



Death Valley National Park

Docket Number: 14

RHODES WELL

Preliminary Docket Information

DOCKET INFORMATION FORM

Compiled by: Alexa Kreiling Date: 2/24/2025
 Initial Docket Information Form ☒ Amendment # (1,2,3 ...)
 Includes Confidential Content ☐

Park Unit: DEVA Docket #: 014 Docket Title Rhodes Well

Docket Type:

Select all applicable: ☐ PC/V (pre-code/vested) ☐ APP (appropriative) ☐ RIP (riparian)
☐ FRR (federal reserved right) ☐ PWR (public water reserve) ☒ ACQ (acquired)
☒ GW (groundwater) ☐ Own (ownership) ☐ Other

Region:

☐ NER & NCR ☐ IMR
☐ SER ☐ MWR
☐ IMR ☒ PWR
☐ AKR

Source:

☒ Groundwater ☐ Spring (When recognized by the State as separate from groundwater and surface water)
☐ Surface Water
☐ Direct Diversion ☐ Diversion to Storage ☐ Instream Flow
 Name: Rhodes Well

State: CACounty: Inyo

Owner: US National Park Service (As listed by the State)

Application #: Date: 2/11/1933

Permit #: Date Issued:

License / Certificate #: Priority Date:

Ruling/Order/Decree #: Date Issued:

Quantity: Rate: Duty:
 Units: ☐ cfs ☐ gpm ☐ afy ☐ other Units: ☐ cfs ☐ gpm ☐ afy ☐ other

Use(s): ☒ Domestic ☐ Livestock ☐ Irrigation ☐ Municipal ☐ Industrial/Commercial ☐ Wildlife ☐ Instream ☒ other Mining

POD Name / Location: ☐ Multiple PODs (see water right)

Qtr: Qtr: Sec: 15 T: 21 N R: 4 E PM:

Latitude: Longitude:

UTM , Datum:

POU Name / Location: ☐ Multiple POU's (see water right)

Qtr: Qtr: Sec: T: R: PM:

Latitude: Longitude:

UTM , Datum:

Narrative / Remarks: Enter short narrative in the space below, attach additional page(s) as needed.

See Water Right/Source Docket Information dated October 31, 1973 in the preliminary section for narrative.

May have been acquired from an inholder.

WATER RESOURCES/WATER RIGHTS

DATE: October 31, 1973WATER RIGHT/SOURCE DOCKET INFORMATIONREGION Western AREA Death Valley National MonumentSITE Rhodes WellSTATE California COUNTY Inyo DOCKET NO WR #14LOCATION Sec. 15, T21N, R4E

REGIONAL BASIN _____ LOCAL BASIN _____

ACQUIRED BY _____

APPLICATION _____ PERMIT _____ CERTIFICATE _____

ACTION DUE _____ PRIORITY ~~100~~ RESERVATION February 11, 1933

QUANTITY _____ USE _____

STATUS _____ SOURCE WellREMARKS Hydrologic unit 18090203NARRATIVE:

This docket merely records the existence of the "Rhodes Well" in Death Valley National Monument, and was never recorded with the State.

Compiled by Wm. N. MurrayApproved by W. WerrellPage 1 of 1

03 HISTORY

Death Valley National Park

RHODES WELL

Land History

FmD.

17 January, 1956

Fred W. Binnewies, Superintendent
Death Valley National Monument
Death Valley, California

Dear Mr. Binnewies:

November 28, 1955

Thank you for your kind letter of November 28, 1956. I am sorry to not have answered it sooner.

I can only say that Dad's passing was in a manner which most men hope for and few achieve, quite quick and painless. Since his passing I have been impressed by the tremendous number of friends he had made who have made themselves known.

I had hoped to meet you before now. I talked in November with Mr. Ogston, whom I deeply respect, and he mentioned his regard for your administration.

My future plans for the property at Rhodes Well include retention of the Mister claims and Millsite, and possibly patenting them. At present my father's interest, an undivided $\frac{1}{4}$, is in the process of probate. Upon settlement of such proceedings I hope to have at my disposal 50% of the property interest, with the other 50% in the hands of our long-time partner, Lance D. Smith, Atty., 15825 $\frac{1}{2}$ East Main Street, Puente, California.

I have lately made several trips to the property, the major object being to safeguard it against trespassers. On my last trip I found that the Shack had been broken into and several items were missing. I have strengthened the locks and hinges so that this should not recur with casual trespassers. One cannot guard against determined breakers-in.

Fred W. Binnewies
Superintendent

I have left the green shack without a lock, to take care of anyone who happens to need shelter.

