

TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Press Clippings

January 14, 2012 – March 13, 2012



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

2012 Nevada chapter AGC officers named

March 12, 2012

By [ThisIsReno](#)

SUBMITTED NEWS RELEASE

The Nevada Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America has named its 2012 officers and board of directors. The **new officers** are as follows: **Matt Frazer, President** (PAR Electrical Contractors); **Scott Hiatt, First Vice President** (A&K Earthmovers), **Craig Holt, Second Vice President**, (Sierra Nevada Construction) and **Justin Ivory, Treasurer**, (A-1 Steel, Inc.).

Frazer is the Reno Division Manager for PAR Electrical Contractors. Frazer has been in the electrical contracting business since he was 19 years old, and his diverse background includes field supervision, estimating, project management, labor relation and business development. He has been with PAR since 2001.

“As AGC’s new president I’m looking forward to promoting activities that will reignite the local economy through economic diversification efforts,” Frazer said. “The construction industry can be a catalyst in creating new job centers for Northern Nevada.”

Frazer chaired AGC’s Government Affairs committee and has served on the Public Works, Membership and Labor Policy Committee. He has a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Utah and attended the Institute on Labor Relations at Cornell University.

The Nevada Chapter AGC also named its 2012 Directors: **Le Arnold**, (TNT Construction), **Trish Bullentini-Kuzanak** (Martin Iron Works), **Vickie Francovich** (Building Solutions) **Bob Gardner** (Gardner Engineering), **Greg Gerhardt** (Gerhardt & Berry Construction) **Sherri Key** (Lindell’s Painting), **David Knaub** (K7 Construction, Inc.), **Brien McKenzie** (McKenzie Construction, Inc.), **Andy Ramirez** (West Coast Contractors), **Eric Scolari** (RHP Mechanical Systems), **Lance Semenko** (Q & D Construction), **Johnnie Stolz** (Omboli Interiors) and **Kevin Weiske** (Moody-Weiske Contractors).

- The AGC also named its Ex-Officio Directors for 2012. They are:
- Jack Byrom – Truckee Meadows Water Authority
- Bruce Gescheider – Moana Nursery
- Jim Dodson, Atkins
- Brian Hartman – Hartman Engineering
- Gordon Hinkel – Basalite Concrete Products
- Scott Smith- Kleinfelder
- Art Sperber- Sperber Consulting
- Dean Stone – Bragg Crane

The AGC’s National Directors for 2012 are:

- Dave Backman, K.G. Walters
- Mike Cate, Pavers Plus
- Frank Lepori, Frank Lepori Construction
- Fred Reeder, Reno Tahoe Construction
- Craig Willcut, United Construction
- Rod Cooper, Granite Construction
- Piero Bullentini, Martin Iron Works
- Deane Shaver, Shaver Construction, Inc.
- B.J. Sullivan, Clark & Sullivan Constructor

The Nevada Chapter AGC is comprised of Northern Nevada’s top general contractors, specialty contractors and building professionals. The Chapter’s 250-plus members make up a bulk of the area’s construction firms and related businesses. The construction industry accounts for more than 18,000 Washoe County jobs and shows one of the highest average hourly wages at nearly \$21, according to the Nevada Department of Employment.

The Nevada Chapter AGC’s success over the years can be directly attributed to working together to build a better community. AGC members build our hospitals, roads, runways, schools and parks, and also contribute to the quality of life that makes Nevada a great place to live.



Caughlin Fire area restoration becomes community affair

Planting shrubs and seeds does not exactly come with the same adrenalin rush as, say, mountain climbing.

For 9-year-old River Edwards and 10-year-old buddy Nicholas Barclay, however, it felt like an "awesome adventure."

Both kids came with Sparks resident and Walgreen's employee Stacy Edwards as part of a joint volunteer effort by her company and Wells Fargo to rehabilitate a canyon that was burnt out during the Caughlin Fire.

"It was really exciting," River Edwards said. "I really wanted to help the environment. I really feel bad for the squirrels."

Planting was apparently not the only activity both kids managed to dirty their hands with. Besides doing some good for the environment, the dynamic duo also managed to exercise their imaginations.

"I thought it was fun because we got to plant trees and also do some exploring," said Barclay with a smile.

Seeing families volunteering to help out Mother Nature is exactly what the Nevada

Land Conservancy wanted to see as part of the Caughlin restoration project.

A project partner for the Sunday event, the organization says taking part in efforts such as this allows families to be more involved with their community while also teaching the importance of volunteer work to younger generations.

"In some ways, it can be more difficult to get volunteers for something of this nature as opposed to the Food Bank or something with a more direct impact on people," said Lynda Nelson, Caughlin Fire restoration manager for the Nevada Land Conservancy. "But it's a good way for families to spend time outside and get in touch with nature. I think that's even more important nowadays given how people are always on their iPhones and iPads."

It's also a good way to bring attention to an issue that most people do not think about, said Kurt Latipow, fire services coordinator for Washoe County.

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Most people probably do not think twice when they drive by the hills in the Caughlin area during their daily commute, Latipow said. But those areas are part of the fabric of the community and its ecosystem, he said.

“When I look at that hillside I see grazing land, watershed protection and habitat protection,” said Latipow, who was reached by phone prior to the event. “Having good protection techniques, preventing wildfires and protecting the habitat all go hand in hand.”

Restoring the burnt area by South McCarran and Skyline Boulevards is especially crucial because its steep slope makes it more prone to erosion, said Kyle West, City of Reno engineering manager.

Prior to the event, the city already had contractors doing restoration work on the canyon, which now bears the familiar green hue on the ground from hydroseeding. The second phase, which will include more hydroseeding, is set to begin in the next week or so.

“We’ve been doing recovery work along the slopes of the hillside and the additional work from the volunteers will really help a lot,” West said. “Any water that goes through that canyon will make it to the Truckee River so the restoration not only helps with the appearance of the canyon but also prevents the river from being contaminated with silt and other stuff.”

Nelson expects to see an immediate

impact with the 200 shrubs planted along the main creek so far, which should grow and thrive right away. The impact from the 15 acres of seed will likely take longer. At this point, the window is getting pretty tight for the seeds, which still need to go through a cold stratification period and require moisture, Nelson said.

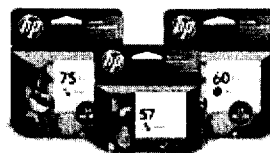
Efforts such as the volunteer work done Sunday, however, go a long way in helping out restoration efforts for the canyon overall. Wells Fargo alone says it brought along 150 employees for the event and also kicked in a \$10,000 grant. Besides planting native grass, bank volunteers planted 160 bushes to commemorate Wells Fargo’s 160th anniversary, said Sean French, Northern Nevada community bank president for the company.

“The Caughlin Fire was such a dramatic and devastating event so we thought this is a great way to have an impact and make a difference in the community,” French said.

The event quickly became a family affair

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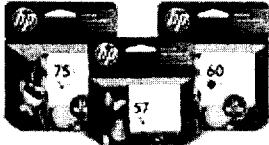


for Wells Fargo employees such as Nik Buus, who brought along kids Kate, 8, Jackson, 8, and Miles, 12.

“We got here at 8:30 (in the morning) and just had a wonderful time,” Buus said. “I think its a great way to reinvest in the community, which is why we dragged the kids here. Hopefully, when we drive by the side of the hill and they see (the shrubs and grass), they’ll say, ‘Hey, I did that.’”

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Celebrate "Fix a Leak Week" with Truckee Meadows Water Authority

March 6, 2012
By [ThisIsReno](#)



Fix a Leak Week

TMWA NEWS RELEASE WaterSense

March 12-18, 2012

March 12-18

(RENO, Nev.) – [Truckee Meadows Water Authority](#) (TMWA) and EPA WaterSense are encouraging homeowners to find and fix leaks during the fourth annual [Fix a Leak Week](#), **March 12 through 18, 2012.**

"Water is such a precious resource here in the Truckee Meadows," Lora Rose Richards, Conservation and Community Education Administrator for TMWA, said. "The conservation staff at TMWA always encourages responsible water use, and finding and fixing leaks is such an important way to conserve water."

The average American household wastes more than 10,000 gallons each year from easy-to-fix water leaks—enough water to wash nearly 10 months worth of laundry. Fixing household leaks not only saves water but reduces water utility bills. Be "for water" and start saving today with three simple steps: **Check. Twist. Replace.**

- **Check for leaks.** Look for dripping faucets, showerheads, and fixture connections. Also check for toilets with silent leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring into the tank and seeing if it appears in the bowl before you flush. Don't forget to check irrigation systems and spigots, too.
- **Twist and tighten pipe connections.** To save more water without a noticeable difference in flow, twist on a WaterSense labeled faucet aerator.
- **Replace the fixture if necessary.** Look for WaterSense labeled models, which are independently certified to use 20 percent less water and perform as well as or better than standard models. You can search for WaterSense labeled fixtures at www.tmwa.com/watersense. Fixtures that carry the WaterSense label are 20 percent more water efficient.

Sponsored by EPA's [WaterSense®](#) program, Fix a Leak Week reminds homeowners of the easy steps they can take to help save water in their community now and for future generations. Visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/> to learn more about finding and fixing leaks, and the EPA WaterSense 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.

Celebrate "Fix a Leak Week" with Truckee Meadows Water Authority



TMWA encourages homeowners to fix leaks

TMWA promotes water conservation week

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority and EPA Watersense are encouraging homeowners to find and fix leaks as part of the fourth annual Fix a Leak Week beginning Sunday.

“Water is such a precious resource here in the Truckee Meadows,” Conservation and Community Education Administrator for TMWA Lora Rose Richards said.

The average American household wastes more than 10,000 gallons each year from easy-to-fix water leaks — enough water to wash nearly 10 months’ worth of laundry, according to a TMWA press release. Participants are encouraged to be “for water” and start saving today with three simple steps: check, twist and replace.

Details: www.tmwa.com/watersense.

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Report says Lake Tahoe's clarity improved in 2011

by Sandra Chereb - Associated Press

03.01.12 - 12:00 am

CARSON CITY — Lake Tahoe's famed clarity improved more than 4 feet last year from 2010, when the average annual clarity level was the second-worst on record, scientists reported Wednesday.

The annual report released by University of California-Davis' Tahoe Environmental Research Center and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency said the average annual clarity of the lake was 68.9 feet. That represents a 4.5-foot improvement over 2010.

"The factors that contribute to lake clarity are complex, and not necessarily linked to factors occurring in the current year," said Geoffrey Schladow, director of the research center.

"For example, the 2011 clarity improvement followed a winter that was one of the wettest in recent years, something that is usually associated with clarity declines," he said. "Understanding what controls the long-term trends is at the heart of what we are attempting to do."

Overall, the lake's clarity has remained relatively stable since 2000, the report said.

Clarity is measured using a 10-inch white plate, called a Secchi disk. Researchers lower the disk in the water and record the depth at which it remains visible.

Measurements have been taken since 1968, when the disk could be seen to a depth of 102.4 feet. In 1997-1998, it reached an all-time average low of 65.1 feet.

Readings taken during the winter months of December through March last year showed an average clarity of 84.9 feet in 2011 — a 12-foot improvement over the previous year.

But summer clarity levels continued to decline. At 51.5 feet, last summer's clarity level was the second worst on record. Scientists point to last year's epic snowpack and late spring runoff as a possible cause, because snowmelt deposits nutrients and sediment into the lake straddling the Nevada-California line in the Sierra.

Last year, Nevada, California and federal officials pledged to restore Tahoe's clarity to 97 feet by 2076 — an ambitious goal that will require healing a rift between the two states over how a bistate compact set up more than 40 years ago by Congress is administered.

A bill passed by the 2011 Nevada Legislature and signed by Republican Gov.

Brian Sandoval threatens Nevada's withdrawal from the compact unless changes are made to the voting structure to approve development projects in the Tahoe Basin.

During legislative hearings, Nevada lawmakers complained regulations and development projects were stymied by a pro-environmental bias from California representatives on the 14-member TRPA governing board.

In mid-February, California Sen. Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, responded with a letter to Nevada lawmakers, calling the Nevada law "unnecessarily inflammatory and deeply counter-productive."

Both states have named delegations to discuss their differences, and an initial meeting is tentatively scheduled sometime in March.

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Water Authority board OKs rate increases

BY HENRY BREAN
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Posted: Feb. 29, 2012 | 11:49 a.m.

Updated: Mar. 1, 2012 | 7:30 a.m.

Get ready for a leap in your water bill.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority board used February's extra day to push through a rate hike that will boost most residential bills by about \$5 a month starting in May.

After more than two hours of discussion and public input, board members settled on a flat infrastructure surcharge based on the size of a customer's water line.

The fee totals \$5 a month for the average single-family home, about \$35 a month for a small retail store and more than \$2,200 a month for a large resort.

Small- to medium-sized businesses are taking the biggest hit by percentage. Some restaurants and storefronts could see their monthly bills jump by 80 percent or more, depending on the size of their water service and fire lines.

The Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and other business groups criticized the flat fee, arguing instead for a consumption-based rate hike that would have divided the increase more equitably among commercial and residential customers.

But authority board members said they chose the option they did because it has the smallest impact on residents, namely those in single-family homes, trailer parks and apartment complexes.

As board member and Boulder City Councilman Duncan McCoy put it, "Everybody has to have workers, and workers live here."

Water authority officials expect the rate hike to generate about \$300 million in additional revenue over the next three years to fund "critical water infrastructure," pay down construction-related debt and maintain cash reserves that protect the agency's bond rating.

The bulk of the money is needed for the "third straw," a roughly \$800 million intake pipe under construction at Lake Mead.

The new intake will allow Colorado River water to be pulled from the reservoir even if it

shrinks below the level of the two existing straws.

The valley draws roughly 90 percent of its drinking water supply from Lake Mead. Henderson and Boulder City get all of their water from the lake.

"What we're building now is not growth-driven, it's reliability-driven," water authority General Manager Pat Mulroy said.

Added authority board member and Clark County Commissioner Tom Collins: "If we don't have reliable water, the businesses won't be worth a thing. The resorts won't be worth a thing. The tourists aren't going to come to the Strip if the swimming pools are empty."

The authority used to pay for major construction projects with connection charges from new homes and businesses, but that stream of money all but dried up when the economy tanked and the housing market collapsed.

The agency serves as the wholesale supplier for the region's water utilities, including the Las Vegas Valley Water District and the cities of Henderson, North Las Vegas and Boulder City.

The rate increase now goes to the member utilities for final adoption. The new fees are expected to take effect in April and show up on customers' bills in May.

The discussion leading up to Wednesday's vote often pitted residents against businesses and small-business owners against some of the valley's largest commercial water users, namely resorts and golf courses.

