

## **LAS VEGAS VALLEY WATERSHED ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Virtual Meeting Conducted via Microsoft Teams

October 17, 2023

2:00 p.m.

### **Members Present:**

Tom Brady, *City of North Las Vegas (CNLV)*  
Dan Fischer, *Clark County Water Reclamation District (CCWRD, alt.)*  
Dan Hernandez, *Clark County (CC, alt.)*  
Priscilla Howell, *City of Henderson (COH)*  
Zane Marshall, *Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA)*  
Steve Parrish, *Clark County Regional Flood Control District (CCRFCD)*  
Colby Pellegrino, *Las Vegas Valley Water District (LVVWD)*  
Charles Trushel, *City of Las Vegas (CLV)*

### **Also Present:**

Steven Anderson	Ryan Pearson
Thomas Ashley	Daylin Sigler
Jason Bailey	John Solvie
Elizabeth Bickmore	John Tennert
Dan Chan	Todd Tietjen
Keiba Crear	Andrew Trelease
Richard Donahue	Debbie Van Dooremolen
Jason Eckberg	Alan Wolfley
Alexei Luganov	Xiaoping Zhou
Tom Maher	

### **1. Welcome/Call to Order**

Chair Charles Trushel called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

Seeing no request for public comment, Charles moved forward with the meeting.

### **3. Introductions**

Attendees are listed above.

### **4. Approve March 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes passed.

### **5. Receive an Informational Update on Items Related to the Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee (LVVWAC) that may appear on Future Regular Board Meetings of LVVWAC Members' Appointing Agencies**

There were no updates.

### **6. Approve the Las Vegas Wash Long-Term Operating Plan 2024/2025 Budget**

Keiba Crear presented the proposed 2024/2025 Las Vegas Wash Long-Term Operating Plan (LTOP) budget of \$2,706,542, with projected contributions from Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) reducing the total local contribution

to \$2,416,792. She presented the distribution and breakdown for each member agency and noted that this budget reflects the annual increase of 2.5 percent. She added that the budget will carry over approximately \$2 million for stabilization operations and maintenance (O&M) that was deferred for two years while incidental take coverage was sought for federally listed bird species.

A motion to approve the 2024/2025 LTOP budget passed.

**7. Receive an Update on the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee**

Debbie Van Dooremolen, SNWA, provided an update on the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (LVWCC). The LVWCC's mission is to stabilize and enhance the valuable environmental resources of the Las Vegas Wash (Wash). The Operations, Administrative and Research and Environmental Monitoring study teams, as well as LVVWAC oversight, have been instrumental in helping the LVWCC to fulfill its mission. All 44 action items from the Las Vegas Wash Comprehensive Adaptive Management Plan have been implemented, with 22 items either complete or being addressed by others and 22 noted as ongoing. Regarding erosion and stormwater, staff completed benchmarking of weirs for the transition to the LTOP and worked on stormwater best management practices for soil stockpile sites. The project consultant gained approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the Letter of Map Revision, and the contract for the 2024/2025 O&M is currently being developed. Debbie showed several photos from the late summer flooding at the Wash, showing impacts and erosion at various sites. She also reported on water quality, stating that all sampling and monitoring programs were conducted per their regular schedules this year. Comparing 2023 to 2022, the data showed that selenium continued to be low at most sample sites, but that perchlorate increased slightly at the two downstream sites, noting that samples were still below 70 parts per billion, and that total phosphorus decreased at most sites. Data was uploaded to the water quality database and displayed with Power BI reports. For Las Vegas Wash Wildlife Management Plan activities, a record number of Yuma Ridgway's rails were reported during the 2022 and 2023 surveys. Staff recorded the first southwestern willow flycatcher pairs and successful nest. Also, this year, field crews detected five yellow-billed cuckoos, the most on record for the project area. Staff are working with BOR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and CC to obtain incidental take coverage for the listed birds due to the increase in detections and breeding activity. Various mammal surveys were conducted in 2023. Field personnel have detected nine species of small mammals, but no shrews. Staff carried out limited bat capture surveys, collecting samples for white-nose syndrome; all samples were negative for the deadly fungal disease. Following this sampling, capture work was delayed until 2024 due to the risk of incidental take for listed bird species. Bat acoustic monitoring has been ongoing since January 2023. Regarding vegetation enhancement and management, 9 acres were revegetated in 2022 and 4.5 acres in 2023, with a total of 615 acres revegetated since the program began. Tamarisk is down 99 percent, with about 15 acres remaining, and the contractor has focused weed treatments on newer sites. For cultural resources, the programmatic agreement expired in 2021, and while stakeholders discussed a new agreement for O&M on BOR lands, they decided to address cultural compliance on a project-by-project basis instead. Approximately 12,500 people attended public outreach events in 2022 and 2023. NDEP continues to provide grant funding for Mabel Hoggard field trips and the Wash Green-Up, which is down to one per year as directed by the LTOP. Staff participated in the Las Vegas Science Fair, interacting with nearly 1,000 people. The Wash website hosted 13,700 unique visitors, and the Facebook page reached more than 1,450 followers. Debbie also reported

that the LVWCC will be celebrating 25 years at its October 24 meeting, and the annual Wash tour is scheduled for April 23, 2024.

