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What Lives, and Dies, on Tule Mats

Can Anti-Public Lands Ethos Take Hold on the Colorado River?

Nevada Water Laws Move in Legislature

The Gutting of NEPA

FEMA Corps

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TC Energy School is expensive – we want to help!

University of Alaska is a land-, sea- and space-grant system of higher education established in 1917.

Mosaic is a national grantmaking initiative

When is it and where are the best places in Nevada to view it?

President Ulysses S. Grant’s Sixth and Seventh State of the Union Addresses



“Native practices and native knowledge are really going to be critical for proper ecological management...” —UC Davis entomology associate professor Geoffrey Attardo

What Lives, and Dies, on Tule Mats

“Along the marsh’s edge at Cache Creek Nature Preserve, 20 miles northwest of Sacramento, Diana Almendariz harvests bundles of tule (*Schoenoplectus acutus*)— green, smooth cylinders up to 10 feet high. With a knife, she cuts the giant sedge, about as thick as a nickel, at their full height, while avoiding stalks where red-winged blackbirds and marsh wrens have built their nests. Sometimes, she stands nearly ankle-deep in the mud and looks skyward, imagining herself as a tiny ant in a grass lawn. After taking only as much as she plans to use, Almendariz, an Indigenous cultural practitioner, dries the tule in the sun. She bends and binds them together with cattail reeds to make huts, dolls, and canoes, as her Maidu and Wintun ancestors had done. While many of their gathering sites are now gone, the preserve remains plentiful of tule—resilient and hardy, but also soft and flexible. And so, they make durable mats for sleeping and sitting, which Almendariz weaves every Sunday at her tule mat-making workshops. But more than 20 years ago, she discovered what happens when you float a small mat of tule on water. . . .” [Read more from Bay Nature](#)

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**From Great Basin Water Network**    [geat.basin.water.network@mx-usa.keela.com](mailto:geat.basin.water.network@mx-usa.keela.com)

## **Can Anti-Public Lands Ethos Take Hold on the Colorado River?**

### **Utah brings its anti-federal sentiment to the Colorado River**

Our work tracking state, federal and local matters helps us all connect the "drops" in a complicated world.

**Today we'll tell you how Utah is taking its public lands mindset to the Colorado River. We offer updates on important water bills in the Nevada Legislature and explore the fate of the National Environmental Policy Act.**

We monitor and engage in these issues because we know water availability is limited in the region. But we also hope that our work compels more folks to stand up and speak out when necessary.

If we are not vigilant, somebody else will be. And the tools we have today to express our support or dissent might not be here tomorrow. And conversely, tools we don't have today can arrive if we work to get them.

Water is finite on this planet. But the effort to protect it must be infinite.

As GBWN engages in multiple state legislative proceedings and monitors the changing regulatory landscape federally, all we know is that we have to show up when necessary, have hope, and stay hydrated.

Nothing says “Utah” like an effort to subvert federal authority on matters relating to land or water. Take for example HJR9, the latest gesture by Beehive State lawmakers to force their will upon those pesky requirements of the Colorado River Compact. Of issue in [HJR9](#) is the long divisive imbroglio about where states can physically use their allocations of water in the Upper and Lower reaches of the Colorado River Basin.

HJR9 targets the longstanding Compact considerations over the dividing line at Lees Ferry (sic) — which has long been the demarcation between the Upper and Lower Basin. Utah, like New Mexico and Arizona, has portions of the watershed in both the Upper and Lower regions of the Colorado River Watershed. There are strict requirements that Upper Basin water be used in the Upper Basin. And the same can be said for the waters flowing south of Lees Ferry in the Lower Basin. Congress must approve of doing otherwise.

The HJR9 language says that, notwithstanding those pesky considerations under federal law: “*...any basin state should be able to use the state’s Colorado River allocation at any location within the geographic boundaries of that state.*”

This is Utah just being Utah. And, unfortunately, there are other signals on the Colorado River.

[HB311](#) gives license for the Utah Water Agent to negotiate on water augmentation — pipelines, reservoirs, trans-basin diversions — involving the Colorado River and Bear River. In connection with HJR9, this opens up all kinds of possibilities for the Water Agent, which can operate in the shadows thanks to open records exemptions in state law. The bill looked a lot different at the beginning of session, dealing with somewhat benign water issues. But then lawmakers gutted it and added the Water Agent language that will further embolden Utah in its attempts to take more water away from the Colorado River System.

