, and I think that that needs to be addressed within the EIS.	SNWA has not disclosed Coyote Spring Investments as a party to this project. As stated in Chapter 2, Lincoln County, by agreement with SNWA, has reserved capacity in the proposed pipeline for use in conveying water from northern Lincoln County to Coyote Springs Investment property. Any development of this reserved capacity would necessarily go through a ROW application process and a thorough NEPA analysis before it could be used by Lincoln County.
33369-61	Because 90 percent of our water comes from the Colorado River, it is not reliable, especially when we have ten years of drought.	Please review updated section 3.3 (water resources) for further information concerning this topic.
33369-62	We believe that the Southern Nevada Water Authority's groundwater development project assures water availability for current and future demands and provides the necessary protection from drought conditions.	Thank you for your comment. Additional information on this comment is contained in Appendix A.
33369-63	SNWA will implement numerous monitoring procedures to determine whether and how to implement additional environmental protection measures working very closely with federal, state and local agencies. That strong management is what will safeguard the environment in Eastern Nevada.	The comment is noted regarding the monitoring and mitigation process.
33369-64	And as far as inter-basin transfers, some of our communities like Carson City and Tonopah were all built because they had the inter-basin transfers. This is nothing new for Nevada. Nevada's water belongs to Nevadans, and so therefore for these reasons we endorse the SNWA development project, and please, we request that the right-of-way to develop this be utilized.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-65	The point of this exercise is to determine whether the BLM will issue a right-of-way. And that's somewhat complicated by the Lincoln County Land Conservation Act of 2004 which actually directed them to issue a right-of-way in Clark and Lincoln counties. The document states that this is really not a point of decision for them, that it's mandated. I think that is not a point of settled law. That needs to be mentioned in the final document, that there's a conflict between FLPMA, the Federal Land Policy Management Act, which established the BLM which mandates sustainable use of our federal lands, and the 2004 Lincoln County Act, which basically directs them to issue the right-of-way regardless of what the consequences are.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities under both FLPMA and LCCRDA.

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33369-66	In Southern Spring Valley we would see potentially greater than 200 foot drawdown in the water table over the next 75 years. That basically means the end of all of the vegetation in that valley with significant loss not only of wildlife, so on, but very negative consequences in terms of turning that into a dustbowl.	Please see Standard Resource Response Veg-4.
33369-67	So to reiterate, I strongly urge you to pick the No Action alternative but also to have a discussion in the final document about the conflict between the 1976 organic act for BLM, which mandates sustainable development, and the 2004 Lincoln County Land Act, and hopefully deny or pick the No Action alternative for the entire project.	Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities under both FLPMA and LCCRDA. Your comments have been considered in BLM's selection of the agency preferred alternative as described in section 2.8.
33369-68	We think that you should look more into some of the economic impacts that the pipeline may have.	Socioeconomic impacts are discussed in detail in Section 3.18.2 of the EIS.
33369-69	And we encourage you to extend the period for comments and feedback because this is going to have long lasting repercussions, and the longer that we have to gain input and criticism for this project, the stronger that the final EIS will be and the stronger the decision made as a result will be.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33369-70	And so that's why the No Action alternative is the only alternative that the BLM should pursue because any other alternative that allows for pumping of the water from these valleys is going to result in destruction of that land, and even acts to try to remediate that or mitigate that after the fact is not going to return the Great Basin to the greatness that it has right now.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-71	So once again, I urge the BLM to address some of these concerns, extend the comment period, and at the end of the day deny the right-of-way to the Southern Nevada Water Authority.	Thank you for your comments. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33369-72	The second point is I request that the BLM extend the comment time. This is such a huge document and very complicated, and I really very much appreciate the public opportunity to speak and to study and think about this, but I think we need a little more time.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33369-73	And I heard the comment made by Mr. McAnallen that there's unused water in Baker. Well, I am sure that the Baker area is making very good use of their water, and I'm sure that there's wildlife and plant life that's using the water, and I don't think that we need to rob it from them.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-74	So other things that have not necessarily been considered are the fact that the Great Basin is indeed a basin. It's a closed system. You pull the water out, it's not going back.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33369-75	The other impacts of course has to be considered by BLM's right-of-way access is the 306 miles of road, the five pumping stations, all the power line access that's going to be required to be put in there, pipelines up to 84 inches. This is going to destroy the desert.	Thank you for your comment. Every resource section considers the temporary and permanent impacts related to right-of-way construction.
33369-76	NPCA registers grave concern that the national park's cave system will be harmed along with these very new endemic species.	Updated sections 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) and 3.14 (special designations) discuss potential impacts to Great Basin National Park from groundwater pumping.
33369-77	In addition the park's pristine air quality and dark night skies are among the best in the nation. In 2004 and 2005, Great Basin was found to be among the darkest places in the lower 48 states giving park visitors a rare and very uncommon experience to experience starry night skies. The park's unspoiled air quality is due significantly to its remote distance from urban areas and from major pollution sources, as well as its location as in regards to prevailing winds. Lack of pollutant particles which scatter atmospheric light and increase sky glow provide park visitors with some of the best star gazing experiences. SNWA's groundwater pumping plans, however, potentially threaten this resource.	Please see common response Air-5.
33369-78	In all likelihood this could create a dustbowl situation threatening the economic eco-tourism opportunities in the area and practically putting this national park at risk.	Please see Standard Resource Responses Air 5 and Air 10.
33369-79	And if you take, the little spring creeks are going to disappear if you start putting straws in the ground up there. And so I would say to you that's a pristine area, it needs to stay pristine. And if you take away the water up there, it just becomes a bunch of dirt. Wilderness and pristine areas without water is nothing more than a bunch of dirt.	Updated sections 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) and 3.14 (special designations) discuss potential impacts to Wilderness from groundwater pumping.
33369-80	I'm the executive director of the Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force and we opposed Yucca Mountain because we want to save what's good in Nevada for Nevadans, for the Native Americans and for everything that it was here for, and I feel the same way about this water project. There is no extra water in Nevada. And I would ask that the No Action alternative be adopted and the right-of-way not be given for this project.	Thank you for your comment.
33369-81	First of all, I would request that the comment period is not adequate and needs to be extended to at least 180 days.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33369-82	Secondly, I would suggest that the scope of the DEIS is not adequate, and there is reason for a supplemental DEIS that covers the entire project, all the well fields, lateral lines, power lines, the entire project plus the new idea of distributed pumping, which was not on the docket when this was started.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown will be analyzed in future NEPA.

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33369-83	The DEIS fails to address in any real terms the cost of this project. How much will it cost to build the entire project, not just the ditch and the pipeline. And where will the money come from to pay for it? Money costs money. Who will pay for the project that is several times the budget of the State of Nevada? Should we trust that Southern Nevada Water Authority will be able to do this when they have gone and spent inflated millions of dollars to buy ranches to try to force their way into Spring Valley?	See standard resource response SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and lack of authority or need for the BLM to independently analyze project costs in conjunction with the ROW application.
33369-84	What are the costs of the monitoring, management and mitigation oversight and enforcement? How can we be sure the monitoring and mitigation will be adequate? Who will see the data? Will it be publicly available in a timely manner? There's more than one way to analyze the data and it needs to be out there.	Determination of monitoring and mitigation costs are beyond the scope of this EIS. The BLM will determine the adequacy of monitoring and mitigation measures. Input from other agencies would be included in the actions dealing with the agencies' jurisdiction and responsibilities (e.g., USFWS for Endangered Species Act compliance). Methods for data analysis of monitoring results will be defined when specific details of the measures are known.
33369-85	The need for the project is not sufficiently addressed in this DEIS. This has gone from a stupid idea, to drought protection and now to a possible future need.	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised
33369-86	There are alternatives that are far more viable, far less detrimental. Why aren't these examined in the DEIS?	Alternatives that were considered but not considered viable are detailed in Section 2.7, particularly Table 2.7-1.
33369-87	Changes in climate change are not addressed, the consequences of climate change on this.	Please see common response Air-15.
33369-88	This water in the White Pine, Lincoln and the valleys up there is not a reliable source of water for Southern Nevada. It will not be long-term. It will not be permanent. When it's gone, it's gone. There is no excess water in these valleys.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33369-89	There are too many irreversible and irretrievable consequences associated with this project.	Please review Chapter 4 which has been updated for the FEIS.
33369-90	I believe that the DEIS is deficient, incomplete and premature.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-91	SNWA has no water rights, and as far as we can see does not have the financial resources to build this.	Please review the updated chapters 1 and 2 which have additional information on project costs and the current NSE water rulings.
33369-92	Based on the many topics inadequately addressed in the DEIS, which have been pointed out by many speakers today, there should be a supplemental draft EIS before the final decision is reached;	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in the issuance of a supplemental DEIS.
33369-93	I was going to say that who knows if 50 years down the line will people be suing you for knowingly putting dust into the atmosphere that caused asthma and lung cancer. Come to find out they did that in Owens Valley. They've already sued the water district in Los Angeles for creating all those things, so that was taken.	Please see common responses Air-3 and Air-10.
33369-94	My real issues are I'm union and I appreciate what the AFL-CIO says and I understand their point of view, but I don't think that we can fix the economic crisis by acting in haste to build this pipeline.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-95	The Colorado River flows within 20 miles of Las Vegas, about 20 miles from Las Vegas, and it flows. The flow in the river ranges between about 6.5 million acre feet a year to about 8.5 million acre feet a year, an average flow of around 7 million acre feet. That is not a drought.	Comment noted.
33369-96	The drought is in brain cells of people who are using, allowing millions, about four million, over four million acre feet of water to be pulled out of the Colorado River and poured onto farms in the middle of the desert to raise alfalfa or cotton or some crops like this that are totally uneconomical.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33369-97	So that gets to my second subject, the second premise on which this is based, that there is no other solution. That's just total nonsense. All they have to do is just change some of the regulations of how the Colorado River water is dealt with. There are many ways of dealing with it. And all this is is one more subterfuge of the federal government. The federal government created this problem in the first place and now the federal government, through BLM, is going to create a second huge problem by denuding the landscape in Northern Nevada.	Please refer to the updated chapter 1 which contains information on the Colorado River allocations. The preface of the executive summary also contains background on this topic.
33369-98	But there's a solution. It's very easy for the federal government to adopt. There are many solutions, in fact. One is the Southern Nevada Water Authority could be permitted to buy farms in the Imperial Valley or in the Arizona valleys. They're using these incredible sums of water and substitute water here. But the federal rules don't permit that. We can't do that. They can change other rules but they can't change rules like that.	This comment was bracketed in error. It does not directly pertain to the Project or the DEIS.

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33369-99	They can do desalting in Mexico and substitute water. They can, as stated here, they can substitute water from the north. One thing that's been very effective in Las Vegas where Pat Mulroy has raised the cost of water from what, about a dollar a thousand gallons to now as much as \$4 per thousand gallons is the federal government can simply charge for the water that's taken out of the river. That will immediately fill up Lake Mead. It will immediately produce all the water that Las Vegas could ever need because the farmers who are growing alfalfa with their five feet of water that they get, that they pour on this land, or in some cases some of the farms down there put 20 feet of water, that's the height of this ceiling, on their crops. So if these exchanges were allowed to be made, this problem is very easily solved.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33369-100	What hasn't been discussed, some of the things that haven't been discussed are how much is it going to cost for the construction of this? The water authority is already \$5 billion in debt. They can't meet their own budget. They're spending their reserves just to be able to operate this year, and they only have to transport water 20 miles. How much is it going to cost to transport water 300 miles for this agency.	See Standard Comment Response SocEcon-1 regarding the inclusion of summary project cost information in the FIES. Additional information regarding SNWA's cost estimates can also be found on the Nevada State Engineer's website: www.water.nv.gov/hearings/past/springetal/documents.cfm?DIR=exhibits.SNWAExhibits .
33369-101	When I read the environmental impact statement, I found it fermented. It does not very well discuss the cumulative affect and the cumulative impact of the component which are agriculture, groundwater. It's like a chain reaction and this must be updated.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33369-102	Second, I propose that this alternative of the pipeline should withdraw and have an alternative pipeline for this reservation of water taken from the Atlantic Ocean. Using solar energy, you can work with Arizona and you will have both electricity and water and it's much more cost effective and I'm sure Senator Reid would sponsor it.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33369-103	One of the things that was talked about is the ownership of the water, and I mentioned that the Donner family came in 1862. That water in Burbank Meadows was divided before there were any state laws but largely before there were any states, either Utah or Nevada, and they didn't know which one it was going to be. And those rights are rights that were established before their state laws. And the state laws say they're vested rights so they predate the taking of water by the State of Nevada.	Potential impacts to water rights are discussed in Section 3.3 of the EIS. GW-WR-6 is provided as a general mitigation measure to address potential impacts to water rights. The protection and mitigation of effects to water rights is the responsibility of the Nevada State Engineer (and UDWRi in Utah). In Nevada, the State Engineer would oversee the groundwater development project and monitor effects to existing surface and groundwater rights and take necessary actions to prevent or mitigate impacts if they occur.
33369-104	The water costs in Las Vegas, the Las Vegas people should look carefully at the actual cost of water when they have taken ten percent of the land sales money, you get part of the sales tax money on the connection fees rather than the real costs of the water to the people, and they should look at the costs of this.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33369-105	And the Owens Valley, I have slips here again, but when they started the pumping of water in 1970, their immediate drawdowns in the valley were such that created the environmental problems. And when you look at their drawdown springs and what it did, in was an immediate impact that shows again a place, and Owens Valley is against the Sierra Pacific which gets many times, many, many times the water that falls in the driest part of Nevada. So to think that this pipeline will work for them, I think it will hurt Southern Nevada.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinions do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.

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32887-1	We have a ranch that's 16 miles east of Pony Springs. It's on the Atlanta Mine Road. And in the summer when Lake Valley turns all of their pumps on to water their fields, we literally have to, we call it chumming our windmill to get water into our house. We have to turn the water out of the creek onto the fields above the windmill and let it run for quite some time before we can turn our windmill on and pump our water to our holding tank for our house. And that's just Lake Valley using the normal water for their big pivots and stuff. So if they put that pipeline in and took the water, we would probably have nothing at our ranch. And we're like 7200 feet and we are probably a good, well, 13 miles from where all of the agricultural is going on with the fields there in Lake Valley. I believe that if they put that pipeline in, we would have no water. And the thing about the renewable groundwater, I'm not sure where that renewable water is supposed to come from, because once it's pumped out of there, it's going to be gone. If we have a good winter and a lot of, you know, water in the spring, we don't have as much of a problem, but at this point it's already affecting us with just them using the water. So if that water is taken out of here, it's going to affect a lot of people. I mean, it would affect us even our drinking water, not just to water our fields and stuff but our drinking water. And it's the John D. and Kathleen Kohl ranch that I'm talking about that's affected, but we've been on that five generations. We've been on there several hundred years, and we've not had the problems we are experiencing now.	Proposed mitigation GW-WR-6, SE-8 (renumbered) address potential effects on existing water rights and wells. Section 3.20 provides additional information regarding the COM Plan framework for the GWD project. Please review standard resource response MM-1, MM-2 and MM-3 for additional information on this topic.
32887-2	Why build this one? You could build a pipeline to the ocean, you know, and distill water and bring the water needs to Vegas, and he said, That is planned in the future.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.

