

TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 19, 2011

Press Clippings

October 12, 2011 – November 7, 2011



*Ann Matya (Desert Heights Elementary School)
2010 Poster Art Contest – Third Place, Grades K-3*

EPA to probe gas drilling's toll on drinking water

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM, Associated Press – 3 days ago 0

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday released the outlines of its long-awaited probe into whether hydraulic fracturing — the unconventional drilling technique that's led to a boom in domestic natural gas production — is contaminating drinking-water supplies.

Investigators will try to determine the impact of large-scale water withdrawals, aboveground spills of drilling fluids, and the fracturing process itself on water quality and quantity in states where tens of thousands of wells have been drilled in recent years.

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, involves the high-pressure injection of millions of gallons of water, along with sand and chemical additives, deep underground to extract natural gas trapped in shale rock. Energy companies have greatly expanded their use of fracking as they tap previously unreachable shale deposits, including the lucrative Marcellus Shale formation in Pennsylvania and neighboring states.

The industry has long contended that fracking is safe, but environmentalists and some residents who live near drilling sites say it has poisoned groundwater. The EPA study, mandated by Congress last year, is the agency's first look at the impact of fracking in shale deposits.

EPA will examine drilling sites in Pennsylvania, Colorado, Louisiana, North Dakota and Texas. The earliest results will be available in 2012.

Industry groups said Thursday they are confident the study will vindicate their position that fracking does not harm the environment or human health.

"The industry has taken the lead in working with state regulators to constantly improve operations, industry practices and guidelines as well as improve communications with local communities," said Stephanie Meadows, a senior policy adviser at the American Petroleum Institute.

The institute and five other industry groups recently complained to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson that agency staff began collecting field data and water samples months before the study plan was finished. The industry groups, in an Oct. 20 letter to Jackson, also questioned the study design itself and said it could undermine the credibility of the findings.

The EPA said it began work over the summer so that it could finish the study by 2014.

The federal agency has studied fracking before, in 2004, looking at its use in coalbed methane deposits. It concluded then that the technology is safe, but its methodology was widely criticized as flawed.

The new EPA study will look at the entire water lifecycle of hydraulic fracturing in shale deposits, beginning with the industry's withdrawal of huge volumes of water from rivers and streams and ending with the treatment and disposal of the tainted wastewater that comes back out of the wells after fracking. Researchers will also study well design and the impact of surface spills of fracking fluids on groundwater.

The EPA has taken steps recently to boost federal regulation of fracking, announcing it will develop national standards for the disposal of the briny, chemical-laced wastewater and proposing for the first time to control air pollution at oil and gas wells, particularly where fracking is used.

Drillers have resisted enhanced federal regulation, saying it should be left up to individual states.

Associated Press writer Dina Cappiello in Washington contributed to this story.

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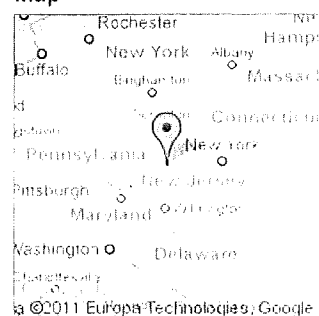
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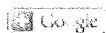
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Bridge design is next step

While construction on the Virginia Street Bridge replacement isn't likely to start for years, city officials say the next step is to at least get a basic design approved by the Reno City Council next month.

The firm doing that design work, Pasadena, Calif.-based Jacobs Engineering, has come up with five bridge proposals that include three fixed structures and two movable options the City Council is expected to consider at its Nov. 14 meeting. The City Council in late August decided to give the community more time to offer their opinions on the proposals. Public comment forms are available at vsbreno.com.

The proposed bridge designs range in price from \$17 million to \$50 million in projected lifetime costs and could require construction crews to tear up Virginia Street and its sidewalks between Mill and First streets. The specifics of the project are on hold until the City Council gives its OK to one general design.

"We will be going out with aesthetics closely following the structure type selection, the dressing it up," said Charla Honey, the engineering manager for Reno's public works department. "The railing, the lighting, the fun stuff."

Honey said the Truckee River Flood

Management Authority has freed up \$4.8 million to do public outreach and design work on the bridge, just one piece of the region's flood management puzzle. So far, \$1.4 million has been spent working on the replacement for the 106-year-old bridge that requires semi-annual state inspections after it needed repairs following the 2005 flood. And while money to start construction has not been approved, the idea today is to at least get the specifics on paper so, once funding does become available, work will be able to start sooner, Honey said.

"We have a lot more to do until we could even get to the point where we could start building it," which includes environmental permitting, she said.

The project has drawn concerns from nearby residents and business owners who have been meeting with city officials during the past three months. City officials staged a public outreach meeting on Aug. 2 and have since held private meetings with people affected by the project.

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That includes Chuck Shapiro, the owner of the Wild River Grille, which sits just south of the Virginia Street Bridge on the first floor of the Riverside Artist Lofts.

"My main concern was the health and livelihood of the businesses that are directly impacted by the construction and what the city can or cannot do to make sure the businesses survive the project," Shapiro said.

And while he's had more communication with city officials since he told the City Council about his concerns in August, "some of the bigger questions remain unanswered."

Those questions will depend on whether a moveable or static bridge is selected.

The problem with the bridge today, officials say, is that it blocks debris whenever the Truckee River starts to rise. The new designs have no supporting structures that reach the river and would raise its profile by about three feet, meaning there would be less chance for the bridge to block up the river.

Those two moveable bridges would be the best, as well as the most expensive, options for flood control by either lifting the bridge up like a draw bridge or raising it on four hydraulic lifts. They would require counter weights to be buried in the ground.

The fixed bridges would cost less, though would offer less flood protection. They would require the road and sidewalk to be raised leading up to the bridge, meaning a

larger construction area.

Officials say that whenever construction starts, it could last up to 18 months to two years.

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What do you think?

Want to give your two cents on the future of the Virginia Street Bridge? Visit vsbreno.com. Public comment forms are available there.

Bridge types

Fixed: Rigid frame, pony truss and extradosed (a variation of a cable bridge). They could cost between \$17 million to \$21 million over a 75-year lifetime.

Pros:

- Likely reduced construction duration
- Utilities in bridge remain in existing routing
- Requires minimal ongoing maintenance
- Does not require action during a flood event

Cons:

- Meets minimal flood capacity requirements
- Requires permanent sidewalk and roadway grade changes
- Will impact existing pedestrian flow and business access

Moveable: Draw bridge and hydraulic lift. These could cost \$48 million to \$50 million over a 75-year lifetime.

Pros:

- Exceeds required flood capacity
- Do not require permanent sidewalk and roadway grade changes
- Maintains existing pedestrian flow and business access

Cons

- Monthly testing required. That means street closures, inconvenience to public, and staff time
- Construction cost approximately twice that of static bridges
- Likely longer construction duration
- Requires re-routing utilities in bridge
- Increased maintenance and lifecycle costs due to mechanical and electrical equipment
- Approximate 45-foot-long construction pit requires ditch and 36-inch sewer relocation
- Requires staff action and operability during a flood event

Source: Jacobs Engineering/VSBreno.com

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Glendale water treatment project wins award

by Tribune Staff

10.26.11 - 05:08 pm

RENO — The Engineering News-Record (ENR) recently named Truckee Meadows Water Authority's (TMWA) Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project as this year's best project in the civil/infrastructure category for the Southwest Region.

Completed in December 2010, this project was also nominated as a finalist for the overall "project of the year" award for the ENR-Southwest Region.

"We are very proud that ENR has recognized the proactive and innovative engineering and construction that went into completing this project," said Ron Penrose, project manager for TMWA. "The project represents years of hard work by stakeholders, TMWA staff and local engineering consultants and contractors."

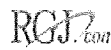
ENR dates back to 1874 when it was first published under the name Engineering News. Today, the weekly magazine has a subscription base of 70,000 worldwide.

The Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project was completed in 2010 and has enabled TMWA to greatly improve reliability and delivery capability to its Glendale Water Treatment Plant while improving fish and boat passage in the Truckee River. Funding for the project was provided by the state through the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program.