Tell Rep. Snider you oppose his bills: [csnider@le.utah.gov](mailto:csnider@le.utah.gov)  
Lastly, there’s a recently released bill in Congress, [HR302](#), from Utah Congresswoman Celeste Maloy. It poses many questions about how the federal government could manage resources during a time of crisis at Lake Mead. The genesis of the legislation was a now-resolved dispute between ski resorts in Colorado and the Forest Service more than a decade ago. The bill never passed Congress.

Today, the bill’s reintroduction raises the specter of uncertainty and highlights the delicate balance between state water law and federal engagement — an important dynamic for Upper Basin states, which does not have a federal water master managing water contracts. The Lower Basin, due to the 1963 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Arizona v. California*, does have a federal water master. On top of that, the federal government must waive its sovereign immunity on certain matters regarding state water law.

Since most of the Lower Basin’s water originates in the Upper Basin’s Rocky Mountains, it is important to think how a bill like this could impact management — for better or worse. One big question for us: How would this bill impact a Lower Basin compact call on the Upper Basin? Send us your thoughts.

<https://greatbasinwater.org/can-utahs-anti-public-land-ethos-come-to-the-colorado-river/>

## **Nevada Water Bills Are Moving**

Next week there will be hearings on AB104 and AB9, two bills where GBWN has invested significant time on collaboration with water users and stakeholders.

[AB104](#) deals with a management framework for retiring water rights via buybacks. When federal COVID money gushed into the state, there was an attempt in 2023 to pass a law to implement the program, but it failed. Instead, state officials at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources were able to administer the funds and dole out millions of dollars to water users to retire their water — all in an attempt to bring aquifers back into balance. Now the money is gone and the problem of over-use and drought remain. But there were lessons learned.

This bill implements a framework that comes with the experience and know-how to support the administration of a water rights retirement effort. But it won't come with the big-ticket money to buy up more water in the nation's driest state. State and federal money doesn't exist. But if we build the program, we hope the money will follow.

During the past 1.5 years we have wordsmithed and posed numerous hypotheticals. The big issue: We all want to ensure retired water, especially paid for with any public funding, doesn't get pumped again.

Easier said than done. But we think we have a solution. We hope that the program can continue receiving funds with bonding measures down the road.

[AB9](#): This legislation expands an existing conservation program GBWN helped create in 2007 to benefit wildlife and agriculture. The effort will expand the duration of temporary fallowing programs to benefit wildlife or limit conflict among water users. With a forthcoming amendment, there will be additional safeguards to prevent bad actors from abusing the program for speculative and profit-driven purposes. This is a small step. But we hope that entities who are seeing declines in their groundwater levels can use the program to improve the quality of flow, habitat for wildlife, and certainty in communities with declining aquifers.

Lastly, we are pushing to get a hearing on [AB109](#), the Water Rights Fairness Act. This legislation would ensure that any use of water by major industries gets a permit. Right now, a loophole in law allows novel mining techniques and geothermal companies to bypass the regulatory review process that cities, farms, hard rock mines and other big users must endure to get a water right. This carveout threatens the public interest, due process rights, and existing water users. Please respectfully tell the Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee that we must have a hearing on this bill. Read our fact sheet [here](#). And send a supportive message to: [Natha.Anderson@asm.state.nv.us](mailto:Natha.Anderson@asm.state.nv.us)

## **The Gutting of NEPA Won't Help Rural Communities**

The new administration in Washington D.C. gutted the regulations overseeing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, a key function for public participation and community protection on major actions proposed for federal lands.

[The action](#), announced this week, poses many questions about what the future holds for permitting at a time of great uncertainty about the federal government's role in project development on federal lands.

GBWN and other community advocates must now weigh the impacts of regulatory change for ongoing federal matters involving Nevada and Utah.

The effort continues an ongoing ideological ping-pong about the intent and role of NEPA that usually switches from one administration to the next. Inevitably, this shift from the Trump Administration will wind up in court. But it creates a major vacuum as countless projects across the west undergo and prepare for environmental review.

The assumed goal of the current regulatory effort is to speed up federal permitting by limiting procedural hurdles for project proponents. This could pose constraints on how the public, scientists, attorneys and others engage on projects that involve natural resources overseen by the federal government.

The process to gut the NEPA regulations began with an executive order earlier this month from the Trump Administration that asked the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which has statutory oversight of NEPA, to revoke all of its existing regulations for NEPA.

This tact follows a recent ruling from a federal judge in North Dakota that vacates CEQ's ability to create the overriding regulations. Public interest advocacy groups appealed that decision. But the decision was enough to propel this week's action.

President Nixon, who signed the NEPA bill, created the executive order tasking CEQ to create regulations. Plaintiffs in the North Dakota case challenged the legality of CEQ's rulemaking authority granted by the Nixon-era executive order.

