

THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN NEVADA



*Providing leadership in
identifying and meeting
resource conservation
needs for
the citizens of
Clark County*



2002-2003 ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

The Conservation District of Southern Nevada (CDSN) is a subdivision of State government dedicated solely to natural resource conservation in Clark County, Nevada.

Our mission is to provide leadership in identifying and meeting the resource conservation needs for citizens of both rural and urban areas within Clark County by providing technical services, education, information, planning assistance and coordination of services. All programs of the CDSN are offered on a free, nondiscriminatory basis.

The CDSN is administered by a Board of seven volunteer Supervisors; five elected, one representing the Incorporated Cities of Clark County, and one representing Clark County.

One of 28 Conservation Districts serving the State of Nevada, the CDSN works with the State's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to implement education campaigns and on-the-ground conservation programs.

The CDSN also maintains membership in the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts, participating in conferences and national programs such as Backyard Conservation, the Conservation Teacher of the Year Award, and the NACD Annual Poster Contest.

For more information, visit the
Conservation District of Southern Nevada website at
www.cdsn.org



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

As I look back on the 2002-2003 fiscal year and prepare for the challenges ahead, it is clear that the role of the Conservation District of Southern Nevada in natural resource preservation is more critical now than ever before.

Clark County continues to be among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation, with the City of North Las Vegas and the once small town of Mesquite taking the lead. With thousands of people becoming new citizens of Clark County every week, it is imperative that we all make an extra effort to protect our natural resources.

In a time of increased water demands and shortages, water conservation is the most serious resource issue facing Clark County. In an effort to educate residents about this valuable resource, the Conservation District has launched several programs and partnerships. Over the past year we have worked with Clark County Department of Parks and Community Services to secure and/or administer over \$4 million in grant funding for on-the-ground wetlands conservation at the Wetlands Park. The 2nd edition of "Preserving Our Water Resources" was revised and updated. Ten thousand copies of the booklet were printed and are being distributed through nurseries and outreach events to educate local residents about water conservation and water quality protection in and around their homes.

Changes in air quality have also been a consequence of increased population. Long recognized for some of the healthiest air in the country, our desert community is now faced with air pollution issues caused by fugitive dust, increased traffic and commercial production. The District is continuing its work with the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management to educate residents about their

role in pollution production and abatement.

This year the CDSN witnessed groundbreaking at the Acacia Demonstration Gardens, a community garden promoting best management practices for resource conservation. Working with numerous community partners including the City of Henderson, the District plans on completing this valuable community resource by the end of 2003. Once completed, the Gardens will educate visitors about water conservation, nutrient management, wildlife hosting and allergy friendly practices homeowners can employ in their own backyards.

Finally, this was a year of change. The District mourned the passing of esteemed Board Supervisor and friend Nanyu "Tomi" Tomiyasu. Tomi's wisdom and 80 plus years of experience are sorely missed.

In the coming year the Conservation District will continue to support and implement conservation programs in Clark County through fundraising, education programs and on-the-ground conservation projects.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and becoming apprised of current Conservation District of Southern Nevada projects. We look forward to building upon our partnerships to continue addressing natural resource issues facing our southern Nevada community in the coming years.

Judy Currier
Chair of the Board of Supervisors

2002-2003 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1: OBTAIN & MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCES FOR DISTRICT OPERATIONS

- Goal A: Pursue funding from federal, state and local agencies.
- Goal B: Research and pursue fundraising opportunities for operating expenses.
- Goal C: Pursue and implement new plans for generating discretionary funds.

OBJECTIVE 2: COORDINATE & PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Goal A: Provide for and participate in community environmental education programs.
- Goal B: Sponsor environmental education programs within the Clark County School District.

OBJECTIVE 3: PROVIDE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE & OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Goal A: Ensure the District is fulfilling the requirements of NRS 548 through its programs and practices.
- Goal B: Employ staff and designate committees to provide services needed to achieve CDSN's mission.
- Goal C: Participate in State, Regional and National Meetings.

OBJECTIVE 4: ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION PLANS & PROGRAMS

- Goal A: Assist community partners in developing, managing and promoting environmental plans, programs and demonstration projects.
- Goal B: Support the Natural Resources Conservation Service in their efforts to assist landowners with conservation needs and with meeting the provisions of the Farm Bill.

OBJECTIVE 5: BUILD, PROMOTE & FACILITATE PARTNERSHIPS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS

- Goal A: Maintain and enhance partnerships with federal, state and local agencies.
- Goal B: Participate in and assist with the environmental efforts of grassroots organizations, local businesses and the general public.

OBJECTIVE 6: PROMOTE CDSN EFFORTS THROUGH PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Goal: Communicate CDSN's efforts to the community.