Jason Eckberg gave an update on the status of the Lower Las Vegas Wash project. He stated that the design for Weir 5 is complete, and Weirs 6–8 are 30 percent designed. He added that the team received the 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Weir 5 and are currently working with NDEP for the Groundwater Discharge and Working in Waterways permits. Jason stated that Las Vegas Paving was awarded as Construction Manager at Risk and that the construction of Weir 5 is anticipated to begin in spring 2024.

**8. Receive an Update on the Clark County Wetlands Park**

Elizabeth Bickmore gave an update on the Clark County Wetlands Park (Wetlands Park) and reported on the impacts to the park and Nature Preserve from the late summer flooding. She stated that a new Office of Public Safety was created in 2022 and that it supports the security for the Wetlands Park, all in an effort to improve park safety and security and address the higher levels of crime and vandalism. Elizabeth spoke about invasive species removal efforts. Staff worked closely with Animal Control to retrieve rabbits as more than 150 were released into the park. Also, Australian redclaw crayfish was discovered, and NDOW removed individuals from the ponds. She reported that staff is currently working to submit a proposal for Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act funding for a new Dragonfly Wetland Interpretation Area and Duck Creek Event Area. She spoke of the two-phase Wetlands Loop Trail project, which is in partnership with Conserve Nevada, and Phase 1 is anticipated to be completed by December 2024. She reported that an update from Clark County Public Works will be given at the next LVWCC meeting on the Hollywood Boulevard extension, and that Phase 1 of this project is to be completed by early 2025. Elizabeth reported on park stewardship and stated that over the past year, the park hosted 14 events and had more than 700 volunteers at those events. She highlighted the Wetlands Watch Volunteer program, the NFL Greening Superbowl program, and the new Spotlight on Nature Gallery art event space. She reported that the Nature Store has been open for a full 12-month period for the first time and received more than \$50,000 in revenue. Elizabeth reported on the continued field trip program and Wetlands Park Friends. She highlighted upcoming events including, Haunt the Wetlands, Wetlands Art Day, BioBlast, Discovery Day, Pollinator Party, Stalking Twilight, and Astronomy in the Park. She concluded by giving an update on the Wetlands Park Navigator mobile app which provides audio tours, maps, trail information and other links and is funded by Wetlands Park Friends through a grant from REI.

**9. Receive an Update on Regional Water Quality**

Todd Tietjen provided the update. He began by stating that lake surface elevation saw a significant increase this year and that BOR lake level predictions for Lake Mead are approximately 1,065–1,067 feet for the end of this year and approximately 1,060 feet for the end of next year. He reported that chlorophyll concentrations in the lake have stayed relatively low throughout the drought period, resulting in clear water. Todd reported that the late summer storms did cause some short-term changes in algae; the first SNWA sampling following one storm event found surface “blooms” of *Microcystis*, a potential toxin producer, though sampling by CLV the following day did not find the bloom when sampling the same area. It was also reported that toxins continued to be detected in Lake Mohave at low concentrations through the summer months. He concluded by giving a summary of other projects that staff are currently working on: (1) a regression and Lake Mead Model study on increases in Wash flowrate on

drinking water quality withdrawn from Lake Mead through 2060; (2) a machine learning investigation on how phytoplankton dynamics may be shifting in Lake Mead; (3) a quantitative microbial risk assessment model for the Las Vegas Valley; and (4) continued simulation of the five-year Lake Mead forecast by the Lake Mead Model based on BOR projections.

**10. Receive an Update from Members and Staff Regarding Water Resources, Stormwater, Wastewater, and Water Quality, Including but Not Limited to Regulations, Permitting and Status of the Lower Las Vegas Wash**

Steve Parrish gave an update on the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. He reported that staff have been working with NDEP and are close to getting a permit issued for public comment. He stated that the biggest changes to the MS4 permit are the revisions. He stated that currently, the Stormwater Management Plan that was produced is not enforceable, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requiring the permits to be made enforceable, which impacts CCRFCD greatly because it has to ensure that whatever is included in the Stormwater Management Plan can actually be achieved every year. Staff have begun working with the other co-permittees on an update to the Stormwater Management Plan on compliance. In addition, the annual report for the MS4 permit was due in September and was completed and submitted on time to NDEP.

Todd Tietjen stated that staff have been working with NDEP as they review water quality data for Lake Mead, Lake Mohave and the Colorado River.

**11. Set Next Meeting Date and Propose Items for the Next Meeting's Agenda**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024. Agenda items may include: (1) the chair/vice chair vote, (2) approval of the 2022/2023 LVVWAC Accomplishments Document, (3) an update by the Stormwater Quality Management Committee, and (4) wastewater discharger updates.

**12. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public. Meeting adjourned.