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32887-3	I also own the Meloy Springs Ranch in the north end of Dry Lake Valley. I've got a really good spring on my property. We run cattle there. We also have a family outfitters business that we operate out of the ranch also. And my main concern, biggest concern is with this pipeline project is it will, you know, construction, even before they start pumping the water, the construction and everything, the environmental issues: The wildlife, wild horses. You know, eventually I feel that once this project is completed and they start pumping water, that, you know, all your surface water is going to dry up and the springs are not going to be available.	Comments noted. The risk to this spring is considered low since available groundwater elevation data suggest that the regional groundwater levels are on the order of a couple hundred feet or more below the ground surface in the region where the spring occurs (suggesting that the spring is likely controlled by a localized perched groundwater system that is not interconnected with the deeper regional groundwater flow system that will be affected by the groundwater development. Regardless, GW-WR-6 is provided as a general mitigation measure to address potential impacts to water rights. The protection and mitigation of effects to water rights is the responsibility of the Nevada State Engineer (and UDWRi in Utah). In Nevada, the State Engineer would oversee the groundwater development project and monitor effects to existing surface and groundwater rights and take necessary actions to prevent or mitigate impacts if they occur.
32887-4	You're going to lose your vegetation in those three valleys: Cave Valley, Dry Lake and Delamar, also up in Spring Valley. And it could completely devastate the wildlife and our way of living here in Lincoln County.	Please review updated section 3.5 (vegetation) for information on this topic.
32887-5	And I hope that the BLM really looks at these issues. And my hope is that the right-of-way is not granted until more scientific evidence shows that the water is available for the project that they're looking at in Southern Nevada, in the Las Vegas Valley I should say.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-6	Dry Lake Valley is 42 percent of our operations. We run our cows there five months out of the year. Without that valley, the operations are no more. We have springs over there: Simpson Spring, Fairview Spring. It's a major concern for us when they're low, impacted by any kind of deep well drilling anywhere near there. We're hoping the BLM will not accept SNWA's right-of-way for the pipeline.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
32887-7	My concerns with actually having Southern Nevada Water Authority come in and take the water out of the basins in Lincoln and White Pine counties is the fact that once they take the water, and it starts to take the wells down and take the springs down, even though they've promised to stop pumping water, where is that guarantee? I don't think and feel that they can actually get that accomplished. I don't want them to take the water in the first place, but I think that it's an outright lie on their part to say that they will stop pumping if they affect the water rights.	An applicant-committed protection measure listed under Adaptive Management Measures would be an option for reducing or ceasing groundwater withdrawals. This measure would be determined on a case-by-case basis for individual production wells or well fields using technical and consultation processes identified in the stipulated agreements.
32887-8	Now in Eagle Valley, where I live, the Eagle Valley Irrigation Company had the water appropriated to them that comes out of all the springs out of Mount Wilson, and that's called the headwaters. From the headwaters all the way down through Eagle Valley, Rose Valley, Round Valley, and that water goes on down and does drain into Lake Mead. But all the waters from the headwaters were appropriated through the state water engineer for the Eagle Valley Irrigation Company. We have the right to use those. Those waters come into what's known as Eagle Valley Reservoir and then the water users down below that in Eagle Valley use those waters. That's our livelihood, has been since Eagle Valley was settled in 1886.	Comment noted.
32887-9	And if those springs go dry, it will put all of those families out of business. There are 50 families in Eagle Valley right now, not all of them are on water rights, but those who are on water rights feed cattle, they raise hay, they sell hay or use it for their own cattle operation.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM appreciates your concern regarding long-term water availability in the Eagle Valley. The results of the regional water modeling for the EIS does not indicate drawdown effects in the Eagle Valley under any of the alternatives, even at full build out plus 200 years (See section 3.3.2.8)
32887-10	How would Southern Nevada Water Authority mitigate that if those springs were affected? If those springs dried up, there is no way for them to mitigate that entire valley to keep the growth going that's out there right now, growth being in the pastures, the stock waters, feeding the stock. And my concern runs deep and it runs through a lot of years, because our ancestors have taken very good care of those areas. I also, where I worked as a county commissioner, I have concerns that all of the permits would be met through Southern Nevada Water Authority. I have concerns that their promise of turning off the water will not be met. I have concerns of them coming in and utilizing the water that is under White Pine and Lincoln County to supply Clark County until that water is not there any longer, then there will be no more supply for Clark County and it will have already done destruction for Lincoln County and White Pine.	See Standard Resource Response MM-1 for monitoring and mitigation.
32887-11	I have a problem in that this proposal is inconsistent with state and local laws. I think that needs to be addressed. I think that anybody who comes in and says they're going to do a project needs to be able to pay for that. I don't think Southern Nevada Water Authority is in the position to pay for everything that they are talking about in this EIS.	Project cost and funding information has been added to chapter 2 of the FEIS. Information on the agencies involved in assuring consistency with state and local laws are listed in Chapter 1.
32887-12	I think there will be serious environmental consequences in everything that they do with this pipeline. I feel that as we go forward with – as they go forward with their plans, there's so many things they haven't worked out that they haven't addressed that they haven't an idea of what the impacts are, and I don't think that there are any guarantees out there of what the impacts are going to be; and I think it will just be a travesty to have this move forward and have the water taken out of these two counties to supply the water to another county.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-13	I just have serious concerns over how they would ever mitigate for the losses that I feel that we're going to have, because even though they've gone out and done their studies, their studies are showing there will be impacts.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.

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32887-14	In Las Vegas on their wells, they've pumped enough that the ground is starting to shrink in in places and they're not putting that out there. If it's doing it in their own county, why in the world would it not do it for somebody else's county when they're going in and taking the water? It's a proven item to them; they're disregarding it. The ground is shrinking, collapsing because the water is not there anymore and the ground collapses in around itself; there's a depression in the ground. They know it. They're going to do the same thing to our two counties and that's wrong.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
32887-15	First of all, I think that this pipeline will be the ruination of the northern counties that's being affected. I think that you cannot run a pipeline through an area without messing up all of the feed for the cattle, the white sage that grows in the flatland in the valleys where this primary is for the pipeline.	Please refer to standard resource response Veg-2 which addresses this comment. Also, please review the updated section 3.5 (vegetation) for information on effects of construction of facilities and groundwater pumping on white sage.
32887-16	If it was an area like the pipeline in Alaska where the tundra would grow back, everything would be fine, the antelope or the animals can migrate in their normal ways after the pipeline was done, and everything looks normal afterwards in a year or two it would be great, but that's not going to be happening when you take and put a big scar like this across our desert.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
32887-17	Not to mention the drawdown that the water would have on our springs and everything else. And as you can see, I didn't bring a prepared speech tonight, I just want you people to know my feelings.	Please review updated section 3.3 and standard response WR-18 for information on this topic.
32887-18	And I would encourage you to use good science before you make a decision on this pipeline because it will ruin it for the folks of Lincoln and White Pine counties. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
32887-19	In the economic impacts I think it's absolutely essential that we have a full description of how much money Harry Reid is going to make from this project, whether him or his family or his business associates, either from the water pipeline and water selling and distribution or from the associated power line use. I think that's extremely vital to the knowledge and information that needs to go into the decision making process.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-20	Also in the economics there was missing, and I visited with some of your folks about it, an evaluation of how this is going to affect domestic well owners. As groundwater tables diminish, it will affect, yes, irrigators and livestock operators, but there are a large number of our citizens that live on domestic wells, usually in the shallow part of the aquifer. And if those aquifers are affected by deep water pumping, it will cause a tremendous impact to those households, because a farm can, once it reaches the feasibility level, they can shut the water off, quit farming. You got a house and a bunch of kids, you've got to have water. And if you have to drill deeper, drill a new well, buy bigger pumps, run higher power bills, there's a tremendous impact on the economy of the household.	Based on current population distribution, this comment relates primarily to Snake and Spring Valleys. Proposed mitigation SE-6 and GW-WR-1 address mitigation for this issue. Please review the COM Plan discussion in Section 3.20.
32887-21	There also needs to be a thorough discussion of how this affects the future growth of possibilities for the county. There is some mention of it but we don't see in real numbers what the potential loss here would be for this pipeline to go into place. It would not only affect the livestock operators and their futures, but the moving of a hundred thousand acre feet of water out of northern Lincoln and southern White Pine counties basically affects from -- I'm a farmer. So 25,000 acres of production agriculture or current values, 25 to \$50 million a year of economic benefit to rural communities. And I think that that's something that needs to be thoroughly discussed and evaluated.	Thank you for your comment. The economic importance and contributions of the agriculture industry, including farm employment and the reliance on irrigation are described in Section 3.18.1.3 and its social importance is noted in Section 3.18.1.7. Section 3.3 (Water resources) notes that groundwater development poses potential risks to existing water rights, which creates the possibility of adverse social and economic consequences in the areas affected by drawdown (see Section 3.18.2.8). Text describing the geographic distribution of agricultural lands within the potentially affected counties has been added, as has language acknowledging the indirect and induced contributions. Suggested mitigation measure SE-6 has also been modified.
32887-22	And then last but not least, it's very important for you and the folks that are here that you put right in writing right up front that this whole NEPA process is just completely moot. It means nothing. The BLM has no choice. The act passed by Congress simply says notwithstanding the NEPA process, this right-of-way is in effect. That's what the law says. Yeah, it's a great dog and pony show and, yeah, hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent on analysis and evaluations and contractors and consultants, and we put on a good show around the country, but I think it needs to state the law right there in the front part of the book that says that's all it is is for show, because the decision has already been made. Thank you, Mr. Harry.	The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.
32887-23	The right-of-way application we're talking about tonight by the Southern Nevada Water Authority should be denied by the BLM for two substantial reasons. Both of them come from BLM rules. First, to comply with the BLM's own guidance entitled Obtaining a Right-of-Way on Public Land from the Lands and Realty Division dated March 10th, 2009, specifically pages 10 and 11 that says a right-of-way application can be denied for any of these six reasons. And I think in part and for some of the rest of them you could use each one of these six reasons: The application does not conform to land use plans; would not be in the public interest; the applicant is not qualified based on the fact of the input that they've given to this document; proposal is inconsistent with federal, state and local laws; the applicant is not technically capable of performing this project; and finally there are a series of environmental consequences that may occur that cannot be mitigated.	Please refer to updated chapter 1 which provides information on FLPMA guidance in regard to this project. Chapter 1 also provides information on NEPA and LCCRDA which also have a bearing on this FEIS.
32887-24	The second major reason you should deny this application is found in this EIS draft proposal discussion tonight. I seriously urge the BLM to listen to their own analysis contained in the four pages of chapter four that discusses irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.	Please review the revised chapter 4 information.

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32887-25	There are 22 topics given including air, geology, water, soil, vegetation, wildlife, aquatic biological, minerals, rangeland, horses, land uses, special designations, recreation, transportation, visual resources, cultural, Native American values, socioeconomics, environmental justice, hazardous materials, surface disturbance, and groundwater pumping.	This statement was bracketed in error and does not contain a comment that warrants a response.
32887-26	Let's talk a minute about cumulative impacts. We are starting to see them today. Take the online transmission project that's now undergoing in Jake's Valley in White Pine County and is scheduled to move through Muleshoe and Dry Lake Valley and Delamar Valley down into Clark County. The public lands are now having trouble with roads, gates being left open. This document talks about you cannot describe the cumulative impacts until the projects are built. This statement is false. We see these impacts today on just the very first of five projects that are listed in section 3.12 executive summary page 33 and 34. Three of these five projects have not started. They've not met with the County, the general public. They haven't told us what's going on. And they haven't even discussed the pending right-of-way Yucca rail application, which the BLM has declined Lincoln County request to cancel this application. They said they're going to take no action until Congress decides that they're going to fund Yucca Mountain.	The additive effects of the ongoing (such as the ON line) and future projects have been evaluated in the locations where these projects and the GWD project overlap. The Yucca Mountain rail project was not included as a foreseeable project because of the low likelihood that the nuclear repository will be approved by Congress.
32887-27	Again in section 3.12 page 37 they talk about only one percent of the 1.56 million acres in forage will not be lost. Only one percent of that. Well, I tell you, if you take half of Gloeckner's allotment, that's a heck of a lot more than one percent. You could take a cut in pay for one percent, I couldn't. Any of us in this room couldn't. But if you cut off half of everything, if you take Gloeckner's allotment, they won't have any winter range. You couldn't survive without half of your job, you'd have to go get a second job, as we all would. So this cumulative impact, this loss of forage statement in this document is inaccurate.	Please refer to standard resource response GR-1 which is responsive to this comment.
32887-28	They talk about long-term draw in section 4.3 page 43. You have a nice little colored graph. And the place that is most heavily impacted is a big red splotch. I want to enter these pictures into the record. Let the record show that they're pictures of a small 16 acre sub-irrigated pasture that I own in Panaca, Nevada. I have personal knowledge of the water flows and the dryness and the wetness of this piece of property for the past 47 years. In the spring this land is too wet to get my tractor on to do work. As soon as the farmers start turning their -- as soon as the farmers turn on their sprinklers, my pasture gets so dry I have to haul water to my cows. But as soon as they turn their pumps off in September, my water table comes back up. If this project pumps water from groundwater basins around me, I'm sure my field will be absolutely worthless. And I'm just a minor player in this thing. Most of the people that are involved in this valley have much more land than I do and have much more invested. It's a small thing.	Please review standard resource response GR-1. Section 3.12 (grazing) contains and allotment by allotment analysis of impacts.
32887-29	Additions and improvements to this document must include all the things that are listed, including placing cattle guards at every fence, road crossing, allotment boundary fences; using type II gravel, full-time onsite road maintenance equipment, plus fire suppression and dust control equipment. These are the mistakes that were made by the NV Energy people that are not in the stipulations that BLM wrote, so we're having a real problem with the online people in White Pine County and we don't want it to continue in Lincoln County, so we need to get this straightened out right here right now. We must create success standards for adaptive re-vegetation mitigation before any construction work is authorized. These standards must assure no net losses of AUMs.	These concerns are addressed in BLM best management practices (appendix D) and in the applicant committed measures (appendix E). The applicant will be required to address these issues and many others in their final plan of development; please review revised chapter 3.20.
32887-30	The long-term pumping effects and the drawdown on page 61, they say there's no current pumping in Cave Valley, Dry Lake Valley and Delamar Valley. This is incorrect. It has been scientifically proven that these water basins are interconnected and will affect each other.	The text was corrected in response to the comment.
32887-31	The impacts of this project are unpredictable and uncontrollable. This application is incomplete and insufficient.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-32	I believe the Las Vegas Valley Water district, and yes, I'm old enough to remember when it was the Las Vegas Valley Water District before it became Southern Nevada Water Authority, has designed this project under the misconception that they are too big to fail. That is the very reason the BLM should deny this right-of-way application because it is too big.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-33	I will steal a quotation from White Pine County Commission Chairman Laurie Carson. Our water is finite. We are the stewards of these resources and we've taken darn good care of them up until now.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.

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ID	Comment	Response
32887-34	<p>But I was impressed by the document. I just want to thank you guys for the work that you've done. I think that considering what could have been done, it is really quite a resource, especially in covering some of the things that I'm interested in, such as the issues of regional water drawdown and the cumulative impacts of the SNWA pipeline and the other things that have been proposed and have been happening. With that said, there are a few things that I would comment on that I think that might be useful. Cumulative impacts I guess -- my notes here are pretty scattered so if I take things out of order -- cumulative impacts, as Connie said, they're already going on and they have been going on actually for 20 years. Cumulative impacts started, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Las Vegas Valley Water District filed an application for all the water in these three counties. The minute that happened, water became a commodity like gold, and a lot of things have developed from that.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
32887-35	<p>The promise of a pipeline coming north through this vast area of Great Basin is similar to the concept of the first transcontinental railroad back in 1860. You see towns spring up because of the speculators going out and saying, you know, the railroad is going to come here, come buy lots and I'll sell them to you. You see other areas not fortunate enough to get the railroad, and the town that might have had promise dries up.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>
32887-36	<p>The pipeline has this kind of an impact. It's kind of hard to assess it but I think it's one of the most important things about this project. And perhaps it falls under the final one of the later categories in your document under socioeconomic impacts. I think that there are additional things that need to go into that section of your document. Look at some of the things that have happened that are related to the pipeline. The pipeline application was filed in 1989. In 1998 Lincoln County formed a partnership with the Vidler water company. Vidler came to Lincoln County and persuaded the County that they could not prevent the pipeline, which is what they wanted to do, but if they joined forces with Vidler, they could come up with a plan to protect their water; however, in the short period of time, all the County's efforts were directed towards water development, very much like what's going on in Las Vegas, exporting water through the valleys here to valleys, uninhabited valleys south of the county near the county line, Coyote Springs near Mesquite over at Toquop. 1989 going to 1998 coincidentally was about the same time that Harvey Whittemore bought Coyote Springs. It was in a three way deal with the Southern Nevada Water Authority where he didn't have to pay anything by turning over some of the water. Toquop also developed about that time. One of the developers down in Mesquite trespassing on BLM and persuaded the County to front door them to see if they could get some legislation to buy it. In 2003 you have the agreement with SNWA. This was prompted pretty much by Vidler wanting to clear the way so they could deal whatever water projects down to the Mesquite area because SNWA protested some of them. So you see all of these things that fall in the process that originated from the pipeline idea itself and from the creation of rural water as a commodity. Following that in 2004 you had the Land Act proposal, and at that time we had SNWA up here lobbying people to support the Lincoln County Land Act and telling us that we needn't worry about whether or not the provision for a right-of-way preempted NEPA because NEPA would still be in effect and all that stuff would go forward. We've already heard a comment tonight of the disappointment that the question of whether or not to grant a right-of-way with Lincoln County area has already been preempted. Then in 2006 approximately we had Harvey Whittemore of Coyote Springs coming up here and purchasing essentially all the land and water he could get and putting together a portfolio of some 35,000 acre feet of water which he would then identify as being exported to Coyote Springs in his EIS for the Coyote Springs development, and the pipeline of course. Without the pipeline you don't transfer that water. Now economic changes over the last few years may have changed some of these sales, I don't know. I've heard rumors. It doesn't matter because I'm not talking about specifics here, I'm not talking about a particular developer, I'm talking about the effect that it's had on the County to have this pipeline phantom, or whatever you want to call it, hanging over us. That's changed the way our future is already being created. It's changed our leadership because the money that's come from the developers has been pumped back into creating administrative departments in the County to deal with the developers, and we have people that have a lot of influence very close to the lives of developers now and don't talk to the citizens as much. So the impression comes out of the County that the County is for the pipeline. And this is kind of unfortunate. When the applications were made by Whittemore to transfer the water from Lake Valley, I proposed, before I went to the state engineer I sat in front of the post office with a petition. I had two because the SNWA application first to go through on Delamar Dry Lake and Cave Valley was happening about that time, 2008, and so I had two petitions. I had one protesting SNWA and the other one protesting Harvey's water transfer. And then I had a friend circulate the same petition in Alamo and Caliente. All together we got 660 signatures. And sitting in front of the post office in Pioche, not a single person disagreed with my petition. Everybody I asked signed it. So I guess I'll quit with that for now. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision. Please review chapter 1 and the executive summary for information and background on the project.</p>