TMWA is a nonprofit water utility that treats and delivers drinking water to more than 330,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

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COMMUNITY FORUM

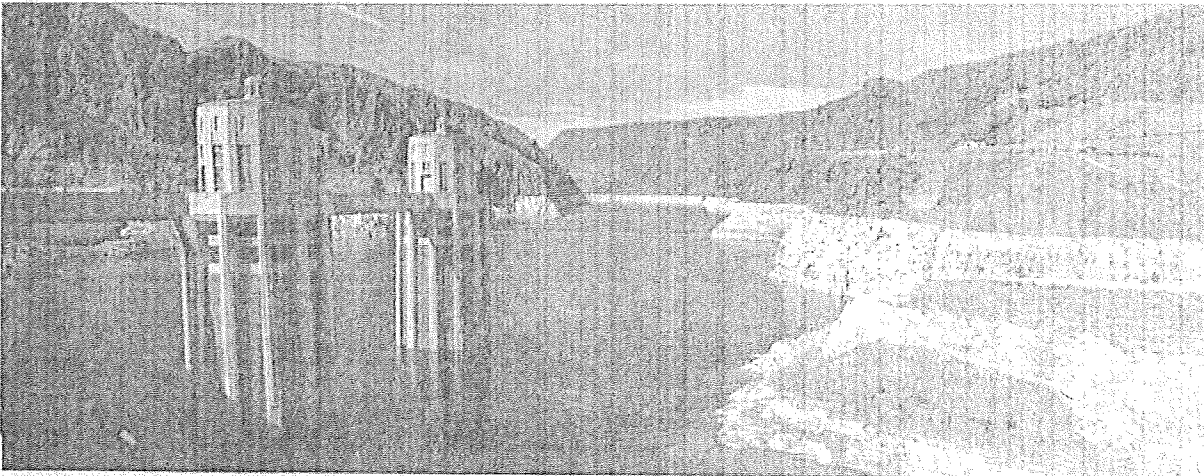


A LOOK AHEAD

Next week's forum will be centric to early February, as it will feature businesses. WEIGH IN NOW AT RGJ.COM/FORUMS

TODAY'S TOPIC: WATER

Water pipeline debate intensifies



Drought caused a reduction in water levels at Lake Mead that can be seen by the white ring around the shore at Hoover Dam in 2006. (COURTESY: SNWA)

FOR PIPELINE

Recovery depends on reliable water supply

By Pat Mulroy

Southern Nevada's nascent economic recovery — which is a critical part of the entire state's recovery — is inextricably linked to a reliable water supply. As the agency tasked with securing water for seven out of 10 Nevadans, the Southern Nevada Water Authority works to identify supplies that can meet demand half a century into the future.

Little more than 10 years ago, our water supply seemed assured. Unfortunately, Mother Nature had other plans. A decade-long drought has depleted Lake Mead, which supplies water to much of the Southwest.

As the drought intensified, it became clear that dependence on the Colorado River — which currently represents 90 percent of Southern Nevada's water supply — is perilous for our community. To reduce our exposure to drought, the SNWA activated long-held groundwater applications in east-central Nevada.

Drawing upon water supplies from outside one's community is not unique to Las Vegas. Carson City, Wendover and, yes, Reno all rely upon interbasin transfers for part of their water supply.

The Nevada state engineer, who controls our state's water supplies, is now considering the SNWA's water right applications. These applications, often mischaracterized by activists as a "water grab," are nothing of the sort. Nevada water law is based upon two principles. First, each groundwater basin has an annual budget of available water based on natural recharge to avoid draining the aquifer. Second, water rights are issued first-come, first-served to ensure that existing rights holders are protected. Even

after water rights are granted, the resulting permit is not a blank check. The ultimate control of that resource remains with the state forever.

Opponents of the SNWA's applications have made wildly speculative claims about deforestation and dust storms, while the science actually indicates that many plants in that region don't use groundwater now. However, the real issue that activists refuse to acknowledge is the power of environmental laws explicitly created to protect our state's and nation's natural resources. Beyond these laws, the SNWA already has entered into agreements with federal government agencies that allow it to directly participate in managing this water supply.

Much has been said about presumed alternatives. Leading the list are conservation and ocean desalination. Southern Nevada leads the nation in its conservation efforts. Our community conserved nearly a third of its water supply while at the same time adding 400,000 new residents. Our commitment to conservation will continue, but you cannot conserve 90 percent of your water use.

As for ocean desalination, the only feasible way to access that supply is through an exchange of Colorado River water. When Lake Mead hits critical elevations, all users will be cut to bare bones, and there will be no river water available for exchange.

Construction of this project will not begin immediately, but rather will occur only when conditions warrant. When that day comes, 2 million Nevada residents will be dependent on resources we identify and secure today.

Pat Mulroy is general manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

EXCERPTS FROM RGJ.COM

We asked readers whether the state should approve the Clark County plan to pipe water from White Pine and other rural counties. Excerpts from the RGJ.com forums:

ABSOLUTELY NOT. THIS is comparable to LA sucking the water in the 1930s from Mono Lake and devastating the communities in that area. Las Vegas and its citizens need to readjust their habits to exist on the water that is currently available to them. — Primomax

QUITE FRANKLY, I think that if Vegas can't do with what they have, they need to stop growing... There are however laws in place that state that if the water is not being put to good use at the source, and will not cause sufficient detriment to the source community, it can be moved to be put to good use elsewhere. — SteveDB

SUNDAY HOT TOPIC

LAST WEEK'S ONLINE POLL:

FULL should the state approve the Clark County plan to pipe water from White Pine and other rural counties?



THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL: Should cities use financial incentives to lure businesses here?

Share your comments by clicking on the Hot Topic link under forums in the Voice section at RGJ.com, and vote in our Instant Poll. You also can comment on Hot Topics and any news story by emailing letters@RGJ.com.

AGAINST PIPELINE

Pipeline won't 'repair' economy in the south

By Launce Rake

I live in Southern Nevada and I'm not ashamed of that. We are rebuilding from a massive economic hit. We're promoting eco-tourism and building a new industry in renewable solar energy down here to complement the geothermal you have. Downtown Las Vegas, where I live, is thriving with new art galleries and bistros.

It's a new way to grow for us, but most of us realize the days of unleavened corporate greed and building empty subdivisions are behind us.

Despite the new direction, there still are promoters of public policy that can't get out of an old, discredited way of working. The Southern Nevada Water Authority, which has a monopoly on water distribution down here, is still serving up an expensive, environmentally ruinous policy as a "solution" that will somehow return Las Vegas to the boom-boom years of the 1990s.

For the low, low price of \$15 billion, Las Vegas can build a pipeline to rural Nevada and pump most of the "used" groundwater down to the coast. For years, SNWA said we needed the water to sustain nonexistent growth.

Now, the agency says Las Vegas needs the water because the Colorado River, our major source of drinking water, might dry up. And the agency says, "Golly if you let us build our \$15 billion pipeline, we probably, maybe, won't even use it!" (No promises.)

And if you don't give us the pipeline, all the businesses and residents and tax revenue will just dry up and blow away, SNWA threatens. This is a fear-mongering exercise to justify a pipeline that, according to federal analysts and dozens of

the best scientists in the West, will profoundly damage the existing environment in East-Central Nevada — roughly an area the size of Vermont.

The arguments for the pipeline also ignore the fact that metropolitan Southern Nevada has cut a third of its water use and could trim more if it had SNWA support.

Preserving the Colorado River as a safe and reliable water source, and protecting the conservation achievements that mean Las Vegas is only using two-thirds of its allocation from the river, will guarantee the city has access to water indefinitely.

The metro area does have a once used much more than our allocation from the river.

Now, we use much less. And there's simply no evidence that building this pipeline will "repair" the Southern Nevada economy.

And further, we don't want to repeat the growth of a few years ago that led to a massive economic and fiscal crisis. The drought is here, and we need to

stop the pipeline. The Vegas bid is a pipe dream. Financial "promises" will mean hotels, malls and homes that go unbuilt when the economy can't local government that they profit.

They're wrong, but they're still pointing to what a pipe dream. You can't build a pipe dream. There are no welcome cranks in their once-unpredictable power. I hope that the entire state can help us oppose bad public policy from whatever source.

Launce Rake is a member of the Sierra Club, a past chapter executive committee member of the Urban Basin Water Network, and a former regional consultant working in Nevada.

