



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION
1 ADMINISTRATION CIRCLE
CHINA LAKE CA 93555-6100

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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Ser N00/034

20 Feb 19

Board of Directors
Indian Wells Valley Ground Water Authority (IWVGWA)
Ridgecrest, California 93555

Dear Members of the Board:

Subj: GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

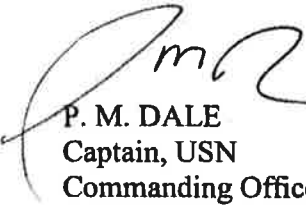
1. This letter serves to formally communicate that Commander Navy Region Southwest (CNRSW), in consultation with U.S. Navy commands located within the Indian Wells Valley, deems groundwater resources as the number one encroachment concern/issue which has the potential to impact missions enabled on and around Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake (NAWSCL). Water sustainability is critical to NAWSCL's mission accomplishment.
2. The Navy's human capital and its ability to recruit and retain talented personnel is integral to these critical national defense missions. We must emphasize the importance of Navy civilian and military personnel's continued access to economically viable potable water as critical to the IWVGWA's implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).
3. The Navy has leaned forward for decades, reducing water consumption on the installation by 54 percent since 2007, funding the Desert Research Institute modeling effort that the IWVGWA is now utilizing, and voluntarily providing reports of its groundwater extractions to assist the basin in understanding the Navy's current water use. NAWSCL engages in these initiatives as a matter of comity and as a good neighbor, rather than state law and local ordinance mandates. The purpose of this cooperative posture is to help the IWVGWA with comprehensive planning efforts to achieve groundwater sustainability as directed by the SGMA.
4. NAWSCL relies entirely upon groundwater as its sole source of potable water. In implementing SGMA, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) classified the Indian Wells Valley (IWV) groundwater basin as "Critically Over Drafted" in January 2016. Therefore, an imbalance between pumping and recharge associated with the basin creates growing concern, despite the efforts and cooperation of community stakeholders.
5. NAWSCL has engaged in consistent, proactive, and cooperative advocacy since the standup of the IWVGWA via a Joints Powers Agreement, with formal recognition as Ex-Officio non-voting Liaison on the IWVGA Board, active participation on the Technical Advisory Committee, Public Advisory Committee, SKYTEM, and other data gathering efforts to supplement the modeling effort. In addition, NAWSCL has committed, per my letter to you dated February 12, 2019, to submitting proposed projects for higher headquarters' consideration as applicable under FY19 NDAA. NAWSCL has a vested interest in participating in the SGMA effort with

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IWVGWA as lead and responsible for developing a plan for the groundwater basin to achieve a sustainable yield in 20 years.

6. The Navy appreciates that IWVGWA recognizes the unique position of NAWSCL's Federal Reserve Water Rights (FRWR) dating back in time to when the base was established in 1943. The SGMA statute itself recognizes that FRWRs shall be respected in full, and in the case of any conflict, federal law will prevail. CA Water Code Section 10720.3(d). IWVGWA has also recognized the fact that there is no waiver of sovereign immunity subjecting the Navy to GW regulation, pumping limitations, or fee assessment. Despite these unique federal legal limitations, NAWSCL intends to continue to be a good neighbor and work cooperatively with the IWVGWA.

7. In summary, we appreciate the magnitude of the task ahead for the IWVGWA.



P. M. DALE
Captain, USN
Commanding Officer