

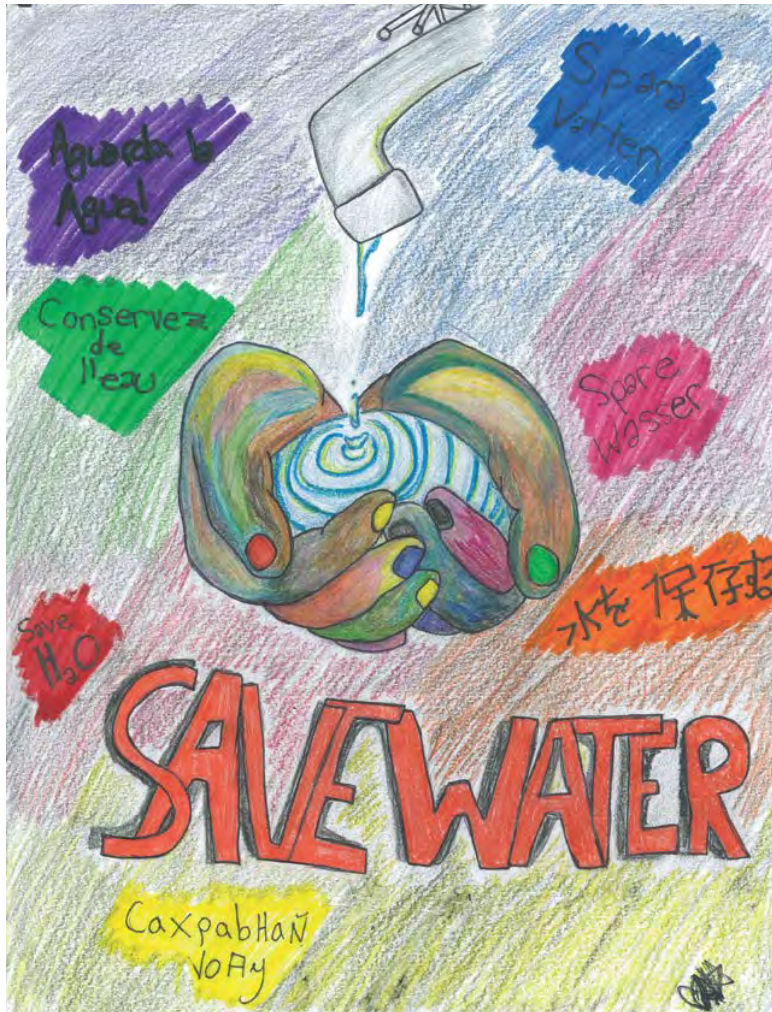


## TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

### Press Clippings

May 9, 2013 – June 5, 2013



Katherine Horton (Archie Clayton Middle School)  
2010 Poster Art Contest – Honorable Mention, Grades 7-8

## TMWA PRESS CLIPPINGS -- 5/8/13 TO 6/3/13

<http://www.rgj.com/article/20130603/NEWS/130603018/>

Page 1 of 1 Jun 04, 2013 09:09:36AM MDT

### **Truckee Meadows Water Authority releases water quality report**

*Filed Under Local News Truckee Meadows Water Authority*

*Jun. 3, 2013 / rgj.com*

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority has released its annual water quality report as required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), officials said Monday.

The report features important information regarding the quality, source and treatment of drinking water, officials said. "This year represents a continuation of TMWA's perfect record of providing your drinking water without a single safety violation," TMWA said in a news release. "At TMWA we are very proud of the quality of the water that we deliver to our 330,000 customers on a daily basis and our Water Quality Report is a welcome opportunity to show our customers the stringent safety standards that we adhere to in ensuring their water quality," Paul Miller, manager water operations and water quality, said in a statement.

This year the water quality report is available entirely online at [www.tmwa.com/WQR\\_2013](http://www.tmwa.com/WQR_2013) as now allowed by the EPA. In addition to being available online, a Spanish version will also be available for viewing, officials said. Those who want to receive a hard copy are asked to call or email Will Raymond at 775-834-8138 or [wraymond@tmwa.com](mailto:wraymond@tmwa.com)

### **Snail surveys in Truckee to begin soon**

*By Jeff DeLong*

*jdelong@rgj.com*

Wading up and down the Truckee River, biologists will soon begin a new round of surveys in effort to gauge the scope of a recently discovered infestation by a non-native snail.

A 2012 study conducted by the University of Nevada, Reno freshwater science expert and other researchers meanwhile suggests that New Zealand mudsnails might become widely established in the Truckee River at significant cost to the river's ecosystem and its valuable fishery.

"We want to get out on the river," said Chris Crookshanks, a fisheries biologist with the Nevada Department of Wildlife. "We just want to get some kind of assessment on what we have here."

Crookshanks said he and seasonal workers will begin the river surveys once they are finished working on the spawning run of Lahontan cutthroat trout at Marlette Lake in coming days. Surveys will occur from the boundary of the Pyramid Lake Paiute reservation on the downstream end upstream to the California border near Verdi. The idea is to get a better idea of how many snails are in the river. So far, only three have been found, all of them in Sparks. One was discovered during tests of routine samples collected last summer near the East McCarran Bridge. Two others were found during subsequent surveys conducted a mile upstream at Rock Park in early May. Crookshanks said he can't really guess at how many snails may be in the river but that he's sure there are more. New Zealand mudsnails can pose significant problems in water bodies where they become established.

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<http://>

### **Tahoe Boat Inspections Pick Up for Memorial Day Weekend**

*Posted: May 24, 2013 4:44 PM PDT*

*Updated: May 27, 2013 9:07 AM PDT*

With Memorial Day weekend upon us, you might see a lot more boats on the lake. But before you put your boat

in Lake Tahoe, you will have to have it inspected first.

"We're out here to protect Lake Tahoe from aquatic invasive species," Jonelle Bright, of the Tahoe Resource Conservation District said. "It's really important that we inspect boats prior to launching into the lake to make

sure that they're clean, drained, and dry." Species like Quagga Mussels and New Zealand Mud Snails have already turned up in other Nevada bodies of water. Bob Edie is a Zephyr Cove resident who got his boat decontaminated, as a precaution. "It was in a lake that was contaminated," Edie said. "So, even though the boat was dry, they gave a courtesy decontamination, just to make sure." To make sure the boat is safe, crews flush it with 140-degree water, which kills any potential threat. All motorized watercraft need to be inspected. Fees range between \$35 and \$121, depending on your boat's length. "I wasn't crazy about the fee or any of this at the beginning of this whole process, certainly," Duncan Davis, Carnelian Bay resident said. "But I think most of the people that own the boats that operate on Lake Tahoe are willing to pay the fee because we all enjoy the lake because it's special." "Maybe it takes you a half-hour or an hour, but it's worth it to save the lake," Edie said. The inspection is good for the whole summer, but if the boat is taken somewhere else, it needs to be checked out again before returning to Tahoe. Inspections are voluntary for non-motorized watercraft like kayaks. Five stations are set up at around the lake at Spooner Summit, Meyers, Homewood, Alpine Meadows, and Northstar. Traffic is expected to pick up this weekend.