WEEK AHEAD

TIPOFF APPROACHES FOR PACK BASKETBALL TEAMS

The Nevada Wolf Pack men's basketball team opens the 2011-12 season with an exhibition game Tuesday against Chico State. The women host Notre Dame De Namur on Wednesday in their exhibition game. Both games start at 7 p.m. at Lawlor Events Center and are free to the public. The men's first regular season game is this week on Friday against Missouri State.

PUBLIC CAN WEIGH IN ON WATER UTILITY'S PLAN

To boost revenues during the next three years, Truckee Meadows Water Authority officials plan to raise a monthly customer service charge rather than hear people complain about their water rates going up after they've conserved water. A public workshop on the hikes is scheduled for 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at TMWA's offices, 1355 Capital Blvd., Reno.

NAMES OF FALLEN SOLDIERS TO BE READ

University of Nevada, Reno veterans will read names of soldiers who died in Iraq and Afghanistan on Friday. Roll call will be at City Hall plaza at Virginia and First streets at 7 a.m. and break at 10:30 a.m. for the Veterans Day parade, which starts shortly after 11 a.m.

-- Compiled by David Jacobs, RCUJ, Reno staff, Associated Press and Mason Valley News reports

Legals

Legals

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
REVISIONS TO TMWA RULES**

Truckee Meadows Water Authority
Wednesday, November 16, 2011 -- 10:00 a.m.
Sparks City Council Chambers, Legislative Building
745 Fourth Street, Sparks

TMWA's Board of Directors will hold the first reading on revisions to TMWA Rules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 on November 16, 2011. Customers are encouraged to provide comments in advance of the meeting or by attending the meeting and submitting comments. The public hearing for the second reading to adopt the proposed revisions is tentatively scheduled to be held January 18, 2012 with revisions, if adopted, to become effective on February 1, 2012.

This Notice of Public Hearing is posted at the following locations: Truckee Meadows Water Authority (1355 Capital Blvd., Reno), Reno City Hall (1 E. First St., Reno), Sparks City Hall (431 Prater Way, Sparks), Sparks Justice Court (630 Greenbrae Dr., Sparks), Washoe County Clerk's Office/Courthouse (75 Court St., Reno), Washoe County Central Library (301 South Center St., Reno), Washoe County Administration (1001 East Ninth St., Reno) and at www.tmwa.com. Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations should contact TMWA at 834-8002 at least 24 hours in advance.

Copies of the proposed rule revisions are available for inspection at the Truckee Meadows Water Authority offices (1355 Capital Blvd.) or online under Latest News at www.tmwa.com. Public comments can also be submitted online. If you have additional questions, contact TMWA at 834-8060, option 2.

No. 767046 Nov 4, 2011

Legals

Legals

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL WATER RATE ADJUSTMENT**

Truckee Meadows Water Authority
Wednesday, November 16, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.
Sparks City Council Chambers
745 Fourth Street, Sparks

Truckee Meadows Water Authority's (TMWA) Board of Directors will hold the first public hearing on a potential water rate adjustment on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. TMWA is asking for your input concerning the proposed adjustment, anticipated for implementation in the first billing cycle in February, 2012. Customers are encouraged to attend this meeting and provide comments. Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations should contact TMWA at 834-8002 at least 24 hours in advance.

This Notice of Public Hearing is posted at the following locations: Truckee Meadows Water Authority (1355 Capital Blvd., Reno), Reno City Hall (1 E. First St., Reno), Sparks City Hall (431 Prater Way, Sparks), Sparks Justice Court (630 Greenbrae Dr., Sparks), Washoe County Clerk's Office/Courthouse (75 Court St., Reno), Washoe County Central Library (391 South Center St., Reno), Washoe County Administration (1901 East Ninth St., Reno) and at www.tmwa.com

Copies of the proposed rate adjustments and information related to the proposed rate adjustments are available for inspection at the Truckee Meadows Water Authority office (1355 Capital Blvd.) or online under Latest News at www.tmwa.com. Public comments can also be submitted online. If you have additional questions, contact us at 834-8080, option 2.

Mark Foree
General Manager

No. 766648 Nov 4, 2011

Mexico's newest export to US may be water

By ELLIOT SPAGAT, Associated Press – Oct 15, 2011 0

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Mexico ships televisions, cars, sugar and medical equipment to the United States. Soon, it may be sending water north.

Western states are looking south of the border for water to fill drinking glasses, flush toilets and sprinkle lawns, as four major U.S. water districts help plan one of two huge desalination plant proposals in Playas de Rosarito, about 15 miles south of San Diego. Combined, they would produce 150 million gallons a day, enough to supply more than 300,000 homes on both sides of the border.

The plants are one strategy by both countries to wean themselves from the drought-prone Colorado River, which flows 1,450 miles from the Rocky Mountains to the Sea of Cortez. Decades of friction over the Colorado, in fact, are said to be a hurdle to current desalination negotiations.

The proposed plants have also sparked concerns that American water interests looking to Mexico are simply trying to dodge U.S. environmental reviews and legal challenges.

Desalination plants can blight coastal landscapes, sucking in and killing fish eggs and larvae. They require massive amounts of electricity and dump millions of gallons of brine back into the ocean that can, if not properly disposed, also be harmful to fish.

But desalination has helped quench demand in Australia, Saudi Arabia and other countries lacking fresh water.

Dozens of proposals are on the drawing board in the United States to address water scarcity but the only big project to recently win regulators' blessings would produce 50 million gallons a day in Carlsbad, near San Diego. A smaller plant was approved last year in Monterey, some 110 miles south of San Francisco.

Mexico is a relative newcomer to desalination. Its largest plant supplies 5 million gallons a day in the Baja California resort town of Cabo San Lucas, with a smattering of tiny ones on the Baja peninsula. Skeptics already question the two proposed plants in Playas de Rosarito — known as Rosarito Beach to American expatriates and visiting college spring-breakers.

"It raises all kinds of red flags," said Joe Geever, California policy coordinator for the Surfrider Foundation, an environmentalist group that has fought the Carlsbad plant for years in court, saying it will kill marine life and require too much electricity.

Water agencies that supply much of Southern California, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Tijuana, Mexico, are pursuing the plant that would produce 50 million gallons a day in Rosarito near an existing electricity plant. They commissioned a study last year that found no fatal flaws and ordered another one that will include a cost estimate, with an eye toward starting operations in three to five years.

Potential disagreements between the two countries include how the new water stores will be used.

The U.S. agencies want to consider helping pay for the plant and letting Mexico keep the water for booming areas of Tijuana and Rosarito. In exchange, Mexico would surrender some of its allotment from the Colorado River, sparing the cost of laying pipes from the plant to California.

Mexico would never give up water from the Colorado, which feeds seven western U.S. states and northwest Mexico, said Jose Gutierrez, assistant director for binational affairs at Mexico's National Water Commission. Mexico's rights are enshrined in a 1944 treaty.

"The treaty carries great significance in our country. We have to protect it fiercely," Gutierrez said.

Rick Van Schoik, director of Arizona State University's North American Center for Transborder Studies, said laying a pipeline across the border would be too costly.

"It's expensive enough to desalinate. I just don't see how it calculates out," he said.

The other big plant proposal joins Consolidated Water Co., a Cayman Islands company, with Mexican investors. Their proposal would send much of its 100 million gallons a day from Rosarito to the United States via a new pipeline, with operations beginning in 2014.

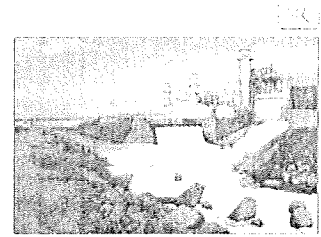
Mexico isn't likely to approve both plants, said Gutierrez, whose government is sponsoring the 50-million-gallon-a-day plant with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the San Diego County Water Authority, the Central Arizona Water Conservation District and the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

A key question is whether Mexico will allow water first used at the neighboring electric plant to be desalinated — a giant potential savings. California recently adopted rules that prohibit the state's electric plants from sucking in vast amounts of seawater to cool their machinery.

The Carlsbad plant illustrates how difficult it can be to build a plant in California. Poseidon Resources Corp., based in Stamford, Conn., has survived about a decade of legal challenges and regulatory review.