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ID	Comment	Response
32887-37	In 1845 my great, great grandfather came to this area and began to establish what would become our present day family cattle ranching operation. Members of the succeeding generations were born on this land, worked hard to earn a living from that land and were laid to rest in the same area of earth that they spent their entire lives. Five generations of extended family lie buried in our small family cemetery and every one of these people loved and respected the land that sustained them. Dry Lake Valley has provided our family much of the sustenance for more than 100 years since it represents 100 percent of our winter grazing. For five months of the year, November through April, over 1500 head of cattle thrive on the abundant winter fat and on the water supplied from wells and springs as they give birth to their calves in this more moderate climate. Dry Lake Valley is essential to the existence of several ranch operations. Without it the livelihood of various families would be destroyed along with the legacy that helped shape the West.	Please review updated sections 3.12 (grazing) and 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) as well as standard resource response GR-1 which provides information relevant to this comment.
32887-38	After having read your executive summary, I would like to express several concerns applicable to our operation. First of all, on page 37 you write that although 20,570 acres of native vegetation in the basin will be removed by the project, this affects less than one percent of the total area of all cumulative surface disturbance.	The reasoning that supports the statement that "No changes in livestock stocking rates in BLM allotments are anticipated" comes from the fact that no allotment would incur greater than two percent surface disturbance. Summer and winter ranges are important communities in the region given their biological and resource values. The proposed pipeline routes, as submitted by the applicant, have been analyzed in this EIS and the impacts associated with the proposed alignment have been presented therein. Other potential impacts related to vegetation and water sources have been addressed at a programmatic level in this EIS. Subsequent NEPA will be required to determine and disclose site-specific impacts.
32887-39	You go on to say that no changes in livestock stocking rates would be affected. Because you are dealing with over 1.5 million acres for the total project, you assume that this small portion of land disturbance from the pipeline itself is very minimal. I, however, believe this conclusion is vastly incorrect since any change in available forage or water would have a tremendous domino effect on many livestock operations. Parts of Cave and most of Dry Lake and Delamar valleys serve as the only winter grazing grounds of many operations. Other areas of the Wilson Creek allotment belonging to ranchers are not suitable for winter use because of snowfall levels and cold temperatures. Grazing permittees can only run as many livestock as the most limiting portion of their permit. Dry Lake Valley, for example, represents our most limiting portion. Since the sustainable numbers supported on this winter allotment is, therefore, directly linked to the number of cattle using our summer, spring and fall allotments, these other seasonal areas would also become drastically affected. We would be incapable of running anything close to our current numbers. Loss of forage, any forage and water in our Dry Lake allotment alone could affect directly 12,163 AUMs, but in addition more than double this amount if spring, summer and fall AUMs are taken into consideration. The economic impact would be drastic since it would be impossible to replace this lost natural winter forage with hay or another desirable grazing area since none are available in our area.	The reasoning that supports the statement that "No changes in livestock stocking rates in BLM allotments are anticipated" comes from the fact that no allotment would incur greater than two percent surface disturbance. Summer and winter ranges are important communities in the region given their biological and resource values. The proposed pipeline routes, as submitted by the applicant, have been analyzed in this EIS and the impacts associated with the proposed alignment have been presented therein. Other potential impacts related to vegetation and water sources have been addressed at a programmatic level in this EIS. Subsequent NEPA will be required to determine and disclose site-specific impacts.
32887-40	Additionally, the abundant winter fat, also called white sage, areas that exist in Dry Lake, Delamar and other valleys represents some of the best winter grazing ranges in the state for cattle and sheep. When disturbed, the sensitive plant is easily destroyed and almost impossible to reestablish. In your summary on page 35 you state that the GWD project and each foreseeable project would be required to re-vegetate disturbed surfaces, yet this plant and several others would be impossible to reestablish.	Winterfat is an important vegetation community in the region given its biological and resource values. The proposed pipeline routes, as submitted by the applicant, have been analyzed in this EIS and the impacts associated with the proposed alignment have been presented therein. Other potential impacts related to vegetation have been addressed at a programmatic level in this EIS. Subsequent NEPA will be required to determine and disclose site-specific impacts.
32887-41	With over 300 miles of disturbance for the pipeline alone, added with the hundreds of miles for laterals to the wells, the soil and vegetation disturbance is unthinkable. Even more distressing is the disturbance to vegetation when the drawdown factor from excessive pumping is added to the equation.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinions do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-42	To compound the bleak situation, in this area is found a very finely divided soil composed of dust blown by wind and silt deposited by water. After any disturbance of the surface crust, it easily becomes airborne again. The area is prone to many dust storms, and this soil type becomes even more troublesome whenever it is disturbed by travel. In fact, the soil in the valley bottom is classified as highly erodible under the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Highly Erodible Lands identification procedures.	It is assumed that ACMs and BMPs would be implemented to minimize wind erosion that might result from project-related surface disturbance. The existence and distribution of soils susceptible to wind and water erosion are documented in Section 3.4.
32887-43	With this type of soil, coupled with lack of sufficient water, I believe it would be very difficult to reestablish vegetation at an adequate level to sustain livestock, wild horses, and wildlife grazing at present levels or anywhere close to that.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-44	As permittees in the Dry Lake Valley, we not only have grazing allotments in this area, but we also own the water rights for the springs and wells that service this valley. Currently we have a pipeline network that is over 31 miles long and that transports water to five reservoirs, in addition to three wells located within the proposed area. These reservoirs also provide water for the wild horse, deer and antelope herds in the valley. Our pipelines run from the mountain springs to all watering areas throughout the valley.	Please refer to revised section 3.12 (grazing) for information on the impacts from groundwater pumping to grazing lands.
32887-45	What effects will the physical construction of the pipeline and related facilities have on our existing pipelines, wells and reservoirs? Will all the GWD project construction bypass our structures or will they destroy them in the process? Will our pipelines run beneath their pipeline, will they run over the top of their pipeline or will they be eliminated altogether, because they do bisect.	Pipelines and related project facilities will not eliminate existing, in use pipelines, wells, or reservoirs. All crossings with established infrastructure or improvements will be avoided to the extent practicable and necessary crossings will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

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32887-46	Also will we still have accessibility and serviceability to our water? Most importantly your summary shows that the long range pumping effects will more than likely have drastic impacts on our water rights, and our wells, as you put it, could be rendered unusable. Minimally there will be a 10 to 20 foot drawdown in a small portion of northern Dry Lake Valley, but in the majority of the area a 20 to 50 drawdown will be likely. Here is where the domino effect emerges again. You must realize that the ensuing consequences for affecting these water rights could prove to be drastic. Again, not only would these particular water rights be affected since ranchers could show no beneficial use by cattle, which the area could no longer sustain, but the water rights in our other grazing areas, we own vested water rights to over 50 other springs in the spring and summer allotments, would be detrimentally affected without the cattle herds to show beneficial use.	Comments noted. GW-WR-6 is provided as a general mitigation measure to address potential impacts to water rights. The protection and mitigation of effects to water rights is the responsibility of the Nevada State Engineer (and UDWRi in Utah). In Nevada, the State Engineer would oversee the groundwater development project and monitor effects to existing surface and groundwater rights and take necessary actions to prevent or mitigate impacts if they occur.
32887-47	Currently our entire Wilson Creek allotment contains almost one million acres. Along with losing the water rights to these grazing areas, we would also lose the grazing rights to this vast tract of land. Would Southern Nevada Water Authority, the BLM or the state water engineer then become responsible for reimbursing all ranchers along the GWD project pathway for their extreme losses or would we just lose everything that's taken a lifetime to build?	Please refer to the updated section 3.3.1.7 for background on Nevada Water Law as it pertains to the protection of existing water rights.
32887-48	For over 150 years the ranchers have been excellent stewards of the land because it, in essence, is their livelihood. The loss of the native plant species and water in this area as a result of the GWD project construction would be irreversible and irreplaceable. Please grant us the opportunity to continue to do our part in using the public lands.	Please review the updated section 3.5 (vegetation) for information relevant to this comment.
32887-49	Furthermore, there would also be adverse socioeconomic impacts that would occur from this project. The permittees in Dry Lake Valley North are among some of the oldest and largest ranches in Lincoln County and have been in the ranching business for almost 150 years. At the present time we have ten heirs to our ranch who will continue our family's legacy. The concerns and risks related to this project could change our way of life forever. Not only would it destroy our livelihood but it would also greatly affect our quality of life, our valued rural lifestyle and our heritage. Moreover, Lincoln County is an economically depressed area, and the ranching industry is a vital element to the economy since it represents one of the main commercial activities in the area. The many ranches that exist in the county constitute a major portion of the tax base and use the local businesses for support services. Lincoln County cannot afford another hit to its already struggling economy.	Concerns in this comment are addressed in the updated section 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice).
32887-50	These areas of concern merely touch upon the alarming findings published in your executive summary. The detrimental effects that could result from this project could devastate this entire portion of rural Nevada. Since it is your mission to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, I urge you to select the No Action alternative and to deny the right-of-way request. Your careful consideration of the concerns expressed would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment. Please see general comment response Gen-6
32887-51	And I want to talk about, well, mitigation damage. The question is are they financially prepared to reimburse every affected entity in Lincoln and White Pine, southern White Pine counties for the damages they cause or are we going to be up against a million dollars worth of lawyers trying to stall for 40 years until we die of old age? I suspect that's what we're going to be up against because they're not going to be willing to pay for all of the extra electrical expenses just in deepening wells and pumping water from an additional 50 to a hundred feet deep.	See Standard Resource Response SocEcon-3 regarding monitoring and mitigation costs.
32887-52	I'm on the board for Pioche Public Utilities here in town. We've got very good water. If we have to deepen our wells, or even if the water table drops 50 feet, we deepen the wells, we still have to lift that water an additional 50 feet. Is Southern Nevada Water Authority going to reimburse us for our costs? That's part of the economic impact, and it absolutely should be required if this project is allowed to go through. And not only for Pioche but every affected entity in the whole area, they should have to make us whole. And they don't have the financial resources to do it. It's going to cause too much damage. And what we're going to be faced with is a whole battery of lawyers trying to stall and get out of it. Thank you.	Mitigation measure SE-6 involves the recommendation that SNWA create and fund a mitigation/protection program to provide financial assistance to affected groundwater supplies for ranchers and public water systems.
32887-53	First of all, it is encouraging that the BLM decided to add an extra 30 days to the review process but it's not enough. This is a complex, massive document, six years in the making. We think that at least the public should be afforded 180 days to review a document that took that long to prepare.	See Standard Resource Response Gen-4 regarding the comment period.
32887-54	Secondly, the frequently asked questions and answers that was handed out up front is very helpful but I was told that it won't be available electronically until after these hearings are over. And I would strongly suggest that if it's going to be used as a guide, as a useful tool for people to be able to get up to speed on this, that it would be more useful if it were available electronically so that people could prepare for a meetings like this rather than read it after the hearings are all over. As you know, we have prepared this EIS guide. And having done that personally, I know how complex the document is and how challenging it is to take all of that information and focus it on the few things that people can grab onto and relate to. And so I would encourage you to make this available electronically sooner rather than later.	The question and answer handout was used only for the public meetings. It was not reasonable to distribute it as an electronic file.

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ID	Comment	Response
32887-55	And the third comment I have is on the setup of this. It looks like we're going to be in a lot of gyms over the next three weeks. The acoustics are lacking, as they are in a gym. And the thing that I'm finding is that the speaker is talking to the two of you when all of you really want to hear what the speaker is saying. And I would just make a recommendation, especially for Baker tomorrow night, but for the all of these hearings, for example if you had the podium here and you had your table there, you know, if I were here and you were there (indicating), I could be heard by all of you and by you and it would be a more effective exchange.	The podium was arranged so that the speaker could address both the hearing officer and the audience at all remaining public meetings.
32887-56	Wanted to listen, support everything that people said but it's interesting. As I sit back I watched the presentation on the computer, you know, and it's zipping up in Las Vegas up there and it gives this wonderful technological view, you know. And I admire the technology but it made me think a lot after listening to Mrs. Gloeckner, that view from that computer is how we're looking it from 20,000 feet or 5,000 feet and it just makes everything look this small. But when you hear from the people who are stewards of the land, it's their lives and their calves, that little white sagebrush that that cow is eating, I just encourage you to lower your view, get right down into it and take a good look at the effects and don't look at it from 20,000 feet. Thank you.	Please refer to standard resource response Gen-1 and Gen-2.
32887-57	Just basically wanted to say that as a couple other people mentioned today I feel that the only alternative really is the No Action alternative.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
32887-58	And to follow up on a remark that Connie Simkins made, referring to chapter four of the irreversible commitment of resources, I believe that's the title of the chapter, I wrote down a quote. The permanent extraction of groundwater in storage: Evidence by formation of regionally extensive drawdown cones is an irretrievable commitment of resources. And I think that sentence pretty well sums up the main problem. In other words, the drawdown is regional in nature.	Please review the updated chapter 4 for information relevant to this comment.
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33565-1	I appreciate the opportunity to be here to speak. I'm speaking on behalf of the Toiyabe chapter of the Sierra Club, and I'd first like to say that given the size of this document, its complexity, and perhaps my slow reading skills, I'd like to ask for additional time beyond the 30 day extension which is currently happening.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33565-2	Moving right along, I believe that the EIS does indeed show there are going to be dramatic impacts caused by the groundwater pumping, and it is certainly a document which explores inadequately, I think, many of the problems that are faced by the five basins, in the five basins which are subject to the pumping. But I do believe that there are far more impacts to be analyzed, and the BLM should have included those and I ask that they be included in a revised EIS.	Please see standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2.
33565-3	For example, the Southern Nevada Water Authority holds water rights probably in excess of 12,000 acre feet in Coyote Spring Valley and over 111,000 acre feet in Railroad Valley in Nye County. All of these water rights are certainly, they certainly intend to develop at some point in time and probably well within the 50-year timeframe for the build-out of the pipeline, so they should have been included in this document. That's a substantial amount of water, two-thirds of the water that is currently being studied in this particular analysis. And there's an additional water that part of the agreement the Southern Nevada Water Authority signed with Lincoln County, they passed water rights that they held, water applications I should say that they held in other desert valleys, Coal, Garden, Patterson, and Rock to the tune of 91,000 acre feet of water. So again we have a substantial amount of water which is not being looked at or analyzed in this EIS. This is significant because all the water that I mentioned would undoubtedly be transported in the pipeline right-of-way that you are now considering. And I think that alone mitigates that this additional 288,000 acre feet of potential groundwater extraction should be considered.	The SNWA Plan of Development specifies the development being assessed in this Final EIS. The BLM cannot make assumptions regarding other actions by the SNWA or other parties.
33565-4	I think that I'd like to end with the idea that the discussion of the impacts which the EIS does show, however, and they are substantial, and I appreciate the work that went into looking at the severe drawdowns that are going to occur in the five valleys and the adjacent valleys.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-5	Ultimately my fear is for the Great Basin National Park and wildlife refuges and public land resources which are in this area that stand to be lost for all time. It will be lost over time so the impacts will appear year by year, and that is one of our great concerns is that the time to deal with this project may slip through our fingers if it gets even the slightest drawdown,	The impact sections of the FEIS have been revised, but without further information on specific missed impacts, we cannot guide you to specific sections. Please see standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2.
33565-6	and that's why I ask the BLM to select the No Action alternative. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-7	Where I'm coming from is I'm opposed to the groundwater development project in its entirety, and I'm hoping for a No Action conclusion from the BLM down the road. That's my bias and I'll say that up front.	Thank you for your comment.

