



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Great Basin National Park  
Baker, Nevada 89311-9701

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
N16(GRBA)

July 8, 2011

Dear Friends:

Great Basin National Park has completed the *Hydrogeologic Research Project Environmental Assessment (EA)*. This EA will be open to review for 35 days, from July 8 through August 12, 2011.

This hydrogeologic research project proposes to conduct investigations to better understand important water resources and connections. Specifically, the project would help to better understand basin-fill deposits, assess quantitatively the interaction of surface water and groundwater along selected creeks, delineate the source of water to two important springs, refine estimates of how water is flowing from Spring Valley to the west of the Park to Snake Valley to the east of the Park, and conduct a dye tracing study to better understand cave and surface-water connections. Studies would be conducted in the Lehman, Baker, Snake, and Strawberry watersheds.

The EA, prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), examines four alternatives: 1) the No Action Alternative would not have the Hydrogeologic Research project undertaken; the Park would have to rely on incomplete information to assess effects of other cumulative actions, such as the Southern Nevada Water Authority Groundwater Project; 2) the Proponent Action-All Sites that includes all the proponent actions; 3) No Lehman Creek Drilling that includes all the proponent actions except for drilling three wells near Lehman Creek by a culturally-sensitive area; and 4) the Preferred Alternative-Lehman Alternate Site that includes all the proponent actions, but with an alternate location for drilling three wells near Lehman Creek in an area that is less culturally sensitive. Long-term benefits derived from the information gathered in this research project would outweigh short-term adverse impacts.

Copies of the EA are available online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/hydrogeologic>. You may also request a CD copy through the park's Planning Office by calling 775-234-7331 x251. Hard copies are available for review at the park visitor centers, the White Pine County Library, and EskDale Center.

Comments may be submitted through the park planning website or by mailing them to Attn: Planning, 100 Great Basin National Park, Baker, NV, 89311. Please submit comments no later than August 12, 2011

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AJF', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew J. Ferguson  
Superintendent