



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
FROM: Mark Foree, General Manager
DATE: May 7, 2014
SUBJECT: **General Manager's Report**

Attached please find the written reports from the Management team including the Operations Report (*Attachment A*), the Customer Services Report (*Attachment B*), and the Water Resource and the Annexation Activity Report (*Attachment C*) and the Web Usage and Social Media Report (*Attachment D*).

Also included in your agenda packet are press clippings from April 7 through May 5, 2014.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Scott Estes, Director of Engineering
BY: Bill Hauck, Sr. Hydrologist
DATE: May 5, 2014
SUBJECT: **Operations Report for May 2014 Board Meeting**

(A) Water Supply

Truckee River Flows - Truckee River flows at the CA/NV state line are 800 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the moment. The required Floriston Rate is 500 cfs this time of year. The extra flow in the river is a combination of runoff and Fish Water being released from Stampede Reservoir. Floriston Rates or "normal river flows" are projected to be met through the middle of August or so (depending on actual runoff and hydrologic conditions over the next couple of months).

Reservoir Storage - The elevation of Lake Tahoe is now 6224.32 feet. This is a storage volume of 160,300 acre-feet (AF) and 22% of maximum storage capacity. Boca Reservoir has 16,060 acre-feet of water currently in storage, or 39% of its maximum capacity. Combined, Floriston Rate water storage is approximately 22% of maximum storage capacity. Donner Lake filling operations began early this year due to the below average runoff projections and is now ½ foot from full. Donner Lake storage is currently 9,042 AF or 95% of maximum capacity. Independence Lake storage is currently 17,140 AF which is 98% of its maximum storage capacity (17,500 AF). Prosser Reservoir storage is currently 10,580 AF which is 35% of its maximum storage capacity of 29,800 acre-feet. Stampede Reservoir's storage is currently 87,100 AF which is 39% of its maximum capacity of 226,000 acre-feet.

Runoff – The official April 1st snowpack measurements made by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) were way below average at 35% of average and 47% of average in the Truckee and Tahoe basins respectively. This marked the third straight below average snowpack year in a row for the region with below average runoff forecasted. The latest runoff projections are pointing towards figures in the 20-25% of normal range which will have an impact on Truckee River flows late this summer or early fall.

River Flows – The required river flows at the CA/NV state line (Floriston Rates) of 500 CFS are being met. Based on the current elevation of Lake Tahoe and Boca Reservoir, and the projected runoff numbers for each basin (29% of average in the Truckee and 23% of average in the Tahoe), the Truckee River is expected to flow normally through the middle of August. Depending on the amount of runoff that actually occurs over the next month and other hydrological conditions, “normal” river flows may continue longer into the summer or taper off sooner.

Outlook – As we get closer to the summer months it is becoming more and more likely that we will be negatively impacted as a direct result of our third consecutive below-average runoff season. Through most of the summer (and our peak demand season) we anticipate operating as we normally do, but once river flows begin to taper off by the middle of August or so (current projection) TMWA will have to rely more on groundwater pumping and possibly make releases from our upstream drought reserves in order to meet the needs of our customers. The current runoff projection for the Truckee River assumes a normal hydrology over the next several months, and the forecast will vary depending on actual weather conditions.

(B) Water Production

Demand – Customer demands averaged 74 MGD last week reflecting average conditions for this time of year. Through the end of April, TMWA water demands were just slightly less than last year (98%) through the same point in time. The Chalk Bluff water treatment plant is on-line and meeting the large percentage of customer demands. The Glendale water treatment plant is also on-line helping to meet system demands where it is needed most (in the Sparks Zone), in addition to a handful of wells located throughout TMWA’s service territory.

(C) Hydro Production

Generation – Average Truckee River flow at Farad was 590 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the month of April. A total of 4,650 MW hours were generated. This yielded combined hydropower revenue from the three power plants of \$323,064 for the month, or an average of \$10,769/day. Generation at the Fleish plant averaged \$4,181/day. Generation at the Verdi plant averaged \$3,594/day, and generation at the Washoe plant averaged \$2,994/day. Opportunities for hydro generation are good at least for the short-term. It appears there will be enough water in the river to keep the plants on-line through at least the middle of August or so depending on actual runoff and hydrological conditions over the next couple of months.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Kim Mazeres, Customer Relations Director
DATE: May 6, 2014
SUBJECT: **Customer Service Report**

The following is a summary of Customer Service activity since the April Board meeting.

Ombudsman

There were three (3) calls to the Ombudsman in April. They included: a question about a TMWA gate leading to a water tank at Somerset; a customer whose concern was resolved before Joanne contacted him back; and, Reno News & Review Columnist Bruce Van Dyke who wanted to compare Las Vegas number of customers and water usage to our area.

Communications

Since the March Board meeting there were media articles and stories on: water supply, snowpack, and the fact that river flows may be reduced later this summer; a lengthy segment on KOLO regarding TMWA's water treatment process, including a water taste test; NV Energy's \$32,000 rebate to TMWA for energy saving work done on the Highland Canal – work which will save over \$45,000 annually in energy costs; tips for turning on your sprinklers; the Fleish railcar bridge installation winning an AGC Pinnacle Award; General Manager Mark Foree joining the EDawn Board; an "Ask Joe Hart" segment about how many customers are still billing at the flat-rate; and several articles about the bogus EWG water quality report.

