

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF GROUNDWATER
IN THE LAS VEGAS VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN**

Meeting No. 75
10:30 A.M.
February 12, 2020
Springs Preserve
333 S. Valley View Blvd., Las Vegas, NV

Members Present:	Richard Avila	Stacey Lindburg
	James Dotchin	Rob McLaughlin
	John Hiatt	Brittany Walker

Members Absent:	John Guillory	Chris Magee
	Justin Harrison	

Also Present:	Andy Belanger	Natalia Londono-Arroyo
	Chaunsey Chau-Duong	Jim Prieur

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Advisory Committee for Groundwater Management (Committee) met for the 75th time on February 12, 2020. The meeting began at 10:30 a.m. and ended at 11:45 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 MEETING

Mrs. Lindburg made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 11, 2018. The motion was approved.

RECEIVE UPDATES FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Hiatt reported that there was an article published in the Sun, authored by Miranda Wilson. The article addressed the issue of groundwater in the valley. He stated that if anyone had not seen the article it might be worth looking it up. Mr. Hiatt added that he was quoted in some parts of the article.

RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Natalia Londono-Arroyo provided an overview of the three financial assistance programs offered to well users through the Groundwater Management Program.

Below are highlights from the presentation:

- The Well Conversion Grant Program helps well owners who want to convert to municipal water by paying up to 85 percent of connection costs
- 98 percent of well conversions have been voluntary
- The Water Smart Landscapes Program is available to well users and currently pays \$3.00 per square foot of turf replaced with water efficient technology. Since inception, this program has completed 801 turf conversions

- The Well Plugging and Abandonment program plugs abandoned or unused wells free of charge. The program has plugged over 700 wells since inception
- The Sub-Meter Assistance Program provides a free one-inch meter and a \$150 rebate to help well owners offset meter installation costs. The program has issued 424 meters and distributed 223 rebates
- The presentation included several maps that display domestic and community well locations across the valley. Maps showing properties that have participated in a well conversion, properties that have installed a sub-meter and properties that have participated in the Water Smart Landscapes Program
- The presentation included a graph of money disbursed from each of the financial assistance programs over the past 10 years
- Lastly, the presentation included a summary of bills issued and funds collected through the GMP program over the past 10 years

Mrs. Lindburg, referring to the map of domestic and community wells— asked what the difference between the purple and brown dots on the map was. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo replied that the brown dots represent domestic wells and the purple dots represent community wells.

Mr. Hiatt referring to the same map, asked if the wells on the map were existing wells. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo confirmed they were existing domestic and community wells.

Mrs. Walker asked if there was municipal water service in the northwest area surrounding well properties. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo stated that yes, there were well properties in the Northwest part of town that have municipal water service very close to them.

Mrs. Lindburg asked if a well owner converted to municipal water without using the Well Conversion Grant Program, would that person have to plug their well? Mrs. Londono-Arroyo replied as per Nevada Water Law, only one water connection is allowed per parcel unless they have a separate permit for irrigation use. Otherwise, the individual would have to have their well plugged.

Mrs. Linburg asked if a well owner who connected to the municipal water system would be able to maintain their water shares and asked how many wells have been permitted since 2007. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo replied that water shares and well permits are managed by Division of Water Resources (DWR), given a representative from DWR could not attend the meeting, Mrs. Londono-Arroyo would check with the agency on the answer to the questions.

Mrs. Walker asked if it was even possible to just drill a well if someone purchased a property or would the property owner automatically have to connect to the municipal water system. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo stated that it depends how far away the closest water line was to the property. If a well was located within 180 feet of a municipal water connection and needed to be re-drilled, DWR could deny the request to re-drill and the customer would have to connect to a municipal water system.

Mr. Hiatt, referring to the graph with a summary of bills issued by well category – asked what was a recreational well and a stockwater well. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo replied that the recreational well category is rarely used nowadays but has been used as a well category for parks. Regarding stockwater wells, Mrs. Londono-Arroyo indicated that she would find out what constitutes as a stockwater well and would report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Dotchin asked how the unpaid well fees balances were collected and if there was a lien placed on properties who did not pay. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo reported that that if a well owner had not paid the groundwater fee, they would incur a cumulative balance on their account. The GMP does not place liens on properties for non-payment.

Mr. Hiatt asked for clarification on whether a property that was to participate in the Well Conversion Grant Program would require a property easement or a lien. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo replied that to participate in the Well Conversion Grant Program, a property easement is required to allow the plugging contractor to plug and abandon the well. The easement is relinquished following well abandonment.

Mrs. Lindburg asked if for companies that use temporary construction wells for construction water, if these wells would be billable under the GMP. Mrs. Londono-Arroyo reported that the GMP only issues bills to wells that are either domestic or have an active water permit, no bills are issued to temporary wells used for construction water.

RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE STATUS OF GROUNDWATER LEVELS IN THE LAS VEGAS VALLEY

Jim Prieur, SNWA Hydrology, provided an overview of hydrologic conditions in the Las Vegas Valley. Below are highlights from the presentation:

- The Western and Northwestern portions of the valley produce more groundwater
- Most of the recharge from groundwater comes from the mountains in Kyle Canyon, Lee Canyon and the Spring Mountain Range
- Between the 1940's until the 1970's there was significant groundwater depletion in the Las Vegas Valley
- The Artificial Recharge Program began in 1989 and those permits are still in place today. The Artificial Recharge Program was discontinued in 2015
- SNWA regularly monitors approximately 200 wells at different depths throughout the Las Vegas Valley. This provides an idea of any changes within the groundwater aquifer
- Mr. Prieur showed a few hydrographs of wells in the valley and groundwater conditions in those wells over the years

Mr. Hiatt stated that given that Colorado River Water had more chloride than groundwater, had anyone looked at chloride levels throughout the valley to determine the impact of recharge water on water quality on a regional basis. Mr. Prieur replied that staff knows the background chloride levels and the chloride from injection, so staff has been able to see how that has changed over time.

Mr. Dotchin asked if the artificial program in general was still ongoing. Mr. Prieur stated that there is no recharge currently occurring. Staff maintains the permits in case recharge is needed for the future.

Mr. Hiatt asked what was SNWA's taught process regarding the imbalance of recharge pumping versus pumping and a future need to recharge just to prevent subsidence in the valley. Mr. Prieur stated that it is important to keep a close eye on this issue. SNWA has a subsidence monitoring network in place that uses survey sites around the valley. Longer term, it is expected that the valley will face issues of over-appropriation in certain areas and this would be something that the Nevada State Engineer's Office would address.

Mr. Hiatt stated that one of the important things that should be focused on is understanding recharge versus discharge so that we know where we are and where we are going.

DISCUSS EMERGING GROUNDWATER ISSUES AND DIRECT STAFF ACCORDINGLY

Mr. Chau-Duong asked members of the committee if there were any issues or initiatives that the committee would like to discuss.

Mr. Hiatt noted that it would be helpful to have an idea of Division of Water Resource's recharge levels in the Las Vegas Valley versus the Las Vegas Valley Water District's recharge levels.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members from the public wishing to speak.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 p.m.