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### Meeting Urban Water Demands in Nevada: The Las Vegas Proposal [outline]

R. Michael Turnipseed

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**MEETING URBAN WATER DEMANDS IN NEVADA:  
THE LAS VEGAS PROPOSAL**

**E. Michael Turnipseed  
Nevada State Engineer  
Division of Water Resources  
Carson City, Nevada**

**UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN RESOURCE:  
GROUNDWATER LAW, HYDROLOGY AND POLICY LAW  
IN THE 1990s**

**Natural Resources Law Center  
University of Colorado  
School of Law  
Boulder, Colorado**

**June 15-17, 1992**

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## OUTLINE

R. MICHAEL TURNIPSRED, P.E.  
NEVADA STATE ENGINEER

GROUNDWATER LAW, HYDROLOGY AND POLICY IN THE 1990'S  
JUNE 15-17, 1992  
BOULDER, COLORADO

### I. DUTIES OF THE STATE ENGINEER

- A. Appropriation - Surface since 1905, groundwater since 1939
- B. Adjudication - Grandfathered Water Rights
- C. Distribution - Decreed Streams
- D. Dam Safety - All dams 10 feet and 10 acre-feet

### II. APPROPRIATION

- A. For all practical purposes, all surface water is appropriated
- B. Majority of groundwater is not near populated areas
- C. Over 50% State Engineer appropriation process deals with change applications
- D. Marketing constitutes major reapportionment to higher beneficial uses

### III. ADJUDICATION

- A. 50 on-going
- B. 4 active
- C. Reserved rights
  - 1. Negotiated settlement
  - 2. Off reservation storage
  - 3. abandonment
  - 4. Rebuttable presumption
  - 5. Forfeiture - retro

### IV. DISTRIBUTION

- A. All decreed streams
- B. Except Truckee, Carson, Walker & Colorado
  - 1. Truckee & Carson - Federal Water Master
  - 2. Walker - U. S. Board of Commissioners
  - 3. Colorado River - Secretary of the Interior

### V. DAM SAFETY

- A. Ten feet high or 10 acre-feet, needs a permit
- B. Inspection, 36' high hazard dam
- C. 400 + all dams

VI. WATER FOR A GROWING NEVADA

- A. Conservation
- B. Conversion of existing rights to municipal use
- C. Importation

VII. INTERBASIN TRANSFERS

- A. Existing
  - 1. Marlette-Hobart, Carson, Virginia City, Dayton & back
  - 2. Wendover
  - 3. Tonopah
  - 4. Las Vegas
  - 5. Carson, Groundwater for Carson Valley & Dayton segment
- B. Interstate
  - 1. Wildhorse - Duck Valley
  - 2. Boca, Tahoe, Truckee Meadows, Fallon
  - 3. Mesquite
- C. Proposed
  - 1. Honey Lake, 12 days of hearings - 136 exhibits
  - 2. Las Vegas Valley Water District (Nov 1992)
  - 3. Eco-Vision
  - 4. Mesquite

VIII. OTHER ISSUES

- A. Yucca Mountain
- B. Mine Dewatering
- C. Abandonment - who's burden?
- D. Forfeiture - retroactivity