Our organization participates in NEPA-driven projects to ensure that the voices of rural communities are heard, the science is sound, information comes to light, and regulators give impacts a "hard look." We are engaging in NEPA right now on the dangerous White Pine Pumped Storage project. We have uplifted concerns about hydrology from tribal and agricultural communities on projects like the Las Vegas Pipeline and the Cedar City Pipeline. We have defended water supplies on the Colorado River via NEPA.

No matter your political colors, you want a sound NEPA process when there is a major action proposed for your community or near a place you hold dear. I have heard unlikely supporters of NEPA say: I hated this law until I needed it.

This new regulatory universe will likely give agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management the ability to create their own regulations rather than relying, as has been the case for decades, on CEQ rulemaking authority.

We will be watching what happens and keep you informed.

This effort doesn't dismantle the law. But it will inevitably change the implementation. And, of course, lead to more lawsuits and uncertainty.

Our mailing address is GBWN, PO 75, Baker NV 89311

**GBWN Board Member: Tamra Borchardt-Slayton**

Tamra is the chairwoman of the Indian Peaks Band of the Paiute Tribe of Utah and a member of the Paiute Tribe of Utah tribal council. She is an advocate for water protection throughout her traditional homelands. Tamra strongly believes in advocating for marginalized communities and has been appointed to sit on various boards and task forces to implement and research meaningful policy changes. Tamra has spent years partnering with GBWN on efforts to stop the Cedar City Pipeline and Groundwater Grab, which would unlawfully export the tribe's water rights for sprawl in Cedar City.

*Nevada Assemblyman Yurek:*

*I will tell you that learning water law is like learning a foreign language. 5.8.23*

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<https://www.cnn.com > 2025 > 01 > 26 > climate > trump-environmental-justice-rural-poor-communities > index.html>

Trump's gutting of federal DEI programs will hit rural poor communities ...

Jan 26, 2025 \$2.5m for a safe room for students and staff in Danville, Arkansas, an economically disadvantaged rural community with no school tornado shelter, in a county where a deadly historic long-track ...

Earthjustice

<https://earthjustice.org > press > 2025 > ceq-eviscerates-nepa-communities-pay-the-price>

CEQ Eviscerates NEPA, Communities Pay the Price

San Francisco, CA — . Today, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) eliminated all of the rules that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the foundational law that protects people and the environment by requiring the federal government to consider and disclose the environmental consequences of its decisions. NEPA often provides the only opportunity for ...

Sierra Club <https://www.sierraclub.org > press-releases > 2025 > 02 > trump-administration-moves-gut-bedrock-environmental-protection>

Trump Administration Moves to Gut Bedrock Environmental Protection

Washington, DC - The Trump administration has taken steps to throw out 50 years worth of rules implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental safeguard designed to protect **communities** and give them a voice in federal permitting decisions.. The

expected rule, called "Removal of National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations," would rescind all ...

NCCC PROJECTS

– Disaster Services

- Preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. Clear debris, mucking and gutting, rebuild, coordinate volunteers, manage distribution centers, survey, rebuild homes.

– Environmental Stewardship

- Tradition of 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps. Projects help preserve/enhance natural resources. Trail development, habitat restoration, plant trees, remove invasive vegetation, restore national park monuments.

– Infrastructure Improvement

- Contribute to the safety and well-being of community. Repair and build structures, improve facilities and services, paint house numbers on curbs for easier location by emergency personnel.

– Urban and Rural Development

- Address special needs, improve the quality of life for the citizens. Support homeless shelters, build playgrounds, revitalize neighborhoods.

– Energy Conservation

- Promote energy efficient practices. Provide energy efficiency assessments, install energy efficient appliances and light bulbs, develop recycling programs, provide educational programming.



FEMA Corps

FEMA Corps is a full-time, team-based service program for young adults to travel the country and serve communities impacted by disasters. Members receive benefits, training, and potential job opportunities with **FEMA** after completing the program.

- **[FEMA Corps Fact Sheet 2024](#)**

[FEMA Corps is a partnership between FEMA and the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps program. FEMA Corps is a unique, team-based service program that gives young adults the opportunity to serve communities impacted by disasters while gaining valuable federal work and emergency management experience. The FEMA Corps program provides ...](#)

Do not know current status. sdc

[Maude's Ventures](#)

[Introducing the Young Founders Program Empowering young entrepreneurs to bring innovative dementia care solutions to life. Empowering the Next Generation of Innovators We believe brilliant ideas know no age. The Young Founders Program is designed to nurture the next generation of dementia care pionee...](#)

Introducing the
Young Founders Program
 \$2,500 grants to high school, college students, and recent grads to kickstart your venture!
 maudesventures.org



maudesventures.org

[Maude's Ventures](#)

[Calling all young entrepreneurs! We're excited to announce the launch of the Maude's Ventures Young Founders Program. This new initiative is designed to empower the next generation of dementia care innovators, offering \\$2,500 grants to help turn your vision for better dementia care into reality! Visit our website and join our e-mail list to stay connected.](#)

<https://almanorfoundation.org/>

Building a Stronger Community Together

TAF provides a platform and opportunities for charitable giving and community improvement by supporting local nonprofits and initiatives.

