

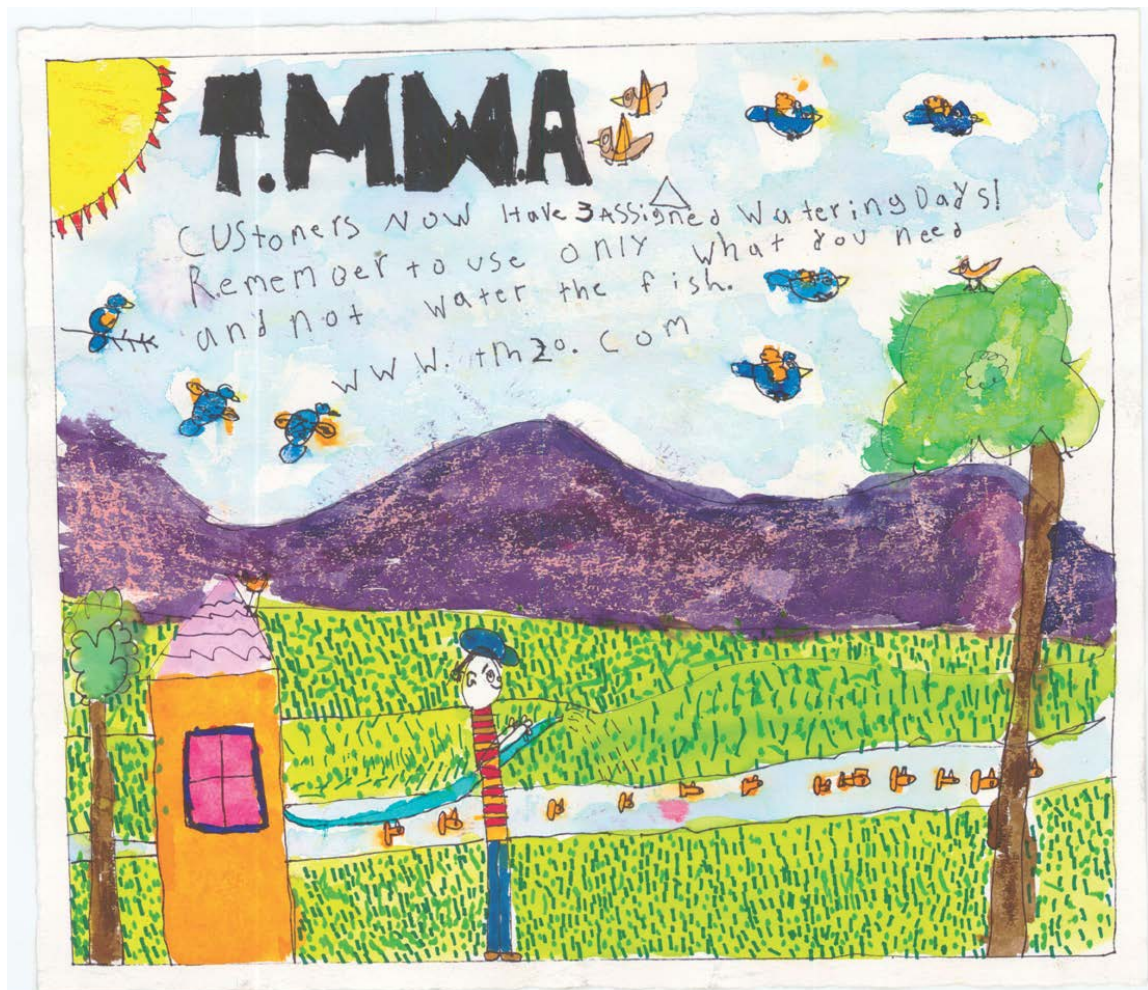


TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Press Clippings

December 9, 2010 – January 10, 2011



*Joshua & Sarah Burrows (Jessie Beck Elementary School)
2010 Poster Art Contest - Second Place, Grades K-3*

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Northern Nevada bikeway trail could be extended

Associated Press - January 9, 2011 2:35 PM ET

RENO, Nev. (AP) - The Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway could be extended this year.

The Reno Gazette-Journal reports that could include opening the first trail in the Truckee Canyon west of Verdi and opening a stretch through the scenic McCarran Ranch.

Bikeway leader Janet Phillips says once McCarran is opened to bike riders after a new bridge is built, they will have nine miles of trail to ride from Mustang to Tracy.

Phillips said work could begin this year on the first four miles of trail. That will be possible because the Truckee Meadows Water Authority signed an agreement in 2010 making its dirt maintenance road public.

Information from: Reno Gazette-Journal, <http://www.rgj.com>

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Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway continues miles-long journey

By Susan Voyles • svoyles@rgj.com • January 8, 2011

The Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway could be extended by several leaps and bounds in 2011, including opening the first trail in the Truckee Canyon west of Verdi, possibly gaining access along the Truckee River at the S-Bar-S Ranch north of Wadsworth and opening a new stretch through the scenic McCarran Ranch.

Once McCarran is opened to bike riders after a new bridge is built, they will have nine miles of trail to ride from Mustang to Tracy, said Janet Phillips, bikeway leader.

Phillips said work could begin this year on the first four miles of trail into the Truckee Canyon from Verdi after the Truckee Meadows Water Authority signed an agreement in 2010 making its dirt maintenance road public.

That trail, however, won't be opened until the Fleish suspension footbridge is made sturdier, Phillips said.

A grant to cover \$200,000 of a \$350,000 in improvements now is in the works, she said.

Mile by mile, Phillips and a band of about 11 professionals and recent retirees now are in their seventh year of pursuing a bikeway following the Truckee River from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake. So far, 68 miles are open, and there are 45 miles to go.

Another 70 volunteers, she said, can be counted on for trail construction, pulling weeds or maintenance.

The bikeway can be a dirt trail or road or a wide road shoulder, such as along California 89 between Squaw Valley and Truckee, Phillips said. The big push, she said, is to get a bikeway opened, making improvements along the way.