There were three workshops given by Conservation staff on Irrigation System Start-Up and Landscape Planning and Design, attended by 60 customers. There were seven (7) presentations given: three on water supply to Rotary Clubs (two given by Bill Hauck and one by Mark Foree); one on the Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project to a UNR Engineering class by Ron Penrose; one on the Truckee River and watershed to Hunter Lake sixth graders by Ron Penrose; and, one on water conservation to several troops of Girl Scouts. There were four (4) tours given: three of Chalk Bluff to one each of two TMCC classes and one to three Virginia Palmer Elementary School classes; and, one of the Verdi Hydro to a TMCC class.

Responsible Water Use

66 watering variances issued this year, with 51 currently active – 31 in Reno and 20 in Sparks.

Customer Calls – April

- 7,684 phone calls handled
- Average handling time of 4 minutes, 2 seconds a call
- Average speed of answer – 29 seconds

Billing – April

- 95,370 bills issued
- 160 (.2%) corrected bills

Service Orders – April

- 5,907 service orders taken
- 3,512 (60%) move-ins / move-outs
- 565 (10%) cut-out-for-non-payment and cut-in after receiving payments, including deposits and checks for tamper
- 548 (9%) new meter sets and meter/register/ERT exchanges and equipment checks
- 330 (6%) zero consumption meter checks
- 253 (4%) problems / emergencies, including cut-out for customer repairs, dirty water, no water, leaks, pressure complaints, safety issues, installing water meter blankets, etc.
- 178 (3%) various collection actions, including hanging 48-hour notices for elderly and disabled customers, returned mail and/or unpaid deposits, and handling of additional deposits
- 146 (3%) re-read meters
- 99 (2%) meter retrofit, including billing and non-billing meter sets, requests to go to the metered rate and mandatory conversions to the metered rate for new tenants
- 91 (1%) high-bill complaints / audit and water usage review requests

Remittance – April

- 33,600 mail-in payments
- 18,750 electronically
- 15,947 payments via RapidPay (EFT)
- 9,865 one-time bank account payments
- 4,662 store payments
- 2,763 payments via drop box or at front desk
- 2,561 credit card payments

Collections – April

- 13,895 accounts received a late charge
- Mailed 6,307 10-day delinquent notices, 6.7% of accounts
- Mailed 1,011 48-hour delinquent notices, 1.1% of accounts
- 141 accounts eligible for disconnect
- 144 accounts actually disconnected (includes accounts that bounced a check in order to prevent disconnect or to restore service)
- 0.16% write-off to revenue

New business / New Construction – April

- 39 active jobs currently in process
- Just over \$118,000 in new business fees/facility charges collected

Meter Statistics – Fiscal Year to Date (thru April)

- 4 meter retrofits completed
- 274 meters yet to be installed on flat-rate accounts
- 414 meter exchanges completed
- 472 new business meter sets completed
- 94,228 total meters installed (billing and non-billing)
- 4,525 total non-billing meters currently installed



STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: John Erwin, Natural Resources
DATE: 5 May 2014
SUBJECT: Report Water Resource and Annexation Activity

RULE 7

Rule 7 water resource purchases and will-serve commitment sales against purchased water resources through this reporting period:

Beginning Balance		7,742.14 AF
Purchases of water rights	0.00 AF	
Refunds	0.00 AF	
Sales	-4.89 AF	
Adjustment	0.00 AF	
Ending Balance		7,737.25 AF
Price per acre foot at report date:		\$7,700

ANNEXATIONS

No annexations to report.

STAFF REPORT – Web & Social Media

TO: Chairman and Board Members
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: Robert Charpentier
DATE: April 6, 2014
SUBJECT: April 2014 Web Report-www.tmwa.com and additional TMWA websites

tmwa.com — January-April, 2014 Website Overview

In the first four months of calendar year 2014, the TMWA website has seen a steady increase in traffic over the same period in 2013, with visitor numbers ticking up over 13%. Of this number, 53% were returning visitors and 47% came to tmwa.com for the first time ever. The average visit duration was just under two minutes, with the majority of visitors focused on employment, contact information, and payment information.

There was a significant jump in the number of visits to TMWA’s assigned-day watering (+61%), lake level (+70%) and winterization pages (314%). The overall number of page views also increased 5% year over year from 187,818 to 197,275.

Growth in Mobile Traffic Jan 1 – April 30, 2014

Though desktop and laptop computers still account for the lion’s share of visits to tmwa.com, the use of mobile devices to access the site continues to rise quickly—now accounting for nearly a quarter of all inbound traffic.

<u>Device</u>	<u>2013/Visits</u>	<u>2014/Visits</u>	<u>Change</u>
Desktop.....	93,072/(83%).....	91,888/(76%)	-1.27%
Mobile.....	14,177/(13%).....	20,105/(17%)	+41.81%
Tablet.....	5,444/(5%).....	8,341/(7%)	+53.21%

Top Content for 2014 YTD (Jan 1 – March 31)

The most visited pages on tmwa.com (listed below) for the beginning of 2014 are similar what we have seen in the past. After the homepage, traffic went mostly to our employment, online payment, and “contact us” pages. We are also seeing an expected rise in visits to the “Doing Business With TMWA” page – which is consistent with annual business cycles.