BACKYARD CONSERVATION

*Promoting
best management
practices in
every home*



Building on the national “Backyard Conservation” program endorsed by the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Conservation District is actively bringing backyard conservation to the community through the creation of conservation demonstration projects. This year saw the creation of two public gardens, one of which was completed in the City of North Las Vegas and the other currently in production in the City of Henderson.

The Conservation District worked with the City of North Las Vegas to develop and fund the Civic Center Demonstration Gardens. Based on the designs of a professor from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas’ Landscape Architecture Department, the Gardens demonstrate native plants and xeriscape landscaping. Funding for the project was received from the Nevada Division of Forestry, Partners in the Urban Resource Environment, High Desert Resource Conservation and Development Council, US Forest Service and the Southern Nevada Water Authority. The Gardens were officially opened to the public in December of 2002.

The Acacia Demonstration Gardens has been a dream in the making shared by the

Conservation District, City of Henderson, JW Zunino & Associates Landscape Architects and numerous community partners. Work on the project began in the fall of 2002 with a large Arbor Day tree planting event. To date, a trail system, on-site interpretive education program, additional trees, and individual gardens have been installed with the help of volunteer groups and private sponsors.

When completed, the Gardens will demonstrate numerous options for home owners to create sustainable and beautiful landscapes in their own yards. Themed garden sites include Wildlife, Cactus, Native, Near Native, Mediterranean and Allergy Friendly areas, in addition to demonstrations of backyard composting, erosion control and a dry riverbed. An interpretive pathway with information about each of the individual areas will be a source of education and inspiration for southern Nevadans looking for ways to conserve natural resources, attract wildlife, and create valuable green spaces in their communities.

The Gardens will open to the public in the end of 2003, with a Grand Opening celebration and launch of educational workshops expected in the spring of 2004.



CLARK COUNTY WETLANDS PARK

*Protecting
water resources
and
wetland habitat*



For the third year in a row, the Conservation District continued to work with Clark County Parks and Community Services to fund expansion of the Wetlands Park. Encompassing 2,800 acres, the Wetlands Park is the largest source of open space in metropolitan Clark County. The Park houses a portion of the Las Vegas Wash, which transports urban runoff and treated effluent into Lake Mead and provides refuge for numerous species of plant and wildlife.

During the fiscal year, the Conservation District was awarded and administered \$110,813.00 in grant funds for conservation at the Wetlands Park. Additionally, District staff wrote grants in the amount of \$4.1 million that was awarded directly to Clark County Parks and Community Services, and continued to administer over \$400,000.00 in grant funds awarded in previous years.

Two projects at the Park received special focus this year, including the 120-acre expansion of the Park's Nature Preserve and an 80-acre development to the west.

The 120-acre wetlands project will create a series of open water and wetland cells in an area currently dominated by common reed and

tamarisk. While the area currently provides little habitat value, engineering plans designed by the nonprofit organization Ducks Unlimited will link the 120 acres to the Park's 300-acre Nature Preserve and enrich habitat for migratory and native wetland bird and plant species. The 120 acres will be tied into the Nature Preserve and planned Visitors Center by a series of trails.

The 80 acres being developed west of the Nature Preserve will create significant amenities for Park visitors. Plans for the area include trails, restrooms, shade structure, picnic facilities and group gathering areas. The surrounding landscape will incorporate the Park's mesquite trees and streams.

In addition to finding funding for large conservation projects, the Conservation District continued to work with community groups and agencies to develop educational opportunities at the Park. District staff continued participation in the Interpretive Planning Committee, a group of local agency education experts who are designing educational programs for the Park. A comprehensive Interpretive Plan for the Park was finalized this year, and a series of interpretive wayside panels and kiosks will be installed at the Park by the end of December 2003.



AIR QUALITY

*Helping to
clear the air
in Clark County*



Living in the Mojave Desert, Clark County residents have experienced some of the best air quality in the country. This benefit is thanks in large part to “desert crust”, a naturally occurring hard top layer of mineral found on desert sands that ensures fine dust particles known as PM₁₀ (particulate matter smaller than 10 microns in diameter) are not easily released into the air. Once airborne and inhaled these microscopic particles can be trapped deep inside the lungs aggravating respiratory diseases, allergies and asthma.

Rapid population growth over the past two decades has created some problems for the quality of our air. Increased construction and traffic on vacant lots has opened new areas of land destroying desert crust and releasing PM₁₀ into the air.

