

TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Press Clippings

January 10, 2013 through March 13, 2013



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



TMWA Accepting Applications for Standing Advisory Committee

Posted: Jan 11, 2013 10:10 AM PST
 Updated: Jan 11, 2013 10:10 AM PST

The Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) is an oversight committee made up of Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) customers. The group is currently accepting applications for two alternates to represent single-family residential customers and one alternate to represent senior citizens (62 and older). The committee reviews budgets, rate proposals and other items and provides feedback from the customer perspective. Findings and recommendations are presented to TMWA's Board of Directors.

This volunteer committee meets the first Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. Those interested in serving on SAC must be TMWA customers.

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

- Applicant's name and contact information
- Type of customer (residential or senior citizen, 62 and older)
- Statement of interest in serving SAC
- Any pertinent experience

Submit applications, by March 31, 2013 to Amanda Duncan at aduncan@tmwa.com or mail to Truckee Meadows Water Authority, PO Box 30013, Reno, NV 89520, ATTN: Amanda Duncan.

From Truckee Meadows Water Authority

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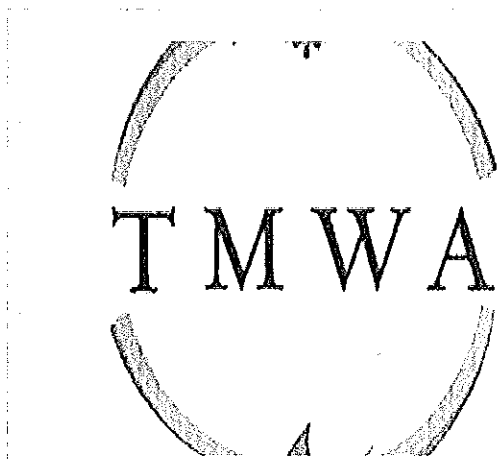
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TMWA accepting applications for advisory committee alternate members



Published: 11:41 am

Updated: 11:45 am

RENO, Nev. (KRNV & MyNews4.com) -- The Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) is an oversight committee made up of Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) customers.

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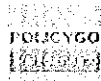
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TMWA accepting applications for advisory committee members

Jan. 18, 2013 6:52 PM, | 0 Comments

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TMWA accepting applications for advisory committee members

Truckee Meadows Water Authority currently is accepting applications for two alternates to represent single-family residential customers and one alternate to represent senior citizens for its Standing Advisory Committee.

The committee reviews budgets, rate proposals and other items and provides feedback from the customer perspective. Finds and recommendations are presented to TMWA's Board of Directors.

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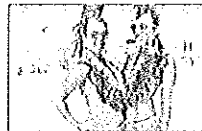
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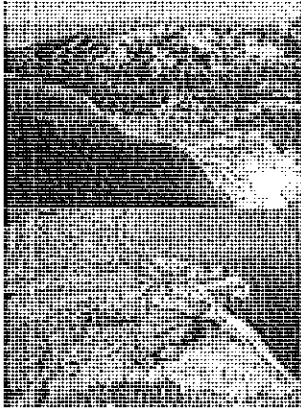
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Courtesy of California Tahoe Conservancy

- Courtesy of California Tahoe Conservancy

Proposals released for Lake Tahoe's largest restoration project

FEBRUARY, 25 2013

BY ADAM JENSEN

AJENSEN@TAHOEDAILYTRIBUNE.COM

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. -- The California Tahoe Conservancy has released a draft plan for a proposed restoration of Lake Tahoe's largest remaining wetland, the Upper Truckee Marsh.

The restoration project would be the largest ever in the Lake Tahoe Basin, according to CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright. The nearly 600-acre marsh is located just west of the Tahoe Keys and should act as the last defense against the thousands of tons of clarity-reducing fine sediment entering the lake every year, according to the agency.

"Beginning in the late 1950s, portions of the Upper Truckee River through the marsh were straightened and channelized to facilitate construction of the adjacent Tahoe Keys development," according to a statement from the CTC. "A primary goal of the draft plan is to reconnect the river with the marsh, and to restore the natural processes that filter fine sediment and other pollutants before they enter Lake Tahoe."

Five alternatives are included in the plan. A preferred alternative has not been selected and the CTC is receiving public input on the proposed project.

Once an alternative is selected, the multi-year effort could head to construction as early as 2015 if it receives the necessary approvals and funding, according to the CTC.