"It looks like the weather's cooperating," Bright said. "I would anticipate it being a busy weekend up here for Memorial Day for boating." Donner Lake, Prosser Reservoir, Boca Reservoir, and Stampede Reservoir are also giving voluntary inspections. In Nevada, Lahontan, Rye Patch, and Wildhorse Reservoirs are giving free inspections.

*Written by Paul Nelson*

## **Non-Native Snail Turns Up in Truckee River**

RENO, Nev. (AP) - A non-native snail has turned up in the Truckee River in Nevada for the first time, and wildlife officials are hoping it doesn't harm the river's trout population.

Nevada Department of Wildlife officials say tests have confirmed that three New Zealand mudsnails are living in at least a one-mile section of the river in Sparks.

They told the Reno Gazette-Journal that a single mudsnail can produce a colony of up to 40 million snails in a single year, and ruin a stream's ecosystem.

But wildlife officials say it's unknown whether the river that flows from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake will provide ideal conditions for the mudsnails to multiply in such large numbers.

Since 1987, the snail has invaded rivers and lakes across much of the West, including southern Nevada's Lake Mead.

*Copyright 2013 Associated Press*

## **Non-Native Snail Turns Up in Truckee River in NV**

Published: 8:09 am

Updated: 8:12 am

CITY, Nev. (MyNews4.com & KRNV) — A non-native snail has turned up in the Truckee River in Nevada for the first time, and wildlife officials are hoping it doesn't harm the river's trout population.

Nevada Department of Wildlife officials say tests have confirmed that three New Zealand mud snails are living in at least a onemile section of the river in Sparks.

They told the Reno Gazette-Journal that a single mud snail can produce a colony of up to 40 million snails in a single year, and ruin a stream's ecosystem.

But wildlife officials say it's unknown whether the river that flows from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake will provide ideal conditions for the mud snails to multiply in such large numbers.

Since 1987, the snail has invaded rivers and lakes across much of the West, including southern Nevada's Lake Mead.

# Golden Valley Couple Forced to Empty Life Savings for Running Water

Published: 5/16 9:08 pm

Updated: 5/16 11:55 pm

GOLDEN VALLEY, Nev. (KRNV &

MyNews4.com) -- You'd be hard pressed to find someone who appreciates water as much as Georgia Hendrick. "You start to realize how much you need this stuff," Hendricks, 73, said. Last month, with one turn of a faucet, life as she and her husband knew it, stopped. "Air and spits of water came out and I thought, "Ah oh, we're in big trouble," Hendricks said. Hendricks, like many of the neighbors who call rural Golden Valley home, live on independent wells for water. When an inspection of her 118-foot well showed the water level had dropped 10 feet below the pump, the solution seemed simple. "Oh we'll just drill. We went down to 600 feet and there was no sustainable amount of water and they said you have the deepest well in the valley and it's not producing," Hendricks said. Days without water, turned to weeks. "I can't wash clothes because we don't have the washer running and I've been using the same dishwater over and over and I empty it at the end of the day (just) like the toilets, which is not pretty. We just use trashbags," Hendricks said. "I try not to cry too much because I need every drop of water that's in me." Inevitable tears come from added frustration over why the well has unexplainably gone dry. Since 1990, Hendricks and others on private wells have been paying a monthly charge of roughly \$22 to Washoe County for what's called a water recharge program to help declining water levels.

"That monthly charge goes to pay for operation of the system, the electricity to move the water, the maintenance of the system." Dwayne Smith, Engineering Director with Washoe County said. "It also goes to the lease of the water rights."

Smith says each well is as independent as the person who owns and maintains it. Private wells may also react differently to geographical factors. A current map of Golden Valley residential wells shows roughly a third have had to be deepened over the years due to decreasing water tables. "Sometimes residents have challenges with their wells and we've gotten calls from folks that say, 'My well is pumping sand,' or, 'It's not pumping the volume it used to pump,' and so the first thing we recommend is to get a certified well driller to take a look at your actual well," Smith said. Hendrick's only resolution from the company that checked her well was to install a 17-thousand gallon storage tank. "It's my husband's IRA cashed out, it's my IRA cashed out, in total. It's all our savings and it is a second mortgage on the house to pay for this. It is upwards of \$50,000 to pay for this," Hendricks said. Smith insists the recharge program is working.

"It has been in place since 1990, so it's been in place for 25 years and it has brought value to the residents and that's why we continue to do it, that's why they continue to pay for it because it does bring that value," Smith said. "I don't know who's being recharged, it is not us and I've paid," Hendricks said. After five weeks of living off bottled water and showering at a local gym, the tank was installed and the nightmare was over. Hendricks now worries which neighbor's well will go dry, next. "It's serious, it'll develop and I believe it's serious. Time will tell you. If they say it's just my well, I'm sorry, that's a dream."

## Truckee Meadows Trees Undergoing Stress

**Posted: May 15, 2013 1:44 PM PDT**

**Updated: May 15, 2013 3:28 PM PDT**

Great weather is ushering in gardening season. But vegetation in the Truckee Meadows is having an especially hard time this year...especially the trees. For something that looks so invincible, it's a very delicate time. After 2 dry winters, these masters of the plant universe are fighting to survive. For too long, arborist Dale Carlson says "It's been very dry and we need to start addressing it now." Is he worried? "Seriously." Where you and I look out and admire the beauty of trees, this arborist with the Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition sees too many dying. Check out the past winter, or what there was of it: December held

great promise with rain and snow, but the turning of the calendar had Mother Nature turning off the spigot. In the last 4 months, only a slight amount of rain fell. Last winter was one of the driest winters on record. Today, things have dried out here to summer levels already. The vegetation is as dry as it typically is in late June. The concern for trees is, if they're this dry now, how are they going to be in the long, hot dry months of summer? Carlon told us, "I'm concerned about the future of our urban forest, quite frankly."

