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Milestone groundwater treatment project begins in Henderson

LAS VEGAS, NV – The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) announces the commencement of a groundwater treatment system associated with the construction of Southern Nevada Water Authority's (SNWA) erosion control structures (weirs). Operation of the treatment system will begin January 2, 2018. This treatment system was built through a coordinated effort with SNWA, the NDEP, and the Nevada Environmental Response Trust (NERT) to treat groundwater extracted during SNWA's construction activities for the last two weirs along the upper reaches of the Las Vegas Wash. Operation of the treatment system will prevent perchlorate from entering the Las Vegas Wash, Lake Mead, and the Colorado River.

Most of the perchlorate to be captured by this system originates from historic operations at the Kerr-McGee/Tronox site at the Black Mountain Industrial complex in Henderson, Nevada. NERT, the current owner of the former Kerr-McGee/Tronox site, whose primary purpose is to remediate environmental impacts from historic operations at the site, also operates an additional groundwater extraction and treatment system at the site to remove perchlorate from groundwater, under the direction and oversight of the NDEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“NDEP, SNWA and NERT are taking joint action to reduce erosion and increase wash channel stability while at the same time preventing water quality degradation,” explained Greg Lovato, Administrator of NDEP. “The treatment plant will prevent tons of perchlorate from entering the Las Vegas Wash and the drinking water sources of Lake Mead and the Colorado River. This project is part of the ongoing, years-long effort to clean-up historical releases of perchlorate from the former Kerr-McGee/Tronox facility.”

Andrew Steinberg, Vice President of the NERT Trustee said, “The Trust was formed by the United States Department of Justice to remediate historic impacts at the site. Through our ongoing

efforts with and under the oversight of the NDEP and the US EPA, this represents one of many large scale projects being implemented, advancing the Trust towards a successful cleanup.”

“Although perchlorate is not regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Southern Nevada Water Authority has been committed to protecting our community’s drinking water from this compound since it was discovered in Lake Mead,” said David Johnson, SNWA Deputy General Manager. “Thanks to remediation efforts led by NDEP, average perchlorate concentrations have been progressively reduced to levels that are 30 times lower than the state’s Interim Action Level. This new treatment system will further improve water quality in the Las Vegas Wash, drawing perchlorate levels in Lake Mead ever closer to zero.”

More information about the site and remediation activity is available at:

<https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/active-cleanup-sites/bmi-complex/nevada-environmental-response-trust-nertr###>