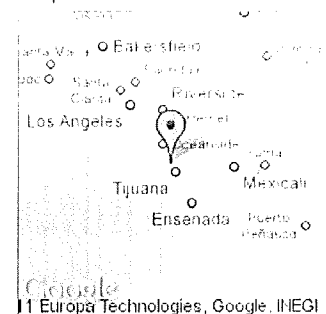
The company, which plans to begin major construction when it secures financing, was required

AP Associated Press



This undated photo released by the San Diego County Water Authority shows water gushing from an electricity plant in Playas de Rosarito, Mexico, next to a site where government agencies in the western United States are considering putting large desalination plants. Details are being worked out, but these vast amounts of water used at the electricity plant could be used for desalination at the proposed site. (AP Photo/San Diego County Water Authority)

Map



Tahoe RCD gains funding to continue invasive species protection

Submitted by Editor on Thu, 10/27/2011 - 4:29pm

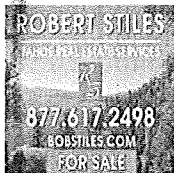
community education News Truckee



By Peter Brumis

The Truckee River Fund has awarded \$267,267 to the Tahoe Resource Conservation District to protect Truckee area waterbodies from the growing threat posed by aquatic invasive species. The money will also be used for continued implementation of a mandatory watercraft inspection program and the establishment of a stakeholder collaborative to fund a long-term, sustainable aquatic invasive species prevention program for the Truckee area.

Entering its third year of managing the Truckee Regional Aquatic Invasive Species Protection Program (TRAISPP), the Tahoe RCD will continue to conduct watercraft inspections and develop and refine a comprehensive AIS education and outreach plan for the Truckee River watershed. Funding will also be utilized for early detection monitoring of AIS, an essential component of prevention programs.



"Through a series of public meetings and stakeholder input, community members and agency representatives have asked the Tahoe RCD to work towards a mandatory boat inspection program, similar to the program in Lake Tahoe,"

said Kim Boyd, Biological Resources Program Manager at Tahoe RCD. "By studying boater usage patterns, we can conclude that Truckee area waterbodies are at risk for AIS introduction, especially with the recent quagga mussel infestation at Lahontan Reservoir, just a short drive away in Northern Nevada. A major concern is that these waterbodies could become a pathway for spreading AIS throughout California and the region."

Tahoe RCD and the Truckee River Watershed Council will be meeting with decision makers in the coming weeks to develop an ordinance for mandatory boat inspections in the Truckee area. Therefore, boaters may see changes to the inspection process at Donner Lake and Stampede, Boca and Prosser Reservoirs.

"We are thrilled with the progress of the Truckee AIS program over the last 2 years," said Mike Mamola, TRAISPP Program Coordinator, "but we are still seeking input and support from the community and a broad coalition of Truckee area stakeholders to help ensure the long term success of the program and to help safeguard Truckee's natural environment and economy." Invasive species resources for the Truckee area and contact information for public input can be found at TruckeeBoatInspections.com.

— Writer Peter Brumis is a Public Outreach Specialist for the Tahoe Resource Conservation District. He can be reached at pbrumis@tahoercd.org



October 28, 2011

Settlement reached in Tahoe pier dispute

ROUND HILL, Nev. (AP) - Environmental regulators and a Lake Tahoe property owner have settled a dispute over environmental rule violations that stretch back to 2008.

The Tahoe Daily Tribune reports Tamara Fritz and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency have agreed to terms to resolve violations that occurred between April 2008 and March 2011.

The violations included an unauthorized pier expansion and construction of a boat lift, among other things, at her Tahoe City property.

Fritz's lakefront property is the site of the annual Oscar de la Renta Fashion Show, an event that raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for conservation group League to Save Lake Tahoe.

Under the agreement, Fritz will pay \$35,000 within 30 days, restore vacant property and remove the boatlift by Nov. 15.

Las Vegas Sun

NV Energy's smart meters to be investigated

By Cy Ryan (contact)

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2011 | 4:04 p.m.

After hearing several complaints about possible health hazards and invasion of privacy, the state Public Utilities Commission has opened an investigation into smart meters installed in more than 500,000 homes in Las Vegas.

Commissioner Rebecca Wagner said there was misinformation or a lack of information when the commission approved NV Energy's application to begin the project.

She said she wants to look into allowing customers to refuse the installation of the meters and the implications. And she says the investigation should address the health issues and the privacy and security fears.

This should be started now, she said, before "it unravels further."

Although the vote was unanimous, Commissioner David Noble said many of the concerns were addressed in a prior hearing and he did not want to duplicate what had been covered. He said he did not "want to open up a free-for-all" on this case.

Angel De Fazio, founder of NV Energy Stop Smart Meters, said the units transmit electromagnetic radiation and are harmful to people with physical impairments.

De Fazio told the PUC it had a duty "to protect the disabled." This is not a federal mandate, she said and homeowners should have the right to "opt out" in having a meter.

She also said the meters are a health hazard to dogs.

Mike Hazard told the commission a lot of people don't like the smart meters. A federal grant of \$138 million helped finance the installation of the meters and he suggested that money could have been used to build a new power plant in Southern Nevada.

NV Energy and its sister Sierra Pacific Power Company hope to have all the customers hooked up by December 2012. Installation should start in December in Northern Nevada.

The units will allow the customer to view next-day energy use information and the time of day the power is used. NV Energy maintains studies show the smart meters are safe.

The radio frequency exposure signal goes out 48 times a day and is within the guidelines of the Federal Communications Commission. "By comparison, cellphones transmit constantly and at very close range," the utility said.

The only one at the Tuesday hearing who spoke in favor of the unit was a man named Todd who said, "I love it." He said he has been able to lower his power use during the day hours. "My problem is with (NV Energy) bringing truckloads of armed guards to read the meter," said the individual who did not sign in at the meeting in Las Vegas.

But several speakers opposed the meters and some said they would be willing to pay more if they could return to the prior system.

Anne Haley complained this should be a “freedom of choice” and NV Energy has been able to keep complaints from being publicized.

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Glendale Water Treatment Improvement Project wins prestigious award from engineering publication

October 25, 2011

By [ThisIsReno](#)

SUBMITTED NEWS RELEASE

Engineering News-Record (ENR) recently named [Truckee Meadows Water Authority's](#) (TMWA) Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project as this year's best project in the civil/ infrastructure category for the Southwest Region. Completed in December 2010, this project was also nominated as a finalist for the overall "project of the year" award for the ENR-Southwest Region.

"We are very proud that ENR has recognized the proactive and innovative engineering and construction that went into completing this project," said Ron Penrose, Project Manager for TMWA. "The project represents years of hard work by stakeholders, TMWA staff, and local engineering consultants and contractors.

ENR dates back to 1874 when it was first published under the name Engineering News. Today the weekly magazine has a subscription base of 70,000 worldwide.

The Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project was completed in 2010 and has enabled TMWA to greatly improve reliability and delivery capability to its Glendale Water Treatment Plant while improving fish and boat passage in the Truckee River. Funding for the project was provided by the State of Nevada through the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program.

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 330,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows.

RPD to Hold Prescription Drug Round Up

RENO-- This Saturday officers of the Reno Police Department will again partner with the DEA and the National Take-Back Initiative to hold our area's sixth Prescription Drug Round Up event.

The Round Up provides a way for citizens to get rid of old or expired medications from their homes, so that they cannot fall into the hands of youth or adults who might abuse them. The effort is also designed to help minimize the potential for pollution of water supplies and the impact on pets and wildlife as a result of improper disposing of medications by flushing them down toilets.

The area's last Round Up was held on October 1st, and collected **268,180 prescription pills**. The first Prescription Drug Round Up in Nevada was held in Washoe County in October 2009. To date, over a half million prescription pills have been collected at these events. The event was sponsored by: Join Together Northern Nevada, the Reno Police Department, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Washoe County Department of Water Resources, Waste Management, Retail Association of Northern Nevada, Nevada Prevention Resource Center, Scolari's, Save Mart, Walgreen's, Smith's, the Sparks Police Department, local pharmacists and others. Collection sites for **Saturday, October 29th from 10am to 2 pm** are: **Scolari's - 8165 S. Virginia St., RenoSave Mart - 565 East Prater Way, Sparks** Further information on the proper disposal of unused or unwanted prescription drugs can be located at www.jtnn.org. If you have any questions regarding the Round-Up event, you are encouraged to call Stacy Shamblin, Drug Abuse Prevention Coordinator for the Reno Police Department at 657-4794

This project is supported by Grant No.2009-DG-BX-0038 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this



This article was printed from the Green Guide section of the *Reno News & Review*, originally published October 27, 2011.