"The original wide-eyed optimism that this was a sprint has become a marathon," said Phillips, a retired Sierra Pacific Power Co. executive.

She said the project requires "the passion, the time and the stubbornness" to see it through. "If we can continue to get a few miles every year, then it should be finished in time for me to still ride a bike. It could take another 15 years, and I'll be 74 by then."

Fred Boyd, Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce acting executive director, said the plans for next year sound exciting.

"I'm not a bicycle person per se, but I like to hike and bike," Boyd said. "I think it's a definite plus for our area, for the people who live here. And for visitors, it's another little arrow in our quiver."

Starting at Lake Tahoe, a paved trail ends near the Squaw Valley entrance and then a wide shoulder takes bikers to Truckee. From there, town locals are working to extend and improve the ride through its Legacy Trail project.

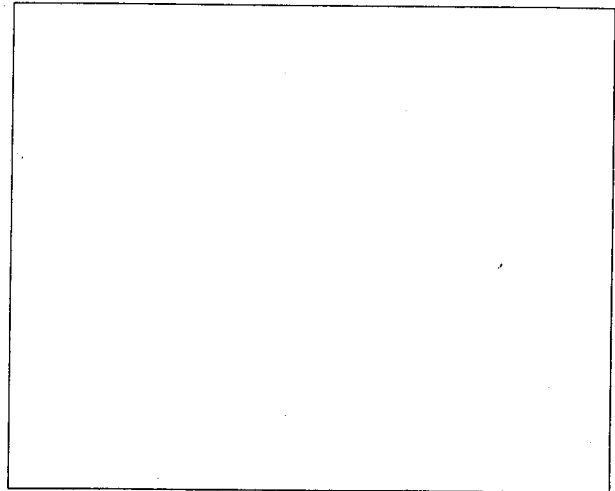
In 2010, the bikeway group's efforts to obtain grants failed to start building a trail from Hirschdale Road at the west end of the Truckee Canyon, near Boca Reservoir.

That section is expected to be the most expensive, requiring a cantilevered -- or projecting -- trail along the side of a steep cliff below Interstate 80 and a freeway overpass.

So, the group now is concentrating on the Verdi side.

East of Reno and Sparks, bikeway volunteers Pat Roe

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and Heidi Littenberg headed up an effort in 2010 to build 1½ miles of trail through a cottonwood forest on the McCarran Ranch, where the Nature Conservancy began work to return the Truckee River to its wild state.

To open the trail at the ranch, a 100-year-old bridge over the Truckee River at the ranch will have to be replaced.

The Nature Conservancy has raised nearly all the money needed for the bridge work, and construction bids should be released soon, said Patti Bakker, the conservancy's river project manager. It would be constructed in late summer when the river is low, she said.

East of there, the bikeway group opened two miles of trail in Tracy last April.

Once the McCarran Ranch is opened, this will allow for the nine-mile section from Mustang to USA Parkway in Tracy.

"It's unparalleled river riparian scenery," Phillips said of McCarran Ranch. "It will get to three of the four river restoration projects. There's a lot of waterfowl, cottonwood forest and wild horses."

In the meantime, Phillips said she likes to ride the Tracy section and then follow USA Parkway at the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center to its end to check out herds of wild horses.

"For someone who likes a road ride and desert scenery, it's really dramatic," she said, adding a map of the 17-mile loop is on the group's website. "It's best on weekends. There's less truck traffic."

Getting the trail from Sparks to the Mustang Ranch still depends on Storey County Commissioners and people at Rainbow Bend subdivision in Lockwood changing their minds about the trail, Phillips said.

The commission blocked an effort in January 2007 to extend the trail after the bikeway group had obtained a \$486,000 state grant to build a needed bridge at Pioneer Crossing. That grant was forfeited.

"We are stuck right here at Lockwood," Phillips said.

To get to town on a bike, Rainbow Bend residents have to ride on I-80 or illegally cross a railroad bridge. She said either route is extremely dangerous.

North of Wadsworth, Phillips has hopes of replacing two miles of trail in the desert hills that bypasses the S-Bar-S Ranch with a river route on the ranch. The bypass trail was built by volunteers in 2008.

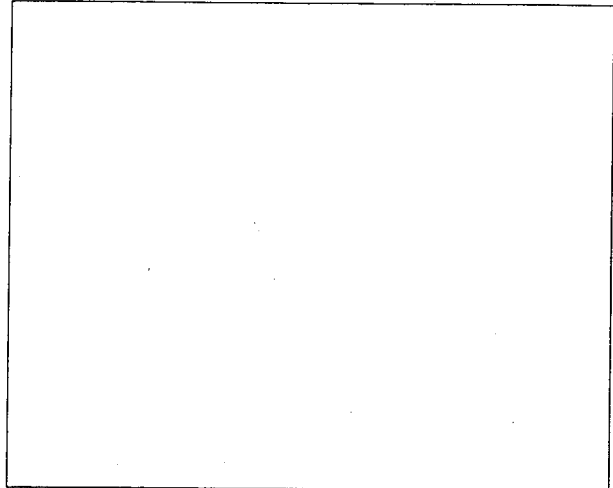
In December, however, the Board of Regents agreed to sell the 288-acre ranch to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation for \$3.7 million. Federal funds under the Truckee River negotiated settlement are available for the purchase.

Phillips said she is hopeful that the tribal council will agree to grant access for the bikeway as the tribe already has opened 22 miles of paved or dirt road along the river on the reservation to get to Pyramid Lake. Visitors must first stop and get a day-use permit for \$6.50 per car at the Smoke Shop in Wadsworth.



Janet Phillips, the guiding force behind the Tahoe-

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Pyramid Bikeway, walks across the Fleish bridge over the Truckee River on Dec. 23, 2009. (Andy Barron/RGJ File)

Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway

FIND OUT MORE: The Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway's website at www.tpbikeway.org has descriptions of the trails, projects and maps. It also has a link to its Facebook page, where group trail rides are organized.