Comments on the proposals must be received no later than April 8. Comments can be submitted by emailing scott.carroll@tahoe.ca.gov. More information on the project is available by calling Victoria Ortiz at 530-542-6063 or visiting <http://tahoe.ca.gov>.

A separate restoration project along the Upper Truckee River, known as Sunset Stables Reach 5, gained approval from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board last week.

That restoration project may be in front of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Governing Board for approval as soon as April. If the TRPA signs off on the restoration, that project could begin this summer.

If you go

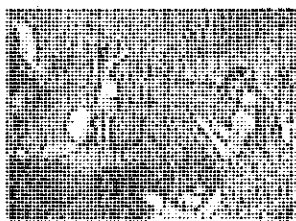
Upcoming public meetings and hearings on the Upper Truckee Marsh restoration

- Wednesday from 1:30-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. at Inn by the Lake, located at 3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

- March 13 at the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Advisory Planning Commission meeting. The meeting starts at 9:30 a.m. at TRPA offices at 128 Market St. in Stateline.

- March 27 at the TRPA's Governing Board meeting. The meeting starts at 9:30 a.m. at TRPA offices at 128 Market St. in Stateline.

- March 28 from 6-8:30 p.m. at Lake Tahoe Community College Board Room. The college is located at 1 College Way in South Lake Tahoe.



© Courtesy: photo

IVGID WasteNot receives \$14K snapshot day grant

JANUARY, 16 2013
SPECIAL TO THE BONANZA

INCLINE VILLAGE, Nev. – The Incline Village General Improvement District Waste Not program recently announced the receipt of a \$14,000 grant from the Nevada State Lands License Plate Grant Program for the 2012 “Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake Snapshot Day”

event.

The grant supports the collaborative efforts of IVGID Waste Not, Tahoe Water Suppliers Association, Tahoe Environmental Research Center, Northern Sierra Region of California Trout (CalTrout) and others by providing fiscal support for monitoring and test equipment, staff and production of the event's summary report.

Snapshot Day is a two-day, volunteer-based event designed to collect information relative to the health of area watersheds.

Each May, Snapshot Day brings hundreds of volunteers together to collect information on the Tahoe Basin and Truckee River Watersheds. Each volunteer team conducts water quality testing in the field, including photographing and providing narrative descriptions of stream, river and lake conditions.

In 2012, more than 700 volunteers sampled 97 sites on the upper and lower Truckee River, at Lake Tahoe and at the terminus at Pyramid Lake. It is important to note that citizen monitoring is designed to supplement existing agency monitoring efforts. All information is provided to regulatory and resource management agencies, whose responsibility it is to protect water quality.

The goals of Snapshot Day are two-fold: to promote environmental education and stewardship, and to collect valuable water quality information.

Snapshot Day began in 2000 and is sustained by the dedication of both paid and unpaid staff, grants and donations, and primarily, the commitment of hundreds of citizens who value public involvement in protecting the community's watershed. Nevada License Plate Grant funding was critical to the 2012 event's success.

IVGID Public Works Program Manager Rebecca Sawyer Williams, a lead site coordinator for Snapshot Day since 2008, coordinated the grant writing process.

Partners

Snapshot Day's collaborative effort was planned and coordinated by the Truckee River Watershed Council, TWSA, IVGID Waste Not, CalTrout, Tahoe Resource Conservation District, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe.

Other organizations involved in Snapshot Day 2012 include:

- Nevada Division of State Lands Grant Funding
- The City of South Lake Tahoe
- Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Lake Tahoe Community College
- Lake Tahoe Unified School District

- TRPA
- University of California Berkeley, Sagehen Creek Field Station
- University of California Cooperative Extension
- University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
- University of Nevada Electrical Engineering Department
- US Geological Survey, Carnelian Bay Field Station

For more information, visit the Snapshot Day website at www.snapshotday.org, or call 775-832-1284.

<http://www.tahoebonanza.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130116/NEWS/130119952/1061&ParentProfile=1050&template=printart>

Newlands Project draft report out

JANUARY, 17 2013
STAFF REPORTS

The Bureau of Reclamation today released for public review a draft report that presents alternatives to satisfy Newlands Project water rights and reduce risks to public safety from the Truckee Canal. Reclamation has scheduled three public meetings in January to discuss the Newlands Project Planning Study Draft Special Report.