At Caughlin Ranch we met one lonely tree, only 15 years old and already in trouble. Look close and you'll see it yourself. Carlon pointed out "All of the profuse sap that we have running down the trunk here. That's a sign of bigger trouble. These serrated cracks here, and then the flowing of the sap tells me that there are bugs infesting it." It's a sign of tree stress from prolonged dry weather. There's more evidence of it covering the ground, and all over roofs: the blanket of seeds. Why so many this year? "Well, this is a response to stress." And so is all the pollen, so thick you can see it. From shaking any branch, we saw it just fall off. The trees are releasing the pollen, their sperm, in giant clouds. Carlon says the trees are in survival mode. "They're sending out more seeds and pollen to propagate themselves to make more trees."

Dale says it's so dry, it's now up to you...to us, to do the job ourselves. "We need to supply supplemental water during the summertime. We don't usually water our trees, and that's where our problem lies." He showed us the best way to water your trees: use a drip line, circling the trunk. Extend it out away from the base to encourage the roots to grow from the tree.

*-written by John Potter*

The Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition has a great website for tree care. Click here:

## Rich in history, Crystal Peak Park in Verdi opens Saturday

*By Bob Harmon*

*Washoe County Sheriff's Office*

The next time you get the urge to spend some quality time along the Truckee River, take my advice and go west. Not too far west. Just out to Verdi to explore the new Verdi Mill Pond and Nature Area at Crystal Peak Park.

The latest addition to Washoe County's park system features just about everything you need to enjoy a beautiful day on the banks of the Truckee River. Local fishing enthusiasts have already discovered that the restored fishing ponds are perfect for some quality time with rod and reel. But even those who don't fish will find plenty of interesting pursuits among these 20-plus acres, which are brimming with natural wildlife and local history. "I like everything about this place," county park superintendent Eric Crump said. "The setting is beautiful. It's a perfect spot for families. The history is amazing and there is all sorts of wildlife. "Whether people come to play by the river, fish in the pond or just learn a little more about local lore, I think they are going to love it here." The Verdi Pond and Nature Area project began in 2008. It included the restoration of the pond, fishing piers, restroom facilities, benches, picnic tables, parking and a nature loop trail.

The history of this 56-acre area is fascinating. From the late 1880s until the 1920s, the pond was used by a lumber mill. Unfortunately, the mill was prone to devastating fires, suffering from eight during its years of operation. One of the signs along the area's nature trail displays a timeline of the fires and details the damage each caused. After the lumber mill pulled out, ambitious plans were laid to turn the area into a resort. Verdi Glen hoped to become one of the more popular travel destinations. Developers' plans for the area would eventually include a fishing lake, dance hall, swimming pool, campground and golf course.

They got off to a good start, and then fire struck again. In the late 1930s, another destructive fire engulfed the resort's main building. All that remains today are parts of the swimming pool and the main building's stone fireplace. The resort was abandoned and the property purchased by Guy Marsh. Following his death, Guy's wife, Florence, offered to sell the property to Washoe County. In 1993, the county purchased the property and began exploring plans for how to best use the special piece of riverside property. One of the first thoughts was to restore the pond to a fishing site. There were challenges, but with support for the Nevada Department of Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the ponds were completed, stocked with trout and today are already popular.

Parks staff also decided to create a half-mile nature trail that would provide public access to the river and give visitors a chance to comfortably experience the park's natural beauty and wildlife while learning a little about its history. The result is an easy and enjoyable loop trail that passes by remnants of the old resort and includes several benches that overlook the river. Informational signs tell you the history, while your eyes and ears take in the sights and sounds of the area's natural habitat. The area is a popular spot for mule deer, birds and a variety of other wildlife. So bring your fishing pole, or just bring a picnic. Plan on walking

the trail then spending time just sitting and enjoying the sweet sounds of the river, cooling your toes in the water under the warmth of our Sierra sun.

— Bob Harmon works for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office and is an advocate for parks, open space and outdoor recreation.

## Additional Facts

Verdi Pond Opening

**WHAT:** The Verdi Pond and Nature Area project began in 2008 and included the restoration of the pond, fishing piers, restroom facilities, benches, picnic tables, parking, interpretive signage and the development of a nature loop trail.

**WHEN:** From 8 a.m. Saturday

**WHERE:** The 56-acre Crystal Peak Park is located just west of Verdi on Old Highway 40, 10 miles west of Reno.

**WHO:** Washoe County, NDOW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Cabela's

**GRAND OPENING:** Saturday's events include nature-themed crafts, raffle prizes and free fishing for kids. The Lahontan National Fish Hatchery Complex will stock 3,000 native Pilot Peak Lahontan cutthroat trout. Biologists will be on hand to talk about the Pilot Peak program.

[www.rgj.com](http://www.rgj.com) | Printer-friendly article page Page 2 of 2

# Taxpayers footing \$3 million lobbying bill for local governments



[Sam Morris](#) / Las Vegas Sun

Lobbyists work in their room at the Legislative Building Thursday, Feb. 7, 2013 during the 2013 legislative session in Carson City.

By [Andrew Doughman](#) ([contact](#))

Friday, May 10, 2013 | 2 a.m.

CARSON CITY —

## Nevada local government lobbying spending

*Nevada's local governments nearly tripled their spending on lobbying the state government during the past 10 years, according to state taxation department data gathered at the end of every legislative session.*

- 2001: \$1,169,243
- 2003: \$2,486,897
- 2005: \$2,585,443

- 2007: \$3,696,064
- 2009: \$3,618,293
- 2011: \$3,039,386

The perception of lobbyists involves polished representatives, paid for by large corporations, plying their influence for the benefit of mining, gaming, retailers and labor unions.

But you pay for lobbyists, too.

Nevada taxpayers are footing more than \$3 million for local governments to lobby the state Legislature, according to a Sun review of state records.

On any given day outside the Senate and Assembly, industry lobbyists mix with lobbyists from North Las Vegas, Henderson, the Southern Nevada Regional Transportation Commission and the University Medical Center.

Sometimes they're the same people.

Taxpayers foot these bills as some local governments struggle with financial woes, seek to renegotiate contracts, or push for tax or fee increases at the Legislature.

But local government lobbyists say they provide a vital screen for a rapacious Legislature that tries to [sweep your local dollars](#) into the state's budget. They're expert hired guns who provide an extra defense for local government interests, especially during the recession's lean budget years.

"There have probably been 50 of those attempts that would've shifted money," said Richard Perkins, a former Assembly Speaker whose firm, the Perkins Company, now has a two-year, \$216,000 contract to represent Henderson at the Legislature.

Still, the expense angers some groups that track Nevada government spending.