ANNUAL MEETING: A kick-off party for the group's work for 2011 will be held at the River Room cafe in the Riverside Lofts building from 5 to 7 p.m. on Jan. 24.

HONOREES: Sponsors of the Century Circle fundraising effort will be honored. Bikeway leader Janet Phillips said 87 supporters agreed to provide \$100 a year for planning, grant applications and operations.


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Posted: 10:43 PM Jan 6, 2011

Crews Clean Up Truckee River Banks

Keeping the Truckee River clean is a lot of work, but community service crews with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office don't seem to mind.

Reporter: Lauren Garber

Email Address: lauren.garber@kolotv.com



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Keeping the Truckee River clean is a lot of work, but community service crews with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office don't seem to mind. For them, it's better than serving jail time or paying a fine.

The crews have been keeping the river banks clean. They remove homeless camps, pick up trash, weed, and protect trees from beaver damage.

And it doesn't just help the river look better, it's also saving taxpayers money.

<


Last year alone, the Sheriff's office estimates the community service crews saved taxpayers \$1,729,476 in labor costs.

"The Truckee River is a big deal around here. It's our staple. We've got a lot of people who come down here. We have hiking trails people enjoy, and we want this place looking good when people come around to enjoy it," said Michael Sherak, the Supervisor of the Inmate Work Program for the Washoe County Sheriff.

Their hard work hasn't gone unnoticed. They were awarded \$12,695 in grant money from the Community Foundation of Western Nevada's Truckee River Fund to keep the program going.

Find this article at:

http://www.kolotv.com/home/headlines/Crews_Clean_Up_Truckee_River_Banks_113043054.html

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This article was printed from the Green Guide section of the *Reno News & Review*, originally published January 6, 2011.

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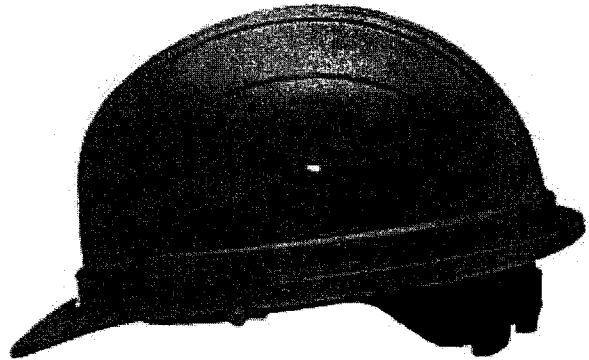
Green year in Review

By Kat Kerlin

The top 15 environmental news and trends in and around Reno for 2010, here, in purely subjective order:

1) **Yucca Mountain project funding pulled.**

After President Obama eliminated funding for Yucca Mountain in the 2011 budget, the Energy Department filed to withdraw its license application for it, which would effectively put an end to the project. However, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia will be holding hearings in early 2011 to decide whether the Energy Department had a right to withdraw its application. Meanwhile, a federal panel is revisiting the issue of how to deal with nuclear waste.



2) **Green jobs: the waiting game.** Green jobs have been identified as one component of getting the state out of this economic mess, but they've been slow to come. Approving clean energy projects and policies is a slow-going process, but some jobs are trickling in. Meanwhile, several green job conferences and panel discussions have been held locally about how to bring more clean energy jobs here. The general consensus is Nevada needs a better educated workforce, better policies and incentives for green businesses to come and stay here, and two seemingly incongruous things: political will and patience.

3) **Solar development.** As the state frets over green jobs, some have been added through solar energy projects. The first large-scale solar project on public lands in Nevada, the Silver State North Solar Project south of Las Vegas, was approved in November. A month later, designated "solar zones" in Nevada were announced to help speed the solar energy development process. Earlier, in July, the One Nevada Line transmission project was approved to connect clean energy resources in northern and southern Nevada.

4) **Gaga over geothermal.** Remember those green jobs conferences we were talking about? One word kept popping up over and over: Geothermal. The short story is we've got it—more than most

places in the world. And by “we,” we mean Northern Nevada, not just the state. We have the companies, the resources, a giant piece of the federal funding for it, and now facilities are in the works to help educate the masses about it. This year, the University of Nevada, Reno got a \$1.2 million grant to develop and operate the National Geothermal Institute, which will complement its already existing Great Basin Center for Geothermal Energy and is expected to be a consortium of geothermal schools, including MIT, Cornell and Stanford.

5) **More water days.** We were skeptical about this one: Water more days of the week, but use the same amount of water? That’s what the Truckee Meadows Water Authority found was the general case when it was studying its decision this year to allow residents to have three, rather than two, set water days per week.

6) **Reno climate:** The air and water temperatures of Lake Tahoe, Pyramid Lake and Walker Lake were hotter this year, according to NASA, but Nevadans were still doubtful about global warming. In a Las Vegas Review-Journal poll taken in April, 55 percent of Nevadans considered global warming “unproven and subject to debate,” an 11 percent drop in believers since 2008.

7) **Roads go on a diet.** Certain roads in Reno got skinnier this year, to the relief of local cyclists. They can now ride a bit more safely at places like Arlington, California and Holcomb avenues, where bike lanes have been added.

8) **EcoReno closes.** The beloved independent eco store shut its doors in December after a two-year run of providing everything from recycled toilet paper and compost tumblers to natural cleaners and upcycled jewelry.

9) **Peppermill goes geothermal.** Talk about using the resources you have. The Peppermill resort and casino tapped nine geothermal wells. The casino expects to recover its \$9.7 million investment within five years. As of this spring, the Peppermill said it was heating 100 percent of its property and running water—from the pools to the spa to the hotel rooms—with renewable energy.

10) **Locally grown food in local restaurants.** This has gone on to some extent for years, but in 2010, there seemed to be more local food in local restaurants and cafes than ever—or at least more restaurants publicizing it. To name a few: 775 Gastro Pub, 5th Street Bakehouse, Bistro 7, 4th Street Bistro, Sezmu, Dish Café, Granite Street Eatery, and more.

