

1 GORDON H. DePAOLI, NSB# 195  
2 DALE E. FERGUSON, NSB# 4986  
3 Woodburn and Wedge  
4 6100 Neil Road, Suite 500  
5 Reno, Nevada 89511  
6 Telephone: 775/688-3000  
7 Email: gdepaoli@woodburnandwedge.com

8 Attorneys for Walker River Irrigation District

9 **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
10 **FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

11 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

12 Plaintiff,

13 WALKER RIVER PAIUTE TRIBE,

14 Plaintiff-Intervenor,

15 v.

16 WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT,  
17 a corporation, et al.,

18 Defendants.

19 MINERAL COUNTY,

20 Plaintiff-Intervenor,

21 v.

22 WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT, et  
23 al.,

24 Defendants.

) IN EQUITY NO. C-125-MMD  
) Subproceeding: 3:73-cv-00128-MMD-CSD  
)

) **WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION**  
) **DISTRICT'S ANSWER TO SECOND**  
) **AMENDED COMPLAINT IN**  
) **INTERVENTION OF MINERAL**  
) **COUNTY, NEVADA**  
)

25  
26 The Walker River Irrigation District (“District”) hereby answers the Second Amended  
27 Complaint in Intervention of Mineral County, filed herein on June 30, 2021 (“the Second  
28 Amended Complaint”) as follows:

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

**PREFACE**

Mineral County states that the Second Amended Complaint “supplements” its Amended Complaint filed March 10, 1995, and further, that certain affidavits also filed March 10, 1995, are applicable to the Second Amended Complaint. Mineral County’s Second Amended Complaint supersedes its original Complaint and its original Amended Complaint. See *Hal Roach Studios Inc. v. Richard Finer and Co.* 896 F. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1542 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1990). In addition, the Court has not granted Mineral County permission to file a “Supplemental” pleading pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. Rule 15(d). Supplemental pleading is allowed solely for purposes of setting out transactions, occurrences, or events that happened after the date of the pleading to be supplemented. To the extent that any response is required to note 1 of the Second Amended Complaint, the District denies the allegations set forth in the March 10, 1995, Motion for Preliminary Injunction and in its supporting affidavits.

**I.**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The allegations contained in paragraph 1 of the Second Amended Complaint consist of legal conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required, the District denies them.

**II.**

**PARTIES**

2. The District admits that Mineral County is a political subdivision of and duly established under the laws of the State of Nevada and that Walker Lake is within Mineral County. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the remaining allegations of paragraph 2, and on that basis, denies them.

3. The District admits that many of the Defendants are claimants to the waters of the Walker River and its tributaries by appropriation or, in California, also by virtue of riparian land ownership. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the remaining allegations of paragraph 3, and on that basis, denies them.

1 **III.**

2 **JURISDICTION**

3 4. The allegations contained in paragraph 4 of the Second Amended Complaint consist  
4 of legal conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required the  
5 District denies them.

6 **IV.**

7 **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

8 5. The District admits that Walker Lake is a desert terminus lake located in Mineral  
9 County, Nevada. The District denies the remaining allegations of paragraph 5.

10 6. The District admits that the Walker River is an interstate stream. The District is  
11 without sufficient information to admit or deny the remaining allegations of paragraph 6, and on  
12 that basis, denies them.

13 7. The District admits that the Lahontan cutthroat trout is listed as threatened under the  
14 federal Endangered Species Act. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the  
15 remaining allegations of paragraph 7, and on that basis, denies them.

16 8. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
17 paragraph 8, and on that basis, denies them.

18 9. The District denies the allegations of paragraph 9.

19 10. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
20 paragraph 10, and on that basis, denies them.

21 11. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
22 paragraph 11, and on that basis, denies them.

23 12. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
24 paragraph 12, and on that basis denies, them.

25 13. In response to paragraph 13, the District admits that as the volume of Walker Lake  
26 decreased, its salinity and total dissolved solids increased.