I hope that you and your staff will find opportunity to make occasional visits to the Rhodes Well Millsite, and that you will inform me of any conditions found that should be called to my attention.

I am presently arranging for a convention of the Geological Society of America, Cordilleran Section, to be held in Reno the Friday and Saturday before Easter. Should I be able to get away for a few days prior to that, I shall try to stop in and have a chat with you. If you are in Reno at any time I hope that you will take opportunity to visit us.

I thank you again for your kind interest.

Sincerely,

Lon S. McGirk, Jr.
Lon S. McGirk, Jr.
870 Evans Avenue
Reno, Nevada

Death Valley National Monument
Death Valley, California

November 28, 1955

Dear Mr. Binnewies:

Thank you for your kind letter of November 28, 1955. I am sorry to not have answered it sooner.

I am sorry that your father's passing was in a manner which most men hope never occurs, with quiet and painless. Since his passing was expressed by the tremendous number of friends who have made themselves known to me, I am sure that he is in a better place.

I met you before now. I met you in November with Mr. McGirk. I deeply respect, and as mentioned his regard for your father.

I learned with sorrow of the passing of your father last summer, and Death Valley has lost another of its old residents. I only had the pleasure of meeting Mr. McGirk once and spent a very pleasant afternoon with him. I would like to ask about your future plans for the property at Rhodes Well, and just what interests you may have there. Do you intend to continue some use or will you dispose of it?

I have lately made several trips to the major object being to safeguard it against trespassers. On my last trip I found that the Shack had been broken into and several items were missing. I have strengthened the locks and hinges so that this should not recur with casual trespassers. One cannot guard against determined breakers-in.

Fred W. Binnewies
Superintendent

I have left the green shack without a lock, to take care of anyone who happens to need shelter.

I hope that you and your staff will find opportunity to make occasional visits to the Rhodes Well Millsite, and that you will inform me of any conditions found that should be called to my attention.

I am presently arranging for a convention of the Geological Society of America, Cordilleran Section, to be held in Reno the Friday and Saturday before Easter. Should I be able to get away for a few days prior to that, I shall try to stop in and have a chat with you. If you are in Reno at any time I hope that you will take opportunity to visit us.

I thank you again for your kind interest.

Sincerely,

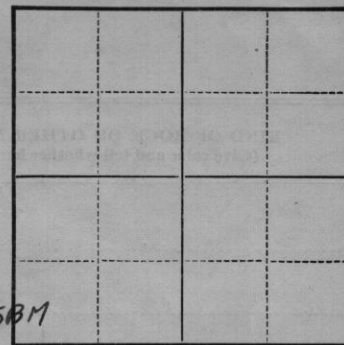
Lon S. McGirk

06 DATA

Death Valley National Park

RHODES WELL

Supporting Hydrologic Data

9-255
(Jan. 1927)UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
WATER RESOURCES BRANCHC
O
P
Y

Locate well on plat of section.

RECORD OF WELL

1. Location: State California County Inyo
 Nearest P. O. Shoshone Direction from P. O. S.W.
 Distance from P. O. 18 miles; $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 15, T. 21N, R. 4E SBM
 If in city, give street and number _____
2. Owner: Rhodes Well,
Death Valley Natl. Monument Address Death Valley, California
 Driller: Unknown Address _____
3. Situation: Is well on upland, in valley, or on hillside? Hillside
4. Elevation of top of well: _____ ft. _____ the level of _____
(Above or below) (Sea, depot, lake, or stream)
5. Type of well: Dug; kind of drilling rig used _____
(Dug, driven, bored, or drilled) (Solid tool, jetting, rotary, etc.)
6. Depth of well: 30 ft.; year in which well was finished Unknown
 Does well enter rock? yes; if so, at what depth? 2' ft.; kind of rock Shale
7. Diameter: At top 60" inches; at bottom 48 inches.
8. Principal water bed: _____
(Gravel, sand, clay, or rock. If rock, state kind)
 Depth to principal water bed _____ ft.; thickness of bed _____ ft.
 If other water supplies were found, give depth to each _____
9. Casings: Kind _____; size _____; length _____ ft.; between depths of _____ and _____ ft.
 Kind _____; size _____; length _____ ft.; between depths of _____ and _____ ft.
 Kind _____; size _____; length _____ ft.; between depths of _____ and _____ ft.
- Packers (if any): Depth at which packers were used _____; kind _____
- Screen or Strainer: Was well finished with screen? _____; kind of screen _____;
 length of screen _____ ft.; diameter _____ inches; size of openings _____
10. Head: Does well at present overflow without pumping? No; did it overflow when new? _____;
 if flowing, give pressure _____ lb. per sq. inch; or height water will rise in a pipe _____ ft. above surface;
 original pressure or head _____; if not flowing, give water level in well 5 ft. below surface.
11. Pump: Is the well pumped? no; kind of pump _____;
 size or capacity of pump _____; kind of power _____
12. Yield: Natural flow at present (if any) _____ gallons per minute; original flow _____ gallons per minute;
 well has been pumped at _____ gallons per minute continuously for _____ hours;
 quantity of water ordinarily obtained from well _____ gallons per day.
13. Use: For what purpose is the water used? Mining, Campers
14. Quality of the water: Hard, Fresh.; is there an analysis? _____
(Hard or soft, fresh or salty, etc.)
15. Cost of well, not including pump: _____ Temperature of water _____ ° F.
- Name of person filling blank /s/ T. R. GOODWIN
T.R. Goodwin, Superintendent,
Death Valley, California.
- Date _____ Address _____

