



State of Nevada

Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources

State Environmental Commission [sec.nv.gov](http://sec.nv.gov)

901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001 -- Carson City, Nevada 89701-5249

## SEC Appeal Hearing

Notice Pursuant to NRS 233B.121 and NAC 445B.891

Date: May 01, 2012

To: Appellants:  
Clean Desert Foundation, Inc. & Robert Hannum  
Represented by Robert Dolan, Esq.

Richard Cook, Pro Se

Respondent:  
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection  
Represented by Cassandra Joseph, Esq.  
Office of the Attorney General

Intervener:  
Recology LLC  
Represented by John Frankovich, Esq. & Debbie A. Leonard, Esq.  
McDonald Carano Wilson, LLP

From: John B. Walker, Executive Secretary

Subject: Appeal Hearing: Jungo Landfill, Final Solid Waste Permit  
SW495REV00

A three-member panel of the State Environmental Commission (SEC) has scheduled an appeal hearing on the above referenced permit. The hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, May 21, 2012 and continue if needed on Tuesday, May 22, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. in Carson City, Nevada at the Bryan Building, 901 South Stewart St., 2nd floor Tahoe Conference Room. Each appellant's appeal has been consolidated into one hearing pursuant to NAC 445B.8957. In addition, on March 26, 2012, Dolan Law LLC on behalf of appellant Robert Hannum filed a Notice of Appearance in the appeal proceedings.

The SEC has jurisdiction to hear this appeal pursuant to NRS 444.560 and NAC 444.980. The Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) sections involved in this appeal are: NRS 444.440, NRS 444.560, NRS 445A.305, NRS 445A.415, NAC 444.629, NAC 444.6435, NAC 444.6769, NAC

444.678, NAC 444.6785, NAC 444.679, NAC 444.6795, NAC 444.681, NAC 444.683, NAC 444.6887, NAC 444.6894, , NAC 444.696 and NAC 444.7484.

### **About the Appeal**

As way of background, Recology proposes to develop a Class I municipal solid waste landfill near Winnemucca, Nevada. The proposed landfill is located about 25 miles west of the city of Winnemucca, Nevada along the south side of Jungo Road and adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad. The total surface area of the site is approximately 634 acres; the proposed landfill “footprint” would be about 560 acres, and the landfill would not accept hazardous wastes.

The landfill is proposed as a regional disposal site serving portions of northern California, which generally include the nine counties that make up the San Francisco Bay Area. Recology notes that wastes generated in Humboldt County and other counties in northern Nevada could also use the disposal facility. The proposed landfill would receive about 4,000 tons of waste per day for up to 100 years. The waste would be shipped by rail from northern California to Nevada. Details about the permitting process, including significant documents, maps and photos are available at: <http://ndep.nv.gov/bwm/jungo.htm>

The permit application which is the subject of this appeal was filed with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) in March 2008 and is known as the Jungo Landfill Application. NDEP issued Solid Waste Permit SW495REV00 to Recology on February 29, 2012. This final decision was subsequently appealed to the SEC on March 9, 2012 in separate appeals by Clean Desert Foundation, Robert Hannum, and Richard Cook.

### **Appeal Issues Presented**

Appellant Cook presents the following issues in his appeal: (1) NDEP acted arbitrarily and against the rule of law when the agency determined that the site is not susceptible to inundation and is frequently within 1000 feet of a body of water; (2) NDEP capriciously reduced the 100 feet to groundwater requirement by 70%; (3) NDEP ignored the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soils report regarding the stated inadequacies of the soils for landfill construction and borrow material; and (4) NDEP relied exclusively on Recology’s biased construction design, calculations, testing materials and results.

Appellant Hannum presents the following issues in his appeal: NDEP is in violation of the Clean Water Act, Section 402 and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System for issuance of a permit allowing toxic contamination of community well water. Evidence has not been brought forth

to ensure toxic liquids would not be discharged into the aquifer, nor was proper procedures presented that would render the aquifer safe for consumption.

Appellant Clean Desert Foundation lists the following grounds for appeal which are summarized as follows:

1. The permit was granted in violation of the declaration of state policy contained in NRS 444.440.
2. The permit violates the goals found in NRS 445A.305(1) and violates the state policy found in NRS 445A.305(2)(a) and (b). The permit fails to protect the quality of water consistent with the public health and enjoyment versus the minimal “economic development” from the landfill operation.
3. The leachate that will be released by the landfill unduly threatens the aquifer that is directly under the landfill site. The “dry-tomb” technology contemplated by the permit fails to protect the state waters because this technology will fail and the landfill leachate will contaminate the aquifer beneath the site. The life of the landfill site and the post closure risks exceeds the expected timeline of effectiveness of the double liners. The aquifer will be poisoned by the leachate, which is comprised of chemicals, herbicides and heavy metals. Moreover, the design criterion for the liner fails to comply with the requirements of NAC 444.681.
4. NDEP’s approval of the variance from the 100 foot distance from the uppermost aquifer to the location of the landfill site is an abuse of discretion, is arbitrary and capricious, and violates NAC 444.678(2) and (9). The location of a Class I site must prevent pollutants and contaminants from the landfill site from degrading water of the state as per NAC 444.678, and the permit fails in this regard.
5. NDEP’s approval of the variance from the 1000 foot distance of any surface water from the landfill site violates NAC 444.678(9) and is an abuse of discretion, and/or is arbitrary and capricious. The historical record shows the landfill site is prone to regular ponding and/or flooding, which often results in substantial amount of surface water being closer than the 1000 feet distance, if not at the landfill site itself.
6. The quality of soil at the site is poor for constructing berms. The soil intended as ground cover is inadequate to meet the “workable and compactible” requirement under NAC 444.678(4). Fairy shrimp have been located near the landfill site which means it is prone to flooding and/or substantial intermittent precipitation. The design elements of

the landfill for directing and diverting groundwater flows through berms and trenches fail to adequately account for the considerable “ponding” that occurs on the playa, leaving the landfill subject to inevitable movement of water into the trash cells above the liners.

7. The permit has failed to adequately protect the beauty of the Nevada desert in violation of NRS 444.440(5).
8. The permit fails to adequately address the frequency of seismic activity and/or earthquakes due to deep geothermal drilling activity in the vicinity of the landfill site. NDEP apparently relied on a study that predated the geothermal activity in the area.
9. The permit inadequately considers the effects of substantial wind gusts that may have adverse consequences to local landowners by spreading noxious orders and/or unhealthy particulate matter through the air and surface water in the region.
10. The permit does not adequately consider the likelihood that lightning will regularly strike the landfill site and that lightning strikes will substantially reduce the effectiveness of any proposed environmental safety methods.
11. NDEP failed to adequately protect the ownership rights of the public to the underground water.
12. The groundwater monitoring programming under NRS 444.560 and NAC 444.683 is inadequate. It does not meet the obligation of NAC 444.7484(2) or (3). The post closure monitoring period of 25 to 30 years is too short. Future generations will be left with a massive liability in dealing with a new “superfund” site caused by damaged/polluted ground water. Moreover, the financial guarantee required is also insufficient.

**Hearing Procedure:** Practice before the SEC is governed by the attached regulations found at NAC 445B.875 et seq. The online version is located at: <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NAC/NAC-445B.html#NAC445BSec875>. NRS 233B.121 to 233B.150 are also applicable.

**Related Information:** Additional information about this appeal is available on the State Environmental Commission’s website at the following location: [http://www.sec.nv.gov/main/jungo\\_landfill.htm](http://www.sec.nv.gov/main/jungo_landfill.htm)

ecc: NDEP Staff  
SEC Appeals Panel

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## Practice before the State Environmental Commission

### **NAC 445B.875 Definitions. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. As used in NAC 445B.875 to 445B.899, inclusive, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in NAC 445B.877 to 445B.884, inclusive, have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.

2. The meanings ascribed to words not included in NAC 445B.877 to 445B.884, inclusive, are in accordance with applicable sections of NAC governing air quality, water pollution or solid waste management and of chapters 444, 445A and 445B of NRS.

**NAC 445B.877 “Appellant” defined. (NRS 233B.050)** “Appellant” means any person:

1. Who requests a hearing before the Commission, pursuant to chapter 278, 444, 444A, 445A, 445B, 459, 486A or 519A of NRS or the Commission’s regulations concerning the control of air or water pollution or the management of solid waste; or

2. Whose appearance before the Commission is required by:

(a) The Director;

(b) An authorized representative of the Director; or

(c) A person who is designated by or pursuant to a county or city ordinance or a regional agreement or regulation to enforce local ordinances or regulations for the control of air pollution.

**NAC 445B.879 “Commission” defined. (NRS 233B.050)** “Commission” means the State Environmental Commission or a panel of three or more members of the State Environmental Commission in accordance with NRS 445A.610 and 445B.350, where appropriate.

**NAC 445B.881 “Department” defined. (NRS 233B.050)** “Department” means the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

**NAC 445B.882 “Director” defined. (NRS 233B.050)** “Director” means the Director of the Department.

**NAC 445B.884 “Person” defined. (NRS 233B.050)** “Person” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 445B.150.

**NAC 445B.886 Petitions to adopt, file, amend or repeal regulations. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. Any interested person may petition the Commission in writing for the adoption, filing, amendment or repeal of any regulation and shall accompany his petition with relevant data, views and arguments as required by form 1.\*

2. Upon submission of a petition, the Commission will within 30 days either deny the petition in writing stating its reasons or initiate regulation-making proceedings in accordance with NRS 444.560, 445A.435 or 445B.215, whichever is applicable.