The cost Nevadans pay for government-to-government lobbying has nearly tripled from \$1.17 million in 2001 to \$3.04 million in 2011.

That's enough to hire 66 more teachers in Clark County or employ dozens more public safety officers.

"There is nothing more insulting to taxpayers than local elected officials who complain about not having enough money, but then spend millions of tax dollars hiring juiced-up insiders to go to Carson City to lobby for even higher taxes," said Geoffrey Lawrence of the Nevada Policy Research Institute, a privately financed free-market think tank.

Several legislative observers say that retaining law firms to lobby on behalf of local governments has become more widespread.

"Back in the '70s and early '80s, we had very few governments who had lobbyists represent them full time in Carson City," said Marvin Leavitt, a former finance director for Las Vegas and a former contract lobbyist for Las Vegas. "They were normally the employees of the government who were sent up there to represent them at the Legislature."

Now, local governments in Clark and Washoe counties have dozens of contracts — worth \$2.77 million — signed with professional lobbying firms. These contract lobbyists often supplement local government employees specifically sent to Carson City as lobbyists.

Local government lobbying expenses dipped during the recession, from its high of \$3.77 million. But the growth in lobbying expenses over the past decade has outstripped the state's monumental population growth.

In addition to fighting off grabby lawmakers, some lobbyists said they must track more bills than they did in 2001 and therefore need to bring on extra help. But there's no substantial difference between the number of bills legislators sponsored in [2001](#) and [2011](#).

The expense also greatly outstrips the inflation rate, which would have accounted for only a [\\$310,000 increase](#).

## **The hired guns**

### **Clark County local governments**

*Local governments in Clark County have signed contracts worth \$1.8 million with contract lobbyists who represent local governments in Carson City this session.*

- Las Vegas: \$396,000
- Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority: \$380,000
- North Las Vegas: \$246,000
- Henderson: \$216,000
- University Medical Center: \$180,000
- Southern Nevada Health District: \$120,000
- Southern Nevada Water Authority: \$82,000
- UNLV: \$80,000
- Southern Nevada Regional Transportation Commission: \$66,000
- Boulder City: \$16,000
- Mesquite: \$16,000
- Clark County: \$0
- Clark County School District: \$0

Still, contract lobbyists say they bring to bear an arsenal of talent, savvy and knowledge that government employee lobbyists cannot match.

A legislative session in Nevada is like a 120-day round of gladiatorial matches that happens once every two years. Lobbyists kill bills, play tricks and make deals. Legislators shift money away from some local

governments and award money to others. To boot, Nevada doesn't have "home rule," meaning local governments need to charm legislators into giving them authority to enact relatively simple governance matters.

Given the high stakes and compressed time span, local governments have an incentive to dispatch their best warriors.

"Governments have gradually recognized that things the Legislature does can have a huge effect on local governments," Leavitt said.

So what do contract lobbyists have to offer?

They say they can use their extensive clientele, many of whom give significant contributions to state legislators, to gain access. Local governments catch a ride on the coattails of the legislative juice machine.

"I'll pick up things because I'm talking to someone about a Wynn or GE issue," said Perkins, who represents Wynn Las Vegas and General Electric along with Henderson.

Other contract lobbyists tout the cachet and clout they've built with legislators; many lobbyists measure their experience in decades rather than years.

They say their expertise and relationships make access easy. They can play the navigator who helps city bureaucrats and elected officials find their way around the Legislature and make the right connections.

"It's part of my job to know all the players — north, south and rural," said [Bob Ostrovsky](#), whose firm, the Ferraro Group, has a four-year contract worth \$396,000 with Las Vegas.

The contract lobbyists fashion themselves as hired guns, mercenaries who are worth hiring because they can do the job better than others. Noting the intricate, fast-paced games that the legislative session entails, they say they translate, facilitate, monitor and act to strike for an opportunity or squash a threat.

"This is a very unique environment," said Jim Wadhams, lobbyist with Fennemore Craig Jones Vargas, which has a two-year contract worth \$380,000 with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. "Their job is to put heads in the beds ... my job is to be spotting opportunities."

## **Cutting lobbying costs**

### **Washoe County**

*Local governments in Washoe County have signed contracts worth about \$973,000 with contract lobbyists who represent local governments in Carson City this session.*

- Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority: \$360,000
- Washoe County: \$189,000
- Reno: \$135,000
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority: \$79,000
- Sparks: \$55,000

- Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District: \$60,000
- Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority: \$42,000
- Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County: \$29,000
- Washoe County Sheriff's Office: \$24,000

Meanwhile, several local governments like Clark County and the Clark County School District have cut costs by not renewing outside lobbying contracts.

“It's difficult to justify an outside contract like that when you're laying people off,” said [Sabra Smith Newby](#), one of Clark County's in-house lobbyists.

Clark County retained a contract lobbying firm during the 2009 legislative session and paid about \$452,000 for lobbying that year.

It ditched its outside lobbyists for the 2011 session and ended up paying \$348,000 in lobbying costs, a difference almost exactly the same as the \$102,000 the county paid Dan Hart & Associates in 2009.

"I still don't think you need paid (contract) lobbyists for local governments," said Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani, a former assemblywoman.

Without an experienced dealer with personal relationships and expert knowledge, was the in-house Clark County lobbying team suddenly reduced to a hapless band of bureaucrats scratching around like blind naked mole rats in the halls of the Nevada Legislature?

“I certainly haven't seen a whole lot of difference,” Smith said. “In fact, I've seen an improvement in our work at our Legislature as we've switched to all employees. We are the most knowledgeable about the things we do because we do them everyday.”

For example, when the state attempted to raid the Clean Water Coalition's \$60 million surplus fund, it wasn't a contract lobbyist who killed the deal. The Nevada Supreme Court halted that move.

The Clark County School District paid about \$250,000 for lobbying in Carson City during 2011, but they didn't pay a contract lobbyist.

Instead, it sends district [employees to Carson City](#), a practice it's continuing this session.

“Our currency is good, accurate information in a timely manner,” said Joyce Haldeman, associate superintendent with the Clark County School District and chief lobbyist during the legislative session.

During the 2009 legislative session, Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, D-North Las Vegas, [introduced a bill](#) that would have changed local government lobbying laws. But the bill died in the Senate.

Now, as Assembly Speaker, she's had testy exchanges with local government representatives, but she has not reintroduced the bill.

“If that's how they choose to spend their taxpayer dollars, that's how they do it,” she said. “They're accountable to their constituents.”

