

Gentlemen,

Last night I attended a meeting in Delta that was supposed to let the people that are vulnerable to excess water use in the Snake Valley know what they were in for. I left the meeting feeling that there were several areas that either need refining or changed or eliminated.

The first area that has a problem is the quantity of water supposedly available after recharge in the valley. There were several studies done with the quantity of water estimated to be available ranging from 105,000 Acre feet to 132,000. The majority of the studies showed the quantity ranging from 105,000 to 111,000. The proposed plan jumped on the 132,000 level. If pumping started assuming there was 132,000 acre feet available, Utah would lose many free flowing springs. I was told that a mitigation would be implemented but unfortunately once a spring stops flowing it seldom starts again once the water is restored. The reason for this is the path the water once flowed is dried and settled thereby blocking the path of the former water flow. All the wild animals, ranchers and farmers that rely on the springs would cease to exist. The only real mitigation would be for SNWA to drill solar powered wells to replace the springs that went dry. That could be a bit pricey.

The second area is based on the accuracy of the forecast of the received water as being what it has been for the last few years. The potential for an extension of the drought is an almost sure thing. This would make the quantity of water available to be potentially radically inaccurate. This would have an extreme environmental impact on the area.

The third thing is the ambiguity of several of the statements in the agreement. This may not be a problem now but in the future when new or different people are involved could result in different scenarios being implemented. This could also devastate the area.

The fourth thing is trusting the SNWA. With the loads of money they have they are pretty well unrestricted in doing what ever they want. A fine wouldn't deter them from getting what they want. Because they would own the wells and the pipeline they would be the ultimate controllers of the water flow.

The fifth thing is the number of monitors and their placements. The necessary number of monitor wells would raise the cost of the agreement more than a trifling amount.

A final comment that seems to make the most sense to me that wouldn't be environmentally unsafe. This would be a pipe line to the Gulf of Baja where there would be a desalination plant potentially powered by a small nuclear power plant. As a drought progressed there would always be water that would have no negative aspects to the planet. The length of the pipe line wouldn't be much longer than it would be getting the water from the Snake Valley. When I was in the military we set up a reverse osmosis plant on the coast of Saudi Arabia and pumped the water into the interior about a hundred miles. We maintained the water for close to two years and we ultimately raised the water table in the Riyadh by almost 8 feet. In the long run this would be the best scenario for everyone involved.

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