This article may be read online at: <http://www.newsreview.com/reno/content?oid=4256478>

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Tree huggers

Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition

By [Ashley Hennefer](#)

The Northern Nevada landscape features a stark contrast between barren desert and snow-capped mountains, urban and rural, and within all of these diverse settings trees are a constant. But in the midst of homeowners caring for smaller plants in gardens and yards, trees are often left to fend for themselves.

This week is Nevada Shade Tree Week, and the Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition and the Truckee Meadows Water Authority are working with homeowners to increase awareness about the care and keeping of perennial arbors.

“We hear often that people don’t water their trees,” said Lora Rose Richards, conservation and community education administrator for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority. “But it’s an urban forest, and we live in the desert. Just like other plants, they need to be watered.”

According to Richards, many of the misconceptions stem from a lack of knowledge about the anatomy of trees and their growth.

“We see trees as structural rather than living,” said Rebecca Wikler, outreach specialist for Good Standing Outreach. “Once you learn about them, caring for them seems common sense, but it’s not necessarily intuitive.”

Roots should extend about a foot below the soil, but many homeowners rely on surface sprinklers to



Plumas Street is known for its shady canopy. Photo By ashley hennefer

For recommendations on how to plant the best tree for your home, visit the Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition website, <http://communityforestry.org>.

<http://communityforestry.org/>
http://tmwalandscapguide.com/landscape_guide/interactive/index.php

nourish their trees, and roots will navigate upward to seek out water. Elevated roots put trees at risk of falling during heavy storms or aggressive winds.

Richards recommends planning an irrigation system that can water all plants. A drip or soaker system will efficiently keep the soil moist without wasting water that can easily evaporate or blow away with the breeze.

“We try to promote water-efficient ways that are still beautiful,” Richards said. “We can grow big, beautiful trees and still conserve.”

TMCFC encourages the idea of “right tree, right place.” Choosing the correct class for your home can make a significant impact. For instance, class I trees are under 30 feet tall and work well for streets with low hanging power lines. A class III tree can require more than 10 feet of space for its roots to expand. Two additional categories, sidewalk and street, refer to trees planted in public city environments.

In Reno, apple trees are abundant, hardy and endure the frost. Pines and evergreens thrive in the mountainous climates. White fir, oak and ash trees are also common and can withstand the harsh and unpredictable weather. TMCFC has knowledgeable arborists on hand to help homeowners pick a tree suitable for their yard, and a comprehensive guide can be found on their website.

Aside from their beauty, trees offer sustenance, shade and air filtering. But often their size and common presence in neighborhoods removes the connection between farmer and plant, and trees can be taken for granted. Richards hopes that homeowners will take a vested interest in their neighborhood foliage.

“Everyone has a tree memory,” Richards said. “There’s a bit of nostalgia, folklore about trees. There’s something very ‘community’ about them.”

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KTVN 10/25/2011 5:09:23 PM: ...they say if you don't do anything, you could end up a big plumbing bill. ernie: "...it's a big mess. you get **Water**, it's starting to leak, and if it's a hose bib, it can be leaking into the house and sometimes you don't know it for awhile." if you want to find out more about how to winterize your home, there's a free winterization workshop at the truckee **Meadows Water** authority office at 1355 capital boulevard in reno. it starts in less than half an hour. they can answer most of the questions you have about what to do with the cold weather coming. i bought this faucet cover for about two dollars... so it's not too expensive. covering the story, jennifer burton, channel two news. saturday will mark one year... since a man walked into the walmart on kietzke lane and started firing. today -- the trial against john gillane got underway. he's accused of shooting three managers at the kietzke store last nevada day. and today -- one of the victims took the stand to tell his story of what happened. richard sanders: and then (clears throat) john walked into the office and for some reason i just got an uncomfortable feeling (butt to) he turned toward me and pulled out a gun and chambered it and pointed it at me and told me to sit down and at that time i just thought of my kids and just started talking to him sanders says he tried to calm gillane down... but he just kept insisting on seeing the other managers. he also says he was scared he was going to die right then and there -- so he decided to make a run for it. sanders: he had the gun in his hand, lowered it like this and right when he did that i jumped for the door and swung it open and ran across the hallway to rick's office. at that time it was locked and i bounced off that office thinking he'd be behind me the whole time. i made it about 15 feet and next thing i know i was on the ground and told myself 'i just got shot' during today's testimony... the prosecution also showed surveillance video as sanders ran out of his office... and was shot in the upper thigh. gillane's attorney says he was tired of being mistreated... but never meant to kill his supervisors. all three victims survived. john: "you're looking at another horse protest. but this one is...well, folks are up in arms against the nevada department of agriculture this time. i'm jp. what brought them here in carson city? that story coming up." chris: you are invited to ...

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10/25/2011 5:09:55 PM

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Winterize Your Home



As freezing temperatures set in, homeowners can avoid the expense and trouble of broken water pipes by keeping their pipes protected. Follow these simple tips:

To prevent water pipes from freezing:

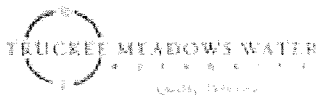
- Shut off and drain your irrigation system
- Disconnect and drain all outdoor hoses
- Be sure your water meter has a specially designed insulation blanket
- Insulate all pipes or faucets in unheated areas, like a garage or crawl space under your home
- During periods of hard freezes, or when you're away from home for an extended period of time, keep your home at 55-58 degrees

Truckee Meadows Water Authority is hosting free workshops to assist you in winterizing your home, inside and out. Please join us on one of the following dates at our main office: **1355 Capital Blvd., Reno.**

Two workshops to choose from:
Wednesday, October 19 at 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, October 25 at 5:30 p.m.

Please RSVP by emailing conservation@tmwa.net or calling 834-8005. For more information, visit www.tmwa.com/winterize.

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you by the water lovers at





Grants to help protect Northern Nevada waters

More snow, cleanups along the Truckee River and projects to fight quagga mussels have been approved to help keep the Truckee River, Lake Tahoe and other reservoirs pristine.

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority has approved eight grants totaling \$724,427 from its Truckee River Fund. The money comes from customer billings and will augment \$393,000 being spent by other groups on these efforts.

Since the Truckee River Fund was created in 2005, TMWA has provided \$7.1 million in 75 grants that have been matched by \$5.8 million in funds from the grantees.

The grants approved this week include:

» Tahoe Resource Conservation District: \$267,627 to help with mandatory watercraft inspections to prevent quagga mussels at Stampede, Boca, Donner and Prosser Creek reservoirs.

» Desert Research Institute: \$154,815 for cloud-seeding efforts to boost the snowpack that feeds the river.

» Nevada Land Conservancy: \$127,500 for weed control and watershed restoration on 1,125 acres.

» Washoe County Sheriff's Office: \$71,860 for a full-time inmate work leader to supervise crews to remove homeless camps, wrap trees and clean up the river banks.

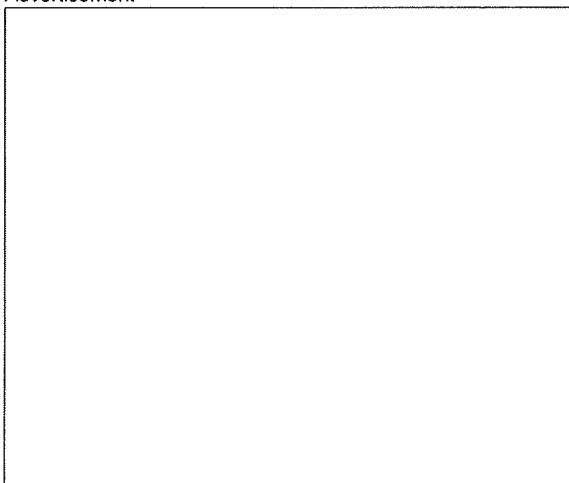
» Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful: \$44,950 to clean up, pull weeds and wrap trees to prevent beaver damage along the river from Verdi to Lockwood.

» Nature Conservancy: \$28,290 to help prevent quagga mussels from spoiling Independence Lake.

» Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents: \$19,375 for training on management practices to stop pollution from entering the river.

» Sierra Nevada Journeys: \$10,010 to educate Washoe students about protecting the river and its watershed.