Read more: <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2013/may/10/taxpayers-footing-3-million-lobbying-bill-local-go/#ixzz2VMQdkEeG>

## **Invading snails discovered in Truckee River (watch video)**

*Written by Jeff DeLong*

May 14 rgj.com

**Experts with the Nevada Department of Wildlife said Tuesday tests have confirmed that New Zealand mudsnails — a tiny aquatic mollusk that can have big-time impacts on water bodies — are living in the Truckee River. / Amy Benson/U.S.**

**Geological Survey file**

**On RGJ.com/video**

Click on “Our Video Picks” to see video about the New Zealand mudsnail in the Truckee River.

A non-native snail that has invaded rivers and lakes across much of the West is now making a home in the Truckee River. Experts with the Nevada Department of Wildlife said Tuesday tests have confirmed that New Zealand mudsnails — a tiny aquatic mollusk that can have big-time impacts on water bodies — are living in the Truckee River. “They’re here,” said Chris Crookshanks, a fisheries biologist with the Department of Wildlife who is now working to gauge the extent of the infestation. Crookshanks and colleagues first learned of the problem after recent testing of routine samples collected by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection at the river near the East McCarran Bridge last summer revealed the presence of a single New Zealand mudsnail. Followup surveys conducted last week revealed two additional snails about a mile upstream at Rock Park. “We know we have at least a one-mile distribution, bare minimum,” Crookshanks said. Native to New Zealand, the mudsnail first turned up in Idaho in 1987 and has since spread rapidly across the West. It was discovered in California’s Owens River in the late 1990s and is found as close as the Consumes River in the western Sierra foothills. Mudsnails were found in Southern Nevada’s Lake Mead in 2007 and over the last couple years were discovered in Elko County’s Maggie Creek and Salmon Falls Creek and in Beaver Dam Wash in Lincoln County, said Kim Tisdale, fisheries supervisor. Until now, there’s been no evidence they existed in the Truckee River or anywhere else in western Nevada. The size of a grain of sand to an eighth-of-an-inch, the New Zealand mudsnail can thrive in huge densities, with up to 900,000 per square yard existing in parts of the Yellowstone River, researchers said. The tiny mollusks compete with bugs and other native invertebrates for food and in general can wreak havoc on a stream’s ecosystem. And, Tisdale said, “they reproduce wildly.” A single snail, reproducing asexually, can produce a colony of up to 40 million snails in a single year.

One key concern is they could potentially negatively impact the Truckee River’s trout population, Tisdale said. “It’s a big concern. They definitely can have negative impacts to the fisheries in the river,” Tisdale said. “Under perfect conditions, you can get really high concentrations and they can pretty much crowd out the good bugs.” Whether the Truckee River will provide those perfect conditions is unknown. What is known is once they show up, nothing can really be done to make them go away. “Once you have them in a waterway like the Truckee River, there’s no way to eradicate them,” Crookshanks said.

“Once you’ve got them, you’ve got them.” On Tuesday, the Department of Wildlife notified various entities of the discovery of mudsnails in the Truckee, including the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Truckee Meadows Water Authority and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, among others.

After learning of the infestation, tribal experts are now studying potential impacts of the snail, including the issue of whether they could exist in the high-saline environment of Pyramid Lake, said Scott Carey, tribal planner. “They really weren’t on our radar screen before,” Carey said. “It could be something that would not be good for the river or the lake.” Since 2008, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has enforced a boat inspection program for vessels entering Lake Tahoe. The program’s primary goal was to avoid introduction of the quagga mussel — a highly damaging aquatic invader that has overrun Lake Mead — but it is also designed to prevent

introduction of other invaders like the mudsnail. In May 2010, boat inspectors intercepted a vessel preparing to launch into Tahoe that was contaminated with the snails. Discovery of the snails living in the river that links Tahoe and Pyramid Lake is disturbing news, said Ted Thayer, TRPA's aquatic invasive species expert. "It's certainly a species we are concerned about," Thayer said. "Certainly this is disconcerting." It's possible the snails were introduced to the Truckee River attached to birds, but more likely culprits would be contaminated waders, fishing gear or vessels such as kayaks, Tisdale said. While the next step will be expanded surveys to determine the scope of the snail infestation, a primary goal will be to prevent spread of the problem to other rivers and streams. Wildlife officials urge people using the river to ensure clothing, gear and boats are cleaned and dried to guard against potential spread.

"Our biggest fear is the spread of these things to other waters," Crookshanks said.

## **Rain Gives Boost To Northern Nevada's Water Supply**

*Posted: May 08, 2013 4:27 PM PDT*

*Updated: May 08, 2013 6:23 PM PDT*

Hydrologists say the moisture over the past few days has been great for our water supply. Since the snow pack is below average, this year, they say any rain is little bit of a bonus. In the past four days, the Truckee Meadows has gotten more precipitation than we normally get in the entire month of May. "We had the recent driest January through April in much of the region, all the way from the Oregon border down to the southern Sierra," Gary Barbato, Service Hydrologist for the National Weather Service said. "Since Sunday, we've actually been wet." In fact, yesterday was a record for May 7, with .60 inches falling. The previous record was .42 inches, set in 1994. For Lake Tahoe, the news is even better. "It was a pretty significant event over the last four days," Bill Hauck, Senior Hydrologist for Truckee Meadows Water Authority said. "The elevation of Lake Tahoe has come up by two-tenths of a foot, which is very significant and we welcome it." That's more than two inches across the entire lake. It's enough water to fill Boca Reservoir more than halfway.

In comparison, snow runoff has only added one inch to the lake, so far. "It just gives us added level of confidence that we'll be able to have normal river flows for the rest of the year," Hauck said. "And for us, that means business as usual." The rain also means many residents are using less water, turning their sprinkler systems off and letting Mother Nature green up their lawns and water their plants. TMWA says customer demand is down 10 to 15-percent. "I think it's great," Joyce DeHerrera said. "We needed it. Especially on the lawns. It makes everything beautiful, green and clean. It's just wonderful." "I like the rain," Valerie Stewart said. "It's nice, cools off, cleans out the air. It reminds me of living in southern Oregon." This is the first month our precipitation has been above average since December. The wettest May on record in Reno came back in 1963, with almost 2.9 inches of rainfall. Here is a link to our area's water system and storage graphic. It is real time and gives a lot of information on the Truckee River water system. If you click on Lake Tahoe, it will give you real time levels.  
<http://tmwastorage.com/lease>

*Written by Paul Nelson*

# Boat inspections to start at reservoirs this weekend

By Jeff DeLong  
jdelong@rgj.com

In an effort to prevent the spread of potentially harmful aquatic invaders, a boat inspection program will kick into gear at three Northern Nevada reservoirs over Memorial Day weekend.

