



OP-ED - Searles Valley Minerals is Correct: the Public Deserves transparency from the Groundwater Authority

By Ron Kicinski IWVWD Board President
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Water ratepayers in the Indian Wells Valley have long paid a “replenishment fee” that is likely the most expensive fee of its kind in the state of California. The fee is based on data put forward by the IWV Groundwater Authority (Authority) and purportedly supported by its groundwater model. As time passes, the groundwater pumpers known as the Technical Working Group (TWG) have pursued the most current and accurate data for assessing the state of our water basin. The new data are public and conflict with the Authority’s claims, highlighting the need for the Authority to release its groundwater model.

Given the large discrepancy between the numbers regarding what can be safely pumped from our Basin, the major pumpers have repeatedly asked for the Authority’s “model”, but all requests have been summarily rejected. Basically, we are asking the Authority to “show your work” as the TWG has already done.

More and more people in the valley are asking “why won’t the GA show their work?” Searles Valley Minerals now has to pursue this basic information through the Courts. We fully support this effort and once again call on the Authority to become transparent with the people, as the citizens should be able to trust the information put forward by public agencies.

Ron Kicinski, President of the Board, Indian Wells Valley Water District