The study was initiated as a result of a January 2008 breach of the Truckee Canal that flooded 590 properties in the city of Fernley, Nev., and led to restrictions on the amount of water the canal may convey. The Study is Reclamation's effort to investigate options for safely satisfying Project water rights, and the report will help guide decisions about the Project's future.

During the meetings, Reclamation will present the key findings in the Draft Special Report, describe the process to develop alternatives and receive public feedback on the report and its conclusions. The Draft Special Report includes seven alternatives for safely serving people, communities and lands that rely on Truckee River or Carson River water delivered by the Project.

Each meeting will include the same format and content and a presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. Meeting dates, times and locations are:

Nixon: 2-4 p.m. Jan. 29, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council Chambers, 208 Capitol Hill

Fernley: 7-9 p.m. Jan. 29, Fernley City Council Chambers, 595 Silver Lace Blvd.

Fallon: 7-9 p.m. Jan. 30, Churchill County Commissioners' Chambers, 155 N. Taylor St., Suite 145

The draft special report is available online at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/lbao/newlands.html>. If you encounter problems accessing the document online, please call 916-978-5100 or email mppublicaffairs@usbr.gov.

Written comments must be received by close of business Feb. 14, and should be sent to Harvey Edwards, Bureau of Reclamation, 705 N. Plaza St., Room 320, Carson City, NV 89701 or emailed to hedwards@usbr.gov.

Originally known as the Truckee-Carson Project, the Project is one of Reclamation's oldest irrigation projects. Since 1903, it has served water users in the Truckee and Carson River Basins for agricultural and, increasingly, other purposes. Operation and maintenance of Project facilities is performed by the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District under a contract with Reclamation. For information about the Project, please visit <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/lbao/>.

<http://www.recordcourier.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130117/NEWS/130119899/1062&parentprofile=1049&template=printart>

U.S. seeks bids to refurbish gates at California's Prosser Creek Dam

The Bureau of Reclamation seeks bids to refurbish gates at Prosser Creek Dam on California's Prosser Creek. Bids are due March 21.

Prosser Creek Dam was built in 1962 just above Prosser Creek's confluence with the Truckee River. The water storage structure is part of Reclamation's Washoe Project, which also includes Marble Bluff Dam and 3.65-MW Stampede Dam.

In a solicitation set aside for small businesses, Reclamation seeks bids to refurbish high pressure gate seats and regulating gates. Work is to include removal, refurbishment, and replacement of two guard gates and two control gates; fabrication of new self-lubricating composite high-pressure gate leaf seats, stainless steel high-pressure gate body seats, stainless steel high-pressure gate leaf lip reconfiguration bars; and installing new hoist shutoff and bypass valves.

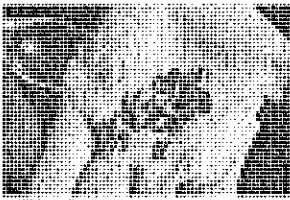
The work is valued at between \$1 million and \$5 million.

A solicitation notice may be obtained from the Federal Business Opportunities Internet site, www.fbo.gov, by entering Solicitation No. R13PS20088 in the "Keyword/Solicitation #" box.

Bids are due March 21. For information, contact Rosana Yousef Goarji, Contract Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, MP, Regional Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1815, Sacramento, CA 95825; (1) 916-978-5004; E-mail: ryousefgoarji@usbr.gov.

To access this Article, go to:

<http://www.hydroworld.com/content/hydro/en/articles/2013/02/u-s--seeks-bids-to-refurbish-gates-at-california-s-prosser-creek.html>



Truckee officials working on fees for mandatory boat inspections at Donner Lake

JANUARY, 29 2013
 BY KEVIN MACMILLAN
 KMACMILLAN@SIERRASUN.COM

TRUCKEE, Calif. — Inspections on motorized and trailered vessels entering Donner Lake will be mandatory starting this spring as officials attempt to stay one step ahead in the battle to prevent invasive species from breaching popular water bodies in the Sierra.

A fee schedule for inspections, possible through a town of Truckee ordinance adopted last summer, could be presented to town council for approval in March, said Dan Olsen, animal services/code compliance manager, with a program-launch goal of May 2013. Fees will be designed to completely offset the program's costs, Olsen said, and not generate revenue for involved agencies.

