

WATER TOPICS IN OUR COMMUNITY: TRUCKEE RIVER FUND

FACTS ABOUT THE TRUCKEE RIVER FUND

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) Board of Directors established the Truckee River Fund (TRF) in 2004 to provide funding for projects that protect and enhance water quality or water resources in the Truckee River watershed. The fund concept maximizes public funds for projects devoted to protecting the primary source of water for TMWA customers. Through the TRF, non-profit organizations raise matching funds that augment TMWA's resources for implementing projects/programs that improve Truckee River water quality and watershed conditions.

The TRF is administered by the Community Foundation of Western Nevada, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, but all TMWA funds remain in the sole control of the TMWA Board. All expenditures from TRF must be approved by TMWA. Since its inception, the program has evolved into an important component of TMWA's overall water quality protection program, funding projects which have directly or indirectly improved water quality or the watershed of the Truckee River.

WHAT REQUIREMENTS MUST PROJECTS MEET TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING?

All projects must meet strict criteria requirements and must provide a direct benefit to TMWA and its customers in the form of protecting and enhancing water quality or water resources. To be considered for funding the project/organization must:

- Have a direct effect in improving the health of the Truckee River system and watershed. For example:
 - Projects that improve bank or channel stabilization and decrease erosion.
 - Structural controls or Low Impact Development (LID) projects on tributaries and drainages to the Truckee River where data supports evidence of pollution and/or sediments entering the Truckee River.
 - Projects that remove pollution from the Truckee River.
 - Projects that remove or control invasive aquatic species or terrestrial invasive plant species that are adverse to water supply.

HOW DOES A PROJECT GET QUALIFIED AND/OR APPROVED FOR FUNDING?

Projects are solicited twice a year through an open and competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Once applications are received, TRF advisors review each request and submit a list of projects that meet all the requirements to the TMWA Board of Directors. The Truckee River Fund Advisory Committee has developed a prudent and rigorous approach to the evaluation of proposals, to ensure that those projects recommended for approval by TMWA's Board have tangible and measurable outcomes and meet the objectives of the fund. TMWA's Board reviews each recommendation at a public meeting and can approve or deny funding to any project. To qualify, the organization must:

- Be non-profit and exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the code.
- Be able to provide financial details and/or reports of their organization upon request.
- Be able to commence the approved projects within 45 days of the end of the fiscal year in which the distributions were received.
- Present matching funds from a partner organization or agency.

QUICK FACTS

Distributions:

To date, nearly \$11.2 million has been distributed from the Fund to qualifying projects.

Matching funds:

Additional matches of nearly \$19.4 million in cash and in-kind services.

Multi-jurisdictional projects:

Many of the projects are multi-jurisdictional in nature, but TRF allows TMWA to secure matching funds and partnerships with other public agencies. This costs TMWA customers less to protect our river and watershed.

Website with more information:

www.truckeeriverfund.org. All meeting minutes and funded projects are listed on the website.



WHO MAKES UP TRF'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The Advisory Committee has nine members. Washoe County, City of Reno and City of Sparks each appoint three representatives to the committee. Committee members cannot be elected officials. The Advisory Committee reviews project requests at noticed public meetings, prior to submitting their recommendations to the TMWA Board.

DOES THIS SAVE CUSTOMERS MONEY?

Yes. Because funds are in a separate, tax-exempt foundation, TMWA requires that all projects have matching funds. This enables projects to be completed at a much lower cost than if TMWA was paying the entire amount. Financially, TRF provides significant financial leverage for source-water protection projects that TMWA could not ordinarily implement or afford.

WHY DOES TMWA USE CUSTOMER MONIES TO FUND PROJECTS THAT PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE WATER QUALITY OF THE TRUCKEE RIVER, OR ITS WATERSHED?

Eighty-five to 90 percent of the water delivered by TMWA comes from the Truckee River. TMWA is responsible for providing customers with potable water that is safe, clean and meets all Federal EPA Standards. Proper management of the Truckee River is critical to ensure such standards are met. The projects funded by the TRF normally involve areas of the watershed that are multi-jurisdictional in nature and makes a watershed improvement project difficult, if not impossible, to implement by one entity or agency. However, TRF requires matching funds and creates partnerships with other public agencies, thus, our customers spend less money to protect our river and our watershed—and ultimately their drinking water.

FUNDED PROJECTS AND MATCHING FUNDS:

Since its inception in 2004, nearly \$11.2 million has been approved for distribution from TRF for qualifying projects. Organizations provided additional matches of nearly \$19.4 million in cash and in-kind services. The projects range from watershed and fire restoration projects to invasive weed removal programs. For a detailed list of all current and completed projects, including the project information and benefit to TMWA, visit www.truckeeriverfund.org. The site's interactive project map provides an overview of all project locations and details.

About TMWA:

Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) is a not-for-profit water utility, overseen by elected officials from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. TMWA employs a highly skilled team who ensure the treatment, delivery and availability of high-quality drinking water around the clock for more than 385,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

About this series:

Water Topics in Our Community is a series of papers designed to provide the citizens of the Truckee Meadows information about key water topics in this region.

To access all of the papers, go to www.tmwa.com/topics.

About TMWA's

Board of Directors:

The TMWA Board welcomes you to attend and comment at any board meeting. Meeting schedules are posted at www.tmwa.com/meetings.

To send a question to the Board, visit us online at: www.tmwa.com/comment.

Questions or feedback?

We'd like to hear from you. Please call our Community Communications line with any remaining questions you have on this topic or other water topics. The number is (775) 834-8290.

Mailing address:

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