

### **Conservation Loves a Crisis:** *Lessons from North America's Driest City*

The Southern Nevada Water Authority is a not-for-profit agency created in 1991 to provide a safe, reliable water supply for Southern Nevada.



7 Member Agencies

- Big Bend Water District
- City of Boulder City
- City of Henderson
- City of Las Vegas
- City of North Las Vegas
- Clark County Water Reclamation District
- Las Vegas Valley Water District



### **Southern Nevada snapshot**

- 4 inches (100 mm/yr) annual rainfall
- 1,600 square miles (4,100 km2)
- 2,000,000 Residents
- 43,000,000 Visitors Annually ٠
- \$92 Billion Gross Domestic Product
- 73.3% of Nevada GDP



**Regional water** 

supply planning







Facility construction



**Operate Major Regional Facilities** 

### **Colorado River System**



#### **Current Water Supplies**







Las Vegas Valley Groundwater

Direct reuse and return-flow credits allow Southern Nevada to reuse 99 percent of treated wastewater flows.



#### **Reuse Extends Water Resources by 70 percent**



#### **Municipal Metered Use (2014)**



#### The Colorado River Basin is facing one of the worst droughts in recorded history.



The SNWA is taking a series of actions to address long-term drought and provide a sustainable supply for Southern Nevada.



Conservation



**Planning and Water Resources** 





Through regional collaboration we've adopted plans and policies to reduce water use and change the way water is used in Southern Nevada.

Key efforts:

- Land development codes
- Increased incentives for the Water Smart Landscape program
- Mandatory Watering restrictions
- Golf course water budgets
- Community Outreach
- Infrastructure improvements
- More robust conservation program offerings



# Southern Nevada has one of the nation's most aggressive and comprehensive water conservation programs.







#### Land Development Codes

- No turf in residential front yards
- Turf limited to 50% in back yard
- Multi-family properties' turf limited
- No turf installations in new commercial properties
- Fountain restrictions

### **Population Density**

Major Western MSA's over 1 Million Population



Population-weighted density from 2010 U.S. Census Metropolitan Statistical Area Distance Profiles http://www.census.gov/population/metro/data/pop\_pro.html







### Stop Chasing your Tail...





### 2000 through 2003: For Every Home Voluntarily Converted ...



Twenty-eight New Homes were built, most with front lawns



### Monthly Consumption Standing Homes Built 1990-1995



# Monthly Consumption 1990-1995 v. 1995-2003



### Monthly Consumption Post 2003 Homes Comparison



### Monthly Consumption Water Smart Homes Comparison





### Tourism: A City Within a City



- 41 Million visitors
- Average stay 4.2 days
- Equivalent to 473,000 visitors per day\*
- Vegas tourism produces
  \$50B annually, more
  than half of Nevada's
  GDP

\* Equivalent to hosting the population of Long Beach, Sacramento, Atlanta or Kansas City





Most resort water is used indoors and intercepted for treatment and reuse.

As a result, Southern Nevada's Resorts consume <u>less than 3%</u> of the region's water resources.



### Mega-Resort Water Use



Surprise! Evaporation from cooling systems exceeds the combined use of landscape, water features and pools.





On average, Las Vegas resort hotels host less than 10 square feet of pool area per guest room.

Residential pools average 160 square feet per person.

Pools comprise 0.5% of the average resort's land use.





### Caesar's Palace to the Visitor's Eye





### Caesar's Palace to the Bird's Eye



Water Features account for 1.5 percent of average resort land use.

Landscape accounts for less than 4% of resort land use.



## **Reinventing The Strip**

Las Vegas Resorts converted nearly 1.4 million square feet of ornamental lawns, saving 75 million gallons per year





# Leading With Technology

SNWA has helped resorts complete 88 technology projects that save the region 700 million gallons each year



Worker updating a cooling tower





# The community has adopted a "culture of conservation" through programs, rebates, policies and education.









PLANNING AND WATER RESOURCES

SNWA Maintains a 50-year Water Resource Plan that is reviewed annually and update as needed

#### **Key Considerations:**

- Long-term water demands under varied economic conditions and water use patterns
- Potential impact of continued drought and climate change on water resource availability, particularly for Colorado River supplies





2015 Water Resource Plan

# The SNWA Water Resource Plan considers two water demand projections





#### SNWA's Water Resource Portfolio includes a diverse set of resource options that will be used to reliably meet the community's current and future water resource needs

Permanent Resources	Temporary Resources	Future Resources
Colorado River	Southern Nevada Groundwater Bank	Desalination
Nevada Unused Colorado River (non-SNWA)	Interstate Banks (Arizona and California)	Virgin River / Colorado River Augmentation
Tributary Conservation/Imported ICS	Intentionally Created Surplus (storage in Lake Mead)	Transfers / Marketing
Las Vegas Valley Groundwater Rights		In-State Groundwater
Direct Reuse		



#### **Conservation is Strengthening Future Supplies**

- The community responded to drought with serious and sustained conservation efforts
- As a result, Nevada is not using its full 300,000 AFY Colorado River allocation
- Available (unused) supplies are being banked for future use. They are also being used to help stabilize Lake Mead water levels





#### Spillway Gate: Elevation 1,221.4 ft.



INTAKE NO. 1

Elevation 1,000 ft.

**INTAKE NO. 2** 

Hoover Dam

#### **Dead Pool - Elevation 895'**

Elevation 860'

**INTAKE NO. 3** 



#### **Major Project Components**



• 3 shafts

(Up to 30 ft. diameter and 600 ft deep)

• 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) of tunnel (Up to 20 ft [6.1 meters] in

(Up to 20 ft [6.1 meters] in diameter)

 A 100-ft (30.5 meters) tall steel and concrete intake structure on the lake bottom





Intake structure

Construction has begun on a new Low Lake Level Pumping Station near Lake Mead

When completed, the pump station will ensure water deliveries down to 875 feet (Below 'dead pool' in Lake Mead)



The SNWA has weathered drought impacts through continuous assessment, flexible planning and action.

#### **Adaptive Management:**

- Reduced consumptive use of Colorado River supplies.
- Increased water banking and recharge.
- Retrofitted/constructed necessary facilities to ensure reliability.
- Initiated legal/environmental permitting work associated with future resources.
- Developed new supplies
  (banking, ICS).







### SOUTHERN NEVADA WATER AUTHORITY®

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