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Water Rates Could Be Increasing



Reported by: Cassandra Duvall

Email: cduvall@mynews4.com

Published: 10/20 5:52 pm

Updated: 10/20 7:09 pm

(MyNews4.com & KRNV) Reno, Nev. – Your water bill may be increasing next year, but by how much? News 4 went to the source to find out exactly how much of an increase is on the table.

“We believe it's reasonable, and we don't just manage our costs by raising rates,” said Jeff Tissier, Chief

Financial Officer for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

But how much does the TMWA recommend to raise rates? Tissier said they're discussing an increase of 3.5% over three years.

For example, if the board approves, and you your average monthly bill is \$40, you can expect to see an increase of about \$1.25 a month, or \$15 a year.

But not all people are happy about the recommendation.

“The water's still coming from the same place,” said one Reno resident. “It's H₂O, we're not doing anything different.”

The TMWA said they need an increase because of an \$8.9 million budget gap for the year beginning in 2014. The agency says they plan out years in advance to make sure they have enough funds to cover costs. They say repairs and interests on loans make up the bulk of their expenses.

“One thing you can't do is cut corners for people's water consumption,” said Tissier.

No decisions have been made, and this is just a recommendation. The final decision for increased rates will be decided on January 18, 2012.

And the TMWA has opportunities for you to give public comment about the recommended increased rates. You can attend the public workshop on Nov. 9 at 5:30 p.m. at the TMWA Office on Capital Blvd. in Reno.



Outdoors: Tahoe bikeway gains momentum

The first leg of the "Stateline to Stateline" bikeway on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe is expected to be constructed next summer, connecting Stateline casinos on the south shore to Round Hill and Nevada beaches.

"Cool," was all that Washoe County Commissioner Robert Larkin had to say last week after hearing of plans to start building what someday could be a 30-mile bikeway from Crystal Bay to Stateline.

Karen Mullen, planning consultant for the Tahoe Transportation District, said she expects the 3.2-mile trail to be as popular as the bike trail at Camp Richardson and the bikeway from Tahoe City to Squaw Valley.

A federal environmental analysis of the proposed route was completed in June, paving the way for work to begin. A feasibility study for the entire bikeway was finished in August.

Using about \$2.5 million in voter-approved state bond funds for the Stateline trail, the project is expected to be bid on in the spring. The second project will be another 3 miles between Sand Harbor State Park and Incline Village.

While it would be built in segments, the total bikeway would cost \$91 million to build, including bridges, tunnels, trailhead parking and paving the trail.

The feasibility study found no major flaws that would stop the bikeway from being built, said Carl Hasty, Tahoe district manager. The trail must be kept a distance from osprey and goshawk nest sites.

"This is a high-level look," he said. "Then we start to address all the details."

The preferred route for the 30-mile pathway would run parallel to the highway most of the way and link with trails leading to Chimney Beach, Secret Harbor and other spots. The route would be built on a grade of less than 5 percent so the average healthy person can make the climb, Mullen said.

But depending on the environmental studies, Hasty said, the route could change.

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For the Stateline bikeway, for instance, Hasty said the environmental analysis found it could cross a large meadow without significant harm, creating a more enjoyable bike ride than one right along U. S. 50.

County Commissioner John Breternitz, a Tahoe Transportation District board member, said he'd like to see plans for a bikeway to connect Crystal Bay with Incline Village, saying it could be used by people commuting to their jobs in Incline Village.

Hasty said the district will take up that issue soon, saying he believes there are some options.

HOW TO COMMENT

- » Public comments, including suggestions for the bikeway and walkway projects near Sand Harbor, will be accepted through Friday and will be reviewed as part of an environmental analysis for the project.
- » Visit the project's website at www.nvtahoebikeway.com and click on public participation.

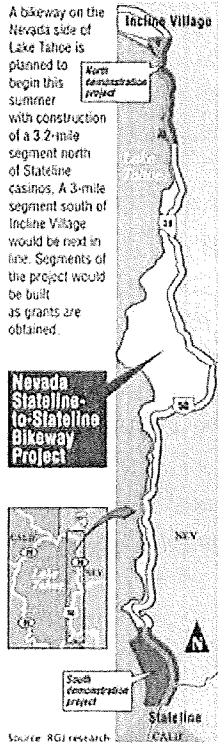
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Related Links

Outdoors: Red Hill's future will be considered in open meetings this week

**Nevada side:
Tahoe bikeway**

A bikeway on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe is planned to begin this summer with construction of a 3.2-mile segment north of Stateline casinos. A 3-mile segment south of Incline Village would be next in line. Segments of the project would be built as grants are obtained.



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Water utility plans to increase customer service charge in Reno, Sparks

To boost revenues over the next three years, officials for the water utility serving Reno and Sparks plan to raise a monthly customer service charge rather than hear people complain about their water rates going up after they've conserved water.

Mike Carrigan, a Sparks councilman and authority chairman, said he would rather not boost water rates for the utility's 82,180 customers on meters but instead favored boosting a \$15.70 monthly charge for customer services. He said these people could argue: "You told us to conserve. We conserved. Now you are going to raise our rates?"

With that, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority board of directors on Wednesday set Nov. 16 as the date to initially review an ordinance to raise customer service charges as well as raise water rates for 8,069 residents still without meters.

The board will take a final vote on the ordinance on Jan. 18.

The goal: Raise revenues by \$2.6 million or 3.5 percent annually over three years to close a \$8.8 million funding gap expected

by fiscal 2013-14. For that year, the utility expects revenues to total \$71.7 million while operating costs are projected at \$80.5 million.

The average customer with a water meter now pays an average of \$42 a month or \$1.40 a day for water. After three years of higher charges and rates, TMWA general manager Mike Foree said customers would be paying an additional 14 cents a day for water.

Metered water rates haven't been raised since 2005, while rates for those without meters have gone up in 2009 and 2010. Those higher rates have resulted in revenues remaining flat despite the poor economy and cooler weather, said John Erwin, resources director.

Water usage is down because of a cooler spring and summer that has resulted in residents using less water for their lawns and gardens.

"April is now a winter month. It used to be

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a spring month," Erwin said. "And we have seen a cooler spring from April to June."

The number of active customers has shrunk because of foreclosures, closed businesses and stalled subdivision projects, he said.

TMWA has 90,249 total customers, including businesses. But Erwin said it has water connections to 97,000 to 100,000 properties, meaning at least 7,000 of those addresses are vacant.

With 82,180 of the utility's customers on meters, that means 61 percent of the utility's revenues are variable. Metered rates are tiered to encourage conservation. In other words, the more water people use, the more they pay.

County Commissioner Robert Larkin, a TMWA board member, said he also wants to see a more tightly run operation if he were to support raising charges.

Foree said the utility has cut \$7.2 million or 18 percent of its spending in the last two years. For the current fiscal year that began in July, he said, no cost-of-living raises will be given to its 148 employees.

TMWA's operating costs include \$31.8 million in debt service, \$16.5 million for maintenance and repairs, \$11.4 million for employees, \$5.3 million in benefits, \$8 million for chemicals and electrical power and \$11.7 million for other supply costs.

Debt service, said finance director Jeff

Tissier, "is the big gorilla in the closet."

Boosting revenues would allow the utility to rebuild reserves, important for the utility's credit rating and ability to borrow money at lower interest rates and save money later, he said.

Depending on interest rates remaining low, he said three bond issues totaling \$385 million could be refinanced between 2015-17.

The board also was presented with results of an annual survey of 501 water customers that show people are generally happy with TMWA water service. In the survey by InfoSearch International completed in June, 83 percent rated drinking water quality as either excellent or good.

Overall satisfaction with water service rose from 85 percent in 2010 to 89 percent in 2011.

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What's next

- » A public workshop on the rate hikes is scheduled for 5:30-7:30 p.m. Nov. 9 at Truckee Meadows Water Authority offices, 1355 Capital Blvd., Reno.
- » The TMWA board of directors will consider a first reading of an ordinance to raise rates. The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. Nov. 16 in Sparks City Council chambers, 745 4th. St.
- » A final vote on the ordinance is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Jan. 18 in the Sparks council chambers.

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Editorial: There should be secrets in flood project discussion

It's no secret that a lot of Truckee Meadows residents have been working hard for more than 14 years now on a plan to protect the community from another flood like the one that inundated large swaths of the valley in 1997.

Nor is there any secret about the contents of the plan, which was developed in a series of community workshops a decade ago and fills a book more than an inch thick.

