

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION NO.)
12918 IN NAME OF JACK WOLLENZIEN TO : RULING
APPROPRIATE UNDERGROUND WATER IN THE :
LAS VEGAS VALLEY, CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA.)

Application No. 12918 was filed May 18, 1949 by Jack Wollenzien to appropriate 0.50 c.f.s. of the underground waters in the Las Vegas Valley for irrigation and domestic purposes. The proposed point of diversion is at a point within the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 32, T. 20 S., R. 61 E. and from which the W $\frac{1}{2}$ corner of said Section 32 bears N. 1° 29' W., a distance of 1537 feet. The proposed place of use is on 50 acres located within the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of said Section 32.

On September 8, 1949 a protest was filed by the Las Vegas Land & Water Company to the granting of a permit under Application No. 12918. The reasons set forth by said protestant are herewith quoted:

"That the water situation in Las Vegas is so acute we are having difficulty in developing sufficient water for domestic purposes, and if applicant is allowed to drill a well below our Well No. 10 it will of course interfere with the water supply for domestic purposes. In our opinion it is much more important that this water be consumed for domestic purposes rather than for irrigation purposes of 50 acres of alfalfa owned by applicant."

On January 10, 1941 a certain defined area within the Las Vegas Valley was set up as a "designated area" pursuant to Section 4 of the 1939 Groundwater Act (Section 7993.13 N.C.L. 1931-41 Supplement). Subsequent to such date and in conformity with the 1939 Ground Water Statute, a well supervisor was employed and the State Engineer, through such supervisor, regulated the distribution of water and well drilling within such area. In July, 1944 a comprehensive ground water study was commenced in the Las Vegas Valley under a cooperative agreement with the Groundwater Division of the United States Geological Survey. The findings of such study is documented in Water Resources Bulletin No. 5, a publication of the office of State Engineer.

The Protestant, Las Vegas Land & Water Company, is a public utility and as such supplies and distributes water to the City of Las Vegas and portions of its urbane area. The water supply is derived from eleven deep wells and three springs. The wells extend in a general north-south direction, the most southerly being Well No. 10 located within the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 31, T. 20 S., R. 61 E. and the most northerly well being located within the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 30, of same township and range. During 1947 there was an average of

8,732,000 gallons of water per day or 9780 acre-feet of water delivered from these wells and springs and distributed through the water company's distribution system. During 1948 the delivered water amounted to a daily average of 9,338,000 gallons or 10,548 acre-feet for the year. This amount of water represents about 30% of the total output of water in the entire Las Vegas Valley.

From the conclusions reached as a result of the ground water survey, it is felt that more water is being taken from the valley than is being normally recharged. During the past five years there has been a drop of about 30 feet in the hydrostatic head of the Griffith well located in this general area. It is very possible that the main cause for such drop is the large draft on the underground water supply by the Water Company and others and the great concentration of wells in this vicinity.

Section 10 of the 1939 Groundwater Act (Section 7993.13 N.C.L. 1931-41 Supplement) as amended by Chapter 103 Statutes of 1949 provides among other things that in acting on an application to appropriate water, the State Engineer may consider the effect of such use on the economy of the area in general -- and that in any basin the State Engineer may restrict drilling of wells in any portion thereof if he determines that additional wells would cause an undue interference with existing wells- -----.

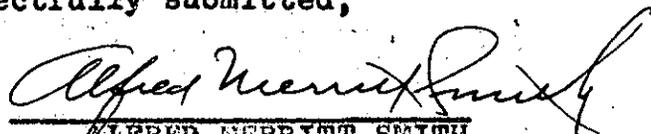
The proposed point of diversion under Application No. 12918 is located about 1400 feet northeasterly from Well No. 10 of the Water Company; about 1200 feet easterly from Well No. 9 and about 1000 feet southeasterly from Well No. 11. There is no question in our minds but that the pumping or withdrawing of 0.5 c.f.s. from a well located at the proposed point of diversion would cause interference to the Water Company wells.

The water situation in the Las Vegas Valley has now reached a point where great caution must be exercised in the granting of additional permits, especially for irrigation purposes within the Las Vegas urban area.

It is the opinion of the State Engineer that due to the great concentration of wells in the vicinity of the proposed point of diversion and the great magnitude of water withdrawn, that the safeguarding of the economy of Las Vegas demands that hereafter water must be placed only to the highest beneficial use, namely municipal, quasi-municipal and domestic uses, and that no permits be granted for the appropriation of water for irrigation purposes because of the greater volumn of water needed therefore.

It is therefore the ruling of the State Engineer that the protest of the Las Vegas Land & Water Company be sustained and that said Application No. 12918 be denied.

Respectfully submitted,


ALFRED MERRITT SMITH
State Engineer

November 30, 1949