

A Lake Mead’s worth of water has vanished from the ground. Could Las Vegas suffer?

ALAN HALALY

Las Vegas Review-Journal

The water beneath our feet that we use to bathe, drink and water crops is vanishing faster than ever in the Colorado River Basin, according to a new study. From Arizona State University researchers, the study of satellite images has found that an amount of water comparable to Lake Mead has been lost from the ground in the period studied from April 2002 to October 2024. That’s roughly twice as fast as water on the surface. For Jay Famiglietti, a study co-author who pioneered the practice of using satellites to study groundwater at ASU, the loss of 27.8 million acre-feet of groundwater should be a wake-up call for everyone from decision-makers to regular citizens who call the West home. “Groundwater is a trans-gener-

ational resource,” Famiglietti said. “If we want our great-great-great-grandchildren to eat, then it’s time to think more holistically about the water that we use and what kind of protection it needs.” While it’s true that Las Vegas relies on surface water from Lake Mead for 90% of its supply, that’s an increasingly limited resource it shares with six other states, Native American tribes and parts of Mexico. And the overuse of groundwater — especially highlighted in Arizona — could prove to be a major problem as conflicts between water users flare in the future, causing more of a reliance on Colorado River surface water. “Groundwater is key to our economic vitality,” Famiglietti said, “yet it remains sort of spottedly managed. Even where it is being managed, it’s unclear how effective the

management will be.” Spotlight on Arizona The worst offender, by far, is Arizona when it comes to Colorado River Basin states. Its \$1.4 billion agricultural industry is largely propped up by groundwater, and only 18% of the state’s groundwater is subject to regulation and management, according to the study. Under the state’s Groundwater Management Act of 1980, seven so-called “active management areas” exist in mostly urban areas, slowly weaning water users off of groundwater and onto surface water. The most recently designated one is the Wilcox basin east of Tucson, which officials approved last December. A huge help to that mission came with the completion of the Central

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Honor rolls

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Marlee Rupert  
Lily Rutherford  
Jessica Zimmerman  
Anabella Bernabe  
Isabel Foraker  
Gabriel Gorley  
Carrington Leeds  
Makenna Meek  
Jonathan Robledo Salinas  
Maya Rutherford

**Honor Roll**  
Irene Fernandez Calderon  
Trinity Burns  
Sunny Canto Torres  
Brayden Magana  
Teon Rex  
Elvis Mendoza  
Cane Wheeler  
Brianna Shaffer  
Hayden Bates  
Jonathan Council  
Alyah Fritz  
Sophia Gullick  
Logan Hodges  
Jonathan Huerta  
Amelia Rodriguez  
Ke’Shawn Hayes  
Destiny Peyton  
Jaryiah Brown  
Brian Roman Rios  
Katelin Shaffer  
Kendra Caron  
Khale Rexwinkle  
Cavin Shuplowsky  
Samuel Shufeldt  
Bennett Thompson  
Bailey Mulkey  
Jaylee Sanders  
Domingo Andres Esteban  
Kaitlyn Kinney  
Mary Michelle Leaf Sanchez  
Joshua Slavin  
Skyla Voris  
Karly Wintjen  
Carlos Miguel Francisco  
Jake Sykes  
Melissa Escudero  
Wrenn Lunt  
Sophie Felix  
Brody Foster  
Mary River Dione Sanchez  
Lincoln Tatman  
Carsten Voss  
Avery Sells  
Zoey Whitley  
Natalie Rex  
Dakota Davis  
Jocelynn Scott  
Isaiah Brown  
Angel Aragon  
Melisa Frazier  
Sena Ponce  
Andrew Raper  
Rylin Richardson  
Kaylor Fox  
Payton Moore  
Munim Skider  
Alyx Chenault  
Lillian Hanna  
Layla Manley  
Macy Miller  
Elija Hogan  
Landyn Scott

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Macy Miller  
Elija Hogan  
Landyn Scott

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David Felipe  
Courtney Payden  
Melanie Ramirez  
Gabriel Thornbrugh  
Wyatt Ditmore  
Alexzander Morris  
Melany Escudero  
Jeremiah Council  
Aaron Reyes  
Brooklyn White  
Keiton Jones  
Lauren Lee  
Madison Powell  
Kilian Reck  
Maria Andres Andres  
Candi Andres Esteban  
Taylor Caron  
Randalyn Crowe  
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Danna Habana  
Tre’Shaun Clemons  
Lillian Noland  
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Amelia Alvarado  
Christian Matias Felipe  
Andrea Bennett  
Tristan McGlothlin  
Maia O’Connell  
Daira Carbajal  
Haylie Kendall  
Dayra Dominguez-Ensald  
Charli Gath  
Hurley McFall  
Devlin Remarry  
Tylan Rosson

Elise Stout  
Colton Williamson  
Michael Caldwell  
Nayelli Rivera Rodriguez  
Aubrey Battaglear  
Alexei Carter  
Tomas Gaspar Bartolo  
Yonie Hernandez Alvarado  
Julia Solorzano  
Rosa Cerda  
Elijah Chapman  
Juana Alonzo Domingo  
Magdalena Andres de Andres  
Juan Franco  
Tordi Hernandez Alvarado  
Silas Gonzalez

Mercedes Nash  
Kei’Asian Riley  
Dominic Holloway  
Freddy Cornejo Williams  
Asher Dumm  
Ryann Flores  
Tyler Thompson  
Erin Bagley  
Westen Kühn  
Serafina O’Connell  
Kimberly Velasquez-Lazo  
James Wagner  
Axel Cornett  
Makenzie Jones  
Tristan Lewis  
Alana Mark  
Caitlyn Warren