11) **Coop on the move, again.** Speaking of local food, the Great Basin Community Food Coop announced in May it was looking to move from its cozy but cramped Plumas Street location. The Sallaberry sisters et.al., at the co-op say they expect to announce where that move will be this month, adding that it will be in a bigger space that’s still central to Reno’s urban core.

12) **Nevada EcoNet lives to see another day, and a new direction.** With a new executive director, a new blog and a more streamlined focus, the local nonprofit that has thrown the city’s big Earth Day celebration for the past 20 years nearly went belly up a couple of years ago. It stayed afloat with volunteers, board members, and one part-time employee, Kaitlin Weeks, who has now become its full-time executive director.

13) **Reno named a top green city.** The Natural Resources Defense Council listed Reno among its “2010 Smarter Cities” for its “emerging energy culture,” due largely to the city’s use of things like renewable energy installations and green retrofits to reduce its energy use.

14) **Transition Reno kicks off.** The local chapter of this international grassroots-driven group had their “great unleashing” this year—with film festivals, local discussions and the forming of action groups—to help Renoites transition from an oil-based lifestyle to one that’s more sustainable.

15) **Everybody’s on Facebook.** If you’re a local, environmental nonprofit or business, or, say, a media outlet (search “RN&R Green”), chances are you have a Facebook fan page by now.



Chicken wire used in fight against beavers on Truckee River

By Susan Voyles • svoyles@rgj.com • January 4, 2011

In assembly line fashion, a Washoe Sheriff's community service work crew hands off bag after bag of old blankets and other bedding from an abandoned homeless camp along the Truckee River in downtown Reno.

"Get a line going here. Pass it from person to person," said Don Dawson, a sheriff deputy and crew supervisor, said of the camp hidden beneath stacks of tree branches.

On Tuesday morning, the crew hauled out 50 big bags of garbage on the isolated north bank between the ballpark and the Wells Avenue underpass. Workers also wrapped 30 trees with 75 feet of chicken wire to protect them from beaver, which wildlife officials say are more destructive than ever.

Francisco Brechado, a community service worker, and other workers share a joke about the set of camps being set up as a duplex. Given the steepness of the riverbank, a townhouse might be a more apt description.

Five days a week, up to eight community service workers are cleaning up the river banks and wrapping trees to prevent them from being gnawed by beaver, thanks to 500 linear feet of chicken wire donated by the public.

"These guys are good workers," Dawson said.

A closer look

In the 16-year-old work program, crew members are people sentenced to do community service time. They are not jail inmates.

They clean up the river in the winter when the foliage is gone. In the summer, the work crew will turn to pulling noxious weeds along the river and cleaning up garbage left in the hills.

In all, their labor is valued at \$1.7 million a year.

A recent grant from the Truckee Meadows Water Authority in December as well as recent donations

of chicken wire are enabling the crews to do more. The sheriff's supply of chicken wire had run out in late December.

Grant funds from the Truckee Meadows Water Authority totaling \$90,000 for supplies will last through October. The latest installment provided \$12,695.

More than 500 linear feet of chicken wire has been donated, enough to keep the crews busy for a while. But Dawson said he'll need more.

Protecting trees

With no one in charge of controlling beaver along the river, the sheriff's work crew is about the only pro-active effort to protect the trees, which provides for wildlife.

In Reno and Sparks, "the beaver are basically destroying the trees all along the Truckee" said Mike Sherak, community service/inmate work crew supervisor.

The crew put in a full day in cleaning up camps and wrapping trees last week in Sparks. Today the crew will tackle a section of the river from Sutro Street bridge to Fisherman's Park.

"There's more beaver damage everywhere," Sherak said. "We're nipping away at it though."

Garbage left behind

The amount of belongings left along by the river by homeless people is up since early December when Reno police and public works crews cleared illegal campsites on the Record Street sidewalk, outside the gate of the community homeless service center.

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Dawson said his crew cleaned up at least six abandoned camp sites on Tuesday. But along one stretch, he said the garbage was just continuous.

"It's crazy to me," said Breciado, a crew member for the last six months, of the camps. "It makes me feel sorry for them. But a lot of them are lazy and some of them do drugs."

How long will the river stay clean after a cleanup? "I wish I could answer that one," Dawson said. "When it warms up, they could be back."



A work crew team members Andy Braham, left, and Marcial Lopez remove trash and blankets from a homeless camp along the Truckee River on Jan. 4, 2010. (Photo by Andy Barron/RGJ)

GOT EXTRA CHICKEN WIRE?

Contact the Washoe County Sheriff's community work program at 775-785-4239 to donate supplies for tree-wrapping.

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Good news for water supply: Area snowpack twice the amount of average

By Jeff DeLong • jdelong@rgj.com • January 4, 2011

The mountain snowpack is at twice normal levels for this time of year and Lake Tahoe now has nearly as much water as it did during its peak last year, with both developments decidedly good news for the region's water supply.

On Tuesday, federal scientists sank measuring tubes into the snowpack near Mount Rose Summit. The snow was nearly 8 feet deep, with a water content, or snowpack, of about 150 percent of average for Jan. 4.

The numbers are better elsewhere along the Sierra, generally 200 percent of average or more. The Lake Tahoe Basin's snowpack Tuesday was 220 percent of average, matching a previous January record set in the early 1980s, said Dan Greenlee, a snow surveyor with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

In Eastern Nevada, the snowpack measured 248 percent of average, smashing previous records, Greenlee said.

"This is just absolutely a banner year right now," said Greenlee, who has been measuring the Sierra snowpack for 18 years.

"This is the biggest year for Jan. 1 since I started doing this," Greenlee said. "This is a fantastic start."

The situation was aided, Greenlee said, by soaking October rains that saturated soils, helping build the snowpack during November and December, which brought heavy early season snowstorms to the mountains.

October was the wettest on record in Reno and also brought the highest rise of Lake Tahoe for that month — about a quarter of a foot — during the last 110 years, said Chad Blanchard, chief deputy water master.

