

RECOMMENDATION FOR POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION BY THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS

- 1. What is the recommendation? What is its intent? What is the problem the recommendation will address? Please provide a detailed description of the recommendation and provide copies of any background information, as necessary. Sufficient detail will help the committee better understand the purpose of the recommendation.**

The Central Nevada Regional Water Authority is recommending that a board of county commissioners be given authority to establish a groundwater board for areas designated as a groundwater basin by the State Engineer pursuant to the provisions of NRS 534.030, and appoint its members. CNRWA is also recommending that a groundwater board may only be dissolved by the board of county commissioners.

Under existing law, the State Engineer may establish a groundwater board upon the recommendation by a board of county commissioners. The Governor appoints members from a list of nominees provided by the county and may dissolve the groundwater board. NRS 534.035 requires that the State Engineer confer with a groundwater board and receive its written advice and recommendations before approving any permits to drill a well or applications to appropriate groundwater or change existing rights, and before adopting regulations or entering orders. Legislative intent is that the State Engineer and board be in agreement whenever possible, however, if there is disagreement the views of the State Engineer prevail.

Assembly Bill 437 sponsored by the Clark County Delegation in 1961 added NRS 534.035 and mandated that a groundwater board be established for certain areas designated as a groundwater basin. It was amended in 1973 to give the State Engineer discretion to establish a groundwater board. CNRWA does not know of any groundwater boards that have been established by the State Engineer. Today, about half of the groundwater basins in Nevada are designated and the State Engineer has proposed designating an additional 53 basins. By designating a basin, the State Engineer is granted additional authority in the administration of the groundwater resources within the designated basin. Preserving Nevada's limited water resources requires coordination and collaboration. Groundwater boards will have local knowledge and perspective on how management decision can impact their neighbors and communities that rely on groundwater resources for economic prosperity and quality of life. Pursuant to Senate Bill 150 enacted in the 2019 Nevada's counties are preparing and updating water resource management plans to guide sustainable development. These plans can serve as a basis for discussions between the State Engineer and groundwater boards.

Does the recommendation revise one or more current *Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS)*? If "Yes," please provide the reference to the NRS citation(s) affected by the recommendation, if known.

NRS.534.035

- 2. What group or person is making the recommendation?**

Central Nevada Regional Water Authority

- 3. What is the name and contact information of the person who should be contacted to provide additional information for the recommendation, if necessary?**

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