Rank	Page	Pageviews	%Pageviews
1.....	Homepage	87,431.....	44%
2.....	Employment.....	17,659.....	9%
4.....	Residential/Payment Options.....	14,175.....	7%
3.....	Contact Us.....	9,979.....	5%
5.....	Customer Service, Residential.....	5,269.....	2.6%

Traffic to tmwa.com is coming from the following sources (YTD 2014):

1.	(direct)	54,088 (44.95%)
2.	google	42,280 (35.14%)
3.	bing	6,601 (5.49%)
4.	reno.gov	5,673 (4.71%)
5.	yahoo	3,928 (3.26%)
6.	r.search.yahoo.com	937 (0.78%)
7.	tmwa.com	476 (0.40%)
8.	cityofreno.com	433 (0.36%)
9.	us-mg205.mail.yahoo.com	384 (0.32%)
10.	aol	313 (0.26%)

Website Update and Consolidation Project

Assessment work on an updated tmwa.com website continues with a rigorous review of the existing “discovery process” that assesses TMWA’s changing Web requirements. With the trend towards mobile devices expected to continue, the Web Team is looking hard at a mobile-specific solution to be sure our site and its content are presented in a both appealing and accessible manner for all of our users.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Given the ongoing issue with false water-quality information from the 2009 [EWG](#) report being circulated via social media, we have instructed Nobel Studios to investigate how TMWA might improve its performance in search engine results – particularly regarding searches on local water quality. Better search performance will improve the likelihood our customers will find accurate information on water quality and other topics important to TMWA. Nobel Studios evaluated TMWA’s website, social media pages and aggregate web presence, identifying numerous tactics that can be used to improve search performance. These tactics include:

- Correct technical site errors such as bad metadata, broken links, missing pages and redundant content.
- Optimize site content for keywords such as “conservation” and “Reno water quality.”
- Replace search-engine-invisible content, such as PDFs, with search-friendly formats.
- Improve linking and visibility between social sites and web content.
- Create additional, sharable content such as infographics, blogs, videos, slideshows ... all of which are highly discoverable and should rank prominently in search engine results.
- Optimize business listings and respond to negative reviews – ie, Yelp

TMWA Staff will work in conjunction with Nobel Studios to both optimize site structure and develop the additional content required to improve our search rankings.

TMWA Social Media



Currently TMWA has **942 Twitter followers** and **313 Facebook fans**. There is a current Twitter feed on the *tmwa.com* homepage that is updated daily to reflect current topics. Social media: The analytics for both *tmwa.com* as well as Truckee Meadows Community Forestry Coalition indicate a growing trend in social media and its value. Social media will be incorporated in the overall strategy of consolidation for all these websites. Interactions with followers on Facebook increased over this time period.

TMWA's YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/truckeemeadowswater>



The fifth video in the “**TMWA How-To**” series has gone live with the launch of “[Spring Sprinkler System Start-Up](#).” This video is performing very well with over 530 views in its first month of distribution. As predicted, the how-to videos are generally performing better than the “**TMWA at Work**” series, with view counts rising more quickly. We have also added our seventh “**TMWA at Work**” video, “[Stead Water Tank Rehabilitation](#).” We expect to make additions to both the “How to” and “At Work” series throughout the year.

Current “TMWA How-to” videos:

- [Spring Sprinkler System Start-Up](#) (new)
- [How to Shut off Your Home's Water in an Emergency](#)
- [How to Use Your Water Meter to Determine if you have a Leak](#)
- [How to Test for and Fix a Leaky Toilet Flapper](#)
- [How to Make an Online Bill Payment from Your Checking Account](#)

Current “TMWA at Work” videos:

- [Stead Water Tank Rehabilitation](#) (new)
- [Partnership For Safe Water Award](#)
- [Idlewild Pump Station Improvements](#)
- [Steamboat Spillway, Flume Repair](#)
- [Fleish 'Railcar Bridge](#)
- [Water Main Repair on Haskell St.](#)
- [Highland Canal Improvement Project](#)
- [Ice Fighting](#)

Pending Videos:

- Setting Your Sprinkler Controller
- Understanding Backflow
- Fleish Hydroelectric Tunnel/Flume Project
- Winterization

The idea behind the production of TMWA videos is to provide useful, hands-on tips and information to our customers while also informing them about the various projects we have in progress. The latter demonstrates TMWA's expertise in planning and executing plant operations and infrastructure improvements. Given TMWA's excellent track record in both these categories, these videos should provide valuable reinforcement of our key value proposition: “*Quality. Delivered.*”

TMWA also manages the following informational websites:

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| • www.communityforestry.org ; | • www.tmwaacademy.com ; |
| • www.howdoyousave.org ; | • www.tmwalandscapguide.com ; |
| • www.tmwastorage.com ; | • www.truckeeriverfund.org ; |