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ID	Comment	Response
33565-8	The task and mandate given to this committee on this particular water rights issue is a challenge I can only begin to appreciate. The BLM will need to pull a rabbit out of a hat on this one to keep everybody seeking your influence and your final decision happy on this pipeline project.	This comment was bracketed in error and will not be treated as a comment to the DEIS.
33565-9	Previous input given this committee, which I've tried to stay on top of, has covered just about the entire spectrum of concerns people have. Utah people are worried about water they thought they owned being carried out of their basin. Central Nevada ranchers and farmers voiced similar concerns. Environmentalists worry about the semiarid desert we live in and the disturbances this will have on the central Nevada ecosystem. Pollution, dust, and the future of plant and animal life were issues this committee was asked to factor in.	This comment was bracketed in error and will not be treated as a comment to the DEIS.
33565-10	Las Vegas is either a city growing by leaps and bounds with greater future ahead of it, or Las Vegas is a spendthrift child that has overspent its Hoover Dam allowance. Sarcasm from the citizens on the street in Reno and Las Vegas carries both dislike. This is just what Las Vegas needs, the okay for another 2,000 room tower, each room with its own flush toilet and shower. And my particular favorite, the recent pole conducted in Clark County which shows that the majority of residents there oppose the project.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-11	So with all this input for the committee to consider, you are urged to steer us in the right direction so we can make a good, moral decision here. Now with my background codified in the morality of the five great religions of the world is this notion that assets, and in this case it's water, belong to the living who have righteous interests as defined by forces that be at the current time. It would be nice for the average citizen to hear the word "no" to forces pushing this water confiscation idea. Perhaps man is not designed to live within his means and needs to appropriate his neighbor's assets under any guise or rationale that one believes will work.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-12	The groundwater development project name itself is catchy. It begs the question, and it's a misnomer, why does natural water ever need development? Let's not kid ourselves, this is really the groundwater confiscation project.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-13	So in conclusion, everything considered, I'm steer us in the right direction so the full board of BLM can make their final decision. Were I in your shoes, I would do everything I could to make sure this pipeline never gets underway. Again, I do not envy the task and your mandate on this issue. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-14	The DEIS is a gift of information but it also raises many more questions and omits key information. The cost of the project is just plain flat missing. This project would be devastating to rural Nevada. The drawdowns that this project proposes do create another Owens Valley. Look how many years that project has been in litigation. Look at how much money Los Angeles has thrown at monitoring and mitigation and it's still not enough.	See Standard Resource Response SocEcon-1 regarding project costs.
33565-15	The SNWA pipeline project isn't one that keeps giving. No, it keeps on taking and taking and taking. The cost projected as \$3.5 billion is the tip of the iceberg. No one has publicly projected the cost of this entire project and said how it will be paid for. The DEIS doesn't. SNWA's own plan doesn't. So why should people support this project if they don't know the cost, true and extended? We think it's because it's so expensive that Southern Nevada Water Authority doesn't want people to know. We don't think that Clark County can afford it, we don't think Nevada can afford it, and we don't think even the United States can afford it either. The days of pork are over.	See standard resource responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6.
33565-16	The DEIS does not seriously look at the negative impacts to Southern Nevada from this pipeline. I think I counted four pages today on impacts of more traffic that is said to be a benefit of water, increased air quality problems, associated health care costs, other public safety costs, and education costs related to their anticipated return to rampant growth necessary to support this project, and believe me, rampant growth will be necessary.	Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-1 and SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33565-17	It fails to address SNWA's diminished funding sources up from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act funds, hook-up fees, sale tax, rates, and bonding impacts. This pipeline is huge. It is damaging. It has gone on far too long. Southern Nevada Water Authority applied for unappropriated groundwater in White Pine, Lincoln and Nye counties over 22 years ago. It was speculative then that under the guise of water for future development and now 22 years later it is still speculative and still water for the future. It has deprived White Pine County and Lincoln County, to say nothing of the tribes, the ranchers, their opportunity for their own economic development for over 22 years, and that will continue to do so. The DEIS has not assessed that specific impact, that I can find anyway.	Thank you for your comment. Section 3.18 acknowledges the identified concerns on the part of some residents and officials of White Pine and Lincoln counties. However, the underlying subject of this comment relates to the allocation of water resources in the state. As noted in the Executive Summary and elsewhere in the EIS, the responsibility for administering water in Nevada rests with the Nevada State Engineer, with consideration of public interest one of the factors to be considered in the water rights appropriations. Given the state's authority in this matter, the subject is beyond the scope of the EIS. Furthermore, the BLM notes that applications for water rights to support local economic development could have been, and can continue to be filed with the NSE. Finally, water is but one factor necessary to support growth and development. Consequently, there are no assurances that growth and development would have occurred in the proposed groundwater production basins absent SNWA's applications.
33565-18	This project is a pipe dream, if you'll pardon my pun. The drought in the Colorado River basin has been a drought for the Great Basin as well. The source of water in this project is not sufficient nor is it sustainable. SNWA justifies this project by saying it needs drought projection, but out of the other side of its mouth it says the water is for growth decades later. So the need and the purpose are not clear, nor have they been sufficiently justified.	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised

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33565-19	There are other alternatives that have been dismissed in this document. And back in 1994 a statement in High Country News, a Southern Nevada Water Authority official called this project, The most singularly stupid project. And we think it still is. The price is too high in human resources. It is too high financially. It is too high environmentally.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-20	We should not repeat the mistakes of our past. Eastern Nevada and western Utah should not become another sacrificed area.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-21	There is no mitigation for the loss of water and there is no excess water.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33565-22	We ask the BLM to select the No Action alternative plainly and simply. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-23	You know, it's real fitting to have this hearing here in Sparks on the Las Vegas water grab because a few miles downstream from here one of the first massive water diversion projects in the United States started about 110 years ago. Senator Francis Newlands had read the diaries of John Wesley Powell's trip down the Colorado River and convinced President Roosevelt to create the Bureau of Reclamation, which created the Newlands project to divert water from the Truckee River to the Lahontan Valley. It was the end of the 19th century, and the 20th century seemed to hold in store limitless water and other natural resources that were out there just available for the plundering.	This comment was bracketed in error and will not be treated as a comment to the DEIS.
33565-24	And the Las Vegas water grab is borne out of these 19th century ideas, yet even in this 21st century world some people still cling to the myth that water is infinite and our only salvation lies in rampant development at any cost.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-25	This current financial crisis, particularly in Nevada where we're the hardest hit on unemployment and foreclosures, it provides a great opportunity for us to take an honest look at what has proved to be an unsustainable economic model. Nevada's recession has been like a war on many of the people who live here. T.S. Elliott wrote about World War I, that we have the experience but missed the meaning. You might say the same thing about Nevada's history of booms that have gone bust, especially as we try to dig our way out of this current financial collapse. Nevada simply can't afford the water grab. Las Vegas is already the second most regressive city in the country. And increased fees to pay for this pipeline are just going to add up to the hardship of working class ratepayers and those on fixed incomes. And cash strapped local governments, some who are on the verge of bankruptcy, don't need additional liabilities, and certainly the State of Nevada can't afford to fund this thing.	See Standard Resource Response SocEcon-2 for current economic conditions in Las Vegas.
33565-26	Now I can empathize with a few who say we really need those 900 construction jobs that this pipeline is going to create. You know, this project was slated at \$3.5 billion, so that equates to about \$3.9 million per job. I mean, that's pretty expensive for job costs. And it shows again we can't afford to build this pipeline for mere 900 jobs that are likely a decade or more from being created and that's going to destroy a vast portion of our state. But we can afford to put our people back to work who can build public infrastructure neighborhood by neighborhood to make Las Vegas more livable and sustainable. Retrofitting Southern Nevada with the most water efficient devices, investing in public transit and energy efficiency, that would create far more jobs and far less cost than the pipeline. So why not set our sights on creating the first truly sustainable 21st century metropolis in the world. No, instead we have a draft environmental impact statement for a 19th century project that reads like an execution order for a revered soulmate who has never done us wrong.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-1 for information on this topic.
33565-27	The DEIS describes a tortured, inevitable death of our beloved Great Basin. It speaks of wiping out hundreds of miles of creeks, hundreds of springs, polluting the last clean air basin in the state with tens of thousands of tons of fugitive dust, and killing off once flourishing communities of fish, wildlife, birds and plants.	Updated sections 3.5 (vegetation) and 3.6 (wildlife resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-28	Eastern Nevada's rural economy is as fragile as our desert ecology and that will also likely collapse. And once proud and self-sufficient ranchers, farmers, Native Americans and other rural dwellers are going to have to flock to the cities as water refugees, or hopelessly cling to their dry land as just colonial possessions of Las Vegas. How is this going to be mitigated and how is the DEIS going to analyze this?	See Standard Resource Response MM-1 regarding monitoring and mitigation.
33565-29	Since my first hike to Mount Moria about 30 years ago, I go there again and again. You know, it's the only way I know how to connect with a power that's greater than myself. And last year I celebrated my 50th birthday by spending five days alone on this amazing place, and I backpacked my way up one creek and down the other, you know. And I've been all over the country and I've been blessed to go in many other countries hiking, touring and backpacking. There's no other place in the world like that northern Snake range.	This comment was bracketed in error and will not be treated as a comment to the DEIS.

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33565-30	<p>And I see it says one minute but I hope you deducted the time you asked me that question, all right? In any case, for water grab proponents to say that the lifeblood of this mountain is water is an unused resource, that's either blasphemy or stupidity or it's plain arrogance, and I don't know how SNWA can say it's an unused resource. Look at these pictures of Henry's Creek. Look at these pictures of Hampton Creek that I took last year. Does anybody think that this is unused water? It was put there to sustain life. It wasn't put there to run down the gutter in Las Vegas or to end up on their lawns. If you drive around Las Vegas like I do, I always see water on the sidewalks. You know, is that the fate of these creeks of our Great Basin streams and springs up there, to end up wasted in some Las Vegas suburban gutter or to end up as reclaimed water on a golf course?</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>
33565-31	<p>The only way the BLM can satisfy its legal obligations to protect our resources for current and future generations is to select this No Action alternative. And if not you can rest assured that we, and I mean we, it's a big "we," it's young people, it's people that defeated the MX 30 years ago, people that fought against Yucca Mountain, people of all different political stripes from all over the country, we will defeat this thing in Carson City, in Congress, in the voting booth and in the streets, because we know that Nevada can't afford to kill itself with this project. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
33565-32	<p>The reason why I'm here today is because of my interest in the caves in the area. I've been in caves for about 40 years. And when I first heard about this proposal, I was concerned over what might happen to the life of the cave.</p>	<p>Updated section 3.4 (vegetation) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.</p>
33565-33	<p>After attending the first meeting and talking to a few of the BLM people, I started wondering will they address the caves properly. Will they be able to answer some of the questions I had about geobiology of the cave, about the life, the invertebrate life that exists in the cave. I didn't get good answers.</p>	<p>Cave biota were included in the existing environment descriptions in Section 3.6 (Wildlife Resources) and 3.7 (Aquatic Biological Resources). The impact analyses also included caves in the assessment.</p>
33565-34	<p>When this proposal came around, a new draft EIS came around, I called the BLM and asked a couple more questions, and I was surprised at what I got. You see, several years ago when I first heard about the plan to remove water from Central Nevada, I was surprised that anyone who looked at it and called the place Dry Lake for large water removal. Surely Nevada and the people here have been known to make some big wagers to casinos, but the odds for success of this gamble are not very good.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
33565-35	<p>When the Clark, Lincoln and White Pine Counties Groundwater Development Project Draft EIS arrived, I spent several hours reading it through primarily to see how it addressed the area caves. As I read I started to notice something odd about the writing, although I find the overall document to be mostly factual, I also became aware of a general bias towards any play-down of all negative concerns.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.</p>
33565-36	<p>The draft EIS seemed to be written by a very knowledgeable shyster, and when I got to the very last sentence of the very last paragraph on the very last page of the EIS, I knew something was amiss. What was that last sentence? On page ES-75 it reads, Concern has been voiced by the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, local counties and others about the potential for impact to groundwater dependent resources of interest from the proposed groundwater withdrawal associated with this project. The last sentence, last paragraph on the last page. But when I went through these hundreds or perhaps thousands of pages of EIS, where were those documents or concerns listed? When I asked the BLM about them, I was told that these documents were confidential and I wouldn't be allowed to see them. So what's in those documents of concern which the BLM feels so troublesome that they need to be suppressed? I filed a Freedom of Information Act requesting that for the BLM. Deny. Everyone should be asking, What information is in those documents that's so damaging that they need to be suppressed, so top secret that they can't be released in any form, even with the blackout pattern?</p>	<p>The purpose of the NEPA (EIS) process is to disclose potential project impacts. The BLM appreciates that you have identified your specific concerns regarding the impacts disclosed in the DEIS.</p>
33565-37	<p>As I continued to read through the information stored on the two CDs that came with the executive summary draft, I continued to find misleading statements and omissions that raise concerns. For example, in appendix F3.3-7, predicted change in groundwater levels: There are many charts showing significant drawdowns and the cumulative affect of plus 75 years. Drawdown numbers shown on areas as high as 200-foot drawdown. Yet when I go to appendix F3.3.10 and F3.3.11, the only tables shown are for drawdown of a mere ten foot. One might ask what those tables might project should the drawdowns be more realistic.</p>	<p>Please see Standard Resource Response WR-1 for a discussion of the 10-ft drawdown.</p>
33565-38	<p>Another area that I did not find in the executive summary is the long-term affect on human inhabitants living in the area. If someone were to look at the lung problems reported by residents of the Owens Valley following the drying up of the lake caused by the L.A. water diversion, one could easily find issues of concern. Where at one time there was a lake in Owens Valley that floated a ferry to supply area miners south of Big Pine, now it's only a dry lake bed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your coment. Standard responses AQ-9 and AQ-10 provide additional information regarding this comment.</p>
33565-39	<p>Instead of plants and animals, the valley now contains only pipe. So much dust, no place to live, and doctors have noticed that fine grains of sand is collecting in human lungs causing more cases of lung disease than would ordinarily be the case. Just think of the lawsuits that will surely follow drying up of the valley's lakes.</p>	<p>Please see common response Air-3.</p>

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33565-40	As I talked to some BLM officials I kept hearing that the Great Basin National Park would not be affected in any way by the water removal. When I asked about the belief, the individuals told me the water removal from one valley would have no effects on neighboring valleys. This is inconsistent with what I've read and learned about the geology in the Great Basin area.	As described in Section 3.3 of the EIS, the conceptual model of the groundwater flow system assumes that groundwater can flow from one basin to another through interconnected system of permeable carbonate rock and basin fill sediments.
33565-41	In the book Geology of the Great Basin, the author writes in his section on groundwater, not all reservoirs fill to the surface. Many have subsurface leaks. Water pressure forces water through fractures or pore spaces in bedrock. The mountain range between the valleys may act as effective barriers for surface water, but not underground movement of water. Infiltration through the permeable rock, the water may leak through the range into the next lowest valley creating regional flow systems in the subsurface.	Updated sections 3.2 (geology) and 3.3 (water resources) discuss the conceptual groundwater model used for the development of this EIS.
33565-42	Questions to geologists, one a professor in geology and the other a USGS geologist, both told me that the geology strata in the projected area consisted of highly faulted porous rock. The area has many known macro and micro caves which clearly defines hydrologically porous carbon rock. In addition to hundreds of millions of years, one would obviously lead to a highly faulted and fractured rock. All of this would indicate a large potential for hydrological conduits to exist between all the region's valleys, yet the executive summary draft tries to express the idea the valleys are not hydrologically connected and that removal of water from one valley would have no effect in its neighbors.	Please see Section 3.3.1.2 and 3.3.1.3 for a discussion of the regional flow system.
33565-43	If I might finish here. A wise person might ask why these federal documents of concern the BLM feels need to be suppressed. Do they hold information that will make it harder for the author of the EIS to sell the project? Could these documents give reasons that the final decision of the federally held BLM managed lands should not be in the hands of a political approved Nevada state engineer but instead of the federal people who have the federal reserve water doctorate who should take precedence over the determination of the plans?	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-44	I believe that most of the ecological issues brought up, have been brought up and will be brought up today. Some of the concerns that we, on the board specifically, wanted to make sure are on the record was we didn't see a really good breakdown of the cost alternative for desalinization, and I don't think that the BLM should proceed until that we, the public, and the ratepayers, citizens of Las Vegas see those numbers.	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-1 for information on this topic.
33565-45	We also don't believe that the costs are anywhere close to what the final project will be to build it. And our concern here again is once you're in for a penny, you're in for a pound. And that once the pipeline is built, or perhaps drawn down and through years of endless litigation, which I suspect will follow, that perhaps a compromise will be met and other basins would then be mined for water, you know, a shared payment thing for all of rural Nevada.	Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 for information on this topic.
33565-46	When you draw an arc, a compass arc from Las Vegas out through the rural areas, it's not just this area, Snake Valley, Lehman Caves, it affects the southern part of Lander County, the Toiyabe wilderness, it affects the entire southern part of the state. So we, the Lander County Public Land Board, want to go on record in recommending to the BLM a No Action alternative. Thank you very much.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-47	I have been reviewing EISs for most of my life but this one is unique. I appreciate the frankness with which the draft EIS discloses the catastrophic hydrological impacts of this groundwater mining proposal. They're still horrifying but still refreshing after listening to SNWA's loud denial of any impacts of their project.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-48	Unfortunately this level of analysis did not continue when BLM considered the project's impact on public lands and resources, nor does the draft meet other NEPA requirements. So many questions come up as I tried to read this 4,000 page document that an additional 60 days would help me and others do a better job of going through it.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the NEPA comment process.
33565-49	My first question is is this project needed? If there is no credible water demand then there is no need for BLM to issue a right-of-way for a water pipeline. Why didn't the BLM require SNWA to update its three-year-old resource plan adjusting water demands to the declining population since the economic collapse that we're all suffering from? And it's not rocket science to realize rural groundwater cannot be used for both drought protection and for new growth. So why did BLM include both mutually exclusive goals in the project purpose?	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised. Please also review generic response SocEcon-2.
33565-50	The draft EIS also says project construction can be delayed for years, depending on the drought, financing, need, etc. If this is true, why is the BLM considering issuing a right-of-way permit now?	Thank you for your comment. The timeline in the FEIS is presented as best available information at the time this EIS is written. Adjustments to the timeline are possible in the future and would be addressed by the BLM if and when schedule adjustments occurred.
33565-51	Now NEPA requires a full range of alternatives in an EIS, but this draft EIS doesn't do this. The draft EIS dismisses alternatives such as desalinization and never even considers an alternative on increasing water efficiency because they are, quote, not economical or, quote, financially unfeasible.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-3, Gen-5, and Gen-9 for information on this topic.