"The health of local waters is extremely important to the character, natural beauty and economic vitality of the town of Truckee," Olsen said.

A steering committee composed of representatives from the town, Truckee-Donner Recreation & Park District, Truckee River Watershed Council and Tahoe Resource Conservation District — with feedback from a working group of residents — is developing the program and fees.

Teresa Crimmens, a spokesperson for TRCD, said it's too early to talk exact dollar amounts, but one idea being floated is to have separate monthly, seasonal and year-long fees in order to accommodate second-home owners and visitors.

While inspections have been voluntary in previous years at Donner Lake and other regional reservoirs, they've been mandatory since 2008 at Lake Tahoe under an agreement between TRCD and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Inspections are done to prevent the introduction of invasive species like quagga and zebra mussels into Tahoe, as the locust-like mollusks and other invasives like Eurasian milfoil could damage the region's environment and hurt the economy in the form of decreased property values and millions in lost tourism dollars.

"During the involuntary inspections at Donner Lake over the past few years, we collected a lot of data of where boaters were coming from," Crimmens said Tuesday. "What we found is many had previously launched in bodies of water that were known to be infested. Because of that, we knew the risk was there, and we felt it was important to protect Donner Lake."

According to data collected since 2010, zebra mussels or quagga mussels do not live in Donner Lake, Crimmens said. Other less-dangerous invasives, such as Asian clams and crawfish, have made it into its waters, however.

The ordinance extends to other town reservoirs, including Donner Creek, the Truckee River and a pond in Glenshire, although Olsen said most enforcement efforts will focus on Donner Lake.


Inspections will be conducted by TDRPD staff at the public launch ramp on Donner Lake, Olsen said; additional off-ramp locations will be announced as appropriate to accommodate increased boating activity.

While there will be no fee for non-motorized watercraft such as kayaks and paddleboards, they will be subject to inspection if identified as high risk, according to the town.

TMWA involved in Working Committee. Truckee River Fund provides Funds

The Modesto Bee

modbee.com

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Posted on Tue, Jan. 29, 2013

Truckee's mandatory water vessel inspection program starts in May

By Barbara Barte Osborn **Bee correspondent**

last updated: January 29, 2013 12:35:58 PM

TRUCKEE -- Watercraft inspections for aquatic invasive species will begin in May at Donner Lake and other waterways within Truckee town limits.

According to an ordinance recently passed by town officials, motorized and/or trailered watercraft will be inspected prior to launching. Non-motorized watercraft will also be inspected if identified as high risk for species transport.

Other town waterways affected include Donner Creek, which originates at Donner Lake, the Truckee River and a pond in the Glenshire subdivision, said Dan Olsen, the town's animal services and code compliance manager.

Aquatic invasive species, such as quagga mussels and Eurasian water milfoil, could degrade local aquatic ecosystems, inhibit recreation, damage infrastructure and equipment and cause depreciation in property values, Olsen said.

"The health of local waters is extremely important to the character, natural beauty and economic vitality of the Town of Truckee," Olsen added. "We believe that (those) who recreate on Truckee waters will embrace this effort to protect this precious natural resource."

The town is developing an inspection fee schedule that is expected to include a range of annual or monthly rates, according to a Town of Truckee news release.

Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District staff will conduct inspections at the public launch ramp on Donner Lake and at additional locations to be announced later, the release said.

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Phone: (209) 578-2000.

Walker County, Texas, and Arizona's Maricopa Association of Governments Select Tyler Technologies for Microsoft Dynamics® AX 2012 for the Public Sector

By BUSINESS WIRE
Posted 10:17 AM ET

Two more government entities choose Tyler to implement Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012

DALLAS--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Tyler Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: TYL) has signed agreements with Walker County, Texas, and Arizona's Maricopa Association of Governments to implement Microsoft Dynamics® AX 2012, an enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution with public sector functionality that Tyler Technologies jointly developed with Microsoft®.

Walker County and the Maricopa Association of Governments each selected Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 for its intuitive user interface and ability to be implemented quickly. Under the agreements, both clients will implement a variety of Dynamics AX 2012 applications, including project accounting, accounts receivable and payroll. Truckee Meadows Water Authority and the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development also selected Tyler earlier in 2012 to implement Dynamics AX 2012, and both of those clients went live on the new system this month.

