

Request for Comments

Scoping

Southern Nevada Water Authority Water Monitoring Sites USDA Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Ely Ranger District April 20, 2014

Project description

Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) is seeking an amendment to their existing special use authorization to authorize the addition of three new water monitoring sites located at Chokecherry Spring and lower Bastian Creek. The installations would include two stream discharge monitoring stations at lower Bastian Creek and a permanent flume and gauging station along with piezometer at Chokecherry Springs with benchmarks at both locations. In addition they are seeking authorization to conduct biological monitoring at Chokecherry Spring for water quality.

Project location

The lower Bastian Spring Site is located on the east side of the Schell Creek range in T15N R66E section 21 southeast of Ely. The Chokecherry Spring site is located on the west side of the Mount Moriah division in T16N R68E section 15, to the west of Ely.

Why this location?

These locations were selected in cooperation with the Forest Service as laid out in the 2011 Spring Valley Stipulated agreement between the US Forest Service and SNWA. Both sites are located in what's known as Spring Valley Hydrographic Area #184.

The decision to be made

The decision to be made is whether or not to issue an amendment to the Special Uses authorization to SNWA to install the proposed sites and to conduct the requested monitoring.

What we have learned so far

- These sites are needed in order for SNWA to comply with the terms of the stipulated agreement.

- The site at Lower Bastian Creek lies adjacent to the High Schells Wilderness area.
- The two sites at Chokecherry Springs fall within the Mount Moriah designated wilderness boundary.
- Language in the 2006 White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development act allows for the installation of hydrological or meteorological data collection devices within wilderness to further the scientific, educational, or conservation purposes of those areas.

How we will figure out what to do

We will use these issues, the comments we receive and the results of archeological, vegetation and wildlife on-site surveys to determine the possible effects (positive and negative) of allowing the installation to occur.

How you can help us decide what to do

We ask that you think about this proposal and let us know what you think. This comment/scoping period provides those interested in or affected by this proposal an opportunity to make their concerns known prior to any decision being made. Comments for this scoping period will be accepted through May 31, 2014.

We want to hear from you ...

If you would like more information on this proposal or would like to submit a comment write or call:

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Public involvement in the NEPA process is essential. Scoping is performed as one of the first steps to receive input from interested individuals, organizations and government agencies including federal, state, and local agencies. We invite you to submit written comments stating your concerns and issues that are relevant to the proposed project. Comments received in response to this scoping document and from personal contacts will be considered during the analysis of this project.

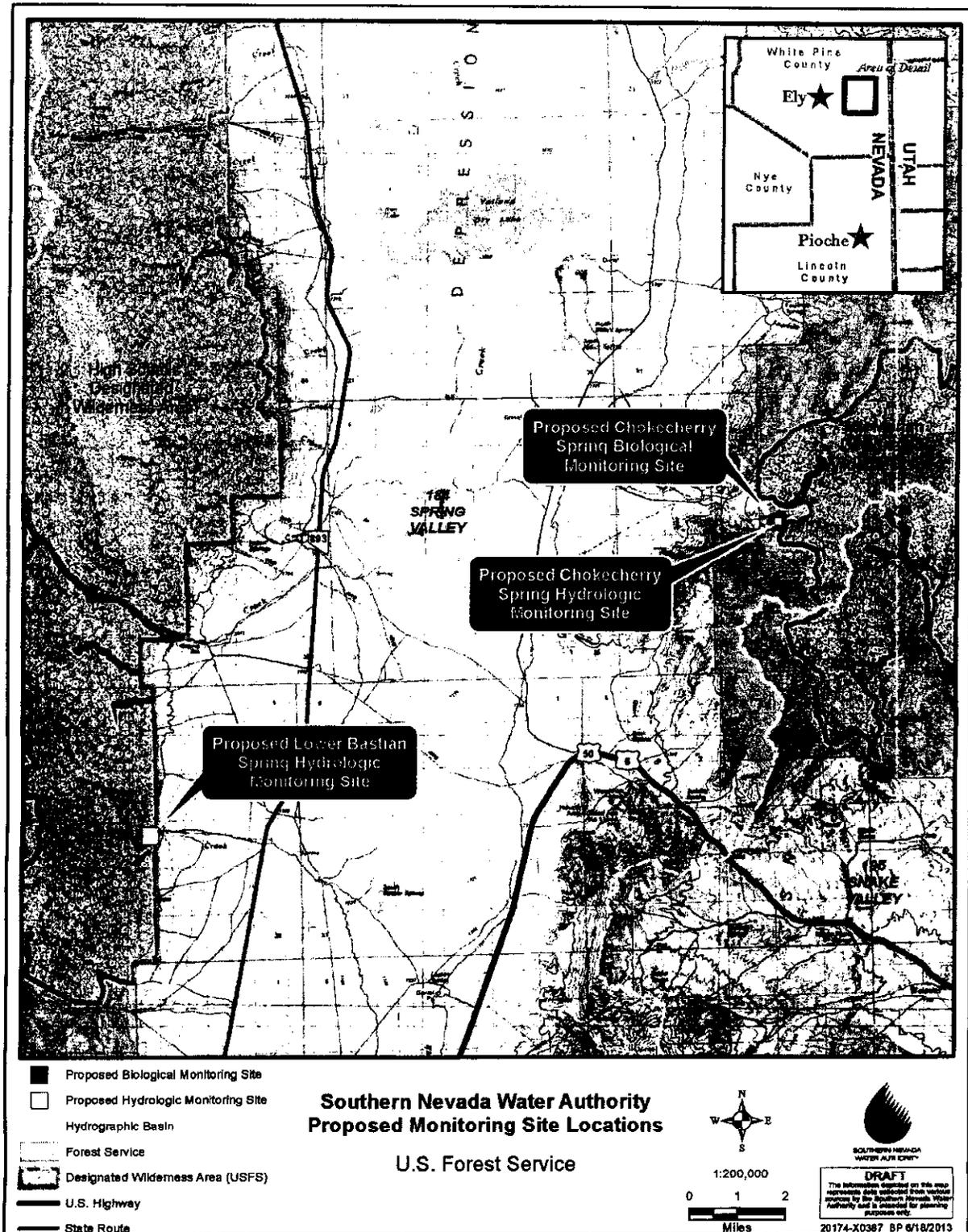


Figure 1. Overview map of Southern Nevada Water Authority Proposed Monitoring Site Locations on U.S. Forest Service Land.

*Ely Ranger District
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest*

Southern Nevada Water Monitoring Sites

Comment Form

We have provided this form for your convenience.

For your information: names and individuals commenting on Forest Service proposals may be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Here are my concerns, issues, and/or ideas about the Beehive Communication Site:

Please check all that apply...

**I have information about the area that may be helpful in the decision.
Feel free to contact me at _____.**

Please send me the final decision document.

I have no further interest in this proposal and do not want to receive further mailings.