Building on the success of the “Let’s Clear the Air” campaign launched with the Clark County Health District in 2001, the Conservation District began work with the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management to develop an outreach and education campaign to inform the public about local air quality issues. This year District staff has worked with the County to develop an outreach plan, brochures and public service print

advertisements to educate the public about air quality protection. In addition, the District is in the midst of completing the 2nd edition of its popular “Residents Guide to Protecting Air Quality” which will be printed by the Department of Air Quality Management in the Winter of 2003.

The Conservation District has also launched a Small Business Assistance Program to assist local businesses in maintaining compliance with local and federal air quality regulations. The program is managed by the District in conjunction with the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management.

The Small Business Assistance Program acts as a liaison between the business community and the Department of Air Quality Management, offering aid to the small business community of Clark County on a free and voluntary basis. Clients are encouraged to seek advice at any point while applying for an air quality permit, or if questions arise concerning their permit and its requirements. Services offered include assistance in the permit application process, including emissions calculations, permit modifications and attachments; and compliance, including record keeping and reporting.



OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

*Providing
opportunities for
community
participation and
learning*



Over this past year the Conservation District has had the pleasure of partnering with numerous agencies to share the conservation message with community residents.

In the fall of 2002, the District sponsored and attended the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta's Interior West Regional Meeting, which was hosted by the Las Vegas Springs Preserve. The Conference brought together garden experts from across the western region to discuss public gardens as catalysts for sustainability. District Board Members participated in the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts and National Association of Conservation Districts Western/Pacific Regional annual conferences. Additionally, staff attended conservation outreach events including the Desert Demonstration Gardens' "Day With the Experts" and Clark County's "EcoJam" Earth Day celebration.

With the rise in projects this year, a need for an organized volunteer base arose. The District responded by developing a volunteer program. Four volunteer tree and shrub plantings were organized in the fall and spring to launch the program.

The District has been working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Nevada State Department of Agriculture to bring local agencies and community groups together in the formation of a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) for

the County. The CWMA will monitor and develop actions to address invasive weed infestation in Clark County.

The District teamed up with the City of North Las Vegas to promote the Pet Waste Prevention Project. Responding to reports of high fecal coliform bacteria in Lake Mead, the project informs North Las Vegas residents about the effects discarded pet waste has on water quality. Pet owners were sent educational flyers with utility bills, and bus stops around town implore pet owners to "Do Your Doody!", and pick up after pets.

The District has also continued its popular compost bin retail program, which offers high quality backyard bins at a reduced price to encourage waste reduction.

Two new educational publications were made available to the public this year, including the 2nd edition of the "Preserving Our Water Resources" guide and a poster promoting urban and community forestry. The water guide addresses the history and future of water quality in the Las Vegas Valley. Ten thousand copies of the guide were printed, and are available from Star Nurseries valley-wide, conservation outreach events or by contacting the Conservation District directly. The poster "Southern Nevada Grows" encourages residents to plant regionally appropriate trees around their homes and communities to provide wildlife habitat, conserve energy, and increase quality of life.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND STAFF

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Judy Currier

Chair

Management Analyst, Southern Nevada Water Authority;
B.A. Political Science

Dirick Van Gorp

Vice Chair

Incorporated Cities Representative
Landscape Architect, Stantec
B.S. Horticulture/Landscape Design

John Hunt

Secretary/Treasurer

Retired, City of North Las Vegas

Christina Gibson

Clark County Representative

Management Analyst II, Clark County
Desert Conservation Program
M.S. Public Administration
B.S. Business

Joe Fortier

Supervisor

Irrigation Consultant/President,
Mojave Water Management;
ASIC, CID, CIC, CGIA, CLIA

Elise McAllister

Supervisor

Administrator, Partners in
Conservation

Jon Wardlaw

Supervisor

Assistant Planning Manager, Clark
County;
M.S. Land Use Planning Policy
B.S. Geography