"As public sector organizations transform for the future, elected officials will continue to look to ERP modernization for cost savings, improving operational effectiveness and achieving greater strategic value from financial management," said Amir Capriles, general manager, U.S. Public Sector for Microsoft Dynamics. "Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 will deliver a smoother and faster implementation to these customers who will enjoy greater end-user satisfaction, a higher return on investment, and a lower total cost of ownership for their ERP solution."

"These recent contracts demonstrate the broad opportunity that Tyler has with the Microsoft Dynamics AX product suite," said Richard E Peterson Jr., president of Tyler's ERP & School Division. "Tyler is the market leader in developing, implementing and supporting integrated solutions for the public sector, all backed by our exceptional services and support for all of our product offerings, including Microsoft Dynamics AX."

Walker County is located in southeast Texas and has an approximate population of 68,000. The Maricopa Association of Governments is the regional planning agency for Maricopa County, Ariz., whose members include the cities and towns within the county including Phoenix

About Tyler Technologies, Inc.

Tyler Technologies (NYSE: TYL) is a leading provider of end-to-end information management solutions and services for local governments. Tyler partners with clients to empower the public sector — cities, counties, schools and other government entities — to become more efficient, more accessible and more responsive to the needs of citizens. Tyler's client base includes more than 11,000 local government offices in all 50 states, Canada, the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. Forbes has named Tyler one of 'America's Best Small Companies' five times in the last six years. More information about Dallas-based Tyler Technologies can be found at www.tylertech.com.

The New York Times

February 7, 2013

In California, Reading the Snow to Tell the Future for the Water Supply

By NORIMITSU ONISHI

PHILLIPS, Calif. — Along Highway 50 in the Sierra Nevada, elevation 6,820 feet, a California winter ritual unfolded here on a recent morning. In the snow-blanketed meadow of a local homeowner's backyard, reporters representing news organizations from across the state followed a man on skis who kept plunging an aluminum tube into the snow.

Leading the pack was Frank Gehrke, California's chief snow surveyor, the man responsible for measuring the Sierra Nevada's snowpack, the source of a third of this state's water supply. Part groundhog, whose appearances signal the shift of the seasons, and part Federal Reserve chairman whose utterances on the state of the snowpack can move California's multibillion-dollar agricultural industry, Mr. Gehrke has led the Department of Water Resources' snowpack surveys for a quarter-century.

In the state that is home to Silicon Valley, Mr. Gehrke and his team use the stick-the-tube-into-the-snow method developed by a local classics professor more than a century ago.

"There've been only incremental changes," Mr. Gehrke said, interspersing this winter's second monthly survey with a veteran's calm observations of the snowfall and hints of the possible coming drama that is California's annual snowmelt. "This course is very uniform, which is normal, because the snowpack during accumulation is kind of uniform. But once you start getting into the melt, it starts to go crazy."

His assessment of this month's survey — after a strong start, the snowpack's water content fell to 93 percent of average for this time of the year because of a "midwinter lull" — was carried on television channels throughout the state. Pictures of Mr. Gehrke, grasping the tube with his gray mittens against a backdrop of the Sierra Nevada, appeared on the front page of newspapers in Sacramento and the Bay Area.

In California's water system, one of the world's most sophisticated and complex, the snowpack plays a leading role by supplying water to more than 25 million people and almost one million acres of farmland. Snow that accumulates on the Sierra Nevada's 400-mile range starts to melt in the spring, draining into rivers that feed reservoirs below.

As Mr. Gehrke and his team gauge the depth and water content of the snowpack, other department officials begin forecasting how much water the snowpack will be able to deliver this year.

Those who depend on the snowpack for water adjust their plans accordingly. Water districts may start looking for water elsewhere or carry out conservation measures. Farmers consider the forecasts in deciding what crops to plant or whether to take bank loans to buy more seed and equipment for the year.

Ryan Jacobsen, who is executive director of the Fresno County Farm Bureau and also sits on the board of the Fresno Irrigation District, said that the snow surveys are the “bible for what decisions irrigation districts are going to make for the rest of the year.”

“Fresno County is the No. 1 agricultural county in the nation, but we also happen to be situated climatically in the middle of a desert,” he said. “It really is the Sierra Nevada snowpack that makes this desert bloom.”

