State of Utah

Department of
Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE
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45 Day Public Comment Begins May 15th

Jordan Valley Draft Permit Ready for Public Review

Salt Lake City, Utah – The Division of Water Quality (DWQ) has completed an exhaustive, multi-year review of the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District (JVWCD) plan to clean up contaminated groundwater in southwest Salt Lake County and is asking the public to weigh in on the proposed permit.

The Jordan Valley Southwest Groundwater Treatment Plant will remove and treat deep aquifer groundwater contaminated by historic mining activities as well as shallow groundwater unaffected by mining impacts. The plant will treat the water using a reverse osmosis process to remove sulfates and other salts from the water. The District proposes to pump the byproducts of the treated water – mostly dissolved salts and trace amounts of metals – through a 21-mile, 16-inch diameter pipeline into Gilbert Bay of the Great Salt Lake. At full production, the treatment plant will provide up to 14 million gallons of drinking water a day to Salt Lake County residents.

Concerns about impacts from selenium and mercury in the byproduct discharge were raised during public comments several years ago. Since then, DWQ has established numeric criteria for selenium in the Great Salt Lake and conducted exhaustive research on potential adverse impacts from byproduct discharge on the lake biota. The proposed permit includes effluent limits and stringent monitoring requirements that address these concerns.

The 45-day public comment period begins May 15th and ends on June 28th. A public hearing and information meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2013 at 6:00pm in the Department of Environmental Quality Board Room, located on the first floor of the Multi-Agency State Office Building at 195 North 1950 West.

"Limits in the permit, the most extensive of any we have ever issued, are calculated to protect the wildlife and aquatic life dependent on the Great Salt Lake ecosystem," explained Water Quality Director Walt Baker. "In addition, water treatment at the Southwest Groundwater Treatment Plant benefits the Valley's water quality by preventing the further migration of contaminated groundwater."

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For more information on the project, visit: http://www.deq.utah.gov/business/jordanvalleywater/index.htm .Written comments may be directed to: Kim Shelley, P.O. Box 144870, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870 or by email at: kshelley@utah.gov.

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