STAFF

Kim Vilt

Grant Administrator

B.A. Integrated Studies,
Earth Systems Science & Visual and
Public Art

Wilisha Daniels

Conservation Assistant

M.P.A.
B.A. Communications

Brian Engbretson

Conservation Technician

Student, Community College of
Southern Nevada

Leah Gillig

Conservation Assistant

B.S. Biology

Katie Bliven

Conservation Intern

Student, University of Redlands

2002-2003 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

Acacia Demonstration Gardens	
<i>Bureau of Reclamation</i>	\$ 10,000.00
<i>Land & Water Conservation Fund & Partners in the Urban Resource Environment (Reimb. by City of Henderson)</i>	\$ 18,407.03
<i>MWH</i>	\$ 1,000.00
<i>Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP)</i>	\$ 38,387.24
<i>Nevada Division of Forestry</i>	\$ 3,500.00
<i>Southern Nevada Water Authority</i>	\$ 6,625.00
American Association of Botanical Gardens Conference Administration	\$ 9,528.55
City of Henderson	\$ 10,000.00
City of North Las Vegas	\$ 10,000.00
Clark County Operating Grant	\$ 54,722.14
Clark County Department of Air Quality Management	\$ 73,775.81
Clark County Trails Program Grant Writing Services	\$ 4,428.01
Clark County Wetlands Park Grant Writing Services	\$ 11,017.57
Compost Bin Retail Program	\$ 2,455.00
Conference Reimbursement	\$ 235.00
Interest Receipts from Dean Witter Account	\$ 2,297.19
Interest Receipts from Wells Fargo Checking Account	\$ 18.50
Miscellaneous Rebates	\$ 31.33
Pet Waste Management Project - NDEP	\$ 7,446.91
Preserving Our Water Resources Guide	
<i>Bureau of Reclamation</i>	\$ 5,000.00
<i>CH2MHILL</i>	\$ 400.00
<i>City of North Las Vegas</i>	\$ 1,000.00
<i>NDEP</i>	\$ 12,008.61
<i>Star Nursery</i>	\$ 1,000.00
State of Nevada Grant Appropriation	\$ 5,000.00
The Conservation Fund	\$ 1,300.00
Volunteer Program Donations	\$ 150.00
Wetlands Park Trail - Nevada Division of State Parks	\$ 1,913.00
Wetlands Pond and Kiosks - NDEP	\$ 1,495.25
Wetlands Southern Expansion - NDEP	\$ 2,313.55

TOTAL INCOME \$295,455.69

EXPENDITURES

Acacia Demonstration Gardens	\$ 48,726.01
Air Quality Outreach Promotions	\$ 6,810.04
American Association of Botanical Gardens	
Conference Administration	\$ 9,528.55
Bank Fees	\$ 24.00
Compost Bin Retail Program	\$ 1,825.00
Conferences	\$ 345.00
Membership Fees	
<i>National Association of Conservation Districts</i>	\$ 775.00
<i>Nevada Association of Conservation Districts</i>	\$ 1,000.00
<i>High Desert RC&D</i>	\$ 100.00
E-mail & Website	\$ 546.75
Employee Expenses	\$ 180,226.92
Equipment Maintenance & Repair	\$ 1,240.94
Equipment Purchase	\$ 3,567.64
Miscellaneous	\$ 145.14
Office Supplies	\$ 2,561.35
Pet Waste Management Project	\$ 3,478.80
Petty Cash	\$ 225.00
Postage	\$ 675.84
Telephone	\$ 469.52
Training	\$ 199.00
Travel	\$ 2,597.94
Urban Forestry Poster	\$ 95.00
Preserving Our Water Resources Guide	\$ 15,474.00
Printing and Reproduction	\$ 218.49
Wetlands Park Tropicana Beautification Project Grant	\$ 21,700.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$302,555.93

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN NEVADA DONORS AND PARTNERS

INDIVIDUALS

Leo & Margaret Connolly

Greg Currier

CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Boulder Sand and Gravel

Dura Plastic Products, Inc.

Eastman Kodak Company

Ecco Equipment

GC Wallace Engineering

Gothic Landscaping

High Desert RC&D

JW Zunino & Associates

Mojave Water Management

Mountain States Wholesale Nursery

MWH

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Nevada Power

Nevada Shade Tree Council

Parson Brothers Construction

Partners in Conservation

Partners in the Urban Resource

Environment

Rainbird

Sloan Quarry

Southern Nevada Arborist Group

Southern Nevada Water Authority

Star Nursery

The Conservation Fund

TJ Krob Consulting Engineers, Inc.

Valley Blue Print

Valley Crest Landscaping

GOVERNMENT

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

Clark County

City of Henderson

City of North Las Vegas

National Park Service—Rivers, Trails and
Conservation Assistance Program

Nevada Division of Environmental
Protection—319 Water Quality Grant
Program

Nevada Division of Forestry—Urban &
Community Forestry Program

Nevada Division of State Parks—Land &
Water Conservation Fund

Nevada Division of State Parks—
Recreational Trails Program

Nevada Division of Wildlife

Regional Flood Control District

State of Nevada

USDA Natural Resources Conservation
Service

US Forest Service

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

University of Nevada Reno Cooperative
Extension

Our mission is to provide leadership in identifying and meeting the resource conservation needs for citizens of both rural and urban areas within Clark County by providing technical services, education, information, planning assistance and coordination of services.



Conservation District of Southern Nevada
5820 S. Pecos Rd. Bldg. A Suite 400
Las Vegas, NV 89120
(702) 262-9047 ext. 5
www.cdsn.org