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33565-52	Since it apparently uses information as the basis for disqualifying reasonable alternatives, why isn't the cost of SNWA's project disclosed in the proposed action? As I claw through this document I am finding a myriad of details, tables, maps, figures but I'm not finding if the disappearing groundwater will lead to the depopulation of Eastern Nevada and Utah's west desert, or if dewatering would destroy the famous caves of Great Basin National Park.	Thank you for your comment. Comparative environmental and economic costs factored into the elimination of conveyance alternatives, e.g., rail haul, but were not a factor in eliminating alternative water supply sources from consideration (see Standard Resource Response Gen-3). See Standard Resource Responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and the lack of BLM authority or need to independently analyze project costs in conjunction with the ROW application. Finally, senior existing water rights fall under the authority and administrative procedures of the respective state engineers and provide potential remedies in case of adverse effects. See also proposed mitigation SE-6 and SE-7 and the COM Plan, and additional information.
33565-53	I couldn't find how BLM is going to protect our public lands and resources from the impacts. But when I look at the section on irretrievable and irreversible commitments of resources in chapter four, I find BLM has admitted catastrophic losses of habitat for wildlife and fish, wild horses, recreation, air quality, vegetation, and endangered species.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33565-54	Never have I read an EIS with so many known unknowns and unknown unknowns, such as basic information on location and number of well sites, how much groundwater would be pumped, which springs would dry up, when the project would be built, even how big the pumps would be.	The purpose of this Draft EIS is to identify impacts related to right-of-way areas and produce a programmatic assessment of the associated future groundwater development areas and pumping. Specific information regarding well locations, pumping volumes, and potential drawdown effects will be analyzed in future NEPA.
33565-55	And most disappointingly I find a little snippet by BLM to actually protect public lands and resources, such as keeping water available for wild horses or forage for horses and livestock or water for recreational uses.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33565-56	I could not even find out whether BLM, because of its previous stipulated agreement with the applicant, has forfeited the right to require any actual mitigation except to agreed to talk to the applicant about pumping problems.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
33565-57	I feel like we Nevadans are at a Mad Hatter's tea party. Why is BLM proceeding with the EIS when the applicant has no water to transport, no immediate need for this water, may not be able to pay for the project, and has lots of cheaper and less environmental damaging alternatives it refuses to consider, and when BLM doesn't know what the environmental impacts of this theoretical project will be, how to protect public lands and resources or whether voluntary mitigation would even work?	Information relevant to this comment is described in chapter 1. Commenter may also find the information contained Appendix A helpful.
33565-58	How can BLM meet its Congressional mandate to issue a right-of-way for the proposed SNWA project and also meet its responsibilities to protect public lands and resources from this area of adverse impact of what this draft EIS proves is a groundwater mining project? BLM is asking in the draft EIS for ideas from the public on how to protect our public lands and resources. This is not a discretionary requirement. Doesn't BLM know how to do this? Thank you.	Please review generic response Standard Resource Response Gen-7 and MM-1 for information responsive to this comment.
33565-59	I've been a resident of Nevada for 29 years. It's gone by quite quickly. And I have watched Las Vegas grow. My work requires that I go down there and see the madness and the growth, and now we're seeing that one in three houses are in foreclosure. The question arises of what on earth are we doing when there's not the need for this water in Las Vegas? There are people leaving this state, not coming to the state. In 2005 my organization, PLAN, did a water tour of the rural Nevada. I got to see springs. I learned a lot about rural Nevada and the people who live out there, and they have kept records of that water for hundreds of years. Their family had records written of the abundance and the lack, and they adjust their lives accordingly. That's what should be done in Las Vegas. They must adapt to this lack of water that they have in Las Vegas and not steal from the very people who are stewards of the land in rural Nevada.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. Water planning and allocation for the state of Nevada rests with the State. Your comment and suggestions concerning conservation have been compiled with other similar recommendations and will be passed to the relevant state agencies responsible for these functions.
33565-60	This cost estimate continues to change. I remember back in 2005 I think we used the figure 1.5 billion, now I see it's 3.5 billion. Everyone knows that is not going to stay constant. It is going to rise and I think that is certainly something we need to think about in an EIS is who's going to pay for that. Are the current residents of Southern Nevada going to pay for that? Is everyone throughout the whole state going to pay for that? Well, personally I don't want to pay for the destruction of our beautiful state and rural Nevada.	Please refer to standard resource responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-5, and SocEcon-6 for information on this topic.
33565-61	This environmental disaster will never be reversed, and I think that's something that is missing from the EIS is there's not an adequate explanation of how we will reverse these adverse effects. How will we restructure a rural Nevada when everyone is gone because there is no water? To me we're not looking at the bigger picture here, we're looking at growth in Southern Nevada, and SNWA wants to push this no matter whether they're growing or they're diminishing.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33565-62	As many of the more eloquent speakers have said, there are many issues on the EIS that I just can't believe we're even moving forward with this. I hope that you will take the No Action alternative. We feel there needs to be more time, more study. There's so many things missing. You've already heard caves, Great Basin, our beautiful national lands in rural Nevada will be gone. So I would urge you to oppose this, and thank you very much for all the time you've put out for this hearing.	Thank you for your comment.

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33565-63	In 1984 at the American Association for Advancement of Science annual conference they had a symposium on mega-projects. Supposedly it was called the Policies and Technology of Large Scale Projects, Lessons from Recent Experience in the United States and Abroad. This has grown as an engineering and academic scientific field. I think a key point was the Unesco Declaration on science and the use of scientific knowledge for the 21st century. This was a 1999 declaration. And in their findings they say scientists with other major actors have a special responsibility for seeking to avert applications of science which are ethically wrong or have an adverse impact. In the third part of the declaration under scientific development they point out, and I won't elaborate, science and its applications are indispensable for development. And there is set up now at Unesco the World Commission on Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology, and this declaration is a touchstone for this project as far as we're concerned.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-64	Let me talk about a couple of things related to this broader context. My mom left the valley when she was two years old and moved to California with her parents, left the ranch, and the people there feel they are next. "We are next" is what you hear outside the EIS project area. Now that is a question of cumulative impacts and growth reducing impacts.	Cumulative impacts are discussed after each resource section in Chapter 3.
33565-65	Now, the BLM rejection of having cooperating agencies such as Eureka County, Elko County, Nye County, the rejection of those is a failure. They're rejected because they are not within the project area is the rejection, what the rejection letters say, and because they don't meet the criteria. They don't have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental issue, which should be addressed. Well, I think the EIS lacks credibility not to have used these counties as cooperating agencies. And I think that BLM should convene these people to revise the EIS and use them to deal with that part of the need to do the environmental analysis.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-66	Now the study of mega-projects has continued over the years. Something that has been very clearly found is that big public investment projects like this, big public investment projects in urban areas started coming to a halt in the '60s and '70s and have been replaced by private investment. Now in rural areas it's more of a mixed bag. Now here we have a rural area being threatened by public investment for an urban water supply. This is a serious problem. You have to ask ourselves how is this happening? What are the factors that are allowing this to happen?	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33565-67	NEPA should be applied in the way I mentioned to the issues outside the project area, but the absence of the Federal Land Policy Management Act, the absence of regulations, which I've addressed to you before, there needs to be -- the law of FLPMA requires we have regulations on input, public input. Those regulations should be what you are turning to to involve the public and scientific community in these major decisions.	BLM prepared this EIS following NEPA and FLPMA as well as CEQ regulations, DOI NEPA regulations, and BLM directives, guidance and handbooks. Public involvement is outlined in Chapter 5.
33565-68	The failure to have those regs is a critical problem that really has to be addressed. And after the EIS, the final EIS is out, it is at that point that BLM should hold, have a notice for public hearings on the project, a notice that includes the record of decision, as I mentioned before, and that includes if there's a right-of-way permit to be given that has an issuance to the public of the terms and conditions of that, and have these public hearings in the same locations but also outside the affected states should have an opportunity for comment. The questions of the Colorado River and other states involved suggest the need for those follow-up hearings, those right-of-way hearings in California, Denver and so forth. Thank you.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-69	As it relates to the Clark, Lincoln and White Pine Counties Groundwater Development Project, our members have had a long-term concern over the ramifications of this project moving forward. Although the draft EIS attempts to frame the Bureau of Land Management's decision in the context of determining whether to grant the right-of-way for infrastructure to potentially deliver groundwater, pumped from a host of well sites, we consider it essential that the agency adequately analyze the environmental impact of this project in a comprehensive fashion.	The purpose of this Draft EIS is to identify impacts related to right-of-way areas and produce a programmatic assessment of the associated future groundwater development areas and pumping. Specific information regarding well locations, pumping volumes, and potential drawdown effects will be analyzed in future NEPA.
33565-70	Before launching into more of the details of my comments, I'd like to express a significant level of frustration in attempting to review the draft EIS and consider meaningful comments that might be effective in the decision process. It seems to me that the draft EIS involves throwing everything in the kitchen sink into the conversation without having any context for how it fits together. The variations in the possible routes and alternatives don't shed any real insight into what might be a mix for a decision on how the project will be put together. An example I'd like to share involved wells with the construction phase. The documentation does not tell whether they're using wells that they will eventually pump for the project or if they are temporary. So much of the information seems to come out of nowhere with missing details on what fits together with something else. As I'll cover in more depth shortly, the draft EIS doesn't establish what is relevant in the deliberation for the actions and what is simply stuff about the project.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-71	For many reasons, including the complicated document itself, we urge that the NEPA process in the groundwater development project be extended and the decision process delayed. Instead of the comment process having a deadline of September 9th, 2011, we urge that at least a 90-day extension be granted. In making this request I've been told that there may have been a 30-day extension already granted, but I'm not clear if that's the case.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the NEPA comment or decision process.

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33565-72	It would further be our recommendation and strong encouragement that this NEPA process be placed on hold pending the actions by the Nevada water engineer in determining the outcome of granting water rights for the applications which have been filed.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-73	Although the draft EIS explains the tiering approach used in this application, we are troubled that this piecemeal technique will result in an incomplete evaluation of the consequences. It would seem possible that actions taken on this portion of the system will result in future actions being rubber stamped without the willingness to make critical determinations which might warrant changes to the decisions already made. We disagree that this draft EIS taking a programmatic approach for the specifics of where individual well sites will be located and the still to be determined details of pipeline delivery requirements to incorporate water movement to the central pipeline system. We believe it would be more appropriate to delay the decision process for this draft EIS until those specifics are established and presented in a comprehensive amended proposed plan.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2 for information on this topic.
33565-74	In the event that the process be continued without knowing where the well sites will be located, we insist that each well site and transport pipeline delivering water from the well to the central pipeline be required to undergo its own individual environmental impact evaluation. Provisions should be included to require further evaluation for this portion of the decision, should circumstances evolve for reconsideration due to the yet to be determined elements of the groundwater development project.	The purpose of this Draft EIS is to identify impacts and mitigation related to right-of-way areas and produce a programmatic assessment of the associated future groundwater development areas and pumping. Specific information regarding well locations, pumping volumes, and potential drawdown effects will be analyzed in future NEPA.
33565-75	It's also important to have more complete clarity to the actual scope of the decision to be made in this process. The draft EIS indicates that federal law requires the secretary to grant the right-of-way requested by the Southern Nevada Water Authority in Clark and Lincoln counties. There are stipulations that this action link to FLPMA and NEPA but does not, at least to our understanding, detail the nuances of what degree or nature of this decision is in context.	Thank you for your comment. The interaction of the laws and regulations mentioned are detailed in Section 1.3.
33565-76	While going through the motions of a full-fledge NEPA approach, are the determinations for the infrastructure in Clark and Lincoln counties already forgone actions? If this is the case, we're led to believe that the only real consideration is whether the right-of-way authority should be granted to the White Pine portion of the projected project. This mishmash of what might bes and already done deals creates a level of confusion beyond what would otherwise be an already complicated proposal. Perhaps deliberately so.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-77	The thing that is clear beyond any shadow of a doubt is the massive impact the overall proposed project will have. The size and scale of the infrastructure system required to accomplish the massive withdrawal of water amounts envisioned is incomprehensible, and the promise that mitigation and monitoring of restoration plans will alleviate all negative consequences is challenging to accept. Given this reality we are curious to learn the criteria for evaluation and what is or won't be acceptable for impacts to landscapes, ecosystems in specific areas. It would seem if, as a land management agency, BLM is able to grant such an alteration and allow this degree of effect, what would be off limits beyond the capability of gaining approval on anything else in the future?	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-78	As we are spending more time in our evaluation of the rangeland and grazing section of the draft EIS, we will plan to submit more specific comments in writing.	Thank you for your comments on the Draft EIS.
33565-79	We do, however, wish to observe that we have not seen the consideration that we believe is essential in presenting the socioeconomic impacts short and long-term for this proposal. A more thorough and comprehensive treatment is necessary to cover the justification of the cost versus the benefits to be realized if the project is approved. And again thank you for the extra time.	Thank you for your comment. A cost-benefit analysis is not required for a ROW grant application such as that proposed by SNWA. See Standard Resource Responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and the lack of BLM authority or need for the BLM to independently analyze project costs, or the potential long-term implications on ratepayers, in conjunction with the ROW application.
33565-80	but I'm speaking primarily as a board member of the Nevada chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and as well as coming from several -- two families of lifetime hunters and anglers that go back probably to prehistoric times. So our concern -- well, we share the many concerns that the water group has I'm sure shared with you today. Our are main concern is the wildlife and the effects, the potential effects on the wildlife, the wildlife habitats, hunting and fishing opportunities, and because of that also the potential economic negative effects on rural communities. And ironically enough I know in White Pine County many of the hunters that come up there and share in the wealth with the county are from Las Vegas. So that's my main concern. And I'm going to really scrutinize how well you analyzed it from that aspect, that potential loss both to wildlife, wildlife habitat and the economics of the rural areas because of that. That's my comment.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. Updated sections 3.6 (wildlife resources), 3.9 (recreation) and 3.18 (socioeconomics and environmental justice) provide a detailed discussion of your issues.
33565-81	I came this afternoon, I'm not going to spend a lot of time talking about it, but I intend to comment in writing on the draft EIS later on, but I just wanted to say in general I've been to Owens Valley. I've seen what that looked like after tens of decades of years of water withdrawals there. I know the story of Owens Valley and I think we're recreating something here similar in Nevada.	Thank you for your comment.

