



Safe yield trial is a go: Appellate court declines to hear IWVGA’s challenge to trial court’s decision

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RIDGECREST, Calif. – The Indian Wells Valley Water District and Searles Valley Minerals are pleased to announce a significant development in their ongoing commitment to securing a sustainable water future for our community. The Court of Appeal has declined to hear the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority’s most recent challenge to the ongoing groundwater basin adjudication. Trial on the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Basin’s safe yield will proceed.

Last month, the Authority filed a writ petition in the appellate court, asking the appellate court to consider (and ultimately reverse) the trial court’s August 2024 decision to set a trial on the basin’s safe yield. The Authority’s writ petition was the latest in a series of attempts to prevent consideration of the best available science in determining safe yield. The appellate court declined to even hear the issue, summarily stating, “The petition for writ of mandate is DENIED.”

The District and Searles have long advocated for decisions regarding the basin’s water management to be made based on transparency and sound scientific data. The Authority’s recent challenge — aimed at preventing even the consideration of the most current scientific findings in determining the safe yield — has been a roadblock to this objective. The appellate court’s decision not to hear this challenge is a crucial step in ensuring that the community’s water resources are managed responsibly.

“The Indian Wells Valley Water District has always emphasized the need for transparency and the best available science in managing our water resources,” said Ronald Kicinski, President of the District Board. “The IWVGA’s efforts to delay and block the use of critical data have only prolonged the adjudication process, but we are glad the appellate court has allowed the process to move forward.”

Dennis Cruise, CEO of Searles Valley Minerals, emphasized, “The attempt to exclude essential scientific data undermines effective water management. We’re pleased that the appellate court has allowed the process to move forward, ensuring that the community’s needs will be met with transparency and the latest available data.”

Both the District and Searles Valley Minerals will continue pushing for a fair, sustainable water management plan, rooted in the latest science to benefit the residents who rely on the basin.