Business owners complained about unfairly subsidizing residential water customers, and residents complained that any rate hike would hurt struggling, low-income families and seniors on fixed incomes.

Local eateries and their customers will be among the first to feel the pinch from higher rates, said Ron Smith, chairman of the Nevada Restaurant Association.

"As you probably know, we run on very narrow margins," he said. "There is a limit to what our menu prices can bear."

Another critic of the flat-fee approach noted that, by percentage, small businesses are being asked to absorb an increase 10 to 20 times larger than that of high-volume water users.

But Mulroy said that difference is mostly a function of scale. The new fees don't seem to affect the resorts and golf courses as much because they already pay the largest water bills in Southern Nevada, she said. "In real dollars, they will pay the most."

Mulroy and company also drew their share of criticism. Several audience members said the authority should cut the salaries of its managers and stop renting expensive

office space downtown before asking customers to pay higher bills.

Others said they were not given enough time to look at the authority's rate hike proposals or budget for the increase.

The whole process was "fatally flawed," said Brian McAnallen, vice president of government affairs for the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. Instead of rushing to raise rates, the authority should be leading a broader water policy discussion about what the community may need in the future and how it should be paid for, he said.

Mulroy said she would have preferred to take it slow, but the authority could not afford to further drain its cash reserves and jeopardize an upcoming bond sale needed to finish the third intake project.

As for the broader conversation McAnallen wants, Mulroy said she hopes to return to the board in early summer with plans for a new committee to do just that.

Complaints from the business community did lead to one last-minute change: Authority officials agreed to reduce the new monthly fee on water lines used for fire protection.

Such fire lines are required by building codes but are almost never used.

The higher rates are slated to last three years, but the pain is unlikely to end there. Unless the economy improves, additional increases may be needed as more of the authority's debts come due starting in 2016.

And none of these rate hikes has anything to do with the authority's plans to build a pipeline network stretching more than 300 miles to tap groundwater across eastern Nevada. That project is expected to cost billions of dollars, and no decision has been made about how to pay for it.

After Wednesday's vote on the rate increase, much of the audience filed out of meeting room as the board breezed through the rest of the agenda.

The next item up for consideration was a resolution to borrow \$360 million in bond money to complete the third intake.

The measure passed unanimously with no discussion.

Contact reporter Henry Brean at hbrean@reviewjournal.com or 702-383-0350.

COMPARISON OF HOW MONTHLY WATER BILLS WILL CHANGE UNDER NEW RATE STRUCTURE

Customer type	Avg. monthly consumption (1,000 gallons)	Current bill	Estimated bill after rate hike
Single family	13	\$36.40	\$41.40
Multifamily	3,205	\$11,502.69	\$11,748.49

High rise	1,467	\$5,504.42	\$6,921.27
Mobile home	2,602	\$5,134.71	\$5,641.65
Restaurant	541	\$1,869.05	\$2,273.13
Fast food	40	\$115.86	\$151.94
Golf course	33,780	\$116,541.56	\$117,926.96
Park	10,943	\$37,078.10	\$41,249.48
Hotel	41,864	\$184,209.27	\$186,417.27
University	27,653	\$95,270.57	\$103,408.59
Retail complex	2,538	\$8,227.76	\$10,435.76
Commercial office	884	\$3,103.68	\$4,142.74
Car wash	332	\$1,051.28	\$1,243.59

Find this article at:

<http://www.lvrj.com/news/southern-nevada-water-authority-board-oks-rate-increase-140910963.html>

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

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Lake Tahoe's clarity improved in 2011 after 2010's decline, scientists say

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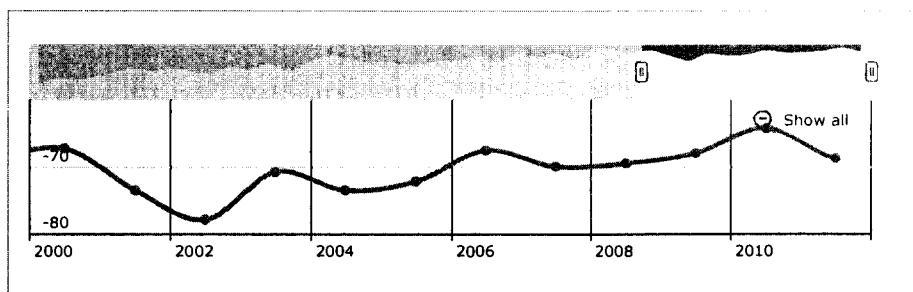
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Lake Tahoe's clarity improved in 2011 after a sharp decrease in 2010, according to scientists who study the lake.

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Lake Tahoe Annual Average Depth Clarity: 1968 - 2011



Legend: All numbers are in feet. Interactive: Highlight to zoom, click and drag the top timeline to change the years.

The 2011 Lake Tahoe clarity was put at 68.9 feet, a 4.5-foot improvement over 2010, when average clarity levels were the second-worst on record, according to a statement released today by the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

The agencies report Winter clarity last year continued a decade-long pattern of improvement and summer clarity continued to decline at the same rate that it has since the late 1960s when monitoring began.

The 2011 average clarity level was more than two dozen feet away from the clarity restoration target of 97.4 feet set by federal and state regulators.

Geoffrey Schladow, director of the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center, said long-term trends are a better indication of Lake Tahoe clarity than year-to-year comparisons.

"The factors that contribute to lake clarity are complex, and are not necessarily linked to factors occurring in the current year," Schladow in the statement. "For example, the 2011 clarity improvement followed a winter that was one of the wettest in recent years, something that is usually associated with clarity declines. Understanding what controls the long-term trends is at the heart of what we are attempting to do."

Scientists blame urban stormwater runoff as one contributor to reduced clarity. The winter and spring runoff from rain and snowmelt carry small, inorganic particles into the lake.

Scientists measure clarity using a 10-inch white disk, called a Secchi disk. They lower the disk and see how deep it can go and still be seen. The first year for measurements were 1968, when the Secchi disk could be seen down to 102.4 feet.

For a complete list of Annual Secchi Depth Data since 1968, go to <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/research/SecchiData.pdf>.

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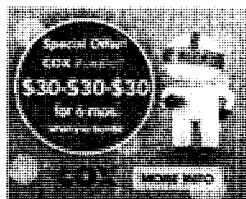
Whitney Myer with Lindsey Pavao

Las Vegas Sun

Water authority board approves \$5 water bill surcharge

By **Joe Schoenmann** ([contact](#))

Wednesday, Feb. 29, 2012 | 12:55 p.m.



The Southern Nevada Water Authority voted today to add a \$5 charge to customers' bills for three years to pay for infrastructure costs, meaning residential users could see higher bills within months.

Retail customers might see a monthly increase of \$36, and resorts' bills could rise \$2,200.

The size of the increases aren't certain. The authority is the wholesale water supplier to several water districts — Las Vegas Valley Water District, for example — which bill customers directly.

Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani, who sits on the board of the Las Vegas Valley Water District, said it will be up to each district — in North Las Vegas, Henderson, Mesquite and Boulder City — to decide how to divvy up the water authority's increased charge.

That could mean a \$5 hike for residential customers, or, Giunchigliani said, or it could be another amount. As the water authority board met, she sent a letter to the Clark County District Attorney's Office calling for formation of a committee to examine other options.

"We can find a better way to do it," Giunchigliani said, adding that she wants to bring businesses and residents together. "And for people who say we can't come up with a quick solution, I say they're wrong."

The water hike had plenty of foes at Wednesday's meeting of the water authority board. Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce representatives argued for a \$9.98-per-residence flat-rate hike, saying it would lessen the burden on businesses.

Some said the water authority hadn't done enough to rein in its expenses, and talked about the "Taj Mahal" the authority occupies downtown. Board member Steve Sisolak agreed, saying the water authority's lease on the building is "extremely, extremely expensive."

The water authority must raise rates because of a massive drop in connection fees — the costs for a new business or homeowner to connect to the water utility. Revenue from connection fees dropped from a high of \$188 million in 2006 to about \$3 million in 2010.

Without connection fees, which once paid for about 57 percent of the authority's expenses, the utility is in danger of defaulting on massive debt payments mostly for infrastructure projects such as the third water intake pipeline into Lake Mead, which has a \$3 billion price tag.

These were the three options:

- A hike that ties into usage by increasing the charge per 1,000 gallons of water by 30 cents to \$1.06. A typical residential bill would increase about \$10.
- A flat monthly rate increase of \$5 for residential customers, \$36 for retail and \$2,200 for resorts. The charge would be imposed for three years.
- A combination of the first two options, which would cost \$5.65 for most homes, \$31 for retail stores and \$3,850 for resorts.

Some argued for the first option, the pay-as-you-go option — meaning that if you use more water, you pay more.

Launce Rake, representing the Sierra Club, said that option would prompt more people to conserve, which decreases the need for more infrastructure to secure more water. He also said that under flat-rate structure, homeowners would see their water bills increase by double-digit percentages, while casinos and golf courses would see their water bills increase by 2 to 6 percent.

Virginia Valentine, president of the Nevada Resort Association, said a small increase for large businesses with water bills in the hundreds of thousands of dollars amounts to much more than increases smaller water users will see.

Ultimately, the pay-as-you-go option and the mixed option were rejected. Board member Sam Bateman of the Henderson City Council said the fixed-fee gives the water authority stability over the next few years.

Bond investors prefer a stable revenue stream.

Sisolak said that between now and 2016, he wants a committee established with "all the stakeholders" to examine the next round of rate hikes, likely in three years.

Suggestions to postpone a vote to give a committee time to examine different options were rejected. Guy Hobbs, a paid consultant who came up with the board's options, said delaying the rate hikes would put the water authority's bond rating at "significant risk." When a bond rating falls, funding become more expensive to the public agency issuing bonds.

At meeting's end, Rake called it a "good day for casinos and golf courses."

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Enough Snow for Our Water Supply?

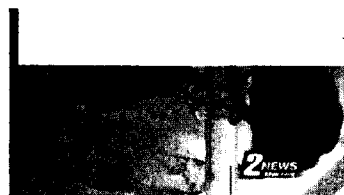
Posted: Feb 28, 2012 1:28 PM PST

Updated: Feb 28, 2012 4:24 PM PST

John Potter

Channel 2 News

The biggest question after every storm these days is "how much"? That's the bottom line up on the mountains. Every snow storm contributes to this end game...the snowpack that serves as a vault and gradually melts in spring and summer runoff to provide a big 75% of our water supply.



The snow survey folks with the Natural Resources Conservation Service have made the trip to personally measure the snowpack many times before, but this one was probably the most important one yet. Up until Monday, the current snowpack was one depressing subject. But after going through the worst of winter on the roads, hopes were high that it would get a boost.

Despite the snow Monday, Hydologist Dan Greenlee didn't expect to move the needle. On his way to the measuring site, he was pessimistic about what he'd find. He told us he expected, "confirmation of a very slow year this year."

It has been a dry winter...the 4th dry year in the last 5. If the measurement is bleak, Dan says it will impact farmers. "Absolutely. I mean, they're looking at this for how much water they're going to get."

How much they, and we get, is determined almost a mile trek away from the Mt. Rose Highway near the summit...a patch of ground with good tree cover to prevent wind-blown redistribution of snow and evaporation. The snow sits on top of a big air pillow that measures the weight and sends back remote data. But once a month in the winter, Dan goes up to do a more accurate reading. It's more than grabbing a yardstick and sticking it into the snow. The pole he brings out is stuck in the snow to measure depth, then weighed to determine the water content...the most

critical measurement to assess the water supply.

So what did we find out in today's frosty, frigid trek? The title "driest winter in at least 5 years" title remains. Still, Dan says, we have a 30% snowpack. "Yeah, unfortunately. Maybe the storm yesterday boosted it a percentage point. That shows you how much you got to bump those numbers up this late in the season to make it a game changer at this point."

There's not much time left to make things right. The snowpack peaks about the first of April, and the runoff peaks the middle of June. The hot months of summer are waiting, just ahead. It all depends on March now. Dan says, "Best case, just a slammer of a month, getting snow after snow after snow. Worst case...it dries up and we don't get anything after this next storm."

He can measure the data, but nature still makes the ground rules.

Dan will make his next and last measurement of the season on April 1st. Until then, you can monitor the automated snowpack measurements from your computer, anytime you want. Just click this link for the latest readings:

<http://bit.ly/xlp7lb>



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ON TAP

Clean water flows from our faucets.



WRITTEN BY AMY HARRIS

Bottled water labels promise liquid from pristine springs. Poland Spring's label says its fountainhead is composed of 100 percent natural spring water. Aquafina's label says it offers pure water with a "perfect taste," and Dasani's label says it has purified water with a "fresh taste." But where can you get spring water from the snow-capped peaks of Lake Tahoe? It turns out that our tap provides fresh, pure water for the cost of the regular water bill.

"Most of our water comes from the snow pack around Lake Tahoe," says Julie Stoughton, an environmental science professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. "The fresh snowmelt flows down the Truckee River."

A total of 85 percent of Reno's water supply comes from the Truckee River. The other 15 percent comes from wells. The sources are mixed together and then filtered, screened, coagulated, flocculated, mixed, and filtered again. Public water is consistently tested.

"The public water supply always has to meet strict standards," says Dr. Mark Walker, a water specialist and professor at UNR.

"Before the water ever gets into your tap, it's tested at several lines. I have confidence I can go anywhere and get a glass of water and chances are I'm not going to get sick."

Water in many places is not tested for agricultural or mining pollutants.

"But upstream from Reno, we do test for a lot of any of these issues," she says.

Sometimes bottled water is not as pure as you think it is. Often it's often hooked up to the public water supply, which means the only difference is that it's bottled and bottled faster and the label says it's from a "pristine spring" or "entirely pure" or "filtered."

"I don't know if it's better than tap water," she says.

But it is important to remember that tap water is treated and filtered to remove contaminants.

"You have to understand that chlorine is used to disinfect," she says. "It dissolves everything."

Water is an expression of its environment, she says. It doesn't mean the water is dangerous. "But if water is the problem, we ensure the concentrations of harmful substances are low and health effects from them are negligible. The people who are overly cautious are a minority of the population."

Because of the source, there's no need to worry about Lake Tahoe. And you're getting the best of both worlds: you receive the type of water that's tested and filtered on the label's promise of spring water.

"We have great tap water," she says. "It's not as fancy as turkey."

And Phil Meyer, manager of the Truckee River Water Quality Authority at Trwa.com, says he's confident in the quality of the water. "The one I don't worry about is bottled water," he says. "I don't know if it's better than tap water. I know it's not for kids or a highly active person. I know it's not consistently delivered to you. It's not the water you're used to. The product that we're getting is good."

For details on local water quality, contact the Truckee River Water Quality Authority at Trwa.com. Truckee-Carson water is regulated at Tdpud.org. Truckee-Carson is regulated by the Nevada State of Carson City Public Works at Carson.org. The cost of your local water is per gallon.

