

BLM_NV_NVSO_GWProjects

From: Lynn Axelrod <lynnaxelrod@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2012 10:54 AM
To: BLM_NV_NVSO_GWProjects
Subject: Don't let the Southern Nevada Water Authority cross federal lands

Dear Secretary Ken Salazar:

I am hoping that as a native Westerner you understand the potential travesty of allowing the Great Basin to be part of an unneeded water grab by Southern Nevada Water Authority. Although you stood with Gov. Jerry Brown in hailing the new, northern California peripheral canal, I ask you how many parts of the U.S. can be drained to feed out-of-control water use habits? Who speaks for the critters and the eventual dried-up top soil, to paraphrase former Justice Douglas? Stop the spread of profligate water use now, please.

Conservation and 'smart growth' should be used. Please use your authority to indirectly cause them to join the 21st century and use these tools before weeking to pump and export billions of gallons of water annually from ancient aquifers.

The BLM's own "final environmental impact statement" reveals the devastation that would occur. Water tables would drop up to 200 feet, and more than 137,000 acres of prime Great Basin shrub land habitats would be dried, destroyed and converted to dry-land grasses and annuals, supporting invasive species such as cheatgrass and Sahara mustard. More than 3,600 acres of wetlands would be destroyed, and more than 70 springs and 145 miles of perennial streams would be drained, some drying up completely.

The toll on species would also be staggering: 14 desert fishes such as the Moapa dace and least chubs and 25 species of rare Great Basin springsnails would most likely go extinct. The imperiled greater sage grouse, southwestern willow-flycatcher, Columbia spotted frog, northern leopard frog and Bonneville cutthroat trout -- along with iconic species such as mule deer, pronghorn and elk -- would also face widespread harm.

Furthermore, I want make clear my adamant opposition to any federal subsidies or bailouts to fund this ill-conceived and disastrous project.

Please deny the Southern Nevada Water Authority's pipeline right-of-way applications based on the severe environmental impacts that they would cause. There are other, largely unexplored options available to the Southern Nevada Water Authority to meet the region's water needs.

Thank you.

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