

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION 39859)
FILED FOR THE WATERS OF AN UNDER-)
GROUND SOURCE IN LAS VEGAS VALLEY,)
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA)

R U L I N G

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INTRODUCTION

Application 39859 was filed on December 3, 1979 by Val Rigby to appropriate 5.4 c.f.s. of the waters of an underground source to be diverted within Government Lot 3 Section 3, T.23S., R.63E., M.D.B.&M., and to be used for the irrigation of 317.85 acres within said Section 3. 1/

In 1948 Water Resources Bulletin No. 5, "Geology and Water Resources of Las Vegas, Pahrump, and Indian Spring Valleys, Clark and Nye Counties, Nevada" by G. B. Maxey and C. H. Jameson was prepared cooperatively by the State Engineer's office and the U. S. Department of Interior, Geological Survey.

In 1947 Water Resources Bulletin No. 6, "Ground Water in Las Vegas, Pahrump and Indian Spring Valleys, Nevada, (A Summary)" by G. B. Maxey and T. W. Robinson was prepared cooperatively by the State Engineer's office and the U. S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey.

In 1961 Water Resources Bulletin No. 18 "A Summary of the Hydrology on the Las Vegas Ground Water Basin, Nevada, with Special Reference to the Available Supply" by G. T. Malmberg was prepared cooperatively by Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources and U. S. Department of Interior, Geological Survey.

In 1974 Water Resources Bulletin No. 44, "Pumping and Ground Water Storage Depletion in Las Vegas Valley, Nevada, 1955-74" by James R. Harrill was prepared cooperatively by Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources and U. S. Department of Interior, Geological Survey.

FINDINGS OF FACT

I

Pursuant to a petition signed by legal appropriators of underground water in Las Vegas Valley, Clark County, Nevada, the State Engineer designated and described an area of land as an underground artesian water basin by Order No. 175 dated January 10, 1941 under the provisions of Chapter 178, Nevada Statutes, 1939.

By Order No. 196 dated December 1, 1949, the State Engineer curtailed the irrigation of additional lands within a portion of the Las Vegas Artesian Basin, pursuant to Section 10 Chapter 178 Nevada Statutes of 1939 as amended by Chapter 103, Statutes of 1949. 2/

II

The perennial yield of the natural system of Las Vegas Valley has been augmented by secondary recharge. Because of this, the sustained yield of the reservoir is estimated to be 35,000 acre-feet annually. 3/ Pumpage is averaging over 70,000 acre-feet per year. Pumpage in excess of the perennial yield has resulted in storage depletion from the principal aquifers, substantial water level declines and land subsidence. 4/

III

Since March 24, 1955 all permits to appropriate water within the designated area of Las Vegas Valley have been issued as temporary permits, subject to revocation when they can be served by a water district or municipality. 5/ To date 127 permits have been revoked. 6/

CONCLUSIONS

If the subject application were granted, additional land would be irrigated. This would result in additional consumptive use by farm land irrigation. The additional withdrawals and consumption would remove water from the ground water reservoir which would not be replaced resulting in depletion of the ground water reservoir, substantial water level declines and land subsidence. The additional withdrawals and consumption of underground water would, therefore, conflict with existing rights and threaten to prove detrimental to the public welfare.

The State Engineer is authorized and directed to designate preferred uses of water within designated ground water basins such as the Las Vegas Valley Ground Water Basin. 7/ The consumptive use of ground water to irrigate additional land is not considered to be a preferred use of the limited water resource of the Las Vegas Valley Ground Water Basin.

RULING

Application 39859 is denied on the grounds that its granting would tend to impair the value of existing rights and threaten to prove detrimental to the public welfare.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Newman

William J. Newman
State Engineer

WJN/bc

Dated this 19th day of
JANUARY, 1981.

FOOTNOTES

1. Public records in the office of the State Engineer.
2. Public records in the office of the State Engineer.
3. Water Resources Bulletin No. 44, Pg. 67.
4. Water Resources Bulletin No. 44, Pg. 66.
5. NRS 534.120, subsection 3(a).
6. Public records in the office of the State Engineer.
7. NRS 534.120, subsection 2.