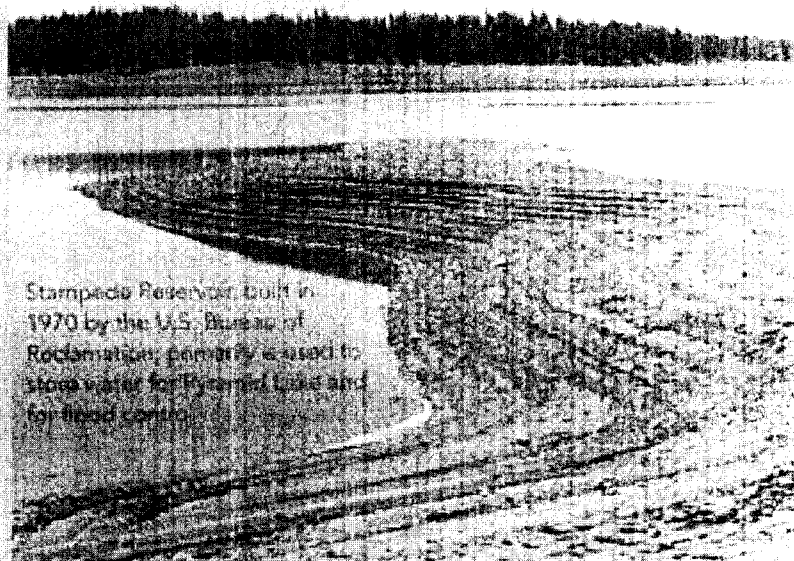
TRUCKEE RIVER

Amy Harris is a writer and author of *Truckee: A Guide to the History, Culture, and Recreation of the Lake Tahoe Region*. She lives in Reno.

Water wise

Conservation tips for edible gardeners.

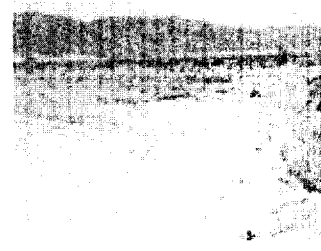
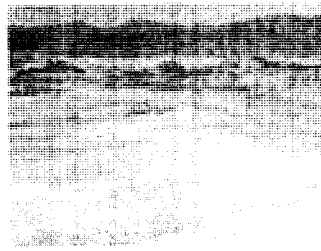
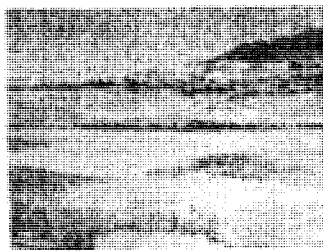
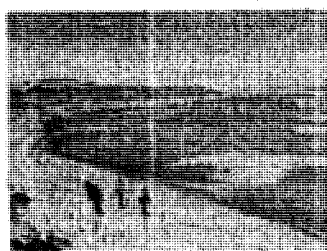
COURTESY OF TRUCKEE MEADOWS
WATER AUTHORITY
PHOTOS BY PETER GOIN



Stampede Reservoir, built in 1970 by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, primarily is used to store water for Pyramid Lake and for flood control.

- **Group plants by water-use zones.** A water-efficient landscape will have few "high-water use" plants and practical turf areas. Group higher-water-use edible plants together, and lower-water-use (herbs, etc.) plants together, putting them on zoned irrigation.
- **Drip irrigation is the best,** most efficient way to water fruit trees and edible gardens.
- When watered on a drip irrigation system (instead of sprinklers), a **vegetable garden** can be more water efficient than turf by up to 30 percent.
- An established "**food forest**," which may include fruit trees, berry brambles, and edible ground coverings (such as asparagus and rhubarb), can be more water efficient than turf by up to 60 percent.
- The Truckee Meadows is a prime location with lots of sun and freezing temperatures appropriate for many fruit trees. **The best fruit trees for our area are** (in order): 1. Apple, 2. Pear, 3. Dwarf cherry, 4. Peach.
- No simple guide exists to tell us exactly how much water a tree will need to thrive, however, there are many common **sense techniques** to help you determine how much water your fruit tree needs and when it needs it. The best way to water trees is to apply the least amount of water needed to keep your tree growing and healthy. Unlike turf, which prefers frequent, cyclical watering to saturate its root zone (six to eight inches deep), trees need less frequent, deep watering to saturate their root zones (12 to 18 inches or more).
- The **top three things** you can do to keep your trees happy and efficiently watered are:
 1. Install a drip irrigation system (with programmable timer), making adjustments to watering times and amounts seasonally.
 2. Buffer your tree's trunk with a mulch-filled watering basin.
 3. Deep-root feed three or four times per growing season.
- If we have two or three consecutive weeks of dry weather in winter (which we experienced in December 2011), **give your trees a good soaking** to keep them nourished and healthy.

For details, visit Tmwa.com.



Low water at Rye Patch Reservoir near Lovelock, Nevada.

The historic Newlands Project brought water to local farms.

WRITTEN BY JEN A. HUNTLEY

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

Herbs of Cold canals open markets for growers of tomatoes from Dayton, Fallon, and to the north, to the turnips. Only a 90-minute drive south of Reno is the heart of the vegetable region, a region blessed with slightly cooler weather that supports our growing small farm community. But it isn't the weather that provides optimum growing conditions for fruit and vegetable. Environmental engineering diverts fresh water from the Truckee and Carson rivers into a desolate plain to provide homesteads and subsistence farms for immigrants and factory workers from the east. This dream became the reality of the Bureau of Reclamation, a government agency that has brought millions of acres of arid and semi-arid lands into production through dam building and irrigation projects across the western United States and abroad. The bureau's inaugural project was the 1905 construction of the Truckee Canal, and the Derby Dam, an unassuming concrete structure just 13 miles east of Reno on Interstate 80. The project created the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District, which grew to include the alfalfa, vegetable, dairy cattle, and lamb/sheep farms of Elko and Idaho (see the story on page 80).

Few Nevadans understand the truly historic quality of their local foodshed or the cost and bitter tradeoffs that make farming here a precious reality. Just more than 100 years ago, Nevada Senator Francis Newlands dreamed of diverting water from the Truckee and Carson rivers into a desolate plain to provide homesteads and subsistence farms for immigrants and factory workers from the east. This dream became the reality of the Bureau of Reclamation, a government agency that has brought millions of acres of arid and semi-arid lands into production through dam building and irrigation projects across the western United States and abroad. The bureau's inaugural project was the 1905 construction of the Truckee Canal, and the Derby Dam, an unassuming concrete structure just 13 miles east of Reno on Interstate 80. The project created the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District, which grew to include the alfalfa, vegetable, dairy cattle, and lamb/sheep farms of Elko and Idaho (see the story on page 80).

Newlands' project ached in the desert. It was the first dam in the West, and it faced environmental and legal troubles, enough to nearly sink it. The project caused environmental rivalries downstream. The project dewatered the timber and agriculture of the region, a primary source of income, and destroyed the Washoe cultural heritage. The marshland evaporated, runoff from the project dried another wetlands habitat, and where concentrations of non-point source pollution and harmful occurring, water quality impacted wildlife.

The awareness of our regional food shed has awakened a new appreciation for the land and farms. Awareness of our history could likewise kindle a clearer appreciation for the cost tradeoffs. ♡

Learn more about the Newlands Project
at www.newlandsproject.com
Newlands Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
organization of the University of Nevada, Reno.

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Work continues to restore land burned in two recent wildfires

Restoration work at the scene of two recent wildfires that burned destructive swaths in the Reno area continues and on Saturday, some affected residents were given the opportunity to help out on their own.

At a Starbucks store near where the Caughlin Fire burned Nov. 18, sacks of native grass seed were handed out to homeowners to help them guard against future fires.

Not far away, crews labored on the steep sides of Manzanita Canyon, laying down straw barriers to help control erosion in the event of rain or snow.

"It's fried," Justin Domenici, a supervisor for Soil-Tech, Inc., said of the charred landscape where high winds rocketed flames down the canyon three months ago. The rare wintertime blaze, started by arcing power lines, burned nearly 2,000 acres, destroyed 26 homes and damaged 17 others.

The danger of future problems in the event of heavy precipitation is significant, Domenici said.

"It's definitely unstable with no vegetation,"

he said.

To help address the danger, Soil-Tech crews are installing 13,000 linear feet of straw "sediment logs." Laid horizontally on the slopes of Manzanita Canyon, the logs will slow down water draining during storms.

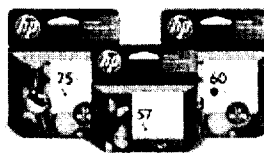
"It slows water momentum. It stops it so it doesn't flow and take everything with it like a mudslide," Domenici said. Next week, crews will begin spraying a liquid-seed mix on some of the steepest slopes to further aid in stabilization.

At the two Starbucks stores, residents were given bags of native grass seed, each containing enough to cover about 9,000 square feet of land, said Lynda Nelson, Caughlin Fire Restoration Manager for the Nevada Land Conservancy. The seed was paid for through a grant from the Nevada Division of Forestry.

The idea is for people with land damaged by the fire to sprinkle it around their

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homes, helping to establish a ring of defensible space with the fire-resistant grass.

“We need to hit it now because we’re getting into spring,” Nelson said.

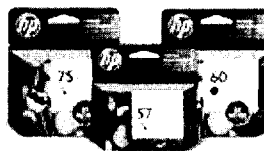
Whatever seed is not distributed to folks after today will be taken to the area of the second winter fire, the Washoe Drive Fire, sometime soon, Nelson said.

Sparked by improperly disposed fireplace ashes and like the Caughlin Fire pushed by high wind, the Washoe Drive Fire burned more than 3,100 acres in north Washoe Valley and Pleasant Valley on Jan. 19, destroying 29 homes. Some restoration work, including aerial seeding of federal land, has already occurred and more is planned.

“The recovery process for both the Washoe and Caughlin fires began before the fires were extinguished,” said Cheryl Surface, the Washoe County parks official in charge of restoration of the southernmost fire.

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Posted: 10:17 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012

Local agencies continue Caughlin and Washoe Fire joint restoration efforts

RENO -- Just a few months after two major wildfires devastated the area, local agencies come together to kick-start restoration.

Protecting watershed and preventing erosion on both private and public properties is key to recovering from a wild land urban interface fire. Emergency crews and local Burn Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) teams responded immediately following the two recent fires, Caughlin and Washoe, working to provide vital erosion control and protection of the community's water resources. The flames have since been extinguished, but the combined agency efforts of recovery professionals still continue.

Local BAER teams have been established for both fires. The Washoe Fire BAER team has already completed initial assessments and planning efforts. Below is a summary of recovery work and preventative measures in the area:

- The week of January 30, 2012, rehabilitation teams consisting of Washoe County Public Works roads personnel, Washoe County Sheriff's Office work crews and Nevada Division of Forestry crews removed hazardous trees and cleaned debris out of natural drainage ways such as Galena Creek to reduce the chance of flooding.
- The first week in February, small specialized teams assessed the wildlife, hydrologic, vegetation and infrastructure damage within the fire area.
- Contractors (Fisher Industries) continue to work within Nevada Department of Transportation right-of-ways to repair portions of the I-580 construction project that were destroyed in the fire.
- In the Montreaux area, contractors will be working on fuel reduction projects to reduce the threat of future wildfires. The Bureau of Land Management quickly reacted to reseed 555 acres burned in the Washoe Fire on February 6, 2012.
- Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space and the Nevada Land Conservancy submitted a grant funding request to the Truckee River Fund for stream restoration on Steamboat, Galena and Bower's Creeks. The \$145,000 grant request was submitted on February 9, 2012.

"The collaborative effort of local, state and federal agencies, non-profits, local businesses and interested citizens reflect on the nature of our community to come together during and after an emergency. The recovery process for both the Washoe and Caughlin Fires began before the fires were extinguished and will continue with community support," said Cheryl Surface with Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space, and the incident commander for the Washoe Fire recovery effort.

In the Caughlin Fire area, City of Reno Public Works crews, local contractors, Washoe County and BAER team members have been working diligently in tandem with the Nevada Land Conservancy to reduce threats of erosion in priority areas. They have already made significant progress.

- Immediately after the fire, the Nevada Land Conservancy, Reno Public Works, City of Reno Attorney's Office and Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space staff submitted an emergency grant proposal to the Truckee River Fund for stabilization of the burned area. The team was awarded \$219,856 to be used for emergency restoration measures
- City of Reno Public Works engineers designed check dams to catch sediment washing off the steep burned slopes. The dams were installed on the bottom of Manzanita Canyon by crews prior to Christmas.
- Emergency access roads used by utility companies in the Manzanita drainage were restored.
- Nevada Department of Transportation donated 1,800 feet of barrier rail to Washoe County for placement on Lakeside drive for erosion control.
- Nevada Division of Forestry crews assisted Washoe County in removing burned brush and trees along Lake Ditch and Last Chance Ditch in Bartley Ranch Regional Park.
- Using savings from another American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded project, Washoe County treated over 26 acres of burned hillside at Bartley Ranch Regional Park with a pre-emergent herbicide to control invasive and noxious weeds and removed approximately 25 large hazardous trees.
- The Nevada Land Conservancy hydroseeded five private properties above Windy Hill
- Washoe County American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds are being used for the Meadowridge Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project, a 6.5 acre fuel reduction project near the intersection of Lakeside Drive and South McCarran Blvd. The project includes channel clearing, herbicide application and debris removal.

In addition to work already completed in the Caughlin Fire area, erosion control teams evaluated and recommended measures for preventing further erosion in Manzanita Canyon. Beginning mid February, the project in Manzanita will include installing over two miles of sediment logs, hydroseeding 14 acres and installing 650 linear feet of willow wattles. The work is being coordinated by the Nevada Land Conservancy and the City of Reno.

"The Caughlin Fire response addresses wildfire and erosion threats on both private and public property within the burn area. This interagency fire response and recovery teams have been successful in meeting the initial needs of the community and continuing the long term recovery process," commented Kyle West, City of Reno Training and Safety Manager and co-incident commander for the Caughlin Fire recovery response.