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33565-82	I've also looked at some major projects in Nevada. Actually we've gotten rid of one, which is Yucca Mountain, but Nevada seems to be the place to undertake these major projects that have a devastating effect on the environment. The most recent one we've dealt with -- I should add that I'm conservation chair of the local Sierra Club group. The most recent one we've dealt with is the Ruby pipeline just now, a corridor all the way across Northern Nevada that is plainly visible from the air and which is now on a total cheat grass invading corridor. So these are some of the things that we anticipate will happen with the pipeline corridors and transmission corridors associated with them.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-83	And I'm very concerned about the national park. The EIS indicates that there will be impacts on the national park. You have only one national park in Nevada, we're very proud of it, and I will look closely at that park in the EIS and be commenting on that.	Updated section 3.11 (special designations) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-84	I've gone through a lot of draft environmental impact statements and this one really caught my attention in the fact that most draft impact statements have already identified most of the areas where the problems were going to be and develop alternatives to mitigate those.	The purpose of this Draft EIS is to identify impacts and mitigation related to right-of-way areas and produce a programmatic assessment of the associated future groundwater development areas and pumping. Specific information regarding well locations, pumping volumes, and potential drawdown effects will be analyzed in future NEPA.
33565-85	And I was focusing mainly on what is going to happen with the cultural resources. As you know, our people, and when I say "our people," the Paiute Shoshone people have been there from time immemorial. The traditional teachings that have been handed down from generation to generation for us is to live in harmony with the environment.	Updated sections 3.16 (cultural resources) and 3.17 (Native American concerns) provide an analysis of these issues.
33565-86	I know any type of pumping project is going to have impacts. I've seen what has happened here in Nevada. We at Pyramid Lake have witnessed what has happened in regard to water resources being transferred out of basins with respect to the Newlands project. We've seen our lake shrink 80 feet. We've seen all of the problems that it caused with the fish migration passage. Also we saw Winnemucca Lake, which was a very important lake, Pyramid Lake's sister lake to the east, completely dry up. I know we're talking about pumping. I don't need to remind the State of Nevada what's happened most recently in Mason Valley and Smith Valley and the impact that the well drilling all in the name of progress has had, and that is most recently.	Comment noted.
33565-87	The TDS level in Walker Lake are probably exceeding 19 parts per million. There are no more cutthroat trout in the lake. I understand that this federal legislation and they are trying to work now in trying to see how they might better manage the river system, so on and so forth. But that's been recently and that's water that's just within the one basin.	Comment noted.
33565-88	What I saw missing in this draft environmental impact statement is the mere fact that you're going to be dealing with tribes, tribes that have a very special recognition within a constitution. They're mandates from Washington regarding consultation as applicable to all state and federal agencies. I have yet to see any mention of federal protection for tribes regarding NHPA, and they failed to mention ARPA, the Archeological Resource Protection Act, and how it all ties together with the tribes. I think that's very important when you're talking about 300 miles of pipeline, transmission facilities, roads, wells. You're going to be impacting cultural resources. And I would highly recommend that should this project go through, then there has to be some of that federal protection and federal regulatory requirements within the document, and more importantly how you're going to work with the tribes.	Impacts to cultural resources and Native American traditional values, as well as discussions of the regulatory framework, including the NHPA and ARPA, are discussed in sections 3.16 and 3.17 of the DEIS. Tribal consultation to identify and evaluate cultural resources, historic properties, and properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to Indian tribes is ongoing and would continue to occur during each tier of the Project.
33565-89	The Great Basin has been home again to our Paiute Shoshone people. It's only been recently that government has identified separately with reservation but the Great Basin is still our home, all of it. And so when there are impacts, and again with teachings, I'm essentially here speaking for those that can't speak for themselves, that's the mountain, the water, the plants, the medicine, the foods. We have a moral responsibility and an obligation to protect what's here. It took a millennium to establish that balance and it doesn't take very long for mankind to unsettle that balance.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-90	So with many eyes that are focused and wide open regarding this project, it still seems to amaze me how so many people can still be blinded knowing that there are going to be significant impacts with this project.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-91	And so with that I wanted to thank you and I'll be looking forward to talking to you more and I'll be working with the tribes as well, keeping them informed about what's going on with the project.	Your comments on the Draft EIS have been considered.
33565-92	I reviewed the groundwater development project draft and I'm very alarmed at the enormity of what is being proposed. The Southern Nevada Water Authority plans to drain vast areas of Southeastern and eastern Nevada as well as parts of Utah in order to import 57.6 billion gallons of water per year. This is in order to fuel rampant growth of the Las Vegas megalopias, and the audacity of Southern Nevada Water Authority as proportional to its thoughtlessness. The proposed drainage of water will have a devastating effect on the vast and unique desert ecosystem and would cause water tables to recede by many feet.	Thank you for your comments. Your input has been carefully considered by the BLM, but has not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-93	This would negatively affect all forms of plant and animal life, including many rare or threatened species, such as the endemic pupfish.	Updated sections 3.3 (water resources) and 3.6 (wildlife resources) discuss potential impacts from groundwater pumping.

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33565-94	As well as affecting important traditional game animals such as black-tailed mule deer, pronghorn, bighorn and elk, this water drainage project would have a very damaging effect upon the awe-inspiring wild horses and burros. As a wildlife ecologist and fourth generation Nevadan, I have observed, photographed, written about and defended these wonderful presences throughout my life. They should be regarded as returned natives to North American, since the fossil record as well as genetic examination proves that they originated upon this continent and that when Europeans reintroduced them here, they were, in fact, restoring the missing equid component to the life community.	Updated sections 3.6 (wildlife resources) and 3.13 (wild horses) discuss potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-95	North America is the true cradle of evolution for the entire horse family, Equidae, as all three extant branches, in addition to others now extinct, both originated and experienced their long-standing evolution right here, including Nevada. The horses and burros are a different type of herbivore; they are not ruminant but rather post-gastric digesters. This makes them natural gardeners who fertilize the soils and spread intact seeds of a great variety of plants wherever they roam. This they do to a much greater degree than is the case with ruminant digesters, precisely because their post-gastric digestive system does not as thoroughly degrade their food as does the ruminant digestive system of cattle, deer, elk, bighorn and domestic sheep, etc.	Thank you for your comments. Your input has been carefully considered by the BLM, but has not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-96	Also, wild horses and burros spread their grazing pressure over vaster areas, and these animals are capable of accessing remoter, steeper and rockier land than many ruminants, particularly domesticated cattle and sheep. Also they do not camp on riparian or stream lakesides including meadow habitats as do cattle, unless forced to do so by man's fences, barricaded water sources, etc. These wonderful presences are restorers and healers of Nevada, yet they are being used as a scapegoat for what is basically humans' destructive doings, especially the overgrazing of livestock or the over-promotion of big game species and the elimination of natural predators such as puma that goes along with our society's overemphasis upon livestock and big game production. As builders of the humus content of soils through their feces, wild horses and burros make soils both more nutrient-rich and more water-retentive, and this has a major positive effect in enhancing the ecosystem and building up the living sponge watershed at all levels, high or low, in any given hydrographic basin, but we people must allow these animals to fill their respective niches. We must learn to value wild horse or burro containing ecosystems and let them realize their own internal harmony. Such an ecosystem is a unique and special community of living beings and kinds that restore so much that is truly valuable here in Nevada as in our nation and world. As members of homo sapiens, our challenge is to learn to live in harmony with this enhanced natural home. And we can start by finding within ourselves sufficient humility to objectively observe, read up about, and thus come to better understand the wild horse containing ecosystem.	Thank you for your comments. Your input has been carefully considered by the BLM, but has not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-97	It is truly a Godsend for our state, as for to the West in general, and I believe will prove key to restoring a wholesome way of life, leading us out of destructive pitfalls of too much material indulgence and into a leaner but more spiritually awakened lifestyle and value system. The latter with heal and restore Nevada's life community, mend its broken links, and avert it from its present blind and arrogant same-old same-old path to destruction.	This comment was bracketed in error and will not be treated as a comment to the DEIS.
33565-98	The lives of many wild horses and burros and their great draw for ecotourism would be terribly damaged by the proposed drainage of eastern Nevada's water. This project would have a devastating impact upon the small remnant populations of wild horses and burros and the hundreds of other plant and animal species that go together with them.	Updated section 3.13 (wild horses) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-99	Many springs upon which these species depend would be adversely affected by the gigantic drawdown of the regional aquifer, and it is disingenuous on the part of those persons preparing this draft environmental impact statement to omit presenting maps and discussions revealing the zero to ten feet groundwater drawdown this project would entail. This omission ignores the pervasive large scale, detrimental effect upon naturally living plants and animals in the region who would be deprived of at or close to surface waters. Even the drawing of a few feet in the desert can drive many populations, marginally surviving subspecies, and even entire species to extinction. I know this drawdown of the regional aquifer would have a lethal effect on the scant remaining wild horses and burros here, as well as hundreds of other species of interdependent animals and plants that form the natural community.	See response WR-1 regarding the use of the model simulated 10-foot drawdown for the programmatic analysis of potential effects to water dependant resources.
33565-100	What would our already abused Nevada look like after this project? Take a take to the Near or Middle East and you will see just what a barren and relatively lifeless wasteland a once healthy desert can become. And this devastating effect would not be just for Nevada but also for significant parts of Utah, including at least five wild horse herd management areas: Choke Cherry, Confusion, Conger, Kingtop and Sulfur, the latter of which contains a rare Spanish barb population stemming from the early Spanish explorers who came here in the 1600s	Updated section 3.13 (wild horses) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.

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33565-101	Herds affected in Nevada would include many I have visited, including the twelve in the Caliente Complex, which though unfairly zeroed out by BLM Ely District in 2009, legally could and should be restored. The Eagle Complex of HMAs, Pancakes, and the Triple B Complex of HMAs, as well as Antelope East herd management area. These contain remnants of historic Shoshone herds and their further diminishment due to the major depriving of water by the groundwater development project would strike at Nevada's very soulful quality of life. With the drawdown being contemplated, there simply wouldn't be enough water left for these herds, and the federal authorities would simply opt to zero them out. As usual it would be the horses and burros who would continue to be set up for elimination, those who offer the most for truly restoring the lands. This must not be allowed. Thank you.	Updated section 3.13 (wild horses) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-102	The reason I'm here and last, I chose to be could offer that I hadn't heard yet today. There's been a number of wonderful presentations, but as a geologist I would like to make a point that I haven't heard either here or in Southern Nevada. Many of the hydrologists connected with the state clearly make a point that our water resources are not renewable. I think the public in Nevada has begun to accept that. We only need to look at the Las Vegas basin itself and the reason that the Southern Nevada Water Authority wants these waters from the two northern counties north of Clark to see that water is not renewable.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-103	If we think in terms of human population growth, and even the dynamics of population growth, in our lifetimes, and mine is a little longer than most of the people here, you can easily see, begin to see what the effect is in terms of our water on our water resources, but we are talking about a geological instant in time. An instant. My life is an instant. Your life is an instant. Maybe the next instant will be the effect of the growth of Las Vegas on White Pine and Lincoln counties.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
33565-104	But the EIS looks at -- what is the maximum, 75 years? And we're thinking 75 years is a long time. It's not. The solutions we're looking at are temporary at the very, very best. And the question to ask, are the impacts that we foresee with our limited knowledge, are these impacts worthwhile undertaking in terms of the future of Nevada and the United States?	Thank you for your comment.
33565-105	I am a wildlife person. I've represented wildlife on the Northwestern Resource Advisory Council for the BLM for six years. I am much more knowledgeable of the wildlife in northwestern Nevada than I am in eastern Nevada. The Great Basin Bird Observatory, which has published the Nevada Breeding Bird Atlas, has looked at bird densities in every Nevada habitat statewide, including Lincoln and White Pine counties. These data have generated the breeding bird data in terms of whether they breed or they don't, whether they're there and in what habitat. But since the atlas was published, the atlas work was just completed in 2000, the Nevada bird count has continued on a similar density of points. The breeding bird atlas was carried out on over 500 points randomly chosen stratified by habitat statewide with additional points added for Clark County under the auspices and funding of the Southern Nevada Water Authority. Since the atlas was published, the Nevada bird count has continued on a similar number of random points stratified by habitat in White Pine and Lincoln counties. I feel like I just got started and I'm looking at one minute remaining, so let me point this out. I would recommend that you look at the EIS in a timeframe that is not so short, and I think you should look at it in terms of the affect on habitats that will be affected using the bird density data that has been calculated and is published in Nevada Comprehensive Bird Conservation Plan that was just published with input from all of the agencies, federal and state, that include concerns about avian wildlife. Thank you. Well, I can't tell you what the trends were without looking at the data. We're talking about close to 400 species. We're talking about 15 major habitats and a total of maybe 25 total. So the data exists in terms of bird densities in a given habitat for up to ten years now. And the data, much of the data is published in the Nevada Breeding Bird Comprehensive Plan, and the rest of it is certainly available from the Great Basin Bird Observatory, which is a scientific organization with no political agenda whatsoever.	Thank you for your comment. Data and information from GBBO and the Nevada Comprehensive Bird Conservation Plan has been used in the EIS analysis.
33565-106	One of the things I noticed in the executive summary document is the geological section was when they were talking about earthquakes. They mentioned earthquakes of magnitude seven or higher. When I went to the USGS website, I found that Eastern Nevada was a lot more seismically active than that. And I would highly recommend that if anybody wanted to continue with this process, they start looking more correctly at earthquake offense of level three or lower. Just because human beings can't feel earthquakes doesn't mean it is not going to geologically affect the plate blocks in those areas, and, therefore, the hydrology of the streams.	Updated section 3.2 (geology) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-107	Throughout the summary document I kept running across places where it was written that the affect of climate change was unknowable and, therefore, could not be addressed. I'd like to address them. I see it's got three possibilities: The environment could get wetter, the environment could stay the same, or it could get drier. If the environment gets wetter, then Las Vegas is going to have ample water and doesn't need any of this. If the water of the climate stays basically the same, then what you're going to have is what this document is all about, all right. But climatologists are telling us to expect change in the climate. The last possibility is the climate is going to get drier, in which case there's not going to be enough water for Las Vegas or even the people in that area. So even in a gambling state like Nevada, you lose two out of three. It's not a really good gamble.	Climate change information in the FEIS has been expanded and added to each resource section in chapter 3. Please see standard resource response Air-15 and Air-16 for further information.

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33565-108	But come across here in the executive summary it discussed the possible remedies to problems arising from the proposed plan of withdrawal; however, I didn't see anything of a remedial action should some problem happen with over-pumping.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
33565-109	Nowhere does it mention problems the counties would have when the roads and utilities are broke by dropping ground level. Nowhere does it mention the possibility of stream piracy, reducing stream surface flow, and there is basically nowhere does it talk about the -- nowhere did I find it mention this subduction is not reversible and once pore space now holding water collapses, that reservoir capacity will be gone forever.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33565-110	In addition to the downside of the proposal here in the document I'd like to add a couple that have been missed. Things like natural areas of the Great Basin National Park will be forever changed. Potential exists for extinction of unique species both known and unknown to science. Lung diseases in the air will multiply among human population. And there's no known remedies are currently available for reversing the devastating downside effects of this proposal.	Updated section 3.14 (special designations) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping to Great Basin National Park. Please refer to standard resource responses Air-1, Air-2, Air-9 and Air-14 for information on this topic.
33565-111	One point that I'd like to make is in addition to what I've already said is make a reference to mitigation. In my six years of advising the BLM, it had became obvious that the first thing that drops out of the Bureau of Land Management budget is the money for mitigation. Project after project is not mitigated in a scientific fashion. And I am not acquainted in depth with the EIS, but I would like to make you all aware that if there is no total analysis of the mitigation costs, and a manner in which to not only confirm but to guarantee that that mitigation is carried out, the whole plan is a failure. And many BLM projects have simply failed because mitigation moneys were not available.	The applicant will be responsible for mitigation costs involving those monitoring and mitigation measures that are under the jurisdiction of the BLM, and other agencies with responsibilities or jurisdiction on lands and resources affected by the project.
33565-112	At one time I heard Miss Mulroy refer to a she assured the gentleman that if the well was drying up they would know it and it would be mitigated. I ask you how do you mitigate a dry spring? Can anybody here tell me? Can you tell me what it costs? Would you drill? What data would you use? So I think and I suspect that the EIS needs to do a large quantity of additional work with respect to the costs and scientific methods of mitigation that you know can be carried out. Thank you.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33565-113	I need to add an important PS. I'm really apologizing for not being prepared. Life got in the way. But the important thing that I wanted to get across and did not is the cumulative effects on wildlife habitat, thus wildlife, and then the economics of the area of not only the projected water drawdown dewatering affected springs, etc., but the additional roads, number of roads, miles of transmission lines, both of which can have a very serious affect particularly on elk and sage grouse, and thus will affect hunting, fishing. Well, not fishing so much but hunting opportunities and economic opportunities to the rural areas as well as just the sustainability of the sage grouse in our state, which is at the brink of being listed.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document.
33565-114	Despite the fact this is just a little mini thing here that we're seeing here, I know there are piles of facts here and statistics and data, but what I'd like to address, as Jim said, there's a whole bigger picture here to look at and a whole larger umbrella, if you will. It's not totally those details in that data, but what we need to look at is what's really bound to happen here is that we're talking about sending water from one part of our beautiful state, and it's not just the water, it's the very lifeblood of that land, to another part of our state for the people to use.	Please refer to standard resource response Gen-8 for information on this topic.
33565-115	And I don't live in that area but I'm one of those people too because I'm a resident of the state, and so I say instead let us learn to conserve. Let us not wash our car as often. Let us not plant lawns and water thirsty landscape. Let us get used to having less water. Let us deny, oh, wait, this is a new concept, let us deny developments because we don't have the water for them. Let us say, I'm sorry, we can't build that because we don't want to strip the water off or our state and turn it into a dustbowl. And to me that's what it comes down to. In the human aspect of it, oh, we need that water here, but they really need it there worse. And to take the water from one place in this respect and totally dry out the land is to me unconscionable, and I hope that the bigger picture will be considered. Thank you.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. Water planning and allocation for the state of Nevada rests with the State. Your comment and suggestions concerning conservation have been compiled with other similar recommendations and will be passed to the relevant state agencies responsible for these functions.
33565-116	One of my concerns is based on what I'll call historical data that seems to be used and then considered to be scientific. If we're going to consider that the historical habits or whatever of the water system and the ecosystem that is being used on that side of the state as being a factor or prophecy for what's going to happen in the future, then we should take the scientific fact of Owens Valley, where I've also lived for three and a half years, of what exactly occurred and considered that to be science as well. And it was a massive failure and continues to be to this day. You can look at Owens Valley or Owens Lake, which is having to be redone at millions of dollars, and the engineering that was involved in just saving that, the public's costs rose from there.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-117	I actually work for a company that's the largest pump company in the United States and we sell pumps and such, and we're still using witchers to get -- there is not enough science in what is going down below the ground to be there. If there was they wouldn't have to mine for gold and every other thing that's out there. There's not enough science involved in it.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33565-118	The wildlife has nobody to protect themselves but ourselves here, and I'm only representing myself as somebody from the state of Nevada. The wildlife can't -- you see the effect of fires, the way they move. There hasn't been enough history involved yet although we continue to grow, and conservation-wise we continue to improve everything.	Thank you for your comment. The subject of this comment is beyond the Draft EIS scope and does not require further agency response. However, your comment topic will be considered by the BLM during preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.