On the back of this sheet give the record of the beds through which the well passes and any other facts not given above.

6-9642

7-

LOG OF WELL

[illegible]

07 OTHER

Death Valley National Park

RHODES WELL

Other Supporting Information

December 10, 1964

L-54

Docket 14

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Death Valley

From: Hydraulic Engineer, Division of Land and Water Rights,
Western Region

Subject: Rhodes Springs, Death Valley

The enclosed letter from the State Water Rights Board dated December 4, 1964 was in reply to our enquiry for record information on the subject Spring. As you see, there is no record of filings with the State since 1914.

It is suggested that the letter be added to the correspondence section of Docket 14, Rhodes Well.

(Sgd) Manuel Morris

Manuel Morris

Enclosure

Mr. L. K. Hill's
incoming letter

cc:

Director w/enclosure
/Chief, WODC (2) w/enclosure

W O D C	
DEC 10 1964	
	CHF
	ADM
	PERS
	P & P
	ARCH
1	ENGR
	L. A.
	SPEC
	CONT
	SFTY
	HABS
2	E. Martin
3	Stratton
ACTION TAKEN - DATE	
File	

Acty

12-11

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—RESOURCES AGENCY

EDMUND G. BROWN, Governor

STATE WATER RIGHTS BOARD

ROOM 1140 • 1416 9th ST. • SACRAMENTO 95814

KENT SILVERTHORNE, Chairman
RALPH J. MCGILL, Member
W. A. ALEXANDER, Member



December 4, 1964

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Western Region
P. O. Box 36063
San Francisco, California 94102

Subject: Applications 15375, 17374, and 17376
Trinity River and Clear Creek in Trinity County
Your File L54

Gentlemen:

In further reference to your letter of November 2, we note that in our reply of November 16 we failed to answer your questions in the last paragraph.

A search of our records determines that there are no water right filings on Virgin and Rhodes Springs in T21N, R4E, SBB&M, in Inyo County. However, we suggest that there could be old appropriate rights initiated prior to December 19, 1914, effective date of the Water Commission Act, and riparian rights, neither of which is generally of record.

If we can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

L. K. Hill

L. K. Hill
Executive Officer



November 23, 1964

L54

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Western Region

From: Superintendent, Death Valley

Subject: USGS Report, "Water-Resources of Ashford Mill and Emigrant Ranger Station, Death Valley National Monument, California"

We have reviewed the subject report and concur with the recommendation that the first test well be at the mouth of Emigrant Canyon. Our second choice would be at the Emigrant Ranger Station in the event that the first one proves unsatisfactory.

Other than the enclosed copy of the Record of Well, which is the only material in Water Right Docket No. 14, Rhodes Well, and the information contained in the subject report, we have no additional information concerning Virgin Spring or Rhodes Well.

John A. Aubuchon

Enclosure

cc:
File
Reading file

WNBurgen:fc



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

October 30, 1964

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L54



Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Death Valley

From: Hydraulic Engineer, Division of Land & Water Rights,
Western Region

Subject: USGS Report, "Water-Resources of Ashford Mill and
Emigrant Ranger Station, Death Valley National Monument,
California"

Enclosed are four copies of the subject report by M. G. Croft,
presented in final form.

In reviewing the report and the development plans for the two areas
involved, it is noted that development at the Ashford Mill District
includes ranger and maintenance stations and is currently scheduled
for FY 1971. We also noted drilling of a test well for this area is
proposed for FY 1969.