In addition to erosion control measures, emergency and public safety personnel patrolled both burn areas to watch for flash flooding during recent storm events. The University of Nevada, Reno – Living with Fire program provides information on protecting homes and lives in fire prone areas. For information on upcoming presentations, please visit www.livingwithfire.com

For more information on Caughlin Fire, Washoe Fire emergency response or restoration, including links for community support please visit: www.washoecounty.us/index/emergency.htmlwww.reno.gov/caughlinfirewww.washoecounty.us/mgrsoff/caughlinfire.html

We Recommend

- 5th person arrested child's death released (FOXreno)
- Sheriff: No signs of foul play in couple's bodies found in Carson River (FOXreno)
- Caughlin Fire victims to receive native grass seed this weekend (FOXreno)
- Special session to inform Caughlin Fire victims of landscape recovery process (FOXreno)
- Caughlin Fire victim fundraiser tonight (FOXreno)

From Around the Web

- The IRS' Worst Nightmare — How to Pay Zero Taxes (Newsmax.com)
- FBI warns of new banking scam (Bankrate.com)
- Virginia Tech on Lockdown After 2 Fatal Shootings (CSO)
- 13 Things Your Pilot Won't Tell You (Reader's Digest)
- This Is Why Inmates Should Not Be Allowed to Make State Police Decals (The Stir By CafeMom)

[?]



TCID Groundbreaking highlights conduit rehab project

Truckee Carson Irrigation District board members and citizens of Fernley met at the Truckee Canal at the Clearwater Bridge on Friday morning for a Groundbreaking Ceremony that featured the conduit rehabilitation project.

Construction is underway with A & K Earth Movers either replacing, removing or consolidating 33 conduits along the 12-mile stretch of the canal.

Water rights owners in Fernley will not receive water until mid-May when the project is slated to be completed, remarked Project Manager Rusty Jardine; but A & K Earth Movers would do everything it can to get the project completed as quickly as possible.

The irrigation district received a loan to complete the project from First Independent Bank in January for \$3 million at 6.5% interest rate over seven years.

At the ceremony, irrigation district officials commended bank officials for their support, as other financial institutions would not provide a loan to the district due to litigation concerning the 2008 Fernley Flood.

“Without First Independent Bank, we wouldn’t be standing here,” said Jardine.

The ceremony also featured a historic Fresno scraper that was pulled by a mule-team, and members of the public, as well as TCID board members, had an opportunity to take pictures with the team.

Previously, Fernley water rights owners were concerned they would not receive their water until late in the irrigation season.

Many longtime Fernley ranchers were in attendance at the ceremony, including Ed Brush, who was a TCID ditch rider and then a TCID board member.

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Zoom
CID board members tried their hand at using this historic Fresno scraper, which was powered by a mule-team at the irrigation district's groundbreaking ceremony for the canal conduit rehabilitation project. / Photo by Richard Booth

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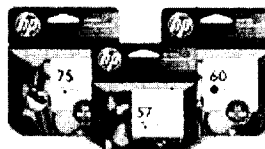
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Study: Sierra snowfall consistent over 130 years

Peter Fimrite

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

Snowfall in the Sierra Nevada has remained consistent for 130 years, with no evidence that anything has changed as a result of climate change, according to a study released Tuesday.

The analysis of snowfall data in the Sierra going back to 1878 found no more or less snow overall - a result that, on the surface, appears to contradict aspects of recent climate change models.

John Christy, the Alabama state climatologist who authored the study, said the amount of snow in the mountains has not decreased in the past 50 years, a period when greenhouse gases were supposed to have increased the effects of global warming.

The heaping piles of snow that fell in the Sierra last winter and the paltry amounts this year fall within the realm of normal weather variability, he concluded.

"The dramatic claims about snow disappearing in the Sierra just are not verified," said Christy, a climate change skeptic and director of the Earth System Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. "It looks like you're going to have snow for the foreseeable future."

Climate experts and water resources officials were immediately skeptical of the report, pointing out that it doesn't come to a meaningful conclusion and uses data from a ragtag collection of people, many of them amateurs.

Christy's study used snow measurements from railroad officials, loggers, mining companies, hydroelectric utilities, water districts and government organizations going back to 1878. That's when railroad workers began measuring the snowpack's depth near the tracks at Echo Summit using a device similar to a yardstick.

"No one else had looked at this data in detail," said Christy, a Fresno native who said some of the information will be published in the American Meteorological Society's online Journal of Hydrometeorology.

Christy divided California into 18 regions based on the amount of snow that falls and on the quality of the records for that region, and crunched the numbers. They show no changes in average snowfall over the 130 years and no changes from 1975 to 2000, a period when studies have shown that global temperatures rose. The snow level was consistent even in the Sierra's western slope, where much of California's water supply comes from.

"California has huge year-to-year variations and that's expected to continue," Christy said. "California is having a snow drought so far this winter, while last year the state had much heavier than normal snowfall. But over the long term, there just isn't a trend up or down."

Mike Dettinger, a climatologist and research hydrologist at the Scripps Institute of the U.S. Geological

Survey, said Christy is picking and choosing data while misleading people about what climate change scientists are actually saying.

For one, he said, snow depth is not as good a measure of the winter weather conditions as water content and density.

The number of inches or feet of snow on the ground can mean a variety of things, he said, depending on if it is fluffy powder or compacted, wet snow.

Recent studies by Scripps scientists have found that over the last 50 years the southern Sierra snowpack has gotten larger while the northern Sierra pack has shrunk. Although they have predicted the overall state snowpack would decrease over time as a result of climate change, nobody has claimed that it has happened yet, Dettinger said.

What's significant in terms of global warming, he said, is the fact that the snowpack has declined over three quarters of the western United States, an area that includes Montana, Wyoming and New Mexico. Scripps researchers, in coordination with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory scientists, have concluded that 60 percent of that downward trend is due to greenhouse gases.

"There is a popular conception that the snowpack has declined everywhere, but that is not what the science says," Dettinger said. "What we're saying broadly is that across western North America there have been declines in spring snowpack."

Peter Fimrite is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. pfimrite@sfgate.com

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/02/15/BA8N1N7HNQ.DTL>

This article appeared on page **C - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

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M/Resilience & RL Networks

Sunset

◀ Return to Our 2012 Environmental Awards

Our 2012 Environmental Awards

Here are the people and organizations working hard to preserve the most special places of the West



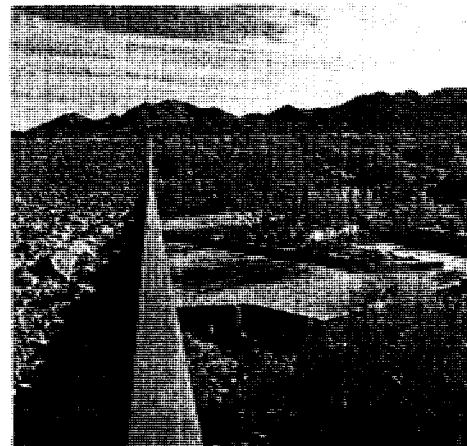
Photo by Thomas J. Story, illustration by Kozyndan written by Peter Fish and Sophie Egan

Best shoreline

What didn't happen here: A waterfront resort and luxury housing

Why it's a winner: The 94 acres of Washington's Devil's Head will be an amazing public park. When one landowner gazed at Devil's Head—a mile-long beach, killer views of Puget Sound, Mt. Rainier, and the Olympics—he had a dream. Specifically, a dream of McMansions and a coastal retreat on this 94-acre tip of the Key Peninsula west of Tacoma. That didn't happen, thanks to the work of Forterra, formerly the Cascade Land Conservancy. Over several years, the conservancy amassed \$3.4 million to buy the land for Pierce County. As is standard with recession-battered real-estate deals these days, nothing about buying Devil's Head was easy. Conservationists had to deal with the landowner's bankruptcy. But they prevailed. Now hikers will have new forests and beaches to romp, and kayakers a new stop on the Cascadia Manne Trail.

Take a look: For now, the best way to see Devil's Head is from a kayak (eventually trails will be developed). forterra.org



Photos by Bill Thompson and writers by Peter Fish and Sophie Egan

Best local land trust and best visitor center

LOCAL LAND TRUST

What didn't happen here: Desert and mountains paved over.

Why it's a winner: Greater Phoenix/Scottsdale gets a bad rap for sprawl. But over the last 20 years, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy has preserved 21,400 acres of wilderness (with 100 miles of trails) on the edge of the metro area, closing in on its goal of creating the largest urban nature preserve in the country.

Take a look: Gateway Trailhead, 18333 N. Thompson Peak Pkwy, Scottsdale. mcdowellsonoran.org

VISITOR CENTER

What didn't happen here: An energy-consuming cinder-block center.

Why it's a winner: The rammed-earth, net-zero energy, LEED platinum-certified Gateway to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve proves that sustainable doesn't have to mean drab.



Photo by Dave Lewatzen written by Peter Fish and Sophie Egan

Best education program

What didn't happen here: Kids whose only exposure to nature is a glimpse of a tree in a video game.

Why it's a winner: The Wildlands Conservancy uses its Southern California nature preserves to introduce the outdoors to the Justin Bieber generation—25,000 kids annually, many of whom come from families at or below poverty level. Its size and emphasis on bringing nature to kids who otherwise wouldn't experience it make the Wildlands Conservancy one of the most ambitious environmental-ed programs anywhere. And the kids' reviews would do Yelp proud: "I learned many new things. First, we all went to pick one pretty rock that shines in the sun and we got to see animals. Thank you for everything."

Take a look: You don't have to be a kid to enjoy Wildlands' preserves. One good one? Wind Wolves Preserve, in Kern County, 95,000 acres where the San Joaquin Valley meets the Transverse Ranges. Sat-Sun; [free; wildlandsconservancy.org](http://wildlandsconservancy.org)



Photo by David Fenton written by Peter Fish and Sophie Egan

Best addition to a National Park

What didn't happen here: Homes and golf course on a bucolic California coast.

Why it's a winner: Newly added to Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 3,658-acre Rancho Corral de Tierra (parksconservancy.org) gives Bay Area residents coastal views in San Mateo County.

Take a look: Access through McNee Ranch State Park near Montara.



Photo by Lonnie Peck / NV Energy written by Peter Fish and Sophie Egan

Best lake

What didn't happen here: A shoreline jammed with houses, restaurants, and pubs. And motorboats.

Why it's a winner: Independence Lake, a half-hour north of Tahoe in the High Sierra, was formerly owned by NV Energy and once used to produce hydropower. It has nothing on its shores except Jeffrey pines, red firs, and some picnic tables. The Nature Conservancy and the Truckee Donner Land Trust fought off a private buyer to purchase 2,325 lakeside acres for \$15 million.

Take a look: Off State 89, 50 minutes north of Truckee; follow signs to Independence Lake. nature.org

<< Back



Post-Fire Restorations in Manzanita Canyon

Posted: Feb 21, 2012 6:39 PM PST
Updated: Feb 22, 2012 2:01 PM PST

From the City of Reno:

The City of Reno Public Works Department and the Nevada Land Conservancy continue to work on post-fire restoration in Manzanita Canyon following the Caughlin Fire.



Starting Wednesday until April 1, 2012, Soil Tech will be installing 13,000 linear feet of sediment logs, 17 acres of hydromulching, and 650 feet of willow wattles within the canyon bottom. The Nevada Land Conservancy was awarded a Truckee River Fund grant for emergency restoration measures. Soil Tech was awarded the contract by the Nevada Land Conservancy.

Residents are encouraged to limit their use of the access road during restoration activities

In mid December, while working on plans for erosion control, the City of Reno Public Works Department designed and installed nine check dams in the bottom of Manzanita Canyon to stabilize sediments in the drainage, and prevent rain and storm water from washing them out in the most severely burned areas. These structures have effectively held the soils back from washing down the drainage way during the January and February storms.

In addition, Starbucks has partnered in the effort on post -fire restoration by providing coffee and a meeting place for impacted home owners of the Caughlin Fire to pick up native grass seed. Impacted home owners can obtain the seed on Saturday, February 25 at the Caughlin Ranch Starbucks from 8:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. or Sunday, February 26 at the Lakeside Drive McCarran Boulevard. A one-sixth acre bag of grass seed will be handed out along with instructions for hand seeding. Address identification will be required to receive the seed. Interested fire victims may request seed before these dates, by calling the Nevada Land Conservancy.

Community members interested in volunteering and helping in restoring the canyon should call Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful at 851-5185.

In the upcoming weeks more organized restoration efforts will be announced.



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Waiting on water, Newlands Federal Reclamation Project is underway



Reported by: Brooke Boone

Email: bboone@mynews4.com

Published: 2/17 5:58 pm

Updated: 2/17 6:30 pm

FERNLEY, NV (Mynews4.com & KRNV) - A new irrigation project in Fernley should be good news for the agricultural economy in the region. Truckee Canal Irrigation District held a ground breaking ceremony today for the Newlands Federal Reclamation Project. Old conduits, pipes that feed water from the Truckee Canal into an irrigation system, are being replaced and consolidated. Once the project is complete, the volume of water flowing through the canal will be slightly increased.

Farmers and ranchers say their livelihood depends on water from the canal and it is critical that the project is done on time. But the project's completion is not expected until a month into irrigation season. According to Ernie Schank, President of the Board of Directors for TCID, this is the only time the project can be done. Schank says that even though this has been a dry year, there is a good amount of water left in the reservoirs.

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Walt Higgins: Be prepared for changes in water supply

Nearly every year, Northern Nevadans are reminded of the importance of water to our livelihoods.

This year, we are experiencing a drought accompanied by unusual winter fires. Water from the Truckee, Carson and Walker rivers supplies drinking water for residents and businesses, irrigation water for agriculture and, in the case of the Truckee River, the means by which we dispose of treated wastewater. The health of our rivers is critical for fish and wildlife and for tourism, recreation and the quality of our lives.

With all this at stake, it is good news that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced it will study how supply and demand for water could change in the Truckee River basin due to long-term shifts in climate. As there is plenty of uncertainty about the future climate of the eastern Sierra Nevada, it is worth asking some "what-if" questions so we are fully prepared for all possibilities.

One projection is that our region's average temperatures might increase by several degrees, with perhaps the same or somewhat reduced, levels of precipitation.

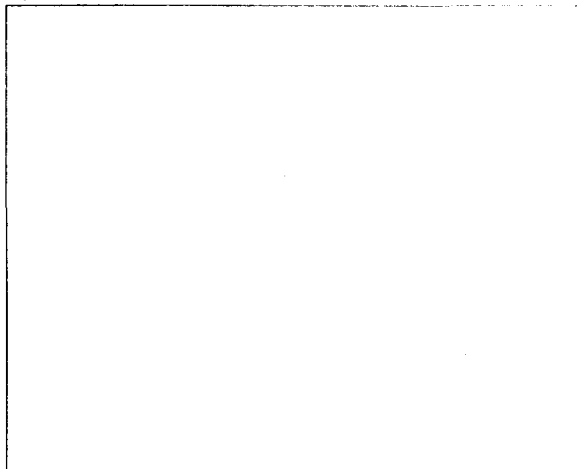
Warmer temperatures would cause more of our precipitation to fall as rain than as snow compared to past years. Spring would begin earlier, and fall would end later. The longer growing season could be expected to increase irrigation demand.

Our weather might also become more variable, meaning the frequency of floods and droughts would increase, and previously "normal" years would occur less often. The increased frequency of drought and longer growing seasons might also mean more Sierra Nevada wildfires.