Inspectors will be on the job at Lahontan, Rye Patch and Wild Horse reservoirs in an effort jointly organized by Nevada State Parks, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

This is the first program of its kind in Northern Nevada outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin, where boat inspections have occurred since 2008. It's all geared to prevent the introduction and spread of invaders such as the quagga mussel, which has overrun Southern Nevada's Lake Mead at major ecological and economic cost.

"It's the best defense we have," said Karen Vargas, aquatic invasive species coordi-



Quagga mussels cover a boat's propeller at Lake Mead. AP

nator for the Department of Wildlife. "I think it's our best shot at preventing the spread of these things."

Quagga mussels were first discovered in Lake Mead in 2007. They now number in the trillions there and have spread

elsewhere in the Colorado River system. Lake Tahoe's boat inspection program is now entering its sixth boating season, with thousands of boats inspected and many undergoing decontamination. Thus far, no quagga mussels have been found in

## WATERCRAFT DECAL PROGRAM

- » \$10 to buy stickers for Nevada motorboats.
- » \$5 for Nevada paddle craft.
- » \$20 for out-of-state motorboats.
- » \$10 for out-of-state paddlecraft.
- » Decals can be obtained at any Nevada Department of Wildlife office with no service fee.
- » Decals can be obtained by calling 866-703-4605 or by visiting [www.ndow.org](http://www.ndow.org). A \$2 service fee will be assessed.

Source: Nevada Department of Wildlife

"We have not had a repeat," Vargas said. "We still don't know if they are there or not, but we have to assume they are."

Two inspection and decontamination stations will operate this summer at Lahontan and one each at Rye Patch and Wild Horse. While no quaggas have been found at Wild Horse — located near the Idaho line — the concern there is the possibility that an infestation could easily reach into the Columbia River Basin with dire economic consequences.

Further danger emerged recently when the Department of Wildlife announced that three New Zealand mudsnails were discovered in the Truckee River in Sparks. That aquatic invader, while not as worrisome as the quagga mussel, could still profoundly alter the river's ecosystem and also spread to other water bodies.

The new inspection stations will help guard against spread of the mudsnail.

## Whittemore

Continued from Page 1A

contributions to Reid. He is also charged with causing Reid's campaign to file a false report with the Federal Election Commission and lying to the FBI. An FEC official testified briefly on Tuesday.

His trial began last week and is expected to run through Friday. It's possible that an FBI agent will be among those called to testify on Wednesday.

money in his account to make the contribution but said he knew that he had enough in his "net-worth portfolio" to cover the check. Whittemore named his children in his family partnership.

Whittemore lawyer Dominic Gentile took over questioning and asked the son how old he was when he first became aware of their interest in the family business. D.J. Whittemore said his father worked hard and made clear that the children would benefit from his efforts.

## Killings

Continued from Page 1A

"This is the United States of America," Yohey said. "We have to make sure we don't lock people up without giving them their due process of rights. That's my job. It's not an easy job."

Jeremy Reichenberg, senior deputy district attorney for Lyon County, said the county has not made its decision whether to seek the death penalty in the case.



# AROUND THE STATE

## \$20M in federal water conservation grants include projects in Nevada

### Southern Nevada landscape rebate effort gets \$300K

Associated Press

The U.S. Interior Department has awarded more than \$20 million in grants for water conservation projects in 11 Western states, including several in Utah, Nevada and California.

The WaterSMART grants announced Wednesday will fund a total of 44 projects, including a plan to convert earthen irrigation canals in Utah by lining them or converting them to pipelines and the Southern Nevada Water Authority's landscape rebate program that provides homeowners incentives to convert their grass lawns to water-efficient landscaping more suitable to the desert.

The Las Vegas-based water authority was awarded a \$300,000 grant toward a \$3.3 million effort to expand its existing rebate program that is expected to result in the replacement of 2.6 million square feet of thirsty turf. It should result in a savings of 448 acre feet of water annually in the Colorado River, which provides supplies for Southern Nevada, California and Arizona.

The Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation estimates the grants will save more than 100,000 acre feet of water annually — enough to supply 400,000 people.

"Throughout the West, we're seeing that drought, growing populations, energy demands and basic environmental needs are stressing our finite water and energy supplies," Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said in announcing the grants.

"These WaterSMART grants will help stretch water

supplies and improve water and energy efficiencies in communities throughout the West to support sustainable uses of our limited resources," she said.

Utah's six projects were second only to California's 10.

Utah's Fremont Irrigation Co., Cub River Irrigation Co. and Weber Basin Water Conservancy District each were awarded \$1.5 million to help with efficiency projects on their canals.

Fremont Irrigation is spending \$8.2 million overall on about 6 miles of new pipeline that is planned in southern Utah to help prevent seepage and evaporation.

Cub River is doing the same with 6.5 miles of ditches in northern Utah's Middle Ditch Water Conservation District at a cost of \$4 million.

Weber Basin has a \$3.2 million plan to line approximately 2,900 feet of the Willard Canal in Layton.

The Strawberry Highlight Canal Company in Payson is getting a pair of \$300,000 grants — one for its Lateral Pipe Conversion project with about 4,000 feet of new pipeline and one to replace 3.5 miles of the open Genola canal system with 1.75 miles of new pipeline using a more direct delivery route. Those two projects combined are expected to cost nearly \$1.5 million.

Northern Utah's Wellsville Mendon Conservation District gets \$183,000 for its \$370,000 plan to line 2,250 feet of the Wellsville-Mendon Canal with rubber membrane and convert 1,800 feet of the Pump Canal to pipe.

California's biggest grant was \$1.5 million for the Patterson Irrigation District to install three new pump stations and 3.7 miles of new pipeline in the San Joaquin Valley. Grant recipients are required to provide at least a 50-percent funding match.

## the source interview

By Penelope B. Grenoble,  
CA-NV Source Editor

**F**or over two decades, Patricia, “Pat” Mulroy has managed southern Nevada’s water, working at conservation efforts to supplement the area’s water supply as General Manager of the Las Vegas Valley Water District (LVVWD) and since 1991 as the organizer, then manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA). She has assumed an active role in regional and national water issues as president of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, the first woman and Nevadan to lead the association, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Water Resources Association and the Board of Trustees of the Water Research Foundation. She was the original chairperson of the Western Urban Water Coalition and has served on the Colorado River Water Users Association Board of Directors.