The report does not indicate strong optimism for water of either
good quality or quantity. It suggests Virgin Spring and Rhodes
Spring as supplemental sources, if the test well is low yielding.
Mr. Croft's description of these springs agrees with the Welles
Report where they are additionally identified as source #137
(Rhodes Spring) and #138 (Virgin Spring). The meager quantity of
1-2 gpm available from Virgin Spring and its distance from the
development site of roughly 6 miles would rule this spring out as
a supplemental source. It should be retained as a wildlife water-
ing station as the Welles Report recommends. Rhodes Spring, on the
other hand, might possibly serve as a supplementary source but only
because of its proximity to the development site. Mr. Croft does
not report its flow, but Mr. Welles indicates an observed flow of
"1 plus gpm." A telephone call on October 28 to Messrs. Croft and
Kunkel of the USGS confirmed that these springs are not capable of
producing appreciably more water than they are now presently showing.

*Let set up a planning session for
later in Nov.*
*L.T.A.M. file one copy of
report and other - per*

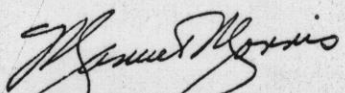
They further felt the prospects for a good well supply are also quite poor. It would have its best chance however, at the site recommended in the report, if it is drilled into the continental deposits that lie below the alluvium, and above the basement complex.

The extensive development planned for Ashford is going to depend on an adequate quantity of water to sustain it. It is important to know its availability in advance of all other planning. Failure to find an adequate supply at this early date would still enable an adjustment in either size or location of this development without unreasonable difficulties. It may be possible to include a test well in the current fiscal year's program, and to do so would combine nicely with the test well proposed for the Emigrant Ranger Station area.

Incidentally, our water rights files do not reveal any information on either of the springs mentioned above. We are writing to the State Water Rights Board to determine what their records show. We would appreciate receiving any information you might already have.

The second part of the report deals with the Emigrant Ranger Station area. Here, the prospects are much more optimistic. Of the three test sites suggested in the report, we would recommend making the first try at the mouth of Emigrant Canyon, rather than at the Ranger Station itself. It would seem to us that a storage tank would be located close to the well from which a gravity supply would serve the Station. Availability of a suitable site and power for pump operation may be overriding factors for drilling at the other locations given in the report.

We will hold up preparation of the Emigrant Ranger Station specifications until we receive your comments.


Manuel Morris

Enclosures 4

cc:

Chief, WODC (2) w/copy of report
Director (SLW) w/copy of report

RECEIVED

MAR 3 1961

Death Valley Nat'l Mon.

L 54

REGION FOUR
180 New Montgomery Street
San Francisco 5, California

March 1, 1961

✓ Supt.	
Ch. Rgr.	
Nat.	
Engr.	
Adm. Asst.	
Proc. & Prop.	
Wingt. Asst.	
WODC	
Sec.	

Mr. L. K. Hill,
Executive Officer
State Water Rights Board
Sacramento, California

Dear Mr. Hill:

We wish to know if the water of Rhodes Spring, located in projected Section 10 or 11, Township 21 North, Range 4 East, San Bernardino Meridian in Death Valley National Monument has been appropriated. Please let us know the status of any applications which may have been made.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) JOHN B. WOSKY
John B. Wosky
Regional Chief of Operations

Copy to: Director

Supt., Death Valley

HARVEY O. BANKS, STATE ENGINEER
CHIEF OF DIVISION

GOODWIN J. KNIGHT
GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

FRANK B. DURKEE
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Public Works
SACRAMENTO

ADDRESS REPLY TO
DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES
P. O. BOX 1079
SACRAMENTO 5
PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING
1120 N STREET

March 2, 1956

RECEIVED

MAR -5 1956

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

✓	SUPT.	PI
✓	CH. ENR.	PI
	NATL.	
✓	ENGR.	MA
✓	ADM. ASST.	ESL
	SUP. CLK.	

Mr. Fred W. Binnewies
Superintendent
Death Valley National Monument
Death Valley, California

Dear Mr. Binnewies:

In response to your inquiry of February 27 please be advised that there are no applications before this office for appropriation from Rhodes Well or Rhodes Spring in T21N, R4E, SBB&M.

If we can be of further assistance to you do not hesitate to call upon us.

Very truly yours,

HARVEY O. BANKS, STATE ENGINEER

By W. R. Gianelli
W. R. Gianelli
Supervising Hydraulic Engineer

Death Valley National Monument
Death Valley, California

February 27, 1956

State Engineer
Division of Water Resources
Department of Public Works
401 Public Works Building
Sacramento, California

Dear Sir:

It will be very much appreciated if you will let us know if there is a record of any water rights on Rhodes Well (or Rhodes Spring) in T 21 N, R 4 E, San Bernardino Meridian.

Sincerely,

Fred W. Binnewies
Superintendent

FWB/atm

Docket Information

Number of Documents in Docket : 14

Documents Dated from : 11-28-1955 to 02-24-2025

Docket Compiled: 6/12/2025