Of course, nobody can say with certainty that these events, or any particular climate scenario, will come to pass. But there is enough evidence of changes occurring that it is prudent to ask how we can best adapt if these predictions do come to pass.

We are fortunate, however, that if we take appropriate steps in preparation for these changes, the Truckee, Carson and Walker rivers will likely remain reliable sources of freshwater and will continue to serve the

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many interests that depend on them.

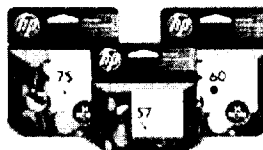
Let's hope the Bureau of Reclamation study launches a broad discussion of how our economy, our way of life and fish and wildlife might be affected due to changes in the climate of the Sierra Nevada, and what might be done to address such effects.

The discussion must not be limited to a single agency or study, however. Generating a workable plan demands engagement at all levels of government and input from all stakeholder groups and the people who call this region home. This study is a valuable and necessary start, but the conversation — and focus on solutions — must continue long after the study's report is issued.

Walt Higgins is board chair for The Nature Conservancy in Nevada and retired chairman and CEO of Sierra Pacific Resources.

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Can you dig it?

There are more than worms and rocks and roots in the ground a few feet below your rose bushes and evergreens.

There's a whole world of lines, pipes and cables that bring power, gas, television and communications services to your house. There are pipes that bring water and remove sewage.

Generally located a few feet underground in front of a house, that utility maze isn't likely to get in the way of planting tomatoes or tulip bulbs. But when the digging gets deeper and involves mechanical equipment, such as a tree planting or excavation for landscaping or concrete work, lines and pipes might present a hazard.

That's when you need to call before you dig. Your best option: Call 811 or visit www.usanorth.org. With a phone call or a visit to the website two days or more before beginning to dig, all utilities involved are notified so they can mark the location of their lines on the property.

"If you're in the backyard, then you generally should not have any underground utilities, except for your own irrigation system, or if you've done extensive outside landscaping and have added electric lines. But we hope you know where those are at," said Jack Byrom, manager of engineering and construction management at Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

"But in front, you should be concerned about underground electric, gas and telecommunications — telephone and cable lines," Byrom said. "Those will come usually from the box next to the sidewalk and run underground to where the meter box or panel are located" on or next to the house.

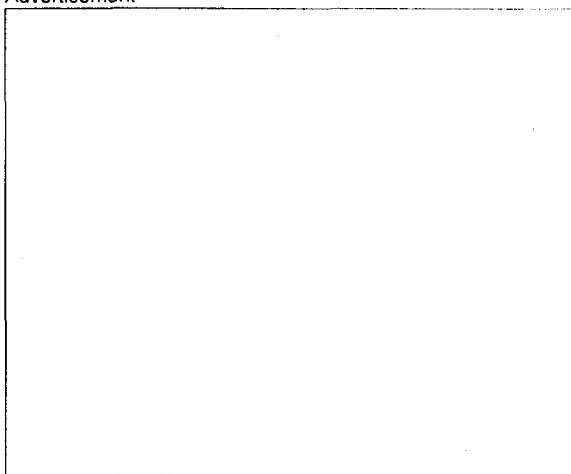
Know your lines

Gas, electric and telecommunications control boxes usually are on one side of a house, Byrom said, while water controls are on the other.

For instance, a gas line is generally buried 24 inches deep when it's installed, said Jay Mendiola, NV Energy senior damage prevention administrator. But that depth can change under certain circumstances.

The age of the neighborhood can affect on how deep lines and pipes are buried, as ground shifts, soil erodes and landscaping is altered over the years.

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"Now, the standards are that we have to put in gas services 24 inches deep," Mendiola said. "But you might live in a house that's 50 years old, so the lines might be 20 or 21 inches down."

Sewer lines come out of a house underground and connect with the municipal system in the street, Byrom said. The homeowner owns the line up to where it connects with the system. If you break it on your property, it's your responsibility to repair it.

"Sometimes, people dig down, put in a big tree, hit that pipe and break it and it backs up," he said. "In many locations, especially in older parts of town, mature tree roots will grow into that sewer line."

Water lines usually come straight out of the water meter box on the sidewalk, then turns into the house, Byrom said. If the shutoff valve for the system isn't evident, a plumber can help locate it.

You bust it, you fix it

"We don't police it," Mendiola said of such construction work. "We mark it and if someone damages something, they are at fault."

The Public Utilities Commission also can fine someone who damages a pipe or other line in excavation work.

"If you hit something, say a gas line, and it's blowing, we recommend you call 911," Mendiola said. "If you feel something is a safety issue, definitely call 911. If you just

come across the steel line with yellow coating and you nick that, call us immediately and we'll come out and repair it. For damage to any utility, call the utility or call back to 811 and reference the ticket (number)."

Once utilities notified of an impending dig mark the area, Nevada law requires that digging be done by hand within 24 inches, plus the width, of the pipe involved, Mendiola said. Any facility that's unearthed by digging also must be protected while the hole is open and after it's refilled, he said.

Details

Call before you dig Northern Nevada:

www.usanorth.org or call 811

Nevada law on excavation guidelines:

1-800-227-2600 (or 811) or www.usanorth.org/

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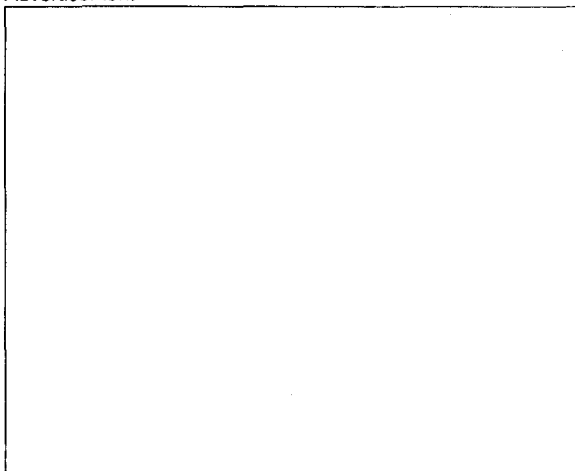
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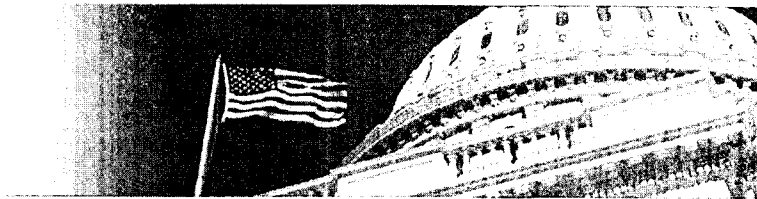
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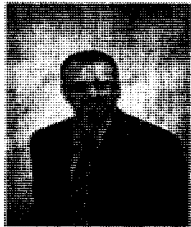
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Water



Federal Regulations – Helping Protect Your Water Quality

By Mark Foree
General Manager
Truckee Meadows Water Authority

We are very fortunate in northern Nevada and throughout the United States to have safe and accessible drinking water. More than a billion people in the world lack access to safe drinking water. In the United States drinking water is heavily regulated, beginning at the federal level, in order to protect public health not only from known contaminants, but also potential future containments. However, few residents understand the important role that our federal government, along with state and local entities, has in protecting the safety of the water we consume.

As the water purveyor to 330,000 residents in northern Nevada, Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), works closely with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and the Washoe County Health Department in order to effectively monitor, treat and deliver high quality drinking water to our community.

As you can imagine there are many different contaminants that can make their way into water, some naturally occurring and some which are manmade. Who decides which contaminants need to be monitored for public health and how do they decide? The EPA, under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) which was enacted in 1974 and modified (made more stringent) many times since then, sets drinking water's high standards for water utilities throughout the country. Through a scientifically rigorous process, the EPA determines which contaminants need to be regulated and the maximum level permissible in order to protect public health. The science of detection has advanced to the point that we are able to identify contaminants at less than one part per billion. In the United States, water utilities monitor for more than 100 contaminants and must meet close to 90 regulations for water quality and safety. These standards are among the world's most stringent. The list of contaminants is regularly reviewed and the EPA develops

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Caughlin Fire restoration work to cause lane closures on Lakeside Drive today

by Tribune Staff

01.31.12 - 06:34 pm

RENO — Work to restore damage in the Windy Hill area from the Nov. 18 Caughlin Fire will bring lane closures to Lakeside Drive today.

The street will only have one lane in operation from 8 a.m. to approximately 3 p.m. and flaggers will be directing traffic. Motorists using Lakeside in the Windy Hill area should expect delays and allow additional time or find alternate routes.

The Nevada Land Conservancy, through funding provided by the Truckee River Fund, has hired a contractor to hydroseed nearly 5 acres of private land on the scorched slopes of Windy Hill on the west side of Lakeside Drive above Bartley Ranch. The process includes the application of native grass seed in the affected burn areas.

The traffic plan was approved by the Washoe County Public Works Department and the contractor applying the hydroseed is Kelley Erosion Control. For more information, contact Lynda Nelson at 997-3982 or Tracy Visher at 742-0076 with the Nevada Land Conservatory.

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Posted: 9:45 PM Jan 31, 2012

Lane Closures on Lakeside Drive Wednesday Due to Caughtlin Fire Restoration

Restoration work due to damage in the Windy Hill area from the Caughtlin Fire will bring lane closures to Lakeside drive on Wednesday, February 1, 2012.

Reporter: Staff

Email Address: news@kolotv.com



Caughtlin Fire (Courtesy KOLOTV.com)

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RENO, Nev. - Restoration work due to damage in the Windy Hill area from the Caughtlin Fire will bring lane closures to Lakeside drive on Wednesday, February 1, 2012.

Beginning Wednesday morning, Lakeside Drive will only have one lane in operation from 8 a.m. to approximately 3 p.m. and flaggers will be directing traffic. Motorists using Lakeside in the Windy Hill area should expect delays and allow additional time or find alternate routes.

The lane closures are in connection with restoration work due to damage from the Caughtlin Fire on November 18, 2011. The Nevada Land Conservancy, through funding provided by the Truckee River Fund, has hired a contractor to hydroseed nearly five acres of private land on the slopes of Windy Hill on the west side of Lakeside above Bartley Ranch. The process includes the application of native grass seed in the affected burn areas.

The traffic plan was approved by the Washoe County Public Works Department and the contractor applying the hydroseed is Kelley Erosion Control. For more information you can contact Lynda Nelson, (775) 997-3982 or Tracy Visher, (775) 742-0076 with the Nevada Land Conservatory.

Find this article at:

http://www.kolotv.com/home/headlines/Lane_Closures_on_Lakeside_Drive_Wednesday_Due_to_Caughtlin_Fire_Restoration_138436044.html



over the West and is expected to shoulder aside storms that otherwise might bring needed snow to the region, Snyder said.

"We're not going to do very well for at least the next couple of weeks," Snyder said. "There are indications it could last longer, that it could last the whole month. It's not our winter."

The good news is Lake Tahoe is still brimming with water after a phenomenal winter in 2010-2011, meaning plenty of water supplies for Reno-Sparks over the coming summer.

"But you hate to dip into your reserves," Greenlee said. "It's kind of like dipping into your savings account to pay your bills."

Wednesday's Sierra snowpack

- Truckee River Basin: 34 percent of average.
- Lake Tahoe Basin: 36 percent of average.
- Carson River Basin: 36 percent of average.

Feb. 1, 2011

- Truckee River Basin: 126 percent of average.
- Lake Tahoe Basin: 142 percent of average.
- Carson River Basin: 124 percent of average.

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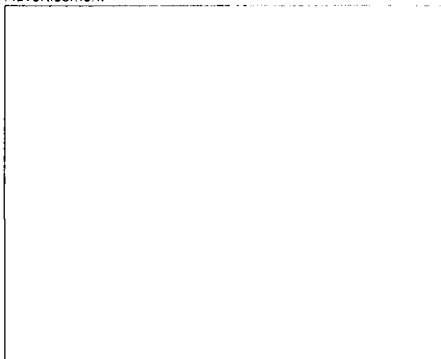
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4-30-12 10:05 AM

Experts tour Washoe Drive Fire area to determine emergency restoration measures

Experts fanned out Monday across the charred landscape of the Washoe Drive Fire, taking stock of damage to the terrain in a first step to determine what emergency measures are necessary to protect the area from mudslides and other postfire problems.

The specialists from federal, state and local governments spent the day examining the burn area in northern Washoe Valley and Pleasant Valley, with recommendations soon to come on how to control erosion during winter rains and prevent an invasion of non-native weeds and grasses.

"We're going to look over the fire globally," Cheryl Surface, a Washoe County parks planner and leader of the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation Team, said during a morning briefing before team members took to the field.

Ignited Jan. 19 by a man who improperly disposed of fireplace ashes in the Washoe City area and pushed by winds gusting at more than 80 mph, the fire blasted through rural neighborhoods, destroying

29 homes. More than 3,000 acres burned

"We've got a lot of bare soil — totally toasted," Surface said.

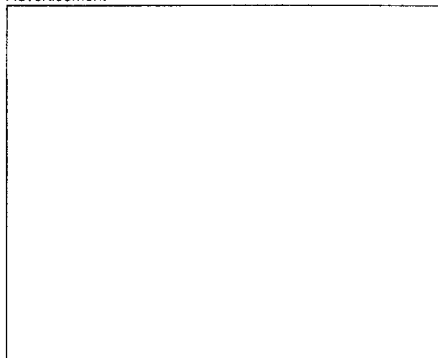
What happens when rain or snow falls on the charred terrain is a worry already voiced by area residents, Surface said.

"Their concerns are primarily what our concerns are. If we get a rain event ... what's going to happen to the creeks, what's going to happen to the steep slopes," Surface said.

The team will identify areas where erosion-control measures, including debris dams, catch basins and straw barriers, might be placed in coming days. Specialists include engineers, botanists, foresters, range managers, biologists and water quality experts, among others.

A variety of funding sources could be tapped, including the Truckee River Fund, an account operated by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority designed to

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finance projects that protect water quality of the Truckee River. The utility granted a \$219,856 grant to fund emergency restoration projects at the scene of the Caughlin Fire, which blasted across nearly 2,000 acres of southwest Reno on Nov. 18.

Three creeks in the Washoe Drive Fire area — Steamboat, Galena and Browns — flow into the Truckee River and have the potential to discharge sediment and fire debris into its waters.

Another goal of the rehabilitation team will be to prevent establishment of invading plants in the burn area. Cheatgrass, which crowds out native vegetation and has the potential to fuel future fires, is among them. So is medusahead, an invading weed that is spreading across parts of Washoe County but is not yet found south of the Galena area.

"We certainly don't want to get the medusahead in this particular area," Surface said.

