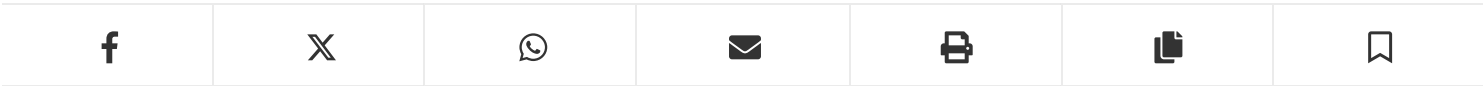


Searles Valley Minerals continues to demand transparency from IWVGA

News Release
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TRONA – Over the past several years Searles Valley Minerals (SVM) has twice requested, through California Public Records Act requests to the IWVGA, the groundwater model upon which the IWVGA has based burdensome and costly proposals, impacting everyone in the Indian Wells Valley. Twice the IWVGA has declined to respond.

Searles is now seeking this public data for a third time through the legal discovery process that is ongoing in Orange County Superior Court.

In contrast to the IWVGA’s lack of transparency, a Technical Working Group (TWG) of groundwater experts recently completed and made public a comprehensive analysis of the Basin using the most current and reliable data. The release of this new technical report underscores the importance of sharing data so that the best available science is used in managing our water resources. The substantial difference between the TWG’s estimate of what can be safely pumped from the Basin (14,300 acre-feet) and that of the IWVGA (only 7,650 acre-feet) raises significant questions about the accuracy of the IWVGA’s data.

Despite multiple formal and informal requests over the past several years, the IWVGA has refused to release its groundwater model and related files and data, which IWVGA claims supports its lower estimate. As a result, the TWG was unable to run the IWVGA’s groundwater model, nor could they conduct an independent assessment of IWVGA’s work on the model. Instead, the TWG used the best and most recently-available data to conduct their own comprehensive analysis. The IWVGA’s lack of transparency leads to concerns about the validity of the IWVGA’s figures and does not inspire confidence in their conclusions.”

Searles will continue to demand full transparency for the citizens in the Indian Wells Valley and encourages everyone to get involved in protecting their right to affordable water by connecting with the “Protect Our Valley’s Water” coalition at www.ProtectOurWater.Info today.