The Bureau of Reclamation’s December 2012 *Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study*, completed under outgoing Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, concluded that climate change will reduce the Colorado River’s long-term average of 15 million acre-feet by 9 percent, to 13.7 million acre-feet. The report also concluded that within 50 years, the western states’ annual water deficit will reach 3.2 million acre-feet and could go as high as 8 million acre-feet, depending on population growth. Mulroy took time out to speak with *Source* about the report and a range of issues likely to shape the future of the water industry.


**Source:** *Your reaction to the “Basin Report?”*

**Mulroy:** The report has been called a wake-up call, but I think all of us in the basin have always known, or at least for the last ten years, that this was very much a possibility. Climate scientists have been saying for a long time that the Colorado River Basin was going to be stressed in terms of water availability. Where this study was helpful was it put some real specificity on the possibilities.

# Pat Mulroy



## Water Industry Pioneer



**Source:** *Where do we start? At the utility level? Or is it a matter of policy as well as structure?*

**Mulroy:** It's going to happen at all levels simultaneously and somewhere they will converge. We shifted gears in southern Nevada in 2002 when it became obvious that this drought was not just a traditional drought on the Colorado River, but a much more significant event. We began to rethink how we managed our resources and our facilities and became aggressive in the area of permanent conservation. And let's be honest. When you start talking statewide or regionally, the environmental voices come to the table. And without a credible, active conservation plan that is embedded in a resource plan and has hard targets that are being achieved, there's not going to be any credibility around other opportunities. If this is the new norm, then the way we use water has to change.

We do a 50-year resource plan every single year, which allows us to make changes as conditions change, whether they're economic- or climate- or facilities-driven. This has to go to the Board of Directors every single year, so the elected officials have to take a look at it as well. Right now we do it in two ways, one under normal Colorado River conditions, which means no imposed shortages and no limitations on our river diversion, and one under shortage conditions. If the current drought becomes more pronounced, if it moves faster than we had anticipated, we are going to go into design and construction to bring in unused perennial yield groundwater from groundwater basins to the north of us. We've gotten our water rights. In December 2012, the Record of Decision was signed by the Secretary. Obviously, like any water project in the west, there will be lawsuits filed. That's inevitable, but currently our resource plan says that when we hit elevation 1075 [in Lake Mead], we go into design and construction. We are at 1116 right now.

You can't eat the brontosaurus all at once. We're going to have to do it one bite at a time. Right now, the states are getting their heads around the data and talking about what processes are going to have to be put in place. In the next two to four years, you're going to see some real changes in thinking. And thanks to the minute that was signed with Mexico in November 2012, Mexico is a full partner at the table, which will make a

huge impact on our ability to find meaningful solutions. And remember, it won't be a silver bullet. It's a mosaic. It has to be a mosaic.

**Source:** *So conversation is key?*

**Mulroy:** Absolutely. One thing I've been happiest about over the past 20 years is that the urban wholesalers in Arizona, California and Nevada—MET [Metropolitan Water District of Southern California] CAP [Central Arizona Project] and ourselves—are working together at a completely different level. We are actively banking in a groundwater bank in Arizona, where Arizona is taking its unused Colorado River water and storing in its groundwater basins for our future use. And we're taking the water we're conserving in Southern Nevada and turning it over to California for its use and will get it back in the future when we need it. We've jointly ventured and paid for a number of conservation projects along the Colorado River, including the Drop 2 structure and the test run on the Yuma desalter, and we've paid for the first of the feasibility studies on a desalter in Rosarita Beach. Hopefully there are some additional possibilities that may emerge through that partnership. We'll see where these discussions take us.

**Source:** *Is the regulatory structure currently in place sufficient, or will we require something additional in the future?*

**Mulroy:** The legal framework of the Colorado River Compact allows seven states to do whatever these seven states can agree to do. People have said the compact is broken, that it's a relic of the past and needs to be redone. That would be the single largest waste of time I can possibly imagine. It would be a futile effort and would cause all kinds of unnecessary acrimony between states. And over the last twenty years, the document has proven that it has the flexibility to deal with some tough issues. George Miller [Democratic member of Congress from California] said something to me once that I've never forgotten: change is coming, and the only choice you have is whether to be the architect, or the tenant of that change. If we can't find the solutions to our problem, it will end up in a federal court in Washington, D.C., with a watermaster 3,000 miles away making the decisions for us. Any state that considers that possibility would be insane not to sit down and work with their neighbors.

Continued on page 16

**Source:** *So water banks will be a strategy for dealing with climate change effects?*

**Mulroy:** There are two prongs to climate change. One is mitigation, which is all about energy and energy production and air quality. The other is adaptation. We need to do a complete rethink about flooding and drought events. We've always considered flood events as a nuisance. We need to be more thoughtful about developing opportunities to capture and store that water and prevent it from becoming lost. We have to rethink our infrastructure—how do we put the surge protections in place; how do we buffer against drought that could shut down huge parts of the economy? In the Colorado River Basin, we have Lake Mead and Lake Powell as flood capturers. But we have to look at these flood-dry spell events differently in non-connected parts of the system that don't feed into Lake Powell but are still dependent on Colorado River water. This would be a huge advantage to the overall mosaic that has to be assembled to solve this problem.

**Source:** *You're suggesting additional infrastructure. Are rate hikes inevitable?*

**Mulroy:** It's unrealistic to expect water rates to stay where they are. Those of us who embraced conservation and put in tiered rate structures have learned a valuable lesson, which is that there are some fundamental infrastructure costs that shouldn't be loaded into those tiers. As your debt payments increase and you have to make that debt service, suddenly you're finding yourself rewarding your customers with ever-increasing rates. Every community has to examine the balance between fixed pricing and tiered pricing carefully. And whatever the structure is, it has to match the fixed costs they're responsible for no matter how little water their customers use.

**Source:** *What about private investment in the water industry?*

**Mulroy:** I would love to see a way for private capital to come in, but my bottom line is that whatever it is it has to lower the cost to the rate-payer. For those agencies that may have credit problems or financial issues, the private sector provides an opportunity. When you have a solid credit rating and you can still get money at three percent or better, it's tough for the private sector to beat that, unless they can go out longer in time. Where I think the private sector can probably have a

meaningful input is in boutique applications like desalters. But from a resource planning perspective you'd better make sure what you develop is part of your base load. This is not a drought standby tool.

**Source:** *What's the role of associations like AWWA in the challenges confronting the water industry? Do they have a role with the general public?*

**Mulroy:** There's a real opportunity for the associations to become champions of change at the foundational level, getting those pieces of conservation and resource management in place. This is fundamental. AWWA is critical in educating its water agency membership about long-term planning and reviewing their water resources. It can also be helpful to water agencies in reaching the public in the role of outside validator. But it's got to become known to the public and it has to establish a recognizable brand.