So, why is the federal government, which must approve the project and provide part of the funding, suddenly treating discussions of the project as a national secret?

Supporters of the much-needed project along the Truckee River have been open about their goals throughout the drawn-out project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which oversees projects on the river, should be just as open with the community.

From the beginning of the planning process, which started shortly after the New Year's Flood of 1997, residents of the Reno-Sparks area have demonstrated their determination to go ahead with a project

that would really protect the community by turning the Truckee into a "living river" again.

Instead of raising existing levees and building new ones that would cut the community off from the river -- and would eventually fail, history suggests -- residents developed a plan that would allow the river to do what rivers do naturally when there's too much water in the channel: spread out into the adjoining flood plain.

And Washoe County residents put their money where their dreams were, voting to tax themselves with a one-eighth-cent sales tax, to pay for planning the project.

In the past year, they've created the Truckee River Flood Management Authority, with the power to levy taxes and fees, to oversee the project and raise the necessary funds.

So, why would the Corps of Engineers lock area officials out of a meeting between its

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Sacramento and Washington, D.C., representatives with no explanation? If the community is going to have to accept changes in the project, changes that might increase the bill or lower the flood protection, shouldn't they at least be part of the conversation? If not, shouldn't they be told why rather than being left scratching their heads?

Yes, the living river plan is ambitious and the federal government's resources more modest than they once were.

It's well understood in the Truckee Meadows that the project that once seemed possible might not be built as it was envisioned.

But 14 years is a long time, and each passing year increases the chances that we will suffer another damaging flood ... along with all the costs that go with recovering from it.

It's long past time for the government to tell local officials what's possible and what's not. It shouldn't be a secret.

SNAPSHOT

TOPIC: "Living river" plan

OUR VIEW: The Corps of Engineers must be open about the future of the 14-year-old project.

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This article was printed from the Green Guide section of the *Reno News & Review*, originally published October 13, 2011.

This article may be read online at:

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Problem solvers

Public Utilities Commission

By Ashley Hennefer

The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada opened its doors for residents and environmentalists to have a say in policies affecting their homes, families and the Nevada landscape. On Oct. 3, two consumer sessions were hosted by the PUC at 1:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. to address questions and concerns from the community. Attendees were invited to the floor to share their grievances.

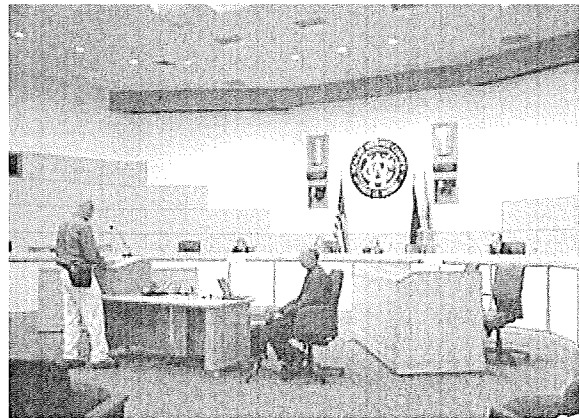
“We just try to hear what people have to say,” said Dawn Rivard, the consumer outreach director for the PUC.

“Many addressed smart meters, billing problems, renewables,” said Peter Kostas, public information officer for the PUC. “Those in rural residential areas talked about paying too high prices for their energy bills.”

Consumer sessions were also held in Carson City and Las Vegas. While only around 30 attended the Reno forum, the Las Vegas consumer sessions drew a large crowd of more than 100.

“It was the most people who have ever attended,” said Rivard.

While the majority of attendees were individual home owners and NV Energy rate payers, organizations such as the Nevada Conservation League and the Sierra Club encouraged members to attend and speak up about environmental concerns. Power plants, money, human health and energy conservation were the primary talking points of the assembly.



Reno resident Bill Stremmel speaks to the Public Utilities Commission.

Photo By ASHLEY HENNEFER

For more information about consumer sessions, go to www.puc.nv.gov.

Marjorie Sill, a Nevada resident since 1959, urged the committee to close the Reid Gardner coal-fired power plant.

“I have been an advocate for environmental protection for many years,” said Sill. “We are fortunate in Nevada to have a huge resource of clean energy, solar, geothermal, and do not need to rely on dirty coal power. Reid Gardner is simply not needed anymore. We cannot afford 12 more years of this polluting power plant. The unkempt landfill leaches into ground water, clearly a violation of the Clean Water Act.”

The process for addressing issues is fairly straightforward. After members of the public share complaints, the matters are often solved in house. NV Energy, the Nevada Bureau of Consumer Protection, and the consumer complaint resolution staff are on hand to speak with people immediately. Issues that can't be answered directly at the session can lead to an investigation. Several complaints were made about the potential health risks and instability of smart meters, and an investigation is now underway. The Reid Gardner power plant has been under investigation since late September.

Nearly all the attendees at the first Reno session agreed that the city should continue to push for long term sustainable choices. Scientist and resident David von Seggern called out NV Energy for not supporting conservation efforts.

“We got a notice that power bills were going to be increased because we were conserving too much,” he said. “We should not be penalized for conserving energy.”

Despite his concerns, von Seggern was optimistic about the future of Reno's landscape.

“We've got great momentum going here in Nevada,” he said. “As an outdoor enthusiast, I like to see the air as clean as possible.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

» WATER

Customers punished for their conservation

Congratulations, TMWA customers!

You have done such a good job of conserving water, having been restricted to two and three days per week watering, that TMWA wants to raise your rates due to lack of revenue. This income shortage is attributed to conservation and cooler temperatures, reducing demand for water [RGJ, Oct. 4].

Forget about the fact that rates have risen 30.4 percent since 2003, mostly to accommodate rapid growth and demand for more water. Now we must pay more because there is a lack of demand for water. Basic economics seem to be lacking.

Jason Leshar, Reno

Bids to open soon for TCID construction

Water district sets Oct. 18 as opening date for proposals

OCTOBER, 11 2011

BY [STEVE PUTERSKI](#)

LAHONTAN VALLEY NEWS

The clock is ticking for Truckee-Carson Irrigation District.

The board of directors decided to open contract bids on Oct. 18 at 2 p.m. at the TCID office at 2666 Harrigan Road for repairs to the Truckee Canal. In addition, the board announced it will select a contractor by Oct. 21 in conjunction with reapportionment from the \$5 million bond question that was passed in August.

TCID will also hold a special meeting – open to the public – on Oct. 21 at 11:30 a.m., at the TCID office to finalize the apportionment of the bond. Once ratified, the apportionment will move to the Third Judicial Court in Fallon to be confirmed.

With a fast-approaching timeline, TCID said it will look to any and all contractors, especially those with experience. However, should no local contractors be selected, TCID hopes some of the work from the general contractor will be sub-contracted to local businesses.

Walt Winder, TCID's deputy project manager, said due to the timeline, bonding and enormity of the project, a larger contractor is needed because local outfits tend to have smaller operations.

Winder added the timeline for the repairs to the canal will include a seven to 14-day contingency to include inclement weather and other factors.

Funds from the bond will be allocated to reconstruct the Lewis Spill and takeouts and to provide the district with additional funds to advance future projects. In addition, the bond money would also be used for prior work on Donner Dam and to reimburse the Bureau of Reclamation for cost associated with the Fernley Flood in 2008.

Plans to repair the Truckee Canal and 33 conduits around Fernley were slated to begin in the spring, but the lack of water and recharge in the area forced TCID and the Bureau of Reclamation to reschedule construction.

Residents of Fernley and Hazen voiced displeasure due to the dewatering of the canal, which had been dry since November 2010. However, the BOR allowed TCID to rewater the canal so water users in Fernley and Hazen could irrigate this year.

The project was subsequently moved to November, and TCID Project Manager Rusty Jardine estimated the construction should take three to four months.

In other TCID news –

- The Truckee-Carson Irrigation District voted unanimously to stop taking water orders for this year at its monthly meeting last week.

Truckee Division water users will have until Friday to submit orders, and Carson Division users have until Nov. 4. For information, contact TCID at 423-2141.

<http://www.lahontanvalleynews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20111011/NEWS/111019985/1055&ParentProfile=1045&template=printart>

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TMWA Offers Free Winterization Workshops

Posted: Oct 10, 2011 12:31 PM PDT

Updated: Oct 10, 2011 12:31 PM PDT

From Truckee Meadows Water Authority:

Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) offers winterization workshops in October to help residents prepare their homes for cold weather and freezing temperatures.



