



TO: Board of Directors
THRU: Andy Gebhardt, Director Customer Relations
FROM: Robert Charpentier and Marlene Olsen, GoodStanding
DATE: April 9, 2016
SUBJECT: **Presentation on proposed Conservation, Communications & Outreach Plan for 2016, discussion and possible direction to staff**

Report Highlights:

- ❖ *As drought reserves are not forecasted to be used this year, TMWA's standard conservation programs will be in deployed with particular focus and emphasis on efficient and responsible water use.*
- ❖ *The 2016 Conservation Communication and Outreach Plan utilizes many forms of communication: multi-media advertising, news coverage, direct customer messages in bills, social media, digital media and website content, in addition to some tactics that are more unconventional, such as restaurant cards and public restroom mirror stickers.*
- ❖ *With the recent implementation of the Truckee River Operating Agreement, the opportunity exists to change the conversation and mindset of the community about water supply planning, droughts and how our water management opportunities have improved. TMWA will begin an educational effort entitled: Water Leadership Platform.*
- ❖ *Survey results confirm that the community understands water is a limited resource, and responds and conserves when asked (see attachment #1, Research Summary).*

Background:

The Communications Plan is a component of the Demand-Side Management Programs described in the Conservation Plan included in TMWA's 2016-2035 Water Resource Plan (WRP). See Volume II, Chapter 5.

The 2016 Communications Plan will be broken into two parts:

- A. Conservation Communication and Outreach
- B. Water Leadership Platform

A: CONSERVATION COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH PLAN:

Per the WRP, TMWA is committed to public education about conservation and efficient water use. Since residential water use during the irrigation season is on average four times higher than during the winter months, much of TMWA's outreach focuses on the efficient use of water for landscaping.

As of this writing, reserve supplies are not predicted to be used before Labor Day due to a moderate recovery snowpack year. Per the WRP, a Level 1 Response is called for, meaning **Standard Conservation Programs will be needed with standard conservation messaging** (see attachment #2, figure 5.3, tables 5.4 & 5.5 from WRP). Therefore customers' watering practices will be targeted in order to promote responsible water use.

Goal:

Build awareness and reinforce the message of responsible water use in the community

Theme:

Be responsible: Care for the community's water supply and use only the water you need (or a variation)

Objective:

Communicate to all audiences how to use water responsibly measured by Customer Satisfaction Survey questions, Conservation Hotline calls, open rates/shares on digital media and various other methods of communication.

Key Messages to Include:

Since we are on the heels of a very specific water-savings target last year, we expect that customers will be wondering what they should be doing this summer. Therefore, we are primarily focused on actions involving outdoor water use. Standard conservation messaging includes (see attachment #3 for drought vs. standard messaging):

- Use water responsibly
- Our customers have always been diligent about responsible water use and are encouraged to keep up the good work
- Only water on your assigned days
- Never waste water
- Find and repair leaks / Get a water audit
- How robust and resilient are our upstream reserves? (new web page)

Target Audiences:

Messages will be delivered with varied communication methods and timing to the audiences identified below. The messages are educational and tailored to how each audience uses water. Education about best practices and where interested persons can learn more about these topics form the basis of the messages.

TMWA customers—residential

Advertising campaign-mass media, news coverage, direct customer communications (bills, emails, etc.), social media

Community at large

Advertising campaign, news coverage, social media

Local media

Direct communications

Communications Strategies:