Calling changemakers ages 13-23! Do you have an idea to change the world? Answer the **2025 Call For Kindness** and get the chance to win up to \$5,000 in funding for a project that inspires kindness and strengthens your local, national, or global community.

For more information, visit CallForKindness.org. Applications are open now through March 9 at 11:59pm ET

In addition to the **General Category** (28 awards), 10 awards will be given in the 2025 Special Category: **LGBTQIA+ Community Award**.

Awards will be given in the following 2025 Sponsored Categories:

- **A Kinder World for Animals Award** (3 projects)
- **Equity in Law Award** (up to 2 projects)
- **Civil Discourse & Connection Innovation Award** (1 project)
- **Yuriko Kikuchi Arigato Award** (1 project)



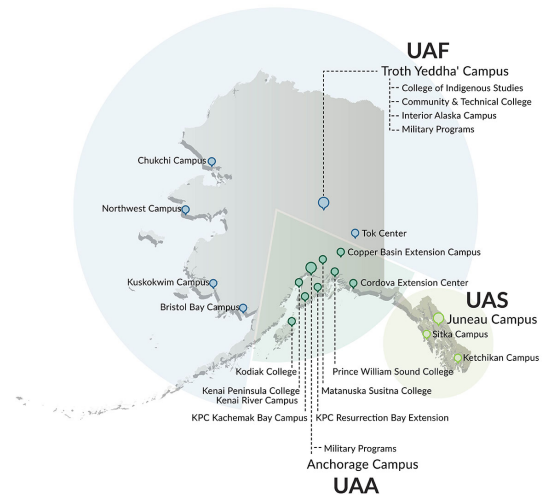


[TC Energy](#) [School is expensive – we want to help!](#)

In 5 quick questions, find out if you qualify for our STEM, Trades and Indigenous Scholarship.

[We are excited to have over 860 scholarships available this year valued at up to C\\$5,000 each. ... tcenergy.com](#)

[Our 2025 Scholarships are back!](#)



The University of Alaska is a land-, sea- and space-grant system of higher education established in 1917.

The UA system's three universities (UAA, UAF and UAS) are separately accredited institutions with [campuses](#) and extended learning centers across the state of Alaska.

Mosaic is a national grantmaking initiative that supports connection, alignment, and scaled action to win key environmental victories throughout the U.S. In 2025, Mosaic will fund movement-building efforts—collaborative projects, coalitions, networks, etc.—designed to fill critical movement infrastructure gaps within U.S.-based climate, conservation, environmental health, and justice movements, with a focus on those aimed at building bridges to scale influence.

Learn more

Lunar eclipse 2025: When is it and where are the best places in Nevada to view it ([rgj.com](#)) — Nevada, including Reno, is gearing up for a total lunar eclipse on March 13, 2025. Prime stargazing spots near Reno, such as Pyramid Lake and Lake Tahoe, offer dark skies for viewing this celestial event, known as a 'blood moon'.

Sixth State of the Union Address Ulysses S. Grant December 7, 1874

Extracts:

“Since the convening of Congress one year ago the nation has undergone a prostration in business and industries such as has not been witnessed with us for many years. Speculation as to the causes for this prostration might be indulged in without profit, because as many theories would be advanced as there would be independent writers--those who expressed their own views without borrowing--upon the subject. Without indulging in theories as to the cause of this prostration, therefore, I will call your attention only to the fact, and to some plain questions as to which it would seem there should be no disagreement.” (*Grand discussion of capital and labor*).

Discussion of affairs with other countries. Major discussion of birth, naturalization, etc

“From a report upon the condition of the business before the American and Mexican Joint Claims Commission, made by the agent on the part of the United States, and dated October 28, 1874, it appears that of the 1,017 claims filed on the part of citizens of the United States, 483 had been finally decided and 75 were in the hands of the umpire, leaving 462 to be disposed of; and of the 998 claims filed against the United States, 726 had been finally decided, I was before the umpire, and 271 remained to be disposed of. Since the date of such report other claims have been disposed of, reducing somewhat the number still pending; and others have been passed upon by the arbitrators. It has become apparent, in view of these figures and of the fact that the work devolving on the umpire is particularly laborious, that the commission will be unable to dispose of the entire number of claims pending prior to the 1st day of February, 1875--the date fixed for its expiration. Negotiations are pending looking to the securing of the results of the decisions which have been reached and to a further extension of the commission for a limited time, which it is confidently hoped will suffice to bring all the business now before it to a final close.”