Fire restoration efforts will also have to take into account cultural resources, including Washoe Tribe artifacts and historic mining mill sites from the Comstock era.

"We'll be looking at what we can do with minimal disturbance to those sites," said John Copeland, resource management officer for the Nevada Division of Forestry.

Fire area breakdown

- 1,950 acres private land
- 611 acres BLM land
- 215.3 acres state land
- 172 acres U.S. Forest Service land
- 51.7 acres Washoe County land
- 9.7 acres UNR land

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Reno-area water rates to rise

POSTED: JAN 18, 2012 3:44 AM PST
UPDATED: JAN 18, 2012 3:44 AM PST

RENO, Nev. (AP) - The Truckee Meadows Water Authority is expected to finalize a rate increase for Reno-area water customers.

The Reno Gazette-Journal reports the board on Wednesday will also discuss a proposal to create a special rate for low-income or senior customers to help ease their financial burden.

If approved, a monthly service fee would be increased by 3.5%, raising average water bills to \$41.63, an increase of \$1.41. Similar increases would occur in 2013 and 2014 if deemed necessary.

The newspaper reports the adjustment is intended to help close a \$9 million gap between water sales revenue and what it costs to deliver water to 93,000 homes and businesses across the Truckee Meadows.

The water authority is jointly operated by the cities of Reno and Sparks and Washoe County.

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

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County commissioners update board appointments

January 25, 2012

By [ThisIsReno](#)

WASHOE CO. NEWS RELEASE

At their meeting yesterday, county commissioners made several changes to board appointments the commissioners hold as representatives of Washoe County.

Commission Chairman Robert Larkin became a primary representative for the county on the Joint Fire Advisory Board with the city of Reno and became an alternate for the Truckee Meadows Flood Management Authority. As chair of the County Commission, he will also serve on the county's Investment Committee and the EDAWN Economic Development Council, with the authority to designate the county manager to attend as representative.

He was also appointed Jan. 19 in a special county commission meeting to continue his appointment to the Regional Transportation Commission.

Commission Vice-Chair Bonnie Weber was appointed to the Regional Transportation Commission and the Washoe County School District Oversight Panel on School Facilities, and is an alternate on the Joint Fire Advisory Board.

Commissioner David Humke became the primary representative for the Organizational Effectiveness Committee and the Nevada Association of Counties Board of Directors, and will become a special Judicial Liaison for the County Commission. He will also serve as first alternate to the Regional Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Kitty Jung was appointed to the Truckee Meadows Flood Management Authority, the Washoe County Investment Committee, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) Board, and the county member of the Western Regional Water Commission. Jung is an alternate for the Nevada Association of Counties Board of Directors.

Commissioner John Breternitz, having completed a year as the chairman of the Washoe County Commission, stepped down from several committees that are, traditionally, staffed by the current chairman of the commission, but will remain on the Audit Committee and the Debt Management Commission.

In addition, the commissioners took action to authorize all commissioners to be seated as alternates when needed for the Joint Fire Advisory Board, the Nevada Association of Counties Board of Directors, the Regional Planning Governing Board, the Regional Transportation Commission, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority and the Truckee River Flood Management Authority.

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Posted by [ThisIsReno](#) on January 25, 2012.

Tags: [Washoe County Commission](#)



Gov. Sandoval receives a Sheep Dip Shaft award for special election

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval was surprised when he received an Infamous Shaft award for 2011's special election to replace former U.S. Rep. Dean Heller, Sheep Dip President Roger Diez said.

"He said he thought it was going to be for his endorsement of (Texas Gov.) Rick Perry," Diez said. "He was gracious about it."

Sandoval received the award because the special election cost taxpayers more than \$500,000, Diez said. Three other recipients also received an Infamous Shaft award at the John Ascuaga's Nugget on Friday and Saturday for the 48th annual Sheep Dip, a comedic satire of newsmakers in Northern Nevada. Actress Dawn Wells, a Reno native famous for playing Mary Ann in "Gilligan's Island," was expected to play Sarah Palin in a skit but missed the show because filming for a movie in Southern California ran long, Diez said.

Every Nevada governor has participated in the event at some point during his term since Gov. Grant Sawyer dressed as Tom Sawyer in 1965 and railed against local newsmakers while painting a white picket

fence with then-Lt. Gov. Paul Laxalt.

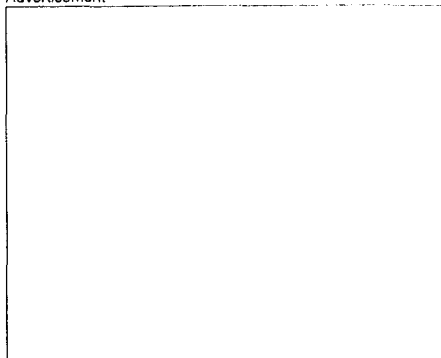
The Truckee Meadows Water Authority also received a shaft award for raising water fees, Diez said. The Wild Orchid's controversial billboard gained the gentlemen's club a shaft award and the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority was shafted for its inability to hire a director, Diez said.

"The audiences were great both nights," Sheep Dip assistant director Sue Higley said. "I think we could have read the phone book each night, and they would have laughed. They really came ready to laugh."

Higley said Saturday's show was a sell out, and Friday's was nearly a sell out. Money raised from the event will benefit CARE Chest of Sierra Nevada, the Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation and Evelyn Mount Community Outreach.

"We don't (yet) know exact numbers on how much money was raised because we are still waiting on exact numbers from the

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TMWA board approves rate increase

by [Jill Lufrano](#)

01.21.12 - 12:00 am

SPARKS — Truckee Meadows Water Authority's Board of Directors quickly approved a rate hike on customer's water bill Thursday night after hearing from two residents at a meeting in Sparks.

The meeting represented the final hearing for the water rate adjustments.

The monthly service fee for customers will be increased by 3.5 percent. The average bill will cost about \$1.41 more per month. Another increase could be made in 2013 and 2014 if the economy does not improve and revenues continue to remain flat.

The water authority cites an increase in operating costs of more than \$7.3 million in the last two years as reason for the hike.

Additionally, the directors pointed to the decline of customers in the area, and the trend of little- to no- growth expected in new services in the future, as reasons why they need to increase revenues.

"The rate adjustments are needed to reduce the difference between TMWA's operating and maintenace expenses and declining revenues," General Manager Mark Foree said in a press release last week.

The increases are planned to appear on customer's bills during the first billing cycle in February, according to the water authority.

Copies of the proposed rate adjustments and information related to the proposed rate adjustments are available at the Truckee Meadows Water Authority office, 1355 Capital Blvd. in Reno, or at www.tmwa.com.

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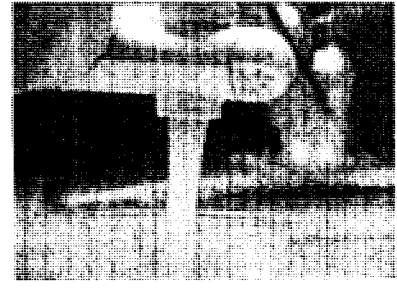
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Posted: 10:30 AM Jan 18, 2012

Reno-Area Water Rates to Rise

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Reporter: Associated Press
Email Address: news@kolotv.com



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The water authority is jointly operated by the cities of Reno and Sparks and Washoe County.

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Find this article at:
http://www.kolotv.com/localnews/headlines/Reno-Area_Water_rates_to_rise_137567903.html

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Truckee Meadows Water Authority set to finalize water rate increases

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

First Posted: January 18, 2012 - 6:33 am

Last Updated: January 18, 2012 - 6:33 am

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

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Water Rates to Rise for TMWA Customers

Posted: Jan 18, 2012 7:49 AM PST

Updated: Jan 18, 2012 7:49 AM PST

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KOLO (ABC) - Reno, NV
KOLO 8 Midday @ 11am

+ National Viewership: 3,440,258
 National Publicity Value \$137,610.32 per
 30s
 Local Market Viewership: 9,163
 Local Publicity Value: \$340.67 per 30s

KOLO 1/18/2012 11:32:38 AM: ...california will collect d- n-a... and compare it to the d-n-a of joseph naso. they hope new technology will help solve her murder. reno residents could soon be paying more for water. the **Truckee meadows water Authority** is expected to finalize a rate increase for water customers today. they are also considering creating a special rate for low- income or senior customers. if approved, a monthly bill would go up about a dollar-40 per month. some people like them and some people don't but every home in nevada will soon have one. we are talking about smart meters. yesterday, crews began installing those meters on homes around our community. their goal was to install three hundred of them in just one day. the meters record how much energy you use... and send that information directly to n-v energy. you can also access the information... online. even get an e-mail alert when the power bill reaches a certain limit. you will get five days' notice before one is installed at your house. you do not have the option to opt out of the program. every home in our state could have one by the end of the year. # # # the nevada men's basketball team keeps winning on the court. but off of it, the numbers don't look great. attendance is a lot lower than usual this year. you can see a lot of empty seats at the games. some fans we spoke to think they know why. dawn van sickle/pack fan "i think our basketball team is the best kept secret at this university, i really do. people just don't know about them, if they did they'd be at the games." whatever the reason, nevada is averaging less than 4,000 fans per home game. compare that with 2010 when lawlor was filling nearly 6000 seats each game. the team says they definitely prefer when the stands are packed. if you want to support the pack, there are six more home games. tickets start at 13 dollars. # # # a woman who was thought to be a missing passenger from the italian cruise liner....was found alive today. however there are still twenty one people missing in the wreckage. searchers found five more bodies today near the restaurant and an emergency checkpoint. all were wearing lifejackets and may have been waiting to get on lifeboats. "the plan is to keep looking for people in the same place where we found 5 people today - it's possible that we will find other people." more than a hundred divers have been searching the freezing water, but this morning they had to stop. the wreck is resting on a ledge and shifted after being pounded by strong waves. there are new fears it could split, sink and spill fuel. the captain, "francesco schet-tino" is home with his wife, under house arrest. he is facing charges of manslaughter and abandoning ship. three more crew members may be chargedincluding the captain's ...

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1/18/2012 11:33:17 AM

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KRXI (FOX) - Reno, NV
Fox 11 News 11 at 11

+ Local Market Viewership: 1,333
 Local Publicity Value: \$127.75 per 30s

KRXI 1/18/2012 11:02:59 PM: ...banning synthetic drugs like "spice." members of the legislative committee on health care are concerned - saying you can still legally buy the drugs that mimic marijuana or cocaine. also rising? water rates in the reno area. the **Truckee Meadows** water authority finalized a 3 and a half percent increase today to the monthly service fee. that's expected to equal about \$1.41 for an average home's bill. similar increases may also kick in - in 20-13 and 20-14 if necessary. the extra money will help close a 9 million dollar budget gap. brazen burglars are targeting homes in the northwest side of reno, during the day! police say 11 homes between mcarran (mak-air-an) boulevard west and peavine valley road - have been hit since december 31st. call 9-1-1 if someone knocking on your door makes you feel uncomfortable. members of occupy reno may soon be occupying elsewhere. their staging area is on the verge of being shut down. something owners of nearby businesses say would be a major improvement for the area. shannon moore has the story. in the back parking lot of reno's closed moana pool protesters are holding down the forts of "occupy reno" "what we were down here doing was learning how to build a community from the ground up when the system has basically failed us." but come january 25th the permit for this encampment will expire. the city council heard from occupiers and supporters of the movement at today's city council meeting as they proposed an extension. "i think that the occupy movement is on the right side of history, and everything the city council can do to support that would make the city council on the right side of history as well, that's a good idea!" but not everyone in the neighborhood is on the protesters side. "i don't have a problem with them having their own opinions and being vocal about their cause, but this is a homeless camp it's not occupy reno." owner of rhapsody salon, mary ann levi says the encampment across the street is nothing more than an eye sore. "it looks really bad, it's getting bigger and bigger as far as trash goes, and more tents and campers and they're not doing anything but hanging out!" she is also complaining about vandals and panhandlers. she's hoping the city council won't extend the special event permit. echoing similar concerns is diane foley, owner of toley's irish pub. "i'm a total believer in free speech however when it starts to infringe on other people's rights then i get a little bit nervous." infringing on her right to run a successful business she says, telling me occupiers use her bathrooms to shower in from time to time...

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1/18/2012 11:03:29 PM

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**KRNV (NBC) - Reno, NV
News 4 at Noon**

+ Local Market Viewership: 14,264
Local Publicity Value: \$446.60 per 30s

KRNV 1/18/2012 12:04:47 PM: ...>> the truckee meadows **Water Authority** is expected to finalize a rate increase today for reno-area water customers. the board will also discuss a proposal to create a special rate for low-income and or senior customers to help ease their financial burden. if approved, a monthly service fee would be increased by 3.5 percent. >> five citizens will be awarded today for their heroic actions in the deadly amtrak crash in june of last year. the nevada department of public safety is giving three people a citizen commendation certificate and the two others will receive a medal of valor. governor sandoval is expected to attend the awards ceremony set for one o'clock today at e c best elementary school in fallon. >> earlier this fall southwest airlines said they were stoppng their daily flights from reno to san jose.. well today.. alaska airlines announced they will pick that route up. alaska airlines is offerring 2 daily non-stop flights between reno and san jose beginning june 4th. southwest is discontinuing their service between the two cities in april. airport spokesperson brian kulpin says they contacted alaska airlines as soon as they heard of southwest's decision.. adding they are thrilled to keep this non-stop connection to the bay area's silicon valley in service. >> looking for a job? you may have a new option the new walmart supercenter in reno is about to open .. and now a hiring center is taking applications for some 250 positions.. the center is located at 10555 stead blvd suite 6.. you can drop off your application for both full and part time work.. from 8am to noon and then again from 1 to 5 monday through thursday and 8am to noon on friday.. and new store is slated to open in march. >> toss to weather >> >> >> tonight.. all of ...