27 14. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
28 paragraph 14, and on that basis, denies them.

1 15. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
2 paragraph 15, and on that basis, denies them.

3 16. The District is without sufficient information to admit or deny the allegations of  
4 paragraph 16, and on that basis, denies them.

5 17. The District denies the allegations of paragraph 17.

6 18. The District admits that the United States Congress has funded a program for  
7 acquisition of water rights for the benefit of Walker Lake. The District denies the remaining  
8 allegations of paragraph 18.

9 **V.**

10 **STATEMENT OF CLAIM**

11 19. The District realleges and reincorporates herein by reference each and every  
12 response contained in paragraphs 1 through 18 of its Answer to the Second Amended Complaint as  
13 if fully set forth herein.

14 20. The allegations of paragraph 20 of the Second Amended Complaint consist of legal  
15 conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required, the District  
16 denies them.

17 21. The allegations of paragraph 21 of the Second Amended Complaint consist of legal  
18 conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required, the District  
19 denies them.

20 22. The allegations of paragraph 22 of the Second Amended Complaint consist of legal  
21 conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required, the District  
22 denies them.

23 23. The allegations of paragraph 23 of the Second Amended Complaint consist of legal  
24 conclusions that do not require a response. To the extent that a response is required, the District  
25 denies them.

26 **AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES**

27 As and for affirmative defenses, the District asserts the following affirmative defenses  
28 subject to the development of evidence through discovery and at trial.

1 **First Affirmative Defense**

2 The Second Amended Complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

3 **Second Affirmative Defense**

4 The Court lacks jurisdiction over the Second Amended Complaint or to grant some of the  
5 remedies Mineral County seeks.

6 **Third Affirmative Defense**

7 Mineral County has failed to join necessary and indispensable parties.

8 **Fourth Affirmative Defense**

9 The District alleges that the relief Mineral County seeks in Paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 10 of its  
10 prayer for relief involve a reallocation of water rights adjudicated under the Decree and settled  
11 under the doctrine of prior appropriation and are therefore barred.

12 **Fifth Affirmative Defense**

13 The District alleges that the relief Mineral County seeks in Paragraphs 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16,  
14 17 and 18 of its prayer for relief are beyond the power of the Court to provide and not within its  
15 jurisdiction.

16 **Sixth Affirmative Defense**

17 Mineral County's Second Amended Complaint and the relief it seeks are barred by claim  
18 preclusion and issue preclusion by reason of the decision of the Nevada Supreme Court in *Mineral*  
19 *County v. Lyon County*, 473 P. 3d 418 (Nev. 2020).

20 **Seventh Affirmative Defense**

21 Mineral County's claim that the Decree Court has violated the public trust doctrine is  
22 barred by claim and issue preclusion by reason of the decision of the Ninth Circuit in *United States*  
23 *v. Walker River Irrigation District*, 986 F.3d 1197 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2021).

24 **Eighth Affirmative Defense**

25 Mineral County's claim against and the relief is seeks from the State of Nevada is barred  
26 by the Eleventh Amendment to the United States Constitution.

27 WHEREFORE, Walker Irrigation District prays for judgment against Mineral County as  
28 follows:

1 For dismissal of the Second Amended Complaint in Intervention;  
2 For its costs of suit allowed by law; and,  
3 For such other and further relief, as the Court deems just and proper.

4 Dated: August 19, 2022

5 WOODBURN AND WEDGE  
6 6100 Neil Road, Suite 500  
7 Reno, Nevada 89511

8 By: /s/ Gordon H. DePaoli  
9 GORDON H. DePAOLI, NSB #195  
10 DALE E. FERGUSON, NSB #4986  
11 Attorneys for the Walker River Irrigation District  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that I am an employee of Woodburn and Wedge and that on August 19, 2022, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send notification of such filing to the parties of record.

          / s / Candace Kelley            
An employee of Woodburn and Wedge

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28