The lake has continued to rise and on Tuesday was approaching its maximum level reached early last summer after peak runoff from melting snow.

"We are only an inch lower than the peak last year in July. That's a huge turnaround," Blanchard said. "No matter what happens now we are going to be much better off than last year. We're just hoping it keeps going."

On Tuesday, Lake Tahoe — the Truckee River system's largest reservoir — was 1.56 feet above its natural rim and 4.44 feet below its maximum capacity. When full, the top 6 feet of Tahoe is stored by the Tahoe City dam for downstream use by Reno-Sparks and agriculture.



Caption: Ed Blake, left, and Dan Greenlee, snow surveyors for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, measure the snowpack Tuesday morning near the Mt. Rose Highway summit. The water content of the snow is at about 150 percent at this location, but up to 200 percent at other areas in the nearby Sierra. Photo by Tim Dunn/RGJ Byline: Tim Dunn/RGJ

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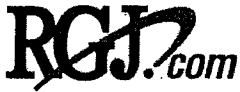
Mom Dilemma #36:
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Tuesday's mountain snowpack, percent of average:

Truckee River Basin: 196 percent.
 Lake Tahoe Basin: 220 percent.
 Carson River Basin: 221 percent.
 Walker River Basin: 208 percent.
 Upper Humboldt River: 185 percent.
 Eastern Nevada: 248 percent.
 Lake Tahoe's water level: 6,224.56 feet above sea level.
 Tahoe's peak level last year: 6,224.65 feet on July 14.

o Snowpack measurements are taken constantly over the winter by both automated equipment and manual surveys at locations often reached by helicopter. Tuesday's survey at the Mount Rose summit automated survey site was conducted for the media's benefit.

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service, federal Water Master's Office.

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Apply now to be a part of the TMWA volunteer committee

by Tribune Staff

01.02.11 - 12:03 am

RENO — The Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) is an oversight committee made up of Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) customers. It reviews budgets, rate proposals and other items, reads reports and provides feedback from the customer perspective. The committee reports its findings and makes recommendations to TMWA's board of directors.

This volunteer committee meets at 3 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month. Those interested in serving on SAC must be TMWA customers who represent either multi-family residential, single-family residential, commercial or irrigation customers.

Applications to serve on the committee can be submitted via letter or e-mail and must be received by Jan. 31. Applications should include the following:

- Applicant's name and contact information
- Type of customer (multi-family residential, single-family residential, commercial or irrigation customer)
- Statement of interest in serving SAC
- Any pertinent experience

Submit applications by Jan. 31 to Lora Rose Richards at lrichards@tmwa.net or mail to Truckee Meadows Water Authority, P.O. Box 30013, Reno, NV 89520, ATTN: Lora Rose Richards.

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 330,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

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December 29, 2010

Sheriff's Office awarded grant to continue cleanups along the Truckee River

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office was awarded a \$12,695 grant from the Community Foundation of Western Nevada's Truckee River Fund to support the continued use of the sheriff's community service work crews for cleanup projects along the river.

Since 2008, the Truckee River Fund has awarded the sheriff's office close to \$90,000 in grants to fund a work crew supervisor and help with the cost of equipment.

Work crew projects include weeding invasive plant species, cleaning up trash, removing the remnants of homeless camps and protecting trees from beaver damage.

With local governments facing severe budget reductions, many of these projects could not be completed without the use of the sheriff's community service work crews.



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Storms bring needed boost

BY JEFF DELONG • JDELONG@RGJ.COM • DECEMBER 29, 2010

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Early season storms have produced a mountain snowpack about twice the normal amount for this time of year -- good news for a region struggling to recover from a series of dry years that have dropped reservoir levels.



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On Tuesday, the Truckee River Basin's snowpack measured 195 percent of average for the date, while the Lake Tahoe Basin's was at 207 percent, according to automated measurements by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"The snowpack is really great, and that's great for the water supply," said Gary Barbato, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Reno. "We're doing really well for this early in the season."

And it still is early.

Along with December, January and February are the most important snow-

producing months for the region. Other winters have started strong and fizzled, and there's no guarantee that won't occur this year, experts said.

Last year, the typical peak of the snow season came April 1 with the snowpack still at below-average levels. A spate of spring storms followed, raising snowpack levels to above-average amounts for the first time in four years.

The snow melted and during the summer, lakes and reservoirs across the region dropped. As recently as October, which produced record rainfall in Reno, water suppliers still were saying there was a good chance Lake Tahoe would drop below its natural rim and shut off the flow of water into the Truckee River before the year's end.

But plentiful storms in both November and December made a difference.

BY THE NUMBERS

Snowpack percent of average on Tuesday:

- » Truckee River Basin: 195 percent
- » Lake Tahoe Basin: 207 percent
- » Carson River Basin: 210 percent
- » Walker River Basin: 200 percent

On Dec. 28, 2009:

- » Truckee River Basin: 84 percent
- » Lake Tahoe Basin: 87 percent
- » Carson River Basin: 105 percent
- » Walker River Basin: 78 percent

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

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The Death of the PC

The days of paying for costly software upgrades are numbered. The PC will soon be obsolete. And *BusinessWeek* reports 70% of Americans are already using the technology that will replace it. Merrill Lynch calls it "a \$160 billion tsunami." Computing giants including IBM, Yahoo!, and Amazon are racing to be the first to cash in on this PC-killing revolution.

Yet, two little-known companies have a huge head start. Get their names in a free report from The Motley Fool called, "The Two Words Bill Gates Doesn't Want You to Hear..."

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In December alone, Tahoe's levels rose by more than 8 inches, and there's now no chance the lake will drop below the rim, said Bill Hauck, water supply coordinator for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

"It's come up nicely, but we've got a long way to go," Hauck said. "Upstream reservoir storage is still quite low, and we're going to need above-average runoff this spring to start recovering and fill up Tahoe again."

"We're going to need a big year to really make a recovery," Hauck said. "We've dug a big hole."