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1/18/2012 12:05:12 PM

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

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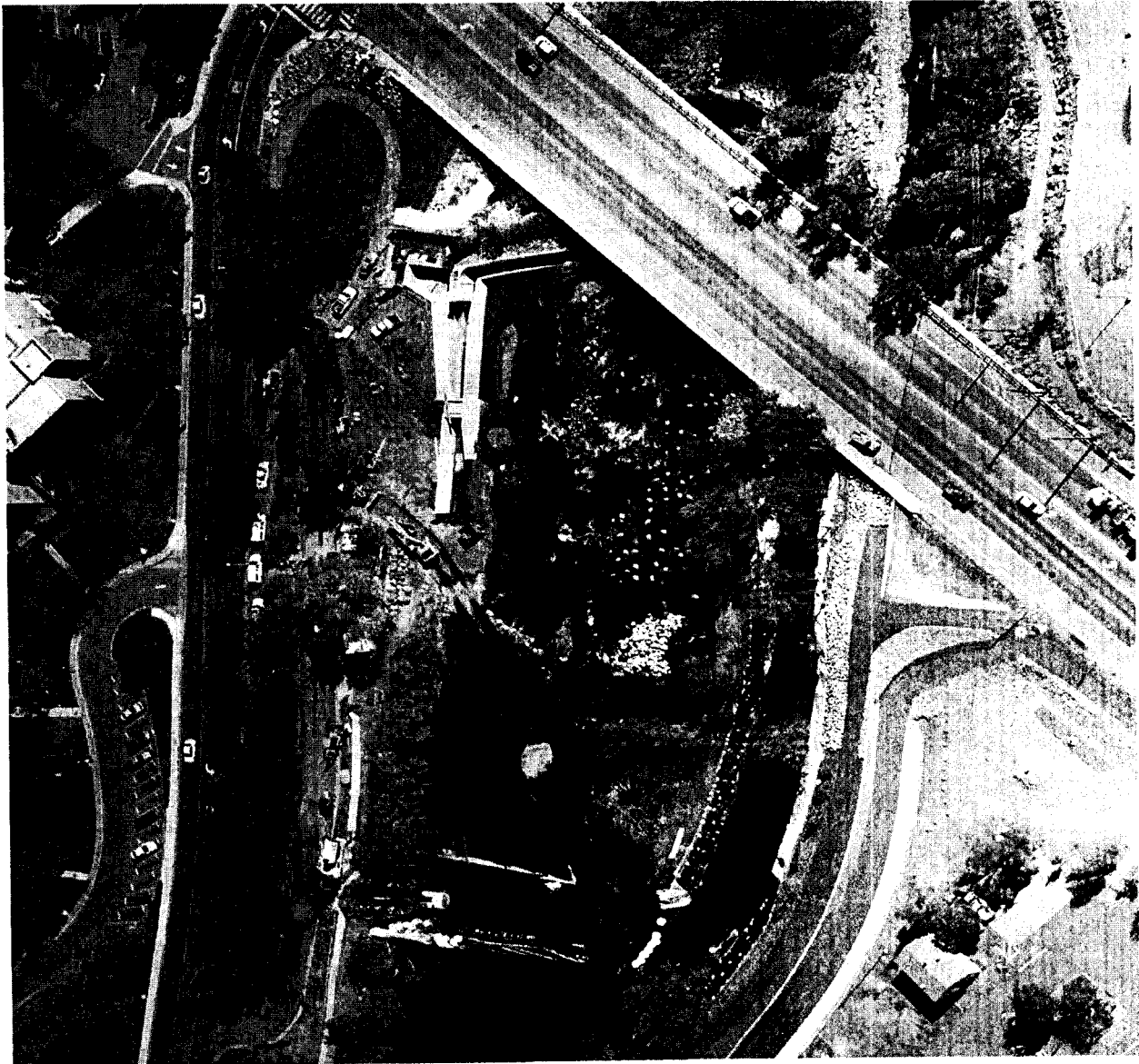
The Ultimate Local Construction Guide

ISSUE NO.1

NEWSPAPER

January 6, 2012

Compiled and distributed every Friday by the Sierra Contractor's Source, LLC. P. O. Box 10537, Reno, NV 89510-0537 (775) 329-7222 Fax (775) 329-7255 Our planroom is located at 500 Ryland Street, Suite 100, Reno, NV 89502. All information contained herein is compiled from reliable sources and believed to be true and correct. We assume no responsibility for error. Subscription rates are as follows: \$600 per year, \$325 for six months, \$175 for three months and \$15 per single issue. Online planroom is available for \$350 in addition to an annual subscription or \$700 for online only. Subscription rates are non-refundable. E-mail us at sierrasource@sbcglobal.net. Visit our website at www.scsplanroom.com.



Q & D Construction was the General Contractor for TWMA's Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project.



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Updated: 7:44 PM Jan 13, 2012

Drinking Water Supply OK Amid Dry Conditions

Despite a lack of rain and snow, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority said there's plenty of water for its customers.

Posted: 5:55 PM Jan 13, 2012

Reporter: Joe Harrington

Email Address: joe.harrington@kolotv.com

Water Worries

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RENO, NV - Despite a lack of rain and snow, the Truckee Meadows Water Authority said there's plenty of water for its customers.

"There really is no need to worry," Bill Hauck, Senior Hydrologist for the company, said. Hauck said there is enough water 'in storage' in Lake Tahoe and reservoirs for the community.

"We know we can withstand at least a nine year drought," he said. He also said last winter's record snow has helped the water supply.

But the dry spell may still cost you - some agricultural products are becoming scarce.

"If the crops don't come in, the price is going to go up," an employee at Sierra Feed and Saddlery said. She said hay is in short supply, and hay is an ingredient in many feeds.

"If we don't get some rain there won't be second and third crops and so there will be a shortage," she said.

Hauck said hydroelectricity production will not be affected by the dry conditions because there is enough reserve water to have normal Truckee River flows.

In Reno, there was no precipitation the entire month of December.

Find this article at:

http://www.kolotv.com/home/headlines/Drinking_Water_Supply_OK_Amid_Dry_Conditions_137327113.html

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

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BLOG

Proper Winter Watering during Dry Spells

Jan 13th | [Tips](#) • 2:01 pm

Truckee Meadows Water Authority Reminds Customers about Proper Winter Watering during Dry Spells

(RENO, Nev.) – [Truckee Meadows Water Authority](#) (TMWA) reminds residents that trees, shrubs, lawns and other plants need supplemental water to stay healthy during extended winter dry spells like the one we are in now. TMWA's Conservation Department offers these tips to help your yard get through a dry winter, while still protecting your home:

- Water in the late morning, when the water has plenty of time to reach the root zones without freezing.
- For trees and shrubs, a soaker hose is a great way to gradually water the roots. It slowly seeps water out, so you can leave it on for an hour or two at a time.
- For smaller plants or small turf areas, a hose with a nozzle is recommended.
- For larger turf areas, you may want to turn on your [irrigation](#) system. Leave the sprinklers on during the day for only 10 minutes at a time to prevent runoff.

Whatever the tool, be sure your hose or irrigation system is disconnected and properly drained the same day to [prevent leaks and broken pipes](#) due to freezing overnight temperatures. Visit <http://www.tmwa.com/winterize> for more information.

<http://tmwa.com/news/press-releases/01-05-2012/-proper-winter-watering-during-dry-spells>.

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Scientists to study effects of climate warming on Truckee River

Scientists are beginning new research into how a warming climate could affect water supplies and flooding along the Truckee River, the waterway that serves as one of the region's central natural features and the source of most of its water.

The \$1.7 million study by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is part of a larger effort examining eight rivers across the West, with California's Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers among them.

The goal is to get an early idea of what costly changes might be associated with climate change when it comes to the vital issue of water supplies and flooding along major river basins in the western United States, officials said.

"The goal is to look into the future so we can be prepared for it," said Mary Johannis, deputy planning officer for the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento.

Authorized by Congress in 2009 under the Secure Water Act, the study would build on information collected through a risk assessment released last year that examined potential impacts from climate change.

Experts have projected that in California's Sierra Nevada range, the climate could warm between 1 and 5 degrees between now and 2050, said Arlan Nickel, project manager for the Bureau of Reclamation.

One expected result could be "fairly significant" reductions in the amount of precipitation falling in upper-level watersheds as well as a change in how that precipitation falls, Nickel said.

"Not only will there potentially be less overall precipitation, but the type of precipitation will be different. There will be less snowfall and more rainfall," Nickel said.

Other studies suggest changes already are occurring, with the April 1 snowpack already 20 percent less on average than it was in the 1950s and 1960s, scientists with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography reported.

The new Bureau of Reclamation studies will attempt to further gauge coming changes in

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the Truckee Basin and elsewhere, potentially recommending different strategies in how reservoirs are managed and how water supplies are conserved, Johannis said. The study is expected to be completed in 2014.

"It's not just the supply end that may be changing with rising temperatures but the demand end," Johannis said.

John Erwin, a top water planner with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, said he's hopeful the federal study will provide firmer guidance concerning how the primary water provider for Reno-Sparks should respond to the issue of climate change. Studies conducted thus far have been inconclusive on the issue, Erwin said.

"It will hopefully identify if there is a trend and what it means," Erwin said.

As a local partner in the study, TMWA is providing federal researchers with water demand and availability forecasts and population projections already prepared for regional water management plans, Erwin said.

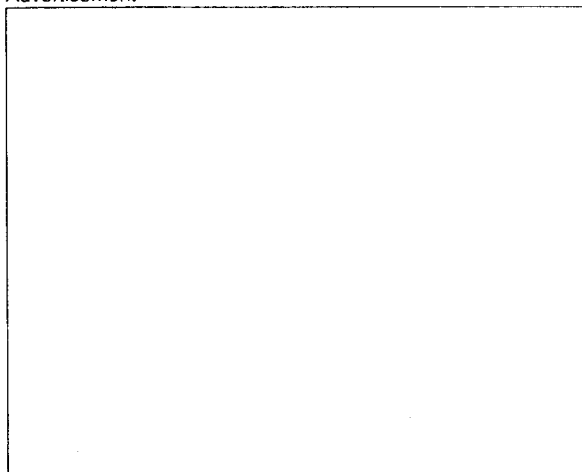
Possible problems associated with climate change could not only mean shortages of water supplies but also too much water at once. Earlier snowmelt could flush more water downstream earlier in the season while more warm, "Pineapple Express"-type storms could also send raging torrents down the Truckee, Sacramento and other rivers.

"It's a condition that can create a tremendous amount of runoff in a short amount of time," Nickel said. "While there may be less precipitation, it may create these super storms that cause major flooding."

The danger of worsening flooding associated with climate change appears to be a real one, said Jay Aldean, executive director of the Truckee River Flood Management Authority. The authority is another local partner, with studies it has conducted into river characteristics being incorporated into the federal research, Aldean said.

"We don't know what the impact is, but we know there is going to be one," Aldean said. "The frequency (of flooding) is expected to increase, and the magnitude is expected to increase."

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Truckee River study

Research will look into impacts on water supply and demand, flooding from warming climate

Other rivers studied: Sacramento, San Joaquin, Colorado, Columbia, Klamath, Missouri, Rio Grande

Cost of Truckee River research: \$1.7 million

Lead agency: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

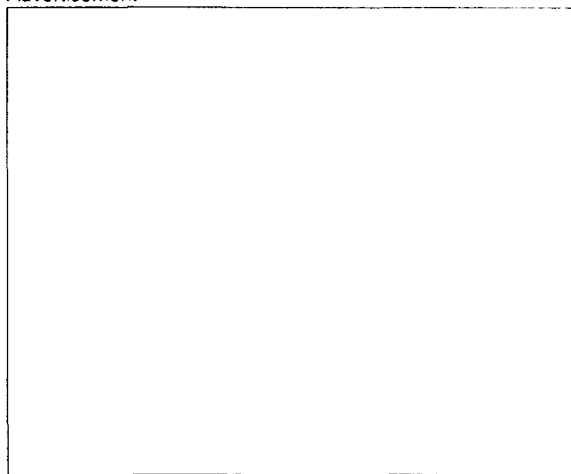
Local agencies involved: Truckee River Flood Management Authority, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Placer County (Calif.) Water Agency

Truckee River: At a glance

- » The Truckee River runs 116 miles from Sierra to Pyramid Lake.
 - » The Truckee River Basin covers about 3,060 square miles, 25 percent in California, 75 percent in Nevada.
 - » The river provides water for more than 400,000 people.
 - » Runoff fluctuates from about 2 million acre-feet in high-water years to 115,000 acre-feet in low-water years.
 - » Average runoff volume is about 580,000 acre-feet.
- Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

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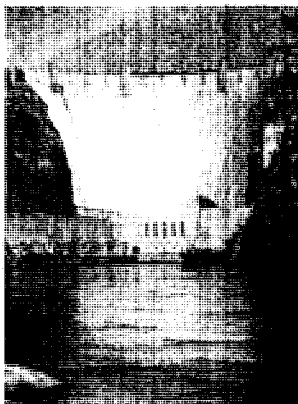


Keeping Our Heads Above Water

Nevada's need to ensure quality and availability of nature's sustaining resource.

by Susan M. Botich

Most of us are used to having as much water as we need. We simply turn on the tap and out



flows the water. However, those who work within the agencies overseeing water allocation must deal with the complex issues of what resources are available, how much is available and the price tag on ensuring that the supply meets the demand.

Many Nevadans are concerned with the possibility that, if appropriate steps are not taken now, water needs in certain Nevada communities may outweigh water availability. That is why steps are currently being taken to ensure the reliability and continued quality of the water here in Nevada.



A Little History About Nevada Water

Southern Nevada gets roughly 90 percent of its water from the Colorado River. The remaining supply comes from in state water resources.

"Although many people are under the misconception that because the river runs through our backyard, it somehow belongs to Nevada," said Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) General Manager Pat

Mulroy. "The reality is that we are entitled to less than 2 percent of its allocated flows. The agreements that govern the Colorado River are nearly 100 years old now, and there is no realistic opportunity to reallocate the river. Instead, we must focus our efforts on maximizing the flexibility with which the system is operated."

In addition to this challenge, five years ago, Nevada was already five years into the most severe drought in the Colorado River's history, according to Mulroy.

"The Southern Nevada Water Authority and the local water purveyors had already enacted one of the nation's most comprehensive and aggressive water conservation programs," Mulroy said. "The results had already demonstrated the effectiveness of those efforts. Last year, our community consumed 32 billion gallons less water than in 2002, despite adding 400,000 residents during that span."

However, new measures are needed to be put into place in order to properly ensure water availability and quality to Southern Nevada.

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- Atlantis Casino Resort Spa and Offsite Data
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TRACK NEVADA'S BIGGEST DEALS

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The Lake Mead Third Intake Project

Nevada accesses the Colorado River's water via Lake Mead. Up until recently, Nevada has had two water intakes at the lake. A third intake has been approved and is currently under construction.

"The purpose of the third intake project is to secure water flow into the Las Vegas Valley," said Guy Hobbs, managing director of Hobbs, Ong & Associates, Inc., an independent financial advisory firm contracted by SNWA. "This third intake would ensure reliability as well as quality of the water."

Why would Nevada's water quality from Lake Mead be in question?

"Most people don't think much about the safety of drinking water; for them, it's a given," said Mulroy. "The reality is that a lot of very talented people work hard to ensure that water delivered from our treatment facilities surpasses state and federal health standards. Most contaminants in lakes are near the surface, for a variety of reasons. If you have a fixed intake, as the lake level drops, the water coming through the intake becomes less pure. This can pose a significant challenge to meeting drinking water standards. With the third intake in place, we are assured the ability to draw from the deepest, purest part of the lake."

