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***Water Grab Opponents Declare Victory
Nevada State Engineer Rejects SNWA's Water Applications***

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Ely, Nevada: A broad coalition of Nevadans committed to protecting the state's water resources are declaring victory in their opposition to the SNWA groundwater pipeline. They applaud a ruling by the Nevada State Engineer denying all water rights applications for the project.

Great Basin Water Network and White Pine County say the decision is essentially a death-knell for the roughly 300-mile pipeline proposal. These groups oppose SNWA's proposed groundwater export and pipeline project because it would cause catastrophic long term environmental harm to some of Nevada's most pristine and treasured areas, and because it would cause long-term economic devastation to rural communities throughout eastern Nevada. Following favorable decisions in Nevada's District and Supreme Courts, it appears that the Nevada State Engineer agrees.

"With the denial of these applications by the State Engineer, this ill-conceived multibillion dollar boondoggle is now dead in the water," said Abigail Johnson of the Great Basin Water Network. "After a string of court victories, we have a decision showing that the water is not available for this project without hurting the area's existing water rights and environment."

"We welcome the State Engineer's denial of SNWA's applications, which clearly was required by Nevada water law, as the State District Court and Supreme Court have explained," said the coalition's attorney, Simeon Herskovits of Advocates for Community and Environment. "We do, however, disagree with the State Engineer's gratuitous finding that SNWA's monitoring, management and mitigation (or 3M) plan is adequate. Their slightly elaborated 3M plan remains as much of a sham as it always has been," Herskovits added.

"White Pine County residents and rural Nevadans are glad that the limits of available groundwater resources have been acknowledged," declared White Pine County Commissioner Gary Perea. "The denial of SNWA's applications finally recognizes that, if allowed, the project would take more water than the system could bear, hurting existing water rights and the economies that depend on them."

"We will continue to stand up and ensure that the State Engineer and SNWA follow the law, and protect our water rights and resources from overpumping and irreversible harm," agreed another White Pine County Commissioner, Carol McKenzie, from Lund.

Kena Gloeckner, whose family has been ranching in Lincoln County's Dry Lake Valley – a target of the project – for many generations, said "Not only would this groundwater project have jeopardized our family's 150-year-old legacy and livelihood, but it would have also ended a way of life valued by local residents. Ranchers and farmers on the ground have long known that the aquifers in these rural valleys are interconnected and are at or near their limits – there is simply nowhere near the amount of water that SNWA wanted to take."

Great Basin Water Network works to protect the region's water resources for current and future residents – human, animal, and plant. They are a broad coalition including ranchers, farmers, local and tribal governments, conservationists, businesspeople, and urban and rural residents across the political spectrum.

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