A "fantastic start" to the winter will hopefully be followed by a continued stormy pattern that will keep layering the mountains in snow, Hauck said.

On the flip side, all the mountain snow could pose a hazard should warm storms bring high-elevation rain instead of snow.

Rain-on-snow events could cause serious flooding, such as what occurred in the Truckee Meadows in January 1997.

Experts will have to keep a "cautionary eye" on that possibility, Barbato said.

More Local News Headlines

Washoe County's housing outlook not rosy, but better (11)

Sparks couple feels heartache, elation on way to adoption (12)

BLM director urged to shun mustang summit (1)

Nevada's Wild West spirit snubs medical marijuana (19)

Government digest

Latest Headlines

Blog: Animal Ark opens for one weekend each in January and February

Democrat Jerry Brown sworn in as California's 39th governor

Blog: Today is final day to pick up Kraft Bowl tickets in Reno

Brian Sandoval begins inauguration day by attending Mass (6)

'Quiet zone' wish might come true

December 26, 2010

» Two crossings between Old Highway 40 and South Verdi Road, immediately east of Verdi.

» A temporary crossing for a Truckee Meadows Water Authority construction project now finished, south of Old Highway 40 near the Interstate 80 eastbound on-ramp.

"None of these are the sole access to any individual property," Freund said. "The railroad wants to be sure alternative access is acceptable to emergency responders if the go-ahead is given to pursue closing those private crossings."

The closures of two of the crossings also would eliminate a safety hazard involving poor sight lines for approaching motorists, he said.

West Truckee Meadows residents have asked for a "quiet zone" where new crossing arms would bar cars from crossing the tracks when the arms are down.

Then, the horn blasts wouldn't be needed.

But in January, the county commission said it was concerned about the liability, as well as the cost, in creating quiet zones and asked for a report on closing some of the private crossings.

In addition, a 1911 state law requiring engineers to sound a warning within 1,320 feet of any place where the tracks cross a road customarily used by the public would have to be challenged.

Union Pacific requires engineers to sound horns at all grade crossings.

In the diagnostics report, railroad safety experts identified the Bridge Street crossing in Verdi as one public crossing to be upgraded in any future quiet zone.

The county commission asked for a policy on approving new crossings after taking no action in July on a request for a new at-grade crossing north of Reno at Heindel Road.

The new policy requires a no net increase in the

number of at-grade crossings, new crossings to be built with equipment, so they can qualify as a quiet zone and applicants must demonstrate the crossing is required for access.

The policy will require the county to create and maintain an inventory of at-grade railroad crossings.

At a glance

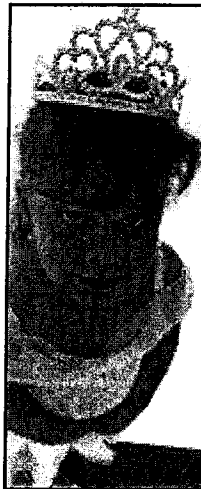
The Washoe County Commission is moving forward on closing four private railroad crossings:

» A crossing across Fuller Lake Road near Quilici Ranch Road west of Verdi.

» Two crossings between Old Highway 40 and South Verdi Road, immediately east of Verdi.

» A temporary crossing for a Truckee Meadows Water Authority construction project now finished, south of Old Highway 40 near the Interstate 80 eastbound on-ramp.

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Mom Dilemma #36:
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Updated: 1:52 PM Dec 25, 2010

Water Main Breaks In Busy Sparks Intersection

A water main break at the Sparks Boulevard and Prater Way intersection has some water in the roadway. TMWA officials want drivers to avoid that intersection if possible. No estimated time of repair.

Posted: 2:29 PM Dec 24, 2010

Reporter: Staff

Email Address: news@kolotv.com

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A water main break at the Sparks Boulevard and Prater Way intersection has some water in the roadway. TMWA officials want drivers to avoid that intersection if possible. No estimated time of repair.

Find this article at:

http://www.kolotv.com/home/headlines/Water_Main_Breaks_In_Busy_Sparks_Intersection_112438954.html

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Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

KRNV News 4's Profile



KRNV News 4

TMWA is asking people to avoid the area of Sparks Boulevard & Prater Way due to water main break.

December 24, 2010 at 2:32pm · Share



Rob Stufts Those water mains along Prater Way sure have been getting some media attention these past couple months.... Didn't one just break over off McCarran and Prater?

December 24, 2010 at 2:42pm · Flag



Alan Mayer Greenbrae and pyramid also!

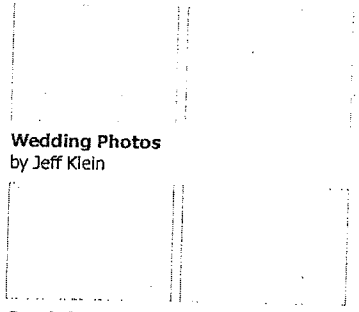
December 24, 2010 at 3:27pm · Flag



Angela Franklin Comphe Thanks to TMWA for working so quickly to try and fix so no one is out of water on Christmas.

December 24, 2010 at 4:15pm · Flag

Friends' Photo Albums



Wedding Photos
by Jeff Klein

Good times...
by Jeff Klein

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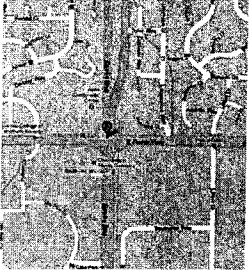
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Water main break at Sparks and Prater

December 24, 2010

Truckee Meadows Water Authority is reporting a water main break at the corner of Sparks Blvd. and Prater Way this afternoon.

Frankie Vigil of TMWA says the break occurred around 1:15 p.m. Friday. It is not a large break, Vigil said, but it is affecting traffic. Motorists are advised to avoid the area. There is currently no ETA on the cleanup time.



