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## Alternate ideas emerge for SNWA 'water grab' at Drought Forum

AUGUST 28, 2015 BY [THE ELY TIMES](#)

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The final Nevada Drought Forum meeting for obtaining information was held on Aug. 19 in Sparks. Members of Nevada's agricultural community, the Great Basin Water Network, Rural water organizations (including the Central Nevada Water Authority), and Tribes participated. Local input was given by Rick Spilsbury and Delaine Spilsbury.

Rick Spilsbury suggested that the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) consider a profitable alternative to the Groundwater Development Project (the Watergrab). Rick's idea was to install Photovoltaic (PV) solar arrays on Lake Mead.

The solar array platforms would reduce evaporation on the Lake, thus increasing available water from the Colorado River. His calculations showed that not only could the SNWA conserve a significant amount of water, but also earn money – which is a vast difference from the billions the Watergrab will cost. Rick also showed that Federal Agencies would likely approve the solar arrays on Lake Mead because it would eliminate the need to bulldoze desert valleys to install solar facilities.

Delaine Spilsbury responded to the Forum questions to the Shoshone Tribe concerning the droughts effects and measures taken to deal with the drought. Delaine pointed out that this last Winter was unprecedented, and that the resultant pine beetle damage is substantial – that pine nut harvests failed for three years – and without significant run off the Watergrab appears less and less feasible. Delaine also pointed out that a lot of what the Tribe was doing to save water was in what they were not doing. Unlike Las Vegas; the Tribe does not have any pools, golf courses, water parks, water fountains, or artificial lakes. She also suggested that Nevada limit population growth.

Ideas can still be submitted at:

[http://drought.nv.gov/Contact/Ask\\_a\\_Question/\\_/Submit\\_an\\_Idea/](http://drought.nv.gov/Contact/Ask_a_Question/_/Submit_an_Idea/)

For more information contact Rick Spilsbury at 775-235-7557 or through email at [rickspils@excite.com](mailto:rickspils@excite.com).

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