

Southern Nevada's Water Resource Strategy: Resilience, Adaptation and Risk Management

Abstract: Maintaining a safe, reliable water supply to a major metropolitan area is a challenge, even in areas where source water is abundant. In the American Southwest, those challenges are exacerbated as many of the West's fastest growing urban centers are relying on a shared resource.

As the agency responsible for managing Southern Nevada's water resources, the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) maintains a water resource plan that looks 50 years into the future. Southern Nevada relies almost exclusively upon the Colorado River, of which Nevada is entitled to less than 2 percent of its allocated flows. However, after a decade of drought, communities along the river system are implementing near and long-term plans to address diminishing supplies.

For a long time, water agencies—including ours—focused on increasing water supplies. However, as the decade-long drought on the Colorado River demonstrated, water planners must also anticipate shortages and develop the tools necessary to meet demand even under adverse conditions. To address its immediate needs, Southern Nevada has plans to invest more than \$650 million to secure access to precious Colorado River supplies. By 2021, a deeper intake will work alongside a new pumping station to access water that is currently inaccessible below 1,000 feet – even when Arizona, California and Mexico cannot receive deliveries.

Ultimately, the key to long-term resource security is diversification. Addressing Southern Nevada's long-term resources requires a shared approach to resource management and cooperation among stakeholders. By developing a suite of resource options, which include reuse, Southern Nevada is prepared to meet the water resource challenges that lie ahead.

Drinking Water and Wastewater Professional CEUs are available from Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licensing for this session.

Presenter: **Andrew Burns**
Title: Manager, Water Resources
Organization: Southern Nevada Water Authority
Address: 100 City Parkway, Ste. 700 (MS-110)
 Las Vegas, NV 89106
Phone: 702-862-3772
Email address: andrew.burns@snwa.com

Professional Background: Andrew Burns is the Water Resources Manager for the Southern Nevada Water Authority. A graduate from the University of Arizona, he has more than 22 years of experience in water resources planning, development, and management, including extensive work characterizing groundwater and surface-water resources in Nevada and the Colorado River Basin.