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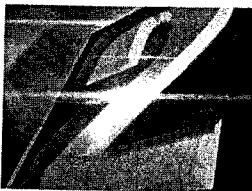
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Cleanup Underway After Water Main Breaks in Sparks

Posted: Dec 24, 2010 4:34 PM PST
Updated: Dec 29, 2010 4:36 PM PST

Allie Williams
Channel 2 News



Crews say it will take several hours to clean up after a water main break in Sparks.

It happened Friday afternoon near Sparks Boulevard and Prater Way.

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority tells us the 24-inch main broke 6 feet underground but they aren't sure what caused it yet.

They'll have to dig down and get to the source before they know and that's expected to take about 8 hours.

So, they're asking everyone to avoid the area if possible because the roadway will be blocked as they work to clean everything up.

Crews expect everything to be back open by morning.

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BETSY BLANEY/AP FILE

Kay Sathre, left, and Sheldon Johnson, compare a clean filter June 17, 2009, to one that had been in Sathre's filtration system for what she said was three days. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality found hexavalent chromium above the maximum allowable by federal standards in water at about 40 homes in Cotton Flats, Texas.

EPA may tighten water standard

By Noaki Schwartz
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Wednesday it would likely tighten drinking water standards to address potential health risks of a carcinogen recently detected in the tap water of 31 cities across the country.

EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson said she was concerned about the prevalence of the chemical hexavalent chromium, also known as chromium 6.

The Environmental Working Group released a study Monday that analyzed drinking water across the country and found the five cities with the highest levels of chromium 6 were Norman, Okla.; Honolulu; Riverside, Calif.; Madison, Wis.; and San Jose, Calif.

In a recent letter to the EPA, U.S. Sens. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., and Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said the agency requires tests for total chromium levels in drinking water but the results don't show precise amounts of chromium 6.

In addition, the agency's chromium standard is outdated because it was set nearly two decades ago, the letter said.

Jackson detailed a series of actions Wednesday to be taken by the EPA, including working with state and local officials to determine how widespread the contaminant is and issuing guidance to all water systems on how to test for the carcinogen.

Citing a draft chromium 6 risk assessment the agency released in September, Jackson said it was likely the EPA will tighten drinking water standards to address the health risks posed by the chemical.

"EPA has already been working to review and incorporate the groundbreaking science referenced in this report," her statement read. "However, as a mother and the head of EPA, I am still concerned about the prevalence of chromium 6 in our drinking water."

Boxer, who chairs the U.S. Senate environment and public works committee, welcomed the agency's new push.

"The EPA is being vigilant and acting properly to address the issue of chromium 6," Boxer said in a statement to the Associated Press.

Following the tap water survey, Boxer and Feinstein, another California Democrat, called on the EPA to move quickly to protect the public from hexavalent chromium.

The senators said they planned to introduce legislation that would set a deadline for the EPA to establish an enforceable standard.

Studies show that chromium 6 can cause cancer in people and has also been found to cause damage to the gastrointestinal tract, lymph nodes and liver of animals.

The federal government's current total chromium standard is 100 parts per billion. California has proposed a goal for safe limits for chromium 6 at 0.06 parts per billion.

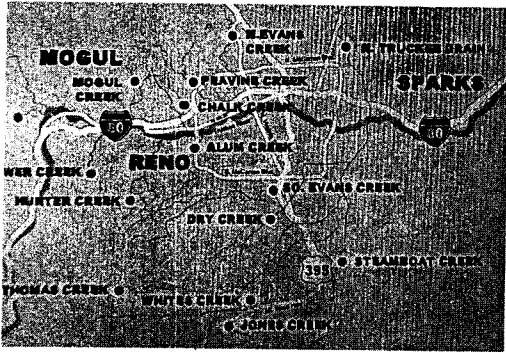
12/23/10

[print](#)

Reno unveils interactive river map

by [Jessica Carner](#)

12.10.10 - 12:02 am



RENO — Ever wondered which species of wildlife live near North Evans Creek or where the trailheads are located along Mogul Creek?

The city of Reno on Thursday unveiled a new interactive map tool that will allow community members to explore the Truckee River watershed with the click of a mouse.

The Truckee River Watershed Map Tool is designed for students, teachers, parents and anyone who is interested to learn about local creeks, trails, wildlife, native plants, noxious weeds and other natural characteristics of the river.

The interactive map can be accessed through a link on the city of Reno's website or by visiting www.tnstormwater.com or <http://watershed.reno.gov/>.

"We're really excited about this because we've never had a tool that lets the community connect with the watershed," said Lynell Garfield-Qualls, hydrologist for the city of Reno.

Garfield-Qualls explained the tool was designed for people who do not have experience using geographic information systems (GIS), especially middle and high school students, but the tool really is for everyone.

"It is a user-friendly, interactive map for the whole community," said Reno City Councilman Dave Aiazzi. "It gives users a bird's-eye view of the region."

Aiazzi said along with watershed information, the map includes links for schools, parks and historic landmarks.

Garfield-Qualls demonstrated use of the map at City Hall during a launch ceremony on Thursday.

She explained from the main map of the entire Truckee River watershed, users can click on links for individual creeks to open more detailed maps of each area. Each creek map contains information on wildlife, plants, trailheads and other areas of significance.

The main goal of the project, which was made possible through an \$80,000 grant from the Truckee River Fund and matching in-kind donations from the city, is to provide community members with a greater understanding of the watershed and with tools for stewardship of Reno's largest source of drinking water, Garfield-

Qualls said.

She said stewardship activities in which community members can partake in storm drain stenciling and volunteering to remove noxious weeds.

According to www.cleanwatermn.org, "Storm drain stenciling involves placing a clean water message next to a storm drains to make the public 'storm drain savvy' and less likely to use storm drains for disposing waste."

In an effort to educate the public about the new site, Garfield-Qualls will be teaching a course this weekend at the University of Nevada, Reno.

"We want to encourage all kinds of teachers to use this," she said, adding that Saturday's course is for teachers interested in learning more about the interactive map.

Sierra Nevada Journeys is offering the course for \$10. The class will be held at UNR from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday in the William J. Raggio Building, room 2026.

