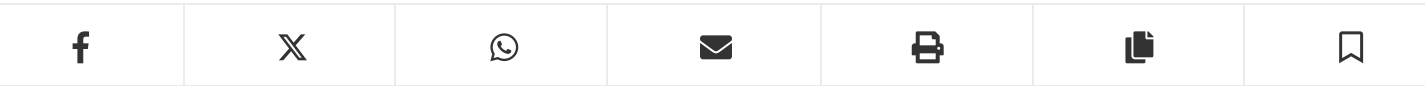


Technical Working Group: IWV basin safe yield higher than IWVGA claims

News Release
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A new report from the Technical Working Group (TWG) reveals that the Indian Wells Valley (IWV) Basin has an annual safe yield which is much more than previously reported by the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority (IWVGA).

The TWG, comprised of independent groundwater experts engaged by the Indian Wells Valley Water District (IWWVD) and Searles Valley Minerals (SVM), among others, has found that 14,300 acre-feet of water each year can safely be pumped from the Basin. This is nearly double the 7,650 acre-feet per year estimated by the IWVGA. This discrepancy is a crucial difference in understanding the Basin’s safe pumping capacity. This report is being released by the IWWVD and SVM for review by all parties and serves as a demonstration of transparency.

Safe yield, defined by the California Supreme Court as “the maximum amount of water that can be withdrawn annually, from a groundwater supply under a given set of conditions, without causing an undesirable result” (City of Los Angeles v. City of San Fernando (1975) 14 Cal.3d 199, 278), is a critical measure for water management.

The TWG’s findings are based on a comprehensive analysis of the most recent and reliable data. This new report underscores the importance of using accurate data in managing our water resources. The substantial difference between the TWG’s estimate (of 14,300 acre-feet) and that of the IWVGA (of 7,650 acre-feet) raises significant questions about the accuracy and transparency of the IWVGA’s data.

Despite multiple formal and informal requests over the past two years, the IWVGA has not released its groundwater model, which it 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 what they might be concealing.

Ronald Kicinski, President of the Indian Wells Valley Water District Board, commented, "Our commitment to protecting the IWV Basin's water resources is unwavering. The TWG's study highlights the urgent need for transparency and accurate data. The IWVGA's reluctance to share its groundwater model raises serious concerns about the validity of its lower sustainable yield estimate. We urge the IWVGA to release its model and work collaboratively to resolve these discrepancies to benefit our community and future water sustainability."

Dennis Cruise, President/CEO of Searles Valley Minerals, added, "It is imperative that groundwater management decisions, which impact our communities and our local economy, are based on the most accurate and comprehensive data available. The significant discrepancy in yield numbers calls for immediate action and transparency from the IWVGA to ensure the sustainable management of our water resources."

The Safe Yield Report, which includes detailed analyses and estimates, is available for public review on the Protect Our Valleys Water Coalition website at protectourwater.info and the Indian Wells Valley Water District's website at iwvwd.com.

The six firms that participated in the TWG are Krieger & Stewart Engineering Consultants, Parker Groundwater, Ramboll, Aquilogic, Geoscience Support Services Inc., and Luhdorff & Scalmanini Consulting Engineers.

For further information regarding the TWG and their analyses, please visit the Indian Wells Valley Water District's website, where additional FAQs address the purpose of the TWG, differences between estimates, and the involvement of professional consulting firms.