It was in 1908 that James E. Church, a classics professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, developed the existing method of forecasting water runoff from the depth and water content of snow. To settle a dispute over water rights in nearby Lake Tahoe, he was able to predict the water from the snowpack on Mount Rose by using a hollow tube that he called the Mount Rose snow sampler. Government agencies adopted his technique and, in 1929, California passed a law mandating that state officials measure the Sierra Nevada snowpack and issue forecasts of the water supply.

“You can almost say it made the development of the West possible,” Mr. Gehrke said. “Prior to that, they really didn’t even have tools to use to hope to predict how much runoff they would have.”

A civil engineer, Mr. Gehrke, 65, grew up in Missouri, where snow was considered more of “a nuisance” than anything else. “We would get occasional snowstorms, and our big hope was that the schools would close, though they rarely did,” he recalled.

He joined the Department of Water Resources in 1987, which coincided with the start of a six-year drought. The drought brought more resources and public attention to the snow surveys. The monthly surveys, which run from January through April, became media events starring Mr. Gehrke.

“He’s sort of iconic,” said John Laird, secretary for the state’s Natural Resources Agency, who had come to participate in the snow survey. “He’s the face of snow measurement.”

The water resources department issues forecasts after studying the data collected by Mr. Gehrke as well as 40 cooperative agencies at some 250 locations. His team includes 10 snow surveyors, some of whom travel with their measuring tubes to remote spots by hiking, snowmobile or even helicopter. Sensors located throughout the Sierra Nevada provide real-time data but are not considered as accurate as the manual surveys.

A new project by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena could soon enrich the snow

surveys' findings. As part of what the laboratory calls the Airborne Snow Observatory, scientists will begin flying over the Sierra Nevada next month aboard a plane equipped with an imaging spectrometer and a laser system known as lidar. The findings, which will be used for water management as well as the study of the impact of climate change on snowpacks, are expected to yield a broader view of the snowpack and more precise predictions of the snowmelt, said Thomas H. Painter, a research scientist heading the observatory.

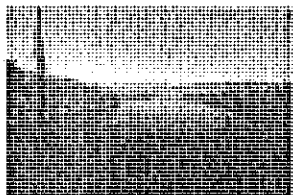
Mr. Gehrke, who is working with the laboratory, has flown on some preliminary flights.

"Frank is the bridge across the legacy of water management and snow observation in the Western U.S. to this technology," Mr. Painter said.

Perhaps no one was better than Mr. Gehrke at finding the drama in California's snow cycle. Would the midwinter lull be followed by steady accumulation in February? If February turned out to be dry, would there be what he calls a "March Miracle" before the final, comprehensive survey in early April?

Mr. Gehrke started skiing back to Highway 50, catching up with the reporters who were already packing up their gear. Fewer reporters would show up next month, he said, but April's snow survey would draw the biggest crowd.

"March is sort of the shoulder season for snow surveys," he said. "Everybody's looking forward to April."



• Tribune file photo

Environmental groups challenge Lake Tahoe Regional Plan Update

FEBRUARY, 11 2013

BY ADAM JENSEN

AJENSEN@TAHOEDAILYTRIBUNE.COM

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Plan Update is headed to court.

The Sierra Club and Friends of the West Shore filed a lawsuit in federal court Monday challenging the TRPA's long-discussed plan for Lake Tahoe's future.

Among the environmental groups' assertions are that the RPU violates the agency's Compact because it will not achieve and maintain the agency's environmental goals, improperly delegates TRPA's project review to local governments and does not reduce environmental impacts to less than significant levels.

Additional height and density allowed under the plan have been among the group's major concerns with the RPU. The height and density allowances were part of an effort by the TRPA to move development away from sensitive land.

"This new plan fails to recognize that an increase in buildings, rooftops, and pavement will mean an increase in the amount of polluted rain and snowmelt--runoff that flows directly into the Lake," said Laurel Ames of the Tahoe Area Sierra Club, in a statement posted on environmental law firm Earthjustice's website Monday. "Stormwater from pavement and roads is the leading cause of the Lake's loss of clarity. Allowing more pavement and roads seriously undermines efforts to clean up the once pristine lake."

The lawsuit seeks to invalidate approval of the RPU and asks for an injunction against its implementation. The TRPA's Governing Board approved the plan in December.

The TRPA called the lawsuit "pointless" in a Monday statement.

Executive Director Joanne Marchetta said the Sierra Club's suit goes against scientific principles and delays needed policy improvements.