Join TMWA's Conservation staff for one of two free workshops to learn how to turn off your sprinkler system and protect water pipes from breaking this winter. The first workshop will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 19 at 5:30 p.m., and the second is on Tuesday, Oct. 25 at 5:30 p.m. Both workshops will be led by TMWA's Conservation department at TMWA's main office, located at 1355 Capital Blvd. in Reno.

Homeowners can avoid the expense and inconvenience of frozen water pipes by attending one of these free workshops to learn how to protect your home's pipes – inside and out – from freezing temperatures this winter.

For more information about [winterization](#), please visit the Conservation section of www.tmwa.com. To RSVP, please e-mail conservation@tmwa.net or call 834-8005.



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Las Vegas Sun

Guest column:

The obvious results of a 'water grab'

Launce Rake

Sunday, Oct. 9, 2011 | 2 a.m.

What seems obvious to anyone who has spent time in beautiful rural Nevada, and is backed up by volumes of research from federal and academic researchers, is the truth that removing the water that sustains the wildlife of the Great Basin means nothing less than enormous environmental change.

What seems obvious to independent scientists, researchers and the residents of the Great Basin is disputed, of course, by the Southern Nevada Water Authority, which wants the right to pump 41 billion gallons of water annually from rural Nevada and Utah, and to charge Southern Nevada businesses and residents billions of dollars to do so.

According to independent analyses, including research from federal agencies and SNWA's own contractors, SNWA would drain the groundwater below the existing roots of vegetation in an area of 19,000 square miles, a region the size of Vermont.

But we acknowledge that a big part of the SNWA campaign is the theme that "Those pesky scientists (including those hired and then fired by the SNWA) don't know what they're talking about."

The War on Science is nothing new. You can peruse the Internet to find that climate change is a massive hoax perpetuated by scientists fabricating extreme weather events and the physics of airborne carbon; that an Ohio scientist did not really step foot on our moon in July 1969. Also, Bigfoot.

The objective documentation to support all these suppositions is a bit sketchy. In the end, the supporters of these concepts turn to other, nonscientific sources of authority for confirmation: Interpretations of Scripture, self-made calculi of limited application to our physical world, and the massing of thousands of like-minded anti-science zealots. The SNWA and its employees turn to another source for confirmation (similar to those denying the physical properties of atmospheric carbon): Money!

The latest price tag for what the SNWA innocuously calls the Groundwater Development Project, and what everyone else calls the Water Grab, is \$15 billion. Greenbacks. Benjamins. Dollars. That's a lot of money to play with. More than half of that money, according to the SNWA's own contractors, would go to bankers. Wall Street doesn't need another bailout.

SNWA claims that even if the Water Grab never provides a drop of water for Las Vegas — a scenario that seems increasingly likely, if only because we only use two-thirds of our allocation from the Colorado River and new-home construction is, as they say, "not economically viable" at this time — there might be as many as 900 workers employed building the pumps and pipelines at any one time.

Just for fun, divide \$15 billion by 900 workers. Do you really think construction workers are going to take home anywhere close to \$17 million each?

No, our money will bleed out of state, and quite possibly out of our country. And there is no guarantee that we would ever use one drop of the water that the SNWA says might, or might not, be needed.

SNWA's army of lobbyists and lawyers, or course, would be the winners.

The losers would be the towns, Native American communities and wildlife of Great Basin. Here in the urban

south, the losers would be those small and large businesses benefiting from Southern Nevada's growing importance as a money-making tourism destination to the great outdoors.

And of course Southern Nevada's working families, which would pay for the SNWA's lobbyists, lawyers and financiers, would also pay, every day, and they would pay a lot. For many businesses and families, the total would be thousands of dollars annually, which could triple water bills.

Who speaks for them, for working families and small businesses? We don't have lobbyists on retainer. A courageous Clark County commissioner recently pointed out that one SNWA lawyer, whose job it is work with his friends among the Wall Street financiers, gets paid \$500 an hour. Again: \$500, an hour, day after day, week after week. We've paid for that year after year. And this pipeline boondoggle will pay for many more \$500-an-hour pinstriped lawyers and lobbyists out of the paychecks of working Clark County families.

That kind of money buys a lot of politics. In fact, it trumps science, good public policy and too often, unfortunately, the decisions of our government officials.

But we have an opportunity to stand up for wildlife, for working families in Las Vegas, for science and reason, and for a future that's not based on profit, but on what works for all of Nevada.

It is time to stop a program that is environmentally catastrophic, costs billions and is not necessary.

Launce Rake is a board member of Great Basin Water Network, a member of the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club executive committee, and an independent consultant who loves living and working in Nevada.

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Las Vegas Sun

Long-awaited water-pipeline decision to follow hearings

By **Cy Ryan (contact)**

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2011 | 2 a.m.

Gov. Brian Sandoval is taking a hands-off approach to upcoming hearings on a plan by Las Vegas officials to pump millions of gallons of water to Southern Nevada from rural eastern Nevada.

“I will leave it to the administrative process,” said the governor, who added that he’s confident state engineer Jason King will reach a “learned decision” on whether to approve the applications of the Southern Nevada Water Authority in spite of objections from rural residents.

King will start the hearings Monday and the Water Authority will outline its case over two weeks. The public will have a chance on Oct. 7 to express opinions, then the Water Authority will have another week to wrap up arguments.

The district is applying for 125,976 acre-feet of water annually from valleys in Lincoln and White Pine counties. An acre-foot of water equals 325,851 gallons.

The district’s opening statement, prepared by Carson City attorney Paul Taggart, says the Las Vegas area could be out of water by 2028, and sooner if drought conditions persist. This water is needed to serve the growing population and provide economic success for Southern Nevada and the entire state, the district says.

“Expert testimony will show that a 10.5 percent decline in water supply in Southern Nevada will result in a decrease of economic output of Southern Nevada by \$9.6 billion, a loss of 84,000 jobs and a decline in wages and salaries of \$3 billion,” Taggart writes.

The Water Authority says the basins are not close to metropolitan areas, major transportation corridors or a skilled labor force. Other areas in the nation offer “far superior economic advantages” for agricultural development than in Lincoln and White Pine counties. The district wants to tap water from the Delamar, Dry Lake, Cave and Spring valleys.

Clark County residents have used less water in recent years. From 2002 to 2008, annual water consumption was reduced by nearly 21 billion gallons despite an increase of about 400,000 people. And 14 million square feet of turf grass has been torn out at a savings of 127,000 acre-feet of water during the past 10 years.

But opponents see the picture differently.

Officials with the Great Basin Water Network say the Water Authority doesn’t have “the financial ability and good faith intent” to build the estimated \$3.5 billion, 263-mile pipeline.

The network, in testimony prepared by New Mexico lawyer Simeon Herskovits, maintains “there is no genuine, legitimate need for the water that SNWA seeks to export from the targeted valleys.”

The network says the authority “has an unreasonable and inadequate water conservation program, given SNWA’s position and available option.”

The network says the Las Vegas area has “failed to implement a number of readily available low-cost water conservation measures and policies that would achieve water savings substantial enough to satisfy most or all of

the supposed future demands for additional water.”

Officials with the Cleveland-Rogers Ranch, owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, believe plans by the Water Authority would threaten the White Pine County ranch’s water rights. In testimony prepared by Severin Carlson, a Reno attorney, and Paul Hejmanowski, a Las Vegas lawyer, the church says granting the water rights would hinder “its ability to survive as a viable ranching enterprise.”

The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation also have submitted a pre-filed opening statement, saying the evidence will show the devastating effect the water plan would have.

The testimony, prepared by Paul Echohawk, an Idaho lawyer, says the abundance of clean water from the springs is important in the Spring Valley. “This area is held in reverence by the Goshute people and it is a sacred site to them.”

The area is used for festivals and other social, religious and economic activities, the tribe says.

Las Vegas originally applied in 1989 for the right to pump water from the area. The Nevada Supreme Court, however, voided the ruling of former engineer Tracy Taylor, which permitted 58,000 acre-feet to be transferred.

The hearings will recess Oct. 14, reconvene Oct. 31 and continue to Nov. 17 to hear protests. Closing arguments will be Nov. 18, then King will make the decision.

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