\*(See adopting agency for form.)

**NAC 445B.888 Declaratory orders, advisory opinions. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. Any member of the public may petition the Commission for a declaratory order or an advisory opinion as to the applicability of any statutory provision, Commission regulation or decision as required by form 2.\*

2. Upon submission of a petition, the Commission will within 30 days issue a declaratory order or an advisory opinion in writing stating reasons for its action.

\*(See adopting agency for form.)

**NAC 445B.890 Request for hearing. (NRS 233B.050)** Any person requesting a hearing before the Commission concerning a final decision of the Department may do so by filing a request, within 10 days after notice of the action of the Department, on form 3\* with the State Environmental Commission, 901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001, Carson City, Nevada 89701-5249.

\*(See adopting agency for form.)

**NAC 445B.891 Notice of hearing. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. The Secretary of the Commission will schedule a hearing to be held within 20 days after receipt of the request for a hearing or an order to appear before the Commission.

2. All of the parties must be notified by registered or certified mail of the date thereof which must be no less than 5 days after the date of notification. The notice must include:

(a) A statement of the time, place and nature of hearing;

(b) A statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held;

(c) A reference to the particular sections of NRS and NAC allegedly violated; and

(d) A brief and concise statement of the matters asserted or the issues involved.

**NAC 445B.8915 Intervention in certain proceedings. (NRS 233B.050, 445B.210)**

1. A person, other than a party to a proceeding, who believes that he may be directly and substantially affected by the proceeding may request an order to intervene in the proceeding by filing a written petition for leave to intervene with the Commission.

2. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Commission not later than 10 calendar days after the notice of appeal related to the proceeding in which the intervention is sought is filed with the Commission pursuant to the provisions of NRS 445B.340. The petitioner shall serve a notice of a petition for leave to intervene upon each party to the proceeding. A party may file a response to the petition within 5 calendar days after receipt of the petition. If a petitioner files a petition for leave to intervene with the Commission after the period prescribed in this subsection, the petition must set forth the reason for the delay in filing the petition. The petition for leave to intervene must:

- (a) Identify the proceeding in which the petitioner requests leave to intervene;
- (b) Set forth the name and address of the petitioner and, if the petitioner is represented by an attorney or other authorized person, the name, address and telephone number of the attorney or other authorized person;
- (c) Contain a clear and concise statement of the direct and substantial interest of the petitioner in the proceeding;
- (d) Set forth the manner in which the petitioner will be affected by the proceeding; and
- (e) Include a statement indicating whether or not the petitioner intends to present evidence in the proceeding.

3. If a petition for leave to intervene demonstrates a direct and substantial interest in the subject matter of the proceeding or any part of the proceeding and does not unreasonably broaden the issues or prejudice any party to the proceeding, the Commission may grant leave to intervene or otherwise appear and participate in the proceeding with respect to the matters set forth in the petition.

4. If it appears during a proceeding that an intervener has no direct or substantial interest in the proceeding or that the public interest does not require his participation in the proceeding, the Commission may dismiss the intervener from the proceeding.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n by R227-03, eff. 4-20-2004)

**NAC 445B.892 Subpoenas. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. Subpoenas to compel attendance of any person at a hearing or to require the production of books, records or other documents may be issued by the Commission.

2. Requests for the issuance of subpoenas must be made to the Commission in writing no less than 5 days prior to the hearing date, setting forth the reason and necessity for the subpoenas. Upon good cause shown, subpoenas may be issued at the request of any party to the hearing at any time. The Commission may issue any subpoenas on its own initiative without request.

3. All costs incident to subpoenas issued at the request of appellant must be borne by the appellant. The Commission may demand payment of those costs prior to the issuance of the subpoenas.

**NAC 445B.8925 Briefs. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. The Commission may, upon its motion or a motion by a party, order briefs to be filed before or after a hearing and shall prescribe the period during which the briefs must be filed.

2. Each brief must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of service or a certificate of mailing for all parties.

**NAC 445B.893 Panels to conduct certain hearings; decision of panel. (NRS 233B.050)** Three or more members of the Commission constitute a proper panel, where appropriate, in accordance with NRS 445A.610 and 445B.350, and a majority of those present must concur in any decision. The decision will be in writing and is a public record.

**NAC 445B.894 Change in time or place of hearing; informal disposition of matter. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. Upon good cause shown, the Commission may vacate and reset the time of hearing.

2. Upon good cause shown, the Commission may transfer the place of hearing to a more appropriate location, taking into consideration the convenience and fairness to the witnesses and the parties.

3. Unless otherwise provided by law, informal disposition may be made by all involved parties at any time of any contested case or matter.