Beach Boys mastermind

Con’t from Page 4

His onetime band recorded terrible singles without him. (“Kokomo,” anyone?) He gained and lost tremendous amounts of weight, recorded beautiful music that record companies ignored. Finally, in the mid-1990s, he escaped the clutches of Landy and married Melinda. He began a solo career in earnest, recruiting a band of fresh-faced musicians from LA and Chicago. He completed the abandoned Beach Boys art-pop project “Smile.” He recorded “That Lucky Old Sun,” a fizzy concept album about California. And the formerly stage-averse musician toured the globe, playing masterpieces such as “Pet Sounds” in their entirety. I hopped aboard in the mid-’90s, as a high-school age fan. I watched as Wilson picked himself up, dusted himself off, and embarked upon this second act. He inspired me. I’m anxious by nature, sometimes high strung and fearful. Even today, I find myself randomly fretting about a potential interview or column. Yet any challenges I face surely pale compared with his. As bandmate Darian Sahanaja told Variety, Wilson “suffered nearly every day of his life in a struggle to find a little bit of peace and love.” That’s a hell of a burden. The other lesson that Wilson taught me was this. You may face unimaginable challenges. You might get knocked down time and again. Yet you can push forward and create work of worth and importance. Wilson’s late appearance sometimes drew scorn from those who didn’t understand his story or diagnoses. But that didn’t stop him. He still recorded and performed his music, still put his beating heart out there for the public to see. In a way, that’s what I try to do here with my columns, what I encourage others to do when they write.

We all face obstacles. Sometimes those obstacles take a chunk out of us along the way. But that’s no reason to be silent. Indeed, that’s all the reason to speak and sing more loudly. That’s all the more reason to seek connection where we can, joining our voices into a powerful chorus. Wilson managed that even in death. After he died, both President Donald Trump and California Gov. Gavin Newsom issued statements. The two men have been at odds over protests in Los Angeles, but they managed to agree on this. “Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys was a true Musical genius, right up there with the greatest, EVER,” Trump posted on his Truth Social account. “Jennifer and I join the world in mourning the death of Brian Wilson, a musical genius and California icon,” Newsom wrote in a statement. Perhaps we should just send the two men to a Beach Boys concert and see if they can work things out. Just an idea. Wilson’s music has been a vital part of my life for three decades. I was lucky to interview him, to meet him briefly, and to come to know members of his touring band. They followed his example of spreading love through music. Some will join former Beach Boys Al Jardine on the road this summer, playing some of Wilson’s more obscure works. Sadly, they don’t have any Kansas dates booked at the moment. Brian Wilson has died. But not his music. And not his example of persisting and caring, no matter what. Love and mercy to you all.

Clay Wirestone is Kansas Reflector opinion editor. Through its opinion section, Kansas Reflector works to amplify the voices of people who are affected by public policies or excluded from public debate.



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### Helpful Tips

**Types of firepits for your backyard oasis**


Outdoor entertaining areas are popular among homeowners, and firepits are one of the most sought-after additions to such spaces. In fact, a 2016 survey from the American Society of Landscape Architects found that fireplaces and firepits were the most popular outdoor design element in 2016. Various styles are available to homeowners who want to add firepits to their backyards, and choosing the right type may come down to budget, the amount of yard space available or even personal preference. · Wood firepit: As their name suggests, wood firepits burn wood, which may appeal to homeowners who already have wood-burning fireplaces inside their homes. Because they don’t require homeowners to tap into gas


### Helpful Tips

lines, wood firepits are generally easy to set up and install, and many homeowners prefer the aesthetic appeal of crackling wood and flames that’s synonymous with wood firepits. · Gas firepit: Gas firepits are touted for their convenience, as they don’t require homeowners to carry wood and build fires. Upon being connected to a gas source, gas firepits provide fire at the click of a switch. Gas firepits are also appreciated for their safety, as there is little or no risk that flames from gas firepits will grow too large and become difficult to control. · Gas fire tables: Gas fire tables might be ideal for those homeowners whose sense of decor favors more modern looks. Gas fire tables come in a variety of shapes and sizes and, like gas firepits, there’s no need to struggle with lighting a fire or carrying firewood. · Tabletop firepits: Homeowners, condominium or apartment dwellers with limited backyard space may want to consider the convenience of tabletop firepits. Restaurants may use tabletop firepits in their outdoor seating areas because they provide warmth and ambiance without taking up much space. Tabletop firepits fueled by gas will not need to be connected to a gas source, which may appeal to consumers who want something that’s simple as well as small. · Fire urns: While they might not technically qualify as firepits, fire urns provide a similar effect as firepits. Fire urns are typically gas-powered and may be an ideal choice for homeowners who are looking for a unique, awe-inspiring feature for their outdoor entertaining areas.

**Did you know?**

It can be easy to forget to apply sunscreen when a sunny summer day beckons you to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors. But forgetting to apply sunscreen before spending time in the sun is a potentially deadly mistake. According to the World Health Organization, one in every three cancers diagnosed is a skin cancer. In addition, the Skin Cancer Foundation notes that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70. The discomfort of a sunburn might seem relatively harmless, but the relationship between sunburns and cancer risk is significant. The SCF notes that having five or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma, a type of skin cancer that often and quickly spreads to nearby lymph nodes. Perhaps that’s one reason why the American Cancer Society reports that the number of new invasive melanoma cases diagnosed annually increased by 47 percent between 2010 and 2020. Avoiding sunburn by applying and reapplying a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 should be a priority for anyone spending time outdoors.





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