The other benefit has to do with ensuring a stable atmosphere for businesses considering investing in commercial enterprises in Nevada.

"One of the things we want to do is express confidence to those investing in Nevada," said Hobbs. "It's important they know that we will have reliable water of a good quality. This has a direct impact on the state in regard to businesses working here, as well as tourism."

Nevada's In-state Water Project Proposal

There has been much controversy over a proposed in-state water project, commonly referred to as the "pipeline project," which would utilize water from areas in rural Nevada to Southern Nevada. The analysis for the project has been completed. Now it's up to the Nevada State Engineer's office to decide whether the information gathered will warrant a go-ahead.

"We had, five years ago—and still have to this day, despite last winter's strong snow-park —grave concerns about the reliability of the Colorado River as a water supply," said Mulroy. "To help insulate our community from a potentially catastrophic shortage, as well as to secure another permanent supply to ultimately replace some temporary resources we've acquired, the SNWA went to hearing before the Nevada State Engineer on long-held applications for renewable, unused groundwater supplies in east-central Nevada."

The in-state water project's projected cost is another hot topic. Figures discussed have varied from approximately \$3 billion to \$15 billion. The explanation for the seeming disparity is actually quite simple, according to Mulroy.

"There is actually only one estimate but some people have misunderstood and, in some cases, intentionally misconstrued the project's cost," said Mulroy. "The build-it-today cost of the groundwater project is, and has consistently been, \$3.2 billion. However, we are not going to build it today. In fact, we cannot precisely say when, in the coming decades, we will need to begin construction. Therefore, in an exercise for the Nevada State Engineer's hearings, we had an external analyst estimate how much the project would likely cost if we deferred construction for two-plus decades and stretched it over an even longer period. Using inflationary assumptions, the cost is projected to increase over time to approximately \$7 billion. Using the same time-frame and construction schedule assumptions and presuming that the project is financed entirely with bonds, the cost of capital would be approximately \$8 billion, making the sum of all payments approximately \$15 billion."

The Cycle of Life Water Turns the Wheel

"The Nevada economic engine is Southern Nevada," said Hobbs. "Making sure that economic engine is finely tuned and reliable is extremely important."

Having enough water is vital to keeping Southern Nevada an attractive place of business and, therefore, a viable future for investors, according to Mulroy.

"One of the questions we are asked is why, with very modest economic activity occurring, are we continuing to exert ourselves identifying and developing water resources for this community," said Mulroy. "The short answer is that we are in the business of planning half a century in advance; we're not thinking about next quarter or next year, we're thinking about



the decades to come.”

Independent economic analyses have consistently shown that the economy of Nevada will eventually recover, according to Mulroy. However, one of the preconditions for that recovery is the availability of a reliable water supply.

“A major corporation considering an investment of hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars is going to look very carefully at any variables that could affect their investment,” Mulroy said.

Another potential added benefit to the implementation of the proposed in-state water project would be employment.

“Nevada has been most hard-hit with the current economic downturn,” Hobbs said. “Of that, construction was hit the hardest - it really has been decimated. Any project that would support that amount of employment necessary would be good for the overall economy.”

Mulroy agreed. “During the extended construction period, the project would directly create private-sector jobs,” said Mulroy. “Those, in turn, would create additional employment opportunities as those workers need housing, goods and services.”

Northern & Southern Nevada One State, Two Perspectives

Though Northern Nevada may be economically tied to Southern Nevada, it is not dependent on its water supply. [Truckee Meadows Water Authority \(TMWA\)](#) General Manager Mark Foree offers his perspective on the subject.

“In the Reno-Sparks area, about 85 percent of the community’s water supply comes from Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River system,” Foree said. “The remainder comes from groundwater wells.”

Though the federal government is not closely involved in the water issue of Southern Nevada, it does play a role in Northern Nevada.

“The federal government is involved in allocation of water in the Reno-Sparks area,” Foree explained. “The Federal Watermaster administers allocation of waters of the Truckee River in accordance with federal decrees.”

What Northern and Southern Nevada share is how the nation’s economic downturn has affected both communities. Over the last five years, the Reno-Sparks area has gone from working hard to keep up with growth to working through significant financial challenges due, in large part, to the national and local economic situation, according to Foree.

“Water use has dropped significantly over the past four years, which has impacted revenues,” Foree said. “Very focused cost-reduction measures have been required to maintain financial stability while continuing to produce and deliver high quality water and service to our customers.”

Regarding funding, Foree added, “We have seen some decrease in federal funding in the past few years. Though, in our budget process, we don’t rely on federal funding to implement our programs.”

TMWA continues to work toward implementation of the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA).

“This agreement sets forth a new way of operating the Truckee River system that will result in many benefits to water users including increased upstream drought storage for the Reno Sparks area (municipal water supply), benefits for endangered (fish) species, benefits for recreation and enhanced water conservation.”

TROA is progressing as expected, according to Foree. “While there are still legal challenges to overcome, we expect that those things will be resolved within the next few years,” Foree said.

Though water consumption has decreased significantly over the past four years, water demands are at or near the bottom right now, according to Foree.

“We expect slow, measured increases in demand over the next few years as the economy improves,” he said.

Making a Positive Difference

In regard to how residents and businesses may help with the issue of water availability versus consumption, Foree expressed a positive outlook.

“We have a water conservation plan that focuses on promoting responsible water use including assigned day watering,” Foree said. “Since these programs have been in place for many years, our customers have become very good at following assigned day watering requirements and

using water responsibly.”

In addition to that, TMWA looks beyond just the immediate need. “We plan for a nine-year drought, which equates to the longest drought on record (eight years) plus an additional year,” Foree said. “As a result of that, we don’t anticipate any water supply issues.”

One area that the business sector can make greater contributions is with the application of water-efficient technologies, according to Mulroy. Appreciating the reluctance to make those kinds of investments in the current economic climate, SNWA has a customizable incentive program geared at non-landscape water uses such as HVAC equipment and indoor fixtures that can help defray those costs.

“Ultimately, the business will recoup its investment, and then some, through decreased water bills,” Mulroy said.

Nevada State Engineer Jason King further puts it all in perspective. “Simply put, the problem has been that we are the most arid state (in the nation) and we were the fastest growing state for decades and water availability is limited,” King said. “We need to be frugal with all of our water and we need to be innovative and creative on how we maximize the beneficial use of what little water we do have. Because the majority of the issues we face relate to groundwater availability, and the fact that there are great uncertainties related to groundwater availability, we need to proceed cautiously and need to be able to get our arms around 3M plans (Monitoring, Management, and Mitigation) and their reliability and appropriateness. We need to increase the degree of flexibility in water management and need to integrate that into our process. We need to continue to collect data and learn more about climate change unknowns.”

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2011 a 'good year' for keeping invasive species out of Tahoe

Land-use regulators are taking stock of 2011's steps to protect Lake Tahoe from aquatic invaders -- a "good year," one official said -- while a similar program to defend other lakes and reservoirs along the Truckee River could be significantly strengthened in 2012.

It's all part of a broad-based effort to protect precious water bodies from non-native, damaging plants and animals already present in the ecosystem or threatening to show at any time.

Water weeds, clams, mussels and warm-water fish that have no place in high-altitude alpine lakes all come with potential high-stakes dangers to the region's environment and economy.

"It's a big deal and certainly a high priority," said Ted Thayer, aquatic invasive species manager for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Thayer this month is scheduled to brief TRPA on what he called a "good year" for an intensifying program to safeguard Tahoe from invaders in 2011.

Related efforts are meanwhile taking shape

to protect other lakes and reservoirs along the Truckee River system, including Donner Lake and Stampede and Boca reservoirs. Officials hope to have a mandatory boat inspection program similar to the one in place at Tahoe since 2008 activated by this summer's boating season.

Good news

Thayer cited several promising developments in last year's program to save Tahoe from exotic species:

» The amount of Tahoe lakebed where the damaging water weed Eurasian milfoil was removed grew from a previous high of less than 3 acres to more than 6 acres, mostly at Emerald Bay. Milfoil alters the lake's ecosystem and provides cover for invading warmwater fish.

» The warmwater fish program "really got off the ground," with scientists removing about 12,000 of the fish from Tahoe's waters, mostly the Tahoe Keys. Warm-

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water fish like largemouth bass could cause damaging changes, including the potential decimation of the lake's native minnow population.

» An aggressive boat inspection program -- established primarily to prevent introduction of quagga or zebra mussels into Tahoe's waters -- continued. About 7,600 boats were inspected in 2011 and 4,800 were decontaminated, a fourfold increase from the year before.

A promising sign came with the fact that only one vessel attempting to launch into Tahoe was discovered with quagga mussels attached to its hull, a significant decrease from 2010 and 2009, Thayer said.

"It's getting better. We're seeing fewer boats with mussels hanging on the side," Thayer said. "I think the boating public is becoming more aware."

Tahoe becoming overrun with quagga mussels like Lake Mead -- a situation that would come with crippling environmental and economic cost -- does appear preventable, Thayer said.

"I don't think it's inevitable. Having the inspection program does work," Thayer said.

Bad news

Not all news was good. Scientists working on the warm-water fish program discovered a new invader -- the

smallmouth bass. They said that fish could prove particularly dangerous to Tahoe's ecology should its numbers explode.

And researchers might have hit a stumbling block in what had appeared to be a highly effective method of killing Asian clams, which have exploded in numbers across parts of Tahoe's bottom over the last decade and have been linked to noxious algae blooms.

Tests using rubber mats laid atop clam beds at Marla Bay and South Lake Tahoe had proved highly effective at killing clams by robbing them of oxygen.

But a new round of tests at clam beds at the mouth of Emerald Bay proved less effective at killing clams, Thayer said. Scientists are still trying to figure out why.

"It just wasn't as effective there. The dissolved oxygen isn't going down," Thayer said.

As the effort at Tahoe proceeds, officials

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are also getting serious about enacting similar measures at other Truckee River reservoirs.

Officials are now working on plans to have mandatory boat inspections required at places like Boca Reservoir by the 2012 boating season. Voluntary inspections have occurred over the last two summers.

"We want to put together something that works," said Kim Boyd of the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, which is now in discussions with officials from the Truckee and Nevada, Sierra and Placer counties to put the program in place.

The recent discovery of juvenile quagga mussels at Northern Nevada's Lahontan Reservoir and their suspected presence at Rye Patch Reservoir makes clear the need to strengthen protections at the Truckee River reservoirs, Boyd said.

Establishment of the mussels there, Boyd said, "could highly impact recreation and the economy of the Truckee area."

Fighting Tahoe's invaders

- » 4,800 boats decontaminated in 2011.
- » Mandatory boat inspections might expand to Boca, Stampede, other lakes.
- » More than 12,000 warm-water fish removed from Tahoe.
- » Amount of lakebed where water weeds were removed doubled.

Source: Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

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Winter weather could finally be on the way

The winter that didn't come may be on its way.

Hopefully, anyway.

After a record-making spate of sunny, dry weather kept conditions bone dry through December and half of January, a pattern change in the Pacific could be sending wet weather on its way.

It's still a ways off -- probably not until late next week or even next weekend -- but forecasters said Thursday that rain and snow could finally make an appearance in the Reno-Tahoe area.

"It's quite a shift from all the doldrums," said Shane Snyder, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno.

It would be welcome news for Reno-area residents watching lawns brown under winter sun and water suppliers anxious to build on reserves for the future. Skiers and snowboarders are biting at the bit to take to slopes white with fresh snow while ski resort operators are eager to improve upon a season thus far characterized by costly dryness and mostly barren mountains.

The first hint at expected change comes

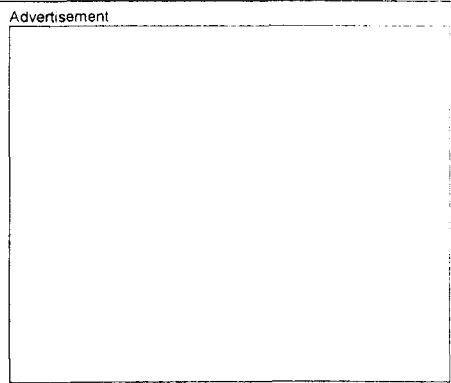
Sunday as the region is brushed by a storm system forecast to bring cold air and high wind but only a slight chance of showers to the north, Snyder said. Sunday's system is expected to be more associated with increased fire danger than any real chance at wet relief.

That could change later in the week as storms begin marching into the Pacific Northwest, potentially dropping south into the Sierra and western Nevada.

"Toward the end of the week and the weekend, it's just a matter of whether we can get some storms to sag on down enough to give us a chance," Snyder said. "Hopefully that will give us a chance at some significant precipitation. We could get a decent storm. It's possible, anyway."

Anything would be an improvement.

"We'll welcome all the white stuff we can handle at this point. It's bone-dry up there," said Bill Hauck, water supply coordinator with the Truckee Meadows



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Water Authority

With Lake Tahoe near full after a record-setting winter in 2010-2011, reservoir storage is still impressive and the region well set up with water supplies that could carry it comfortably through 2012 and into 2013, Hauck said.

Still, storms are badly needed to reverse a "bleak" start to the current water year, Hauck said.

"We're already half-way through," Hauck said. "It gets harder and harder to make up that ground."

That could be no more true than at the Sierra's ski resorts, which weathered the important Christmas holiday period under dry conditions and will now face the same situation over the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, normally another big time for business.

The Sierra ski industry faced four similar dry starts to seasons since 1980 and while improved snow-making capability helped a lot in surviving this one, arrival of some snowy weather would be decidedly welcome, said Bob Roberts, executive director of the California Ski Industry Association.

"We're hopefully seeing a break" later next week, Roberts said. "It's not terribly helpful for Martin Luther King weekend, but we'll take it when it comes."

It's fairly clear that whatever happens with

the weather over the rest of the winter, this ski season will suffer from its slow start, Roberts said. There's little chance at a full recovery, he said.

"It would take a phenomenal streak of luck," Roberts said. "Could it happen? Yes. But history hasn't proven that out."

Sierra snowpack, Jan. 12.

2012

Lake Tahoe Basin: 11 percent of average

Truckee River Basin: 13 percent

Carson River Basin: 7 percent

2011

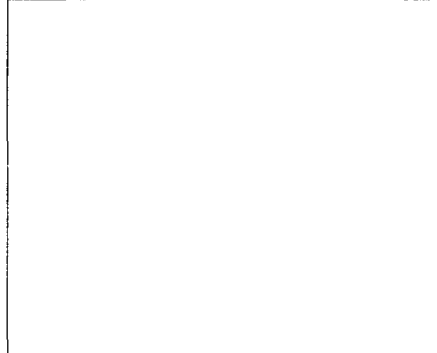
Lake Tahoe Basin: 192 percent of average

Truckee River Basin: 172 percent

Carson River Basin: 185 percent

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

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