**NAC 445B.895 Appearance of parties; procedure at hearing. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. The parties may appear in person and may be represented by counsel. All testimony must be given under oath and recorded verbatim pursuant to the provisions of NAC 445B.897.

2. The Commission:

(a) Will determine the order of the presentation of evidence; and

(b) May limit the time and scope of the examination of witnesses and disallow repetitive testimony.

3. Hearings are open to the public until such time as confidential information, within the meaning of chapter 445B of NRS or applicable sections of this chapter or chapter 445A of NAC, is admitted to the record, at which time the hearing will be closed.

**NAC 445B.8953 Conduct at hearing; maintenance of order. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. A person who appears in a proceeding shall conform to the recognized standards of ethical and courteous conduct as determined by the Commission. All parties to a hearing, their counsel and the spectators shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner.

2. The Commission may take any action which it determines is necessary to maintain order during a hearing, including, without limitation:

(a) Excluding a party or his attorney or authorized representative from the hearing;

(b) Excluding a witness from the hearing; and

(c) Limiting the taking of testimony and presentation of evidence during the hearing.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n by R227-03, eff. 4-20-2004)

**NAC 445B.8957 Consolidation of proceedings. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. The Commission may consolidate two or more proceedings if it appears that the issues are substantially the same and the rights of the parties will not be prejudiced by the consolidation.

2. At a consolidated hearing, the Commission will determine the order in which the parties introduce evidence and present testimony.

3. If two or more parties have substantially similar interests and positions, the Commission may, at any time during the hearing, limit the number of witnesses who will be allowed to testify.

**NAC 445B.896 Findings of Commission. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission may take the case under submission and will notify the appellant and any other party to the hearing of its findings and recommendations in writing within 30 days after the date of the hearing.

2. Final recommendations will be in writing and will separately state findings of fact and conclusions of law. Findings of fact and recommendations will be based upon substantial evidence. Findings of fact will include a concise statement of the evidentiary facts supporting the findings.

**NAC 445B.897 Record of hearing. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. Each hearing must be recorded electronically. An electronic recording of the hearing must be made available for inspection or copying. A party who requests a copy of an electronic recording must pay the cost to copy the recording.

2. In addition to the provisions of subsection 1, a party may request that a hearing be recorded by a court reporter who is certified pursuant to chapter 656 of NRS. A party who requests that a hearing be recorded by a court reporter must pay the costs relating to the services of the court reporter, including the cost charged by the court reporter for providing a transcript of the hearing.

[Environmental Comm'n, Practice Rule 7, eff. 1-7-73; A 4-3-74; A and renumbered as Rule 12, 1-9-76]—(Substituted in revision for NAC 445.992)

**NAC 445B.899 Petitions for reconsideration or rehearing. (NRS 233B.050)**

1. A petition for reconsideration must specifically:

(a) Identify each portion of the challenged decision which the petitioner deems to be unlawful, unreasonable, or based on erroneous conclusions of law or mistaken facts; and

(b) Cite those portions of the record, the law or the rules of the Commission which support the allegations in the petition. The petition may not contain additional evidentiary matter or require the submission or taking of evidence.

2. A petition for rehearing must:

(a) Allege that a decision is in error because of an incomplete or inaccurate record;

(b) Specifically set forth the nature and purpose of any additional evidence to be introduced; and

(c) Show that such evidence is not merely cumulative and could not have been introduced at the hearing.

3. A petition for reconsideration or rehearing of a decision must be served upon all parties of record within 15 days after the effective date of the decision.

4. An answer to a petition for reconsideration or rehearing may be filed with the Commission by any party of record in the proceeding within 5 days after the filing of the petition. The answer must be confined to the issues contained in the petition and served upon all parties of record. Proof of service must be attached to the answer.

5. The Commission will grant or deny a petition for reconsideration or rehearing within 10 days after the date of the filing of the petition. The denial of a petition may be on the record without a separate decision.

6. Unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, the filing of a petition for reconsideration or rehearing or the granting of such a petition does not excuse compliance with, or suspend the effectiveness of, the challenged decision.

7. If the Commission grants a petition for reconsideration, it will reexamine the record and decision with regard to the issues on which reconsideration was granted and issue a modified final decision or affirm its original decision within 20 days after the petition is granted.

8. If the Commission grants a petition for rehearing, it will, within 20 days thereafter, conduct a hearing to allow the parties to present additional evidence and will issue a modified final decision or affirm its original decision.

9. A modified final decision of the Commission issued upon reconsideration or rehearing will incorporate those portions of the original decision which are not changed by the modified final decision.

10. A modified final decision of the Commission or the affirmation of an original decision of the Commission is a final decision for the purposes of judicial review.

(Added to NAC by Environmental Comm'n, eff. 11-9-95)