(Ed note: The American and Mexican Joint Claims Commission was decommissioned in 1946 - 72 years after it was supposed to have ended - in order to create the Indian Claims Commission which was purported to accept claims for five years (1951) and then try those claims in a quasi-judicial court for five more (1956).....cases from both Commissions were transferred to the “regular” court system and some remain active today (2025). What everyone got was The Indian Termination Act.)

“Education of the people entitled to exercise the right of franchise I regard essential to general prosperity everywhere, and especially so in republics, where birth, education, or previous condition does not enter into account in giving suffrage. Next to the public school, the post-office is the great agent of education over our vast territory.”

“The attention of Congress is invited to the report of the Secretary of the Interior and to the legislation asked for by him. The domestic interests of the people are more intimately connected with this Department than with either of the other Departments of Government. Its duties have been added to from time to time until they have become so onerous that without the most perfect system and order it will be impossible for any Secretary of the Interior to keep trace of all official transactions having his sanction and done in his name, and for which he is held personally responsible.”

The policy adopted for the management of Indian affairs, known as the peace policy, has been adhered to with most beneficial results. It is confidently hoped that a few years more will relieve our frontiers from danger of Indian depredations.”

I commend the recommendation of the Secretary for the extension of the homestead laws to the Indians and for some sort of Territorial government for the Indian Territory. A great majority of the Indians occupying this Territory are believed yet to be incapable of maintaining their rights against the more civilized and enlightened white man. Any Territorial form of government given them, therefore, should protect them in their homes and property for a period of at least twenty years, and before its final adoption should be ratified by a majority of those affected.

The report of the Secretary of the Interior herewith attached gives much interesting statistical information, which I abstain from giving an abstract of, but refer you to the report itself.”

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**Seventh State of the Union Address**

**Ulysses S. Grant**

**December 7, 1875**

“In submitting my seventh annual message to Congress, in this centennial year of our national existence as a free and independent people, it affords me great pleasure to recur to the advancement that has been made from the time of the colonies, one hundred years ago. We were then a people numbering only 3,000,000. Now we number more than 40,000,000. Then industries were confined almost exclusively to the tillage of the soil. Now manufactories absorb much of the labor of the country.

“Our liberties remain unimpaired; the bondmen have been freed from slavery; we have become possessed of the respect, if not the friendship, of all civilized nations. Our progress has been great in all the arts--in science, agriculture, commerce, navigation, mining, mechanics, law, medicine, etc.; and in general education the progress is likewise encouraging. Our thirteen States have become thirty-eight, including Colorado (which has taken the initiatory steps to become a State), and eight Territories, including the Indian Territory and Alaska, and excluding Colorado, making a territory extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the south we have extended to the Gulf of Mexico, and in the west from the Mississippi to the Pacific.

“The discovery of gold in the Black Hills, a portion of the Sioux Reservation, has had the effect to induce a large emigration of miners to that point. Thus far the effort to protect the treaty rights of the Indians to that section has been successful, but the next year will certainly witness a large increase of such emigration. The negotiations for the relinquishment of the gold fields having failed, it will be necessary for Congress to adopt some measures to relieve the embarrassment growing out of the causes named. The Secretary of the Interior suggests that the supplies now appropriated for the sustenance of that people, being no longer obligatory under the treaty of 1868, but simply a gratuity, may be issued or withheld at his discretion.”

“The condition of the Indian Territory, to which I have referred in several of my former annual messages, remains practically unchanged. The Secretary of the Interior has taken measures to obtain a full report of the condition of that Territory, and will make it the subject of a special report at an early day. It may then be necessary to make some further recommendation in regard to legislation for the government of that Territory.”

“The method for the treatment of the Indians adopted at the beginning of my first term has been steadily pursued, and with satisfactory and encouraging results. It has been productive of evident improvement in the condition of that race, and will be continued, with only such modifications as further experience may indicate to be necessary.”

<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5026/pg5026-images.html#dec1875>

*Again, this SOS/SOU contains so many fascinating tendrils, that I urge you to read the complete address which really begins to document the transition from “The Age of Agriculture” to the “Age of Industrialization”. We are now in the “Age of Information”, so the retrospect is valuable, especially since many of the laws under which we now operate come from this period, 1870’s to turn of the century. sdc*