"For just \$10, teachers can learn about the tool and receive continuing education units," Garfield-Qualls said.

To sign up, contact Sierra Nevada Journeys at 355-1688.

Officials with the city of Reno hope community members will use the new site and contribute information to it.

Garfield-Qualls said she will continue to update the maps as necessary and anyone who wishes to send her information or photos for the map site is encouraged to do so. She can be reached by e-mail at garfield1@ci.reno.nv.us.

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- Courtesy UNR Cooperative Extension

- Courtesy UNR Cooperative Extension

Plants outside the box

BY JOANNE SKELLY
FOR THE NEVADA APPEAL,

Recently I was looking at the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's water-efficient plant list (tmwalandscapeguide.com) and found some plants with which I was unfamiliar. I always like broadening my plant palette, so I looked them up.

Amorpha canescens or leadplant is in the Pea family. This shrub is native to the Great Plains west into Wyoming and Montana. Not only does it tolerate temperatures to minus 38 degrees, it is also drought and fire tolerant. It requires little fertilization and is adapted to sandy to loamy soils. It has purple flowers with whitish to gray-green leaves. It grows to about 3 feet in height. Leadplant has a deep-branching root

system, so it is good for erosion control. For the best flower production, full sun is best.

Chamaebatiaria millefolium, fernbush or desert sweet, is a cousin to the rose. Grown in full sun, this Nevada native plant can reach 6 feet in height. White flowers bloom in midsummer on plants covered with sweet-smelling fernlike leaves. It grows well in gravelly soils with good drainage. It, too, tolerates drought.

I love lilacs and saw Japanese lilac tree, *Syringa reticulata*, on the list. This relative of the olive can be grown in full sun as a large shrub or trained as a single-stemmed tree that can grow to 25 feet tall. Its leaves are 4 to 5 inches long, and it has showy white flowers 4 to 12 inches long. The bark is a cherry-like reddish brown. It attracts birds and bees. It thrives in most soils. It does require regular water; otherwise, treat it as any other lilac, which means low maintenance. It will tolerate temperatures down to minus 35 degrees.

I had heard of the Amur maackia, *Maackia amurensis*, but knew little about it. Another member of the Pea family, this relative to the locust is a native of Siberia. The maackia generally grows to 30 feet tall. It is known for its copper-colored peeling bark and pealike creamy flowers. The leaves are dark gray or olive-green. Well-drained soil is essential, but it is salt, drought and cold (minus 35 degrees) tolerant. It is said to have a nice form and works well in home landscapes.

As winter keeps you indoors, explore adding less common plants to your landscape next spring. Check nurseries, catalogs and websites for new ideas. If you purchase plants, buy those that will fit the spot even at maturity, require little water summer or winter, and will tolerate high winds and occasional below-zero temperatures.

• JoAnne Skelly is the Carson City/Storey County Extension educator for University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and may be reached at skellyj@unce.unr.edu or 887-2252.

NORTHERN NEVADA MOMENTS

Truckee River flows onto the Web

A high-tech tool to allow students and other interested people to study the Truckee River's sensitive watershed was unveiled by Reno officials Thursday.

The interactive website explores the creeks and watersheds that feed the 22-mile-long section of the river that flows through the greater Reno-Sparks area between the California state line and Vista Boulevard.

Kelly Cannon, K-12 science program manager for the Washoe County School District, said the Truckee River Watershed Map Tool will offer an exciting opportunity for students.

"This is going to be amazing," Cannon said. "It will let the kids do something other than watch water flowing down the creek. We need our students to understand science is in everyday life."

See full story on page 2A.



ANDY BARR/FURIEL

City of Reno hydrologist Lynell Garfield introduces the new interactive map of the Truckee River watershed at the Reno City Council Chambers on Thursday.

Website can help students learn about Truckee River watershed

Tool funded by \$80,000 TMWA grant

By Jeff DeLong
jdelong@rgj.com

A high-tech tool to allow students and other interested people to study the Truckee River's sensitive watershed was unveiled Thursday by Reno officials.

The interactive website explores creeks and watersheds feeding the 22-mile-long section of the river that flows through the greater Reno-Sparks area between the California state line and Vista Boulevard.

Users can click on icons where 18 different creeks flow into the river, learning, among other things, physical characteristics of the creek, what wildlife can be found there and hiking opportunities in the area. About 244,000 acres of watershed are contained within the map area.

The website, funded through an \$80,000 grant from the Truckee Meadows Water Authority's ratepayer-financed Truckee River Fund, is designed to help people, particularly students, understand how components of the river's watershed naturally connect, said Lynell Garfield, a hydrologist for the city of Reno.

"Understanding connections is our main goal," Garfield said. "It builds a sense of place and what we're about."

The creeks are all different. There's



ANDY BARRON/RGJ

City of Reno hydrologist Lynell Garfield, center, assists teacher Sean Hill, right, and Sarah Gobbs-Hill of the Nevada Discovery Museum on Thursday as they navigate through the new interactive map of the Truckee River watershed at the Reno City Council Chambers.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: Training session on "exploring your watershed through technology" for teachers and other interested people. Half of a continuing education credit is available for teachers.

WHEN: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: William J. Raggio Education Building, Room 2026; University of Nevada, Reno

COST: \$10

DETAILS: Call Sierra Nevada Journeys at 775-355-1688 to sign up for the training session.

ON THE WEB

Visit <http://watershed.reno.gov> for the Truckee River Watershed Map Tool.

Galena Creek, which gurgles from the Mount Rose Wilderness. There's Chalk Creek, which flows from the

flanks of Peavine Creek, entering the Truckee River after

picking up massive amounts of pollutants from densely packed neighborhoods.

Kelly Cannon, K-12 science program manager for the Washoe County School District, said the Truckee River Watershed Map Tool will offer an exciting opportunity for students.

"This is going to be amazing," Cannon said. "It will let the kids do something other than watch water flowing down the creek. We need our students to understand science is in everyday life."