"Renewal is badly needed to realize environmental improvements," Marchetta said in the statement. "A modern approach to sustainability that mixes incentives and a streamlined permit process with high environmental standards is at the heart of 21st century environmentalism. This lawsuit takes us back to the outdated environmental movements of 30 years ago. Simply demanding that development should go away or people should stop coming to Lake Tahoe is not a realistic plan."

Passage of an updated regional plan was one of the requirements in Nevada Senate Bill 271, which threatens to pull the state out of the TRPA if certain changes are not enacted.

The possibility of litigation over the regional plan leading to the dissolution of the TRPA Compact was brought up in a Monday statement from League to Save Lake Tahoe Executive Director Darcie Goodman Collins. Goodman Collins said the League is "disappointed" that litigation was filed regarding the plan.

"While the plan is not perfect, it is a product of community collaboration and compromise, and is designed to be adaptive," Goodman Collins said. "It also ensures that we continue protecting the regional environment through a federally approved bi-state compact that contains important environmental thresholds. Any litigation will likely result in the dissolution of this compact and no compact means no regional environmental standards for Lake Tahoe. Preserving the compact and implementing the RPU will provide the greatest long-term benefit to the lake and its communities."

Goodman Collins said the League is hopeful the lawsuit can be resolved quickly.

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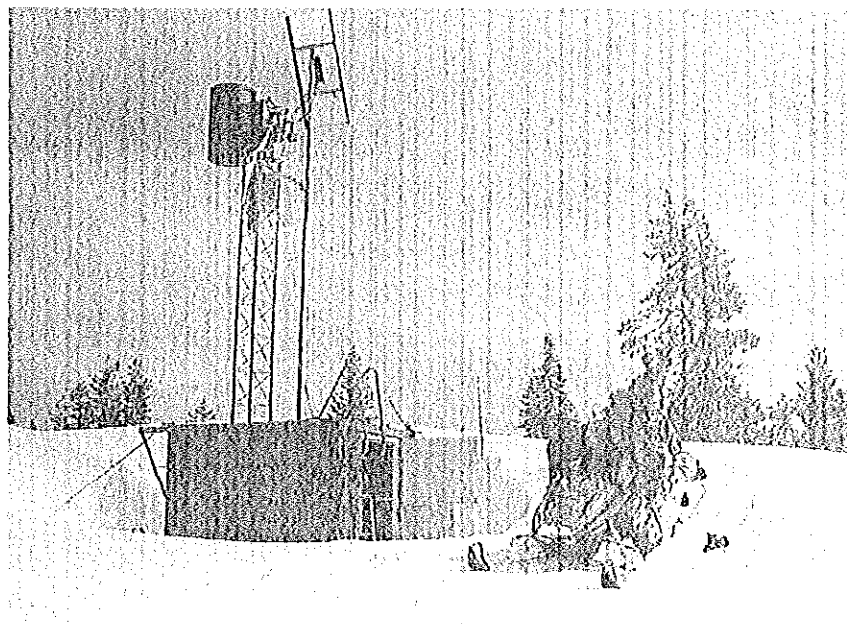
The facts behind the news with writer Mark Robison



Is cloud seeding making Ely drier?

5:59 pm, Feb 16, 2013 | Written by Mark Robison

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The claim

Cloud seeding in the Sierra Nevada causes less precipitation in central and eastern Nevada.

The background

A Reno Gazette-Journal story looked at warmer temperatures due to climate change possibly leading to cuts in cattle grazing on public lands.

This prompted reader Sue Cauhape to write in. She mentioned a conversation she and her husband had with a 'young rancher' near Ely.

"We talked of drought and climate change in the ranch lands of Nevada and he mentioned that ever since cloud seeding started in the Sierra Nevada, precipitation has fallen there instead of moving eastward to central Nevada. Checking this, I found a website, Lake Scientist, that had an article reporting that the Desert Research (Institute) has installed four cloud-seeding stations near and around Lake Tahoe to increase precipitation levels to aid economic development in that region. Human intervention on behalf of the ski industry

has threatened the livelihood of ranchers. This may not be the cause of drought throughout the 11 states mentioned, but for Nevada ranchers, it's something we can change. We need to choose which is more important: food or recreation."

Cloud seeding in the Sierra Nevada works this way: A generator heats a solution containing silver iodide, which causes it to vaporize and be pulled up into passing clouds. The silver iodide has a crystalline structure like ice and encourages snow to form.