The public process is critical. And it can't be just be advertising. It has to go beyond that.

**Source:** *Public outreach has sometimes been a stepchild in the water industry. You've done a lot in southern Nevada. Suggestions or insights?*

**Mulroy:** The public process is critical. And it can't just be advertising. Advertising has to be a piece of it, because that's the only way you're going to reach parts of the community. But it has to go beyond that. We're in our third integrated resource planning process right now, and we have a large citizens advisory committee that represents every facet of the community and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding future resources, conservation and facilities and how we pay for it. There's also a public comment period. You're never going to make everybody happy, but the public will have had its day in court and the general consensus of the community will have been established. The board appoints individuals within specific categories. We staff the committee and we hire an independent facilitator to manage the process.

**Source:** *The public can sometime have an oversized idea of what's practical. How do you handle that?*

**Mulroy:** When you put diverse members of the community together, the businesses large and small, the developers, large and small, environmental activists, any outlier ideas get quickly shot down. Consensus doesn't mean unanimous. Consensus means the majority. There might be a minority report that comes of the process but it's identified as being from a minority.

**Source:** *Dissidents have been known to hijack the public process.*

**Mulroy:** The only reason dissidents have that level of influence is that they feed into the general distrust around government. And because you've done your planning in a closed way, with your staff or within the organization and only talking to your board. We're building our third intake at a cost of \$800 million. That project is not growth driven so the existing customer base has to pay for it. We were forced to raise rates in order to sell the last \$350 million. We had a limited public process and I'll tell you, I've been paying the price for that for the last eight months.

**Source:** *Developing additional infrastructure will trigger environmental review. How do you make that process constructive?*

**Mulroy:** The environmental community is not monolithic. You're always going to have the extreme faction, which usually has a different motivation, like growth, and uses environmental issues as a tool. But then you have what I call the credible, reasoned, environmental groups that understand that it's all about finding a balance. The big challenge in the environmental community is going to be differentiating between changes in species that are caused by climate change and have nothing to do with whether a project is built or not—species migrating and disappearing, changes in how species evolve—and genuine effects from construction that need to be mitigated. I have a tremendous respect for the environmental advocates who are really there to make sure there is sufficient mitigation around environmental impacts that result from building projects to meet human demand. I agree with them wholeheartedly. Concentrating your efforts on the reasoned ones mutes the voices of the more extreme factions.

**Source:** *You've partnered with businesses in your conservation programs. Is this an effective mode of public outreach?*

**Mulroy:** The partnership with the business community has been a godsend here in

Southern Nevada. Educating the businesses, which then help educate their employees, is huge. They were early adapters. They got it quickly. When business leads, what government is doing gains credibility.

**Source:** *Southern Nevada Water Authority is known as a progressive agency. What does "progressive" mean to you?*

**Mulroy:** Being open, not being defensive. Being objective about what may sound like a crazy suggestion, and not just rejecting it out of hand. A healthy portion of humility. Understanding the politics of your community. And empowering your workforce. You'd be amazed at how many unbelievably brilliant ideas are in the workforce somewhere and are not coming out because people are afraid. I meet every six months with every single employee in the organization. It takes a week of large group meetings, but they are very open dialogues. I share with them. They can ask anything they want. It's a trust issue. It's that simple.

**Source:** *Water has effectively been your life's work. What do you consider your most significant achievements?*

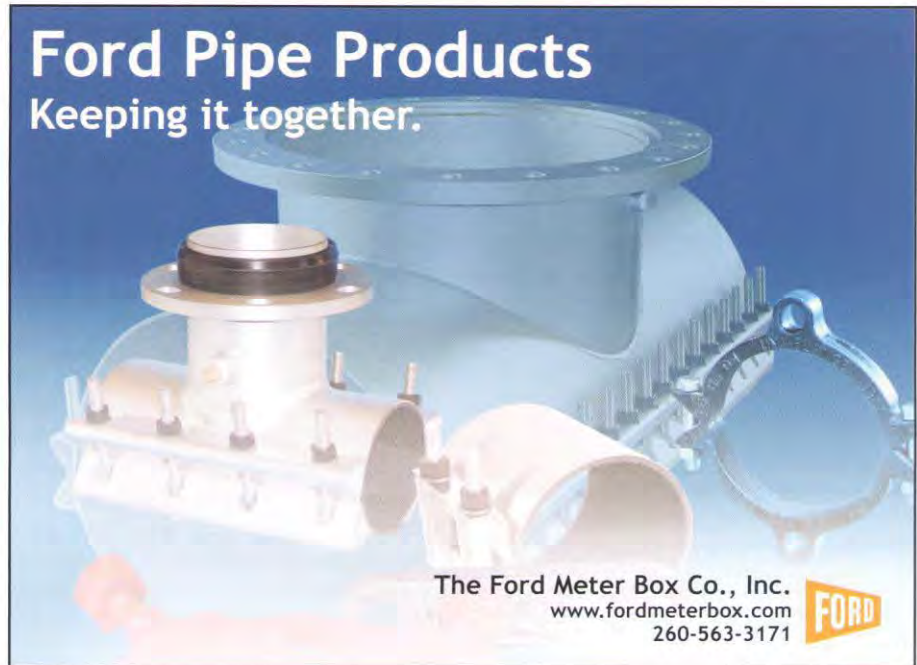
**Mulroy:** The creation of the water authority for openers. That was a huge accomplishment, then our conservation efforts. The agreements on the Colorado River that we were an integral part of. We take great satisfaction out of all of these. And I'm delighted that there is a solid working relationship between the urban areas on the Colorado River, Denver, MET, CAP, ourselves—and that the states are functioning in a healthy way with one another and not a dysfunctional group of demigods. Watching this community respond and take conservation seriously and really retool itself has been tremendously rewarding.

**Source:** *How much longer will you stay at it?*

**Mulroy:** I've always been a public policy junkie. One of our foundational societal issues is how we manage our water resources. Water is our economic enabler. It has a huge connection to our social interactions and our social policies. It's the reason we exist. Many people think water is going to be the next arena for armed conflict, but I believe it's an opportunity to show that armed conflict isn't necessary and we can have successful collaborations. And that's what keeps me going—the interstate dynamics, the challenges that keep coming at us. It's hard to know where life will take you, but I don't see losing my love of this issue. And my fascination. We'll see. 💧

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