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33565-119	By taking this water from that area there can be nothing but a failure, in my opinion. And again you just look at Owens Valley and what's occurred to them and it seems to be glaring that this is not the right way to get to that project. So that's all I have to say. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-120	I please urge you to take the stand of No Action. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-121	My comment is that we shouldn't be taking water from one region of the state to feed another. To me it's like robbing Peter to pay Paul, and eventually Peter is not going to have anything either and then who's going to take care of them? Who's going to take care of White Pine County when they clean it out all their water and destroy all of the lands that are over there?	Thank you for your comment.
33565-122	I know firsthand the involvement in Southern Nevada Water Authority. My son has worked for them for two and a half years, and he's about to leave. He's been working on one of the ranches and I saw him have some of the inside loop of some of the information that's going on and I don't appreciate their attitude. They seem to think that they're entitled to this water in White Pine County. The water belongs to White Pine County. If it was supposed to be in Las Vegas and Clark County, it would be down there.	Thank you for your comment.
33565-123	And we need to build developments where the resources are rather than take them to feed another community. It's just not right. White Pine County would benefit if the developments were happening in White Pine County. The dollars would stay in White Pine County. And that's where it needs to stay instead of shipping it all down to Clark County. I mean, how big does Clark County need to get or Las Vegas need to get before they figure out they're too big for their britches?	Please refer to standard resource response SocEcon-5 for information on this topic.
33565-124	Surely we've learned from L.A. County and what Southern California has done to the entire region. And let's take the water rights away from Los Angeles County or Southern California out of the Colorado River and give it to Las Vegas. Maybe then they'll be happy and let the two of them duke it out.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33565-125	So I'm here to talk about the appendices. And right now what's available is a two volume draft environmental impact statement. And as I've mentioned to someone after one of the other meetings I was at, the EIS does not have a listing, does not list the appendices. And the fellow I talked to had the impression that the next version would list what's in the appendix.	The appendices are listed in the table of contents.
33565-126	I began to see that there were appendices as I went through the document. And when I asked about them at the following meeting, I learned that they were all on the disk, on the CD. So today's the first time I had a chance to go through a paper copy of the appendix, and it's a massive document. My computer, which is a Mac book, is about three and a half years old and I got it with all kinds of extra room on it, but I'm used to reading paper copies of documents and it takes a long time to go through the document, which is four or five inches thick, to try to do that kind of thing on my computer.	The appendices volume was distributed to the public via electronic disk and they were available at the public meetings.
33565-127	What the appendices have are there are seven appendices A through G, and then appendix F3 has 19 subsections, and then F3.3 has 17 subsections. And I was going through those putting a Post-it on the ones, the paper copy I was looking at this afternoon, and that's about 43 sections.	Comment noted.
33565-128	And I did ask Penny about having a copy of this available in the Reno BLM office. There isn't one at this moment but she is going to check to see if they can have one of the copies that was here today available in the Reno office, the paper copies of the appendices. My request is that BLM make copies, have copies, paper copies of the appendices available to the public to obtain. Having gone through it now, I think it's obviously a critical part of the EIS when you used to read the appendix, 40-some appendix parts in conjunction with what's in the document. I think the appendix is such an integral part of the EIS it should be, paper copies should be made available to the public along with the EIS. And I would also suggest that the paper copies also be placed at some or many of the locations where the EIS has been put in libraries and that kind of thing. I have access to a computer but the only way I can get a copy now -- well, I could request BLM make me a copy, which would be prohibitive, but the only way I could make a copy now would be to take it to a service and have them print it or print it out on my own computer, which I could see would take a lot of time and run through a lot of ink. so I think it's appropriate for purposes of disclosure of this project to take several steps to make the appendices available, including to individuals upon request, and that some or all the locations where the EIS is now put available to the public. Speaking for people who don't have computers or who have extremely slow computers who may even be interested in a section or a subsection, those without computers aren't going to be able to access it. Some of the information in there is information that our group, Water Keepers, started to compile for Spring Valley, identification of wells and well locations in connection with Ely office permits, right-of-way permits for test wells, piezometer studies and so forth. The information that's in the appendices is an important starting place to look at that information. And I think that without having that available to the public means it's a burden to the public to print it out and greatly limits access to the EIS itself. So to conclude I request, urge that this be made available, the appendix be made available and put in the newsletter and online how to get access to paper copies once they're available. Thank you.	Thank you for your comment.

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ID	Comment	Response
33565-129	I just want to have it on the record that I oppose any expansion of the SNWA drawdown, any kind of pipeline going outside of the Clark County area, that those areas, as marginal as they are, can't afford to lose what little water they have. That is their own resource there. And Las Vegas just needs to start learning to live within its means. And I sorely fear, not only another Owens Valley when they start doing this, but once this project is in place, I don't see them stopping until they get to the Idaho border, and it's just absolutely insane, but that's what will happen. This is the ugly camel's nose that I don't want to see poking underneath the tent.	Thank you for your comment.
<u>Salt Lake City Public Mtg Transcript</u>		
33269-1	When would they stop pumping, because I read that they would stop pumping if the water got to X, whatever their X is. But they won't stop. This is just like old men convincing young women to have sex: I will pull out before I cum and you won't get pregnant. When are they going to pull out?	An applicant-committed protection measure listed under Adaptive Management Measures would be an option for reducing or ceasing groundwater withdrawals. This measure would determine a reduction or cessation of pumping on a case-by-case basis for individual production wells or well fields using technical and consultation processes identified in the stipulated agreements.
33269-2	We fear that the depletion of the water levels will essentially hurt plant life and then create dust which will blow towards Salt Lake County and other counties along the Wasatch Front. And it's our understanding that the sparse vegetation, erosion of bare surfaces and wildland fires possibly resulting from groundwater drawdown can generate wind blown dust, haze and climate impacts as well. And the report estimates that the wind blow dust after full build-out under the proposed option, the option showing maximum build-out, would be 180 tons per year and will increase over time from 24,000 to 34,700 tons per year, so that concerns us.	Please see common responses Air-6, Air-9, and Air-21.
33269-3	One of the things that we would like to see is the impact of that dust coming towards Salt Lake County. We already live in a non-attainment area in Salt Lake County, meaning the federal government has told us that our air is not clean enough and we need to do something about it, so we are concerned about the air quality impacts. And we'd love to see the study address that along the Wasatch Front, even though it's not located in the immediate area, and so we'd love to learn about potentially negative impacts.	Please refer to standard resource responses Air-9 and Air-14 for information on this topic.
33269-4	And if you've ever noticed, there's a lot of year-round springs or streams that come down out of the Deep Creek Mountains, and I haven't seen that addressed yet in any of these studies how the long-term in the Deep Creeks would be affected by that also.	The maximum extent of the model simulated drawdown area resulting from the GWD pumping scenarios occur at the full-build out plus 200 year timeframe. At this point in time, the nearest location of the simulated drawdown area resulting from project pumping is located in northern Spring Valley; located two hydrographic basins away from (approximately 20 miles southwest) of Deep Creek Valley; and approximately 15 miles from the Goshute Indian Reservation boundary. Therefore, impacts to water resources in Deep Creek Valley and the Goshute Indian Reservation are not anticipated.
33269-5	And moving on to a different look at it, I didn't know until today that the one person that's going to make the final decision is the Nevada Water Engineer is going to make -- he's going to make a decision that's going to affect Utah. And, frankly, one man making a decision on something this important scares me, especially when he's not representing our state.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33269-6	And there is not a lot of water in the west desert. Obviously they could probably take it from Lake Tahoe but that's not part of their scope.	This comment was bracketed in error and does not warrant a response.
33269-7	Southern Nevada Water proposes to extract groundwater, and that transfer to Las Vegas will have a direct impact on agriculture, the ecosystem and Utah's interest.	Thank you for your comment.
33269-8	Some like to minimize the socioeconomic contributions of farmers and ranchers. Well, let's be clear. Food and agriculture in the state of Utah is a major contributor to the economy, the tax base and to jobs. Agriculture contributes \$15 billion, food and agriculture contribute \$15 billion to Utah's economy. That's 15 percent of our GDP and it employs 73,000 Utahans. Our view is BLM has to fully assess the socioeconomic impacts and the history of the residents in this important region.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM acknowledges the social, economic and cultural significance of farming and ranching to Nevada and Utah, and to the study area for the EIS. At the same time, without diminishing the value of that production within the local community, it is noted that the value of agricultural production in the study area constitutes a very small fraction of statewide production cited in the comment. Long-term risks to agriculture in the region associated with drawdown are noted in 3.18.2.8. Additional text regarding such risks, as well as the long-term uncertainties associated with these risks, and the geographic distribution of crop lands in Juab and Millard county, have been added in the latter section and further assessments could occur as part of subsequent NEPA (see Gen-1)
33269-9	Some like to minimize the socioeconomic contributions of farmers and ranchers. Well, let's be clear. Food and agriculture in the state of Utah is a major contributor to the economy, the tax base and to jobs. Agriculture contributes \$15 billion, food and agriculture contribute \$15 billion to Utah's economy. That's 15 percent of our GDP and it employs 73,000 Utahans. Our view is BLM has to fully assess the socioeconomic impacts and the history of the residents in this important region.	Thank you for your comment. The BLM acknowledges the social, economic and cultural significance of farming and ranching to Nevada and Utah, and to the study area for the EIS. At the same time, without diminishing the value of that production within the local community, it is noted that the production constitutes a very small fraction of statewide production cited in the comment. Long-term risks to agriculture in the region associated with drawdown are noted in 3.18.2.8. Additional text regarding such risks, as well as the long-term uncertainties associated with these risks, and the geographic distribution of crop lands in Juab and Millard county, have been added in the latter section and further assessments could occur as part of subsequent NEPA (see Gen-1)
33269-10	Number one, Farm Bureau supports the state engineer prohibiting changes in diverse, water transfers, and new well permits that would impact the existing water rights, and we hope that the Nevada State Engineer would do the same.	Comment noted.

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ID	Comment	Response
33269-11	The hydrological connection between Snake and Spring Valley and even further into Cave Valley and beyond that are significant. Pumping associated with Spring Valley may have a direct and indirect impact on Utah water rights and the residents of Snake Valley, and we have concerns about that.	These concerns are discussed in Section 3.3 (Water Resources) of the EIS.
33269-12	If approved by the BLM and ultimately damage those impacts, not just money, not buying out affected interests, is the Southern Nevada Water Authority really prepared to pull the plug and shut this down, as Pat Mulroy suggests in the media, if it does adversely impact; or once those homes are tied up to this pumping out of the west desert, will that take precedent and we'll forget about the commitments?	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33269-13	A project of this magnitude taking groundwater resources away from its originating source that adversely affects the local water resources should not be allowed without any in-depth cumulative impact analysis that the project will have on the natural environment.	Cumulative impact analysis by resource was completed in the DEIS.
33269-14	The Southern Nevada Water Groundwater Project EIS, the DEIS does not address the water aquifer recharge rates, affects of climate charge, evaporation, etc.	An additional discussion of climate change was added to water resources (Section 3.3.3)
33269-15	Unfortunately the Southern Nevada Water Authority Groundwater Development Draft Environmental Impact Statement and associated agreements takes a wait and see approach, or we won't find out what happens until we start pumping. That is not acceptable.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33269-16	The valleys contain many cultural sites and natural features, especially wetland areas which include, but are not limited to, springs, creeks, marshes, wet meadows, streams, rivers. There's no rivers out there to replenish the aquifer.	Comments noted.
33269-17	Riparian areas and federal mineral water resources, which is a great spiritual and cultural importance, the EIS seriously fails to recognize the project affects on the water resources need to sustain the natural environment in those valleys.	Impacts to riparian areas and water resources are discussed at length in Section 3.5, Vegetation Resources, and Section 3.3, Water Resources.
33269-18	The stipulated agreement signed by the board of Department of Interior agency for mitigation and monitoring does not include any management or protections for the water-dependent species and the environment. The stipulation agreement as written is inadequate to address additional impacts and uncertainties posed by the change application required by distributed pumping.	Thank you for your comment. Please see Standard Resource Response MM-1.
33269-19	The monitoring and mitigation plan is unenforceable, it's unfunded and lacks the baseline data and triggers for specific responses to adverse impacts.	Please refer to standard resource responses MM-1 and MM-2 for information on this topic.
33269-20	The EIS does not address the prolonged, compounded affects on a multitude of species and organisms and habitat because of the way they're chained and linked together. Local water sources will dry up when the groundwater is lowered. Crops will wither and animals and fish will die from the lack of oxygen and of thirst.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33269-21	The EIS does not recognize long-term drought impacts and its affect on water recharge.	Comment noted. As described in Section 3.2.8, the groundwater flow model uses the 30 year average precipitation rate to estimate an average annual recharge rate for the regional groundwater flow system. Because of the relatively slow groundwater movement (where regional groundwater flow is estimated to require decades or more to flow between recharge and discharge areas) the regional groundwater flow system is less sensitive to cyclical drought cycles than are localized surface water resources that are controlled by seasonal or annual precipitation patterns.
33269-22	Too many times a top down driven agenda does not acknowledge the public concerns and our positions are not even considered in this EIS process.	Thank you for your comment.
33269-23	Is it economically feasible?	Thank you for your comment. Please see SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding the inclusion of project cost information in the FEIS and lack of authority or need for the BLM to independently analyze project costs in conjunction with the ROW application.
33269-24	Is there sufficient water available to sustain the project?	The analyses of pumping effects evaluates impacts to water resources (including springs, streams, ET discharge areas, and water rights) and water dependant resources. Perennial yield or sustainable yield is evaluated by the Nevada State Engineer through the water rights adjudication process.
33269-25	What will be the short and long-term adverse impacts of the whole water aquifers in the valley?	Impacts to water resources are provided in Section 3.3 of the EIS.
33269-26	And the first comment is that we would ask the BLM to consider extending the comment period beyond October 11th to accommodate a decision by the Nevada State Engineer regarding the adjudication of water rights and what impact that would have on the environmental impact statement for this project. We also would ask that the BLM continue this hearing and comment period to allow for the USGS report on Snake Valley to be published, which is very soon to come out. All of this information is relevant for the public to provide meaningful public comment, which is our right to be heard, and we would extend an invitation to the BLM to prolong this comment period to at least December 11th, if not January 11th, because of the way holiday seasons work.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.

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33269-27	This project is about the pipeline project that would service a groundwater completion project, so your responsibility is to decide about the pipeline. But they're related. And so the environmental impacts that are associated with the project that will be accommodated by the pipeline is relevant to your decision.	Please refer to standard resource responses Gen-1 and Gen-2 for information on this topic.
33269-28	Snake Valley is part of the hydrologic system of the Great Salt Lake watershed and it is part of our watershed community. We are concerned about impacts anywhere in our watershed.	Snake Valley was included in the impact analyses for all resources in the EIS.
33269-29	There are concerns about the groundwater depletion and how that would affect the surface water systems. Mostly the analysis that's been done suggests that groundwater has no impact on the surface water. That's not true. Rivers and streams are made up of the groundwater that feeds the channel, and so any depletion of groundwater affects the functionality of a stream system and the riparian zone.	The potential impacts to springs and streams are described in Section 3.3.2 of the EIS. The EIS identifies a number of springs and streams at risk from the proposed GWD pumping alternatives.
33269-30	This valley is actually important because of the sage steppe environment. And there are significant federal resources being deployed at this point for sage steppe recovery. I was part of the initiation of Utah Partners for Conservation and Development program to address the sage steppe problem in Utah. It's a multistate problem, and have to do everything we can to preserve the fundamental infrastructure to keep the sage steppe community alive to avoid listing it.	Please refer to standard resource response WL-2 for information on this topic.
33269-31	And we do have Peregrine hawk populations in this area. They're a very incredible wildlife species that would be detrimentally impacted by the loss of sage steppe habitat. Gunderson grouse, other species that are of concern.	These bird species are included in the impact analyses for wildlife resources in Section 3.6.2 of the EIS.
33269-32	So we have to look at these broader implications. We need sufficient time to provide those comments and the additional information that we would get from the USGS and from the Nevada State Engineer are relevant, and we would ask you to postpone those hearings until we can get those studies.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to reviewing the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the comment period of this document.
33269-33	I think no DEIS should be published until the well locations, costs, water rights and other uncertainties are addressed. I believe particularly that the upcoming USGS UNR hydrology study on the Great Basin National Park must be included. Please delay closing the comment period or at least agree to issue at least a supplemental EIS after the missing information is obtained.	Thank you for expressing your concerns related to the Draft EIS. Your suggestions have been carefully considered by the BLM, but have not resulted in changes to the analyses presented in this document. The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33269-34	I'm particularly concerned that the DEIS considers primarily the impacts to wildlife, animal and vegetable, only in conjunction with the pipeline. I believe that the EIS should include, or at least address in some detail, the entire potential impact to all our publically owned BLM land. The DEIS is clear that construction of the pipeline probably means destruction and desertification on the adjacent land, and I believe that extrapolates to mean on all BLM land in the valleys. That I think is an inappropriate outcome. I would like to know exactly the degree of damage that will be done on all the public BLM land affected by the water removal.	The purpose of this EIS is to analyze impacts related to the right-of-way, access roads and ancillary facilities. Impacts related to well locations, pumping, and groundwater drawdown are analyzed on a programmatic level and will be analyzed in greater detail in future NEPA.
33269-35	I'm concerned with the DEIS's discussion of probable desertification downwind of the Wasatch Front causing up to perhaps 24,000 tons of blowing dust to be created. I suggest that you consult with the climatology department of the University of Utah which has some very lovely photographs of the dust from the southwest from the area that will be affected blowing directly into our air shed.	Please see common response Air-8 and Air-10.
33269-36	The Utah portion of the proposed water removal is not addressed in this particular DEIS, but I believe proposed removal of the underground water is likely to damage the water table and water supplies in Utah as well as in Nevada.	Potential effects to water resources in Utah are addressed for each alternative pumping scenario in Section 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 of the EIS.
33269-37	I think leaving out the Snake Valley was a deliberate effort on the part of the Southern Nevada Water people to not discuss this in this DEIS. Snake Valley was considered to be a prime pumping area and water source for the Southern Nevada Water's earlier plans, and I expect those haven't changed.	Snake Valley was discussed at length in the DEIS and that discussion is carried into the FEIS.
33269-38	They had an earlier plan to do groundwater monitoring and mitigation if harm was done. I believe mitigation means a plan to buy out our ranchers in the Snake Valley and create more wasteland.	See Standard Resource Response MM-1 regarding monitoring and mitigation.
33269-39	The BLM has identified some information about wild horse impacts in its study but has done an inadequate job of analyzing the impacts on the Utah herds. We need to know about the compromising of springs and seeps that are in the Choke Cherry, Confusion, Conger, Kingtop and Sulphur horse management areas in Utah. So if you take a hard look at that, that's an area where I think you have failed to meet the requirements of NEPA.	Surface disturbance (construction) activities would not affect HMAs in Utah. As summarized in Table 3.13-8 and 3.13-11 through 3.13-17, the 10 foot or greater groundwater drawdown contour would only affect springs and streams in the Antelope, Eagle, and Silver King HMAs.
33269-40	I've got to say that when we talk mitigation and monitoring and compensation that this just simply can't be done. If you take the water out of the desert the way that Southern Nevada Water wants to in their proposed action, you're going to have groundwater drawdowns of up to 200 feet, a hundred feet in Snake Valley, and those are guesstimates but those are devastating numbers. You're not going to see any recovery to equilibrium for hundreds if not thousands of years. There simply isn't enough recharge for that to take place if you dewater the aquifer in these valleys.	See Standard Resource Response SocEcon-3 regarding the cost of monitoring and mitigation.
33269-41	How are you going to mitigate -- how are you going to offset subsidence, ground levels dropping five feet or more over hundreds of square miles in Nevada and Utah? That's impossible to monitor and mitigate. You can't pay people off enough to deal with their ground dropping as if they were in a sinkhole.	See Standard Resource Response MM-1 regarding monitoring and mitigation.

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ID	Comment	Response
33269-42	And Pat Mulroy has had lots of second thoughts about having said that, and she's had other proposals that she's brought to the table, alternatives like going to the Mississippi River, going to the Missouri River, taking flooding waters out of the Midwest and pumping them to Nevada. Well, why don't we help her take up some of those potential alternatives like desalinization, like better conservation, like reuse of water rather than taking return flow credit. All of those should be on the table with the BLM and have not been on the table.	See Standard Resource Response Gen-3 regarding alternative water sources.
33269-43	We can at least ask that she give us a reasonable cost estimate for this project, because I believe they won't be able to finance it.	Thank you for your comment. Please see standard resource responses SocEcon-1, SocEcon-3 and SocEcon-6 regarding these topics.
33269-44	And I, first of all, want to go on the record as adamantly opposed to this whole project, but what I want to speak on this afternoon is what lies down the road after it's either approved or disapproved.	Thank you for your comment.
33269-45	They are worried about the Colorado River impact of getting less water than they have now due to depletion of the Colorado River. That water is over-allocated right now.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33269-46	The alternative to this is to drain every ounce of water from the Great Basin until it's gone. And as been noted before, when it's gone, it's gone. The damage, as the documentation has shown, is irretrievable and irreversible. The damage will be forever.	Please refer to the revised chapter 4 which discusses irreversible and irretrievable impacts.
33269-47	But the redeeming grace, if what I hear is true, nobody gets more out of a gallon of water than Las Vegas. They can become a role model for every community in the United States.	This comment was bracketed in error and does not warrant a response.
33269-48	Getting off the Colorado River, Southern Nevada, it's their choice to go off the Colorado River water, that the compact does not require them to do that. The EIS needs to deal with this and explicate -- the assumptions about the Colorado River need to be explained, the myth that has been created around this in the early meetings from Southern Nevada.	An evaluation of Colorado River Compact is not within the scope of this EIS.
33269-49	The question is what if no off-river water is available to Southern Nevada? That is the question. It's really a question about an alternative, should be reviewed in the environmental impact statement. In fact, Southern Nevada has options on the river under the compact, and the EIS is too limited in not giving that background and explaining it.	An evaluation of Colorado River Compact is not within the scope of this EIS.
33269-50	Once you have lands dedicated to urban use like they're asking the BLM, which it cannot do under its authority, it becomes locked up. It becomes a conversion to another use.	Thank you for your comment.
33269-51	A couple comments about the land use chapter. Only going one mile off on land use issues, one mile past the right-of-way and the facilities, that may be good for construction impacts but adjacent, you have to deal with adjacent lands, you have to deal with the impacts on other lands as was commented here.	A distance of 1 mile was used to assess direct and indirect land use impacts. Impacts to residences from sound and sight are addressed in those respective sections.
33269-52	They know about the investments on agriculture that's been made on those farms and ranches. That should be dealt with. That is an economic investment that would be lost.	Thank you for your concern regarding potential loss of investments on farms and ranches. Section 3.18.2.8 identifies potential long-term effects on agricultural property values in association with groundwater production. Such effects can't be readily quantified due to multiple uncertainties, including the possibility of higher property values and decisions regarding ranch ownership that are independent of this project. The text discussing these issues has been expanded.
33269-53	You need a map in there where you can see where the private lands are and so that you – BLM understands it but the EIS does not understand the critical nature of that.	Land ownership, including private lands, is shown in Figure 3.8-1.
33269-54	I've heard all kinds of excuses of why agricultural dollar impacts is not dealt with adequately in this.	Impacts on agriculture economy were discussed in a qualitative manner in the EIS.
33269-55	The current standard, the current research that's being done on ag econ is apparently not known at all to the people who work on this. This farm ownership pattern changes are critical things to know. The BLM seems to have deep six'ed scoping comments. I'd like to know what the criteria was to drop and not cover them in the EIS.	Scoping comments were considered as required by NEPA. Please see Section 1.7 for a summary of topics covered in this EIS. Section 3.18, Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice notes SNWA's purchases of ranches, describes concerns regarding the exportation of water, and describes potential effects on the ag. industry, noting the extended time horizon and uncertainty associated with those changes and the potential influence of other factors.
33269-56	Finally the 30-day -- the decision could be made on this in 30 days. This is atrocious. What should happen is once the final EIS is out, you need to issue a proposed record of decision. You need to put out proposed terms and conditions. If you're going to go ahead with the right-of-way, you need to tell the public what the criteria are for your decision, and you have to hold public hearings at that point with that information so that you can get the public's input and not just make the decision based just on the EIS. The EIS is not enough. And the hearings have to be outside Nevada and Utah. The Colorado River is a perfect example. Other states are affected by this. National parks are affected by this. You must be broader.	The schedule for making and issuing decision in the Record of Decision will follow the BLM NEPA regulations.
33269-57	I think that the EIS does not go far enough in documenting the purpose and need. The Southern Nevada Water Authority asserts that it needs this water, but when you carefully look at its water use and you look at the No Action alternative, you see that water conservation has not been given enough of a real consideration to not need to mine these areas of the one thing they need to exist, which is water.	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised

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33269-58	Las Vegas can continue to grow without this water if it was more creative in its water conservation planning. True they have been good in some respects in their water conservation planning, but a report by the Pacific Institute and the Western Resources Advocate found that Las Vegas could significantly reduce its water use through efficient improvements.	This information will be provided to SNWA for their use in future water resource planning.
33269-59	That report is readily available online, and it should be a part of it. It should be addressed as part of this draft EIS. It needs to be included in the consideration of the No Action alternative.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33269-60	That's the reason that the No Action alternative is gibberish because even the No Action alternative allows for the drying up of some of these pristine and vital springs and aquifers and creeks that support so many communities up there. It's absolutely nonsensical that Congress would do this.	Thank you for expressing your concerns. While statements of opinion do not require specific responses or text revisions under the NEPA regulations, they will be considered by the BLM and documented in the administrative record associated with this EIS.
33269-61	So any consideration of the purpose and need of this project must include water conservation measures in Las Vegas. So I would implore the BLM to procure a subcontractor, or whatever expertise is needed, to actually make sure that the Southern Nevada Water Authority doesn't just do smoke and mirrors about its true water use. Its water rates, for example, are far below the market value, and until there's a full internalization of the very serious environmental cost of this and they're amortized into the price of that water, then there hasn't been a real purpose and need addressed to evaluate the impacts of this project.	Based on your comment and others, the purpose and need statement has been revised. Appendix A contains information relevant to this comment. Chapter 1 contains a thorough explanation of BLM's legal mandates and responsibilities. Regulation and management of Nevada's water resources rests with the State. Information on the funding of the SNWA Groundwater Development Project has been added to Chapter 2. The NSE, in the rulings, assessed water planning issues and financial ability to build the project within the public interest section.
33269-62	The other impact that might not have been discussed yet is the loss or the commitment of resources that would detract from Indian water rights. I understand there are some tribes in that area, and they do, under my understanding of the law, have superseding water rights to those in the Vegas area. There are also federal water rights related to some of the national parks and national wetland, wildlife refuge areas; and those types of resources are also very important, that it seems that the drawdown on the aquifer would very much adversely impact those superseding federal Indian water rights.	Impacts to all potential water sources – whether or not those sources are the subject of federal reserved water rights, state appropriation-based water rights, or are unappropriated waters – have been summarized, evaluated, and considered in the EIS. Similarly, project mitigation measures apply to all water sources regardless of water rights status. By analyzing potential impacts to all identified water sources, the EIS analysis thus encompasses potential impacts to any federal reserved water rights that may later be identified in or adjudicated on these sources. Finally, the EIS describes the background for federal reserved water rights in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1.7, Water Resources. There is no federal authority prohibiting the grant of a federal right of way on BLM land prior to the adjudication of federal reserved water rights. In this instance, Congress specifically mandated that certain portions of the right-of-way be granted by the BLM for the GWD Project. See Pub.L. No. 108-424, § 301.
33269-63	We have all observed significant dust pollution from the west desert prior to storms moving into the state. If the Las Vegas water pipeline is built, this phenomenon will become much worse, as will all of the above-mentioned health impacts to Utah residents.	Please see common response Air-8.
33269-64	Nevada soils, however, contain unique threats beyond just desert dust. Mixed into Nevada soils are significant concentrations of some of the most toxic substances on Earth. On a per weight basis mercury is the second most toxic substance after plutonium, causing brain and neurologic damage even at unimaginably small concentrations. It is deposited ubiquitously throughout the environment because it is carried into the global atmosphere, primarily from the stack emissions of power plants. However, it is also released during the smelting process at gold mines, most of which are in Nevada. Testing by the U.S. Geological Survey of 300 streams in this country revealed mercury contamination of every single fish tested. The Great Salt Lake already has the highest concentration of mercury of any inland body of water in the United States. Arenite is a fibrous mineral similar in microscopic configuration to asbestos, and in fact causes the same deadly mesothelioma cancer that asbestos does. Arenite is found in the residue of weathered volcanic rock and it is widely distributed throughout Nevada soils. In some parts of Turkey where it exists in high concentrations, arenite is the leading cause of death. Nevada soils also contain residual radioactive isotopes from over 900 nuclear bomb detonations that occurred in Nevada from 1951 to 1992. Specifically these radioactive isotopes are alpha emitters, and as little as one millionth of a gram of these radioactive isotopes can cause fatal cancer if swallowed. Valley Fever, or coccidiomycosis, is difficult to diagnose but sometimes fatal but frequently a chronic debilitating fungal disease that has quadrupled in occurrence in the last ten years in the southwestern United States. It is a greater threat to immunosuppressed patients like diabetics and pregnant women. One gram of alkaline Nevada soil contains as many as a billion microorganisms that can carry this and other serious diseases when they become airborne. Other diseases now thought to be transmitted through dust are influenza, SARS, hoof and mouth disease and meningitis. Already the Utah residents along the Wasatch Front experience significant health conquests from the air pollution that is already here. We simply cannot tolerate the public health consequences of having our air pollution exacerbated by this project. It is a guaranteed public health disaster.	Please see common responses Air-1, Air-2, and Air-3.
33269-65	I'm a chairman of the Environmental Public Health Committee and so I have an official statement from the UMA saying that the UMA opposes the agreement as it stands because there's no assurance that the health of the people in the Salt Lake Valley and other parts of Utah will be protected, in that the dryness that might result from draining those reservoirs of water may lead to significant soil depletion and dryness and dust storms which will come into our part of the country in Utah and compromise our air quality, which is already very poor.	Please refer to standard resource responses Air-8 and Air-14 for information on this topic.

Comments and Responses - Public Meeting Transcripts

ID	Comment	Response
33269-66	My major concern, spending a lot of time in the Snake and Spring Valley region, is that the sources of water there, there are not many of them and they tend to be shallow. So if there is a drop in the water table, I'm concerned that many of them will go away completely.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.
33269-67	My concern is that this draw of water will result in those mountain ranges and the surrounding valleys becoming a lot more arid and much more like the less unique and less bio-diverse valleys nearby.	Updated section 3.3 (water resources), 3.5 (vegetation) and 3.6 (wildlife) discusses potential impacts from groundwater pumping.