It should be noted that the Lake Scientist article does not mention the ski industry or economic development as the reason for cloud seeding.

It quotes DRI scientist Arlen Huggins as saying cloud seeding can be extremely beneficial, "especially in the drought-stricken West." Later, it says, "The DRI estimates that the cloud seeding program has resulted in an average annual increase in snow water of 64,000 acre-feet over the last 15 years — enough to supply 140,000 households with water annually."

Fact Checker asked Huggins about cloud seeding being done to help ski resorts. He replied, "It could land on a ski resort, particularly early in the season. But the main reason is to increase the water supply. For the Tahoe project, it's for the flow in the Truckee River system."

From the start in 1979 when DRI began the Nevada State Cloud Seeding Program, it received complaints from ranchers in central Nevada. Huggins and other scientists met with them in the mid-1990s.

The researchers informed them that during the drought years of the late '80s and '90s, central Nevada actually received above or near normal winter precipitation. This didn't persuade the ranchers, who "were still worried that cloud seeding was the cause of what they perceived as a worsening drought in central Nevada," according to a 1996 DRI report.

The report also says that when a storm encounters a mountain, only about 10 percent of its water falls as precipitation. Cloud seeding is predicted to increase that precipitation by about 10 percent. Ten percent of 10 percent is one percent of the total.

Or, as the report states, "Even with 11 to 13 cloud seeding projects operating on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, only a fraction of the total storm can be expected to be effectively treated, suggesting that even less than one percent of storm water would be removed by cloud seeding."

In other words, 99 percent of a storm's moisture is available after seeding.

Also, Huggins told Fact Checker, "Storms that affect the Sierra generally aren't the ones that affect Ely. A great example is today. It's been snowing in Ely for 24 hours and nothing in the Sierra. It's a completely different storm track."

The '96 report looked at cloud seeding projects in California and precipitation from the 1920s through the mid-1990s in Austin, which is in Nevada's belly-button middle.

"The driest of the decades, the 1950s, occurred when very few cloud seeding projects were being conducted, and the wettest occurred after most of the current projects were in operation. There is no indication that the gradual increase in seeding projects adversely affected the precipitation in central Nevada, if anything the opposite trend is indicated."

Finally, the report states, "The conclusions reached in this report are similar to ones reached in other parts of the country where wintertime cloud seeding efforts are occurring. There is a small, but significant benefit to the operations in localized areas, but no detectable negative impact to regions far removed from the seeding operations."

Studies have shown that cloud seeding tends to increase — not decrease — precipitation up to 150 miles downwind.

After Nevada, Utah is the second driest state in the nation. (Hawaii and Louisiana are the wettest.) As such, Utah also engages in cloud seeding to boost snowpack and thus water supplies.

A 2003 report called "Estimations of Downwind Cloud Seeding Effects in Utah" by North American Weather Consultants says, "The question occasionally carries the connotation of 'stealing' someone else's water, sometimes referred to as robbing Peter (the downwind folks) to pay Paul (those who benefit from the seeding project). This question, among others, must be answered as forthrightly and factually as possible when it is posed. The most succinct, and probably accurate, answer to the question is 'no.'"

To phrase its conclusion more digestibly, there's little evidence cloud seeding reduces precipitation downwind and, in fact, areas that are quite a few miles downwind tend to get increased precipitation similar to that in the areas where seeding happened.

How far downwind? From 48 to 150 miles for the Sierra Nevada seeding projects, according to A.B. Long in a 2001 Journal of Weather Modification.

That report is probably the best on "extra area" effects of cloud seeding, rounding up data from projects in a number of states, and it too did not find a decrease in precipitation downwind.

The verdict

There's no evidence that cloud seeding in the Sierra Nevada has decreased precipitation in central and eastern Nevada — and it's likely not even possible given the paths storms take and how much water is removed by seeding.

Truth Meter: 1

Photo above: A Desert Research Institute scientist visits a cloud seeding station near Lake Tahoe. (Provided by DRI)



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Posting as Victor Glenn Leyba (Owner)

Comment



Samuel Owens · Top Commenter · Guest Services at Nevada System of Higher Education

Since DRI has heard complaints from people in central and eastern Nevada regarding precipitation, I wonder if DRI should consider placing a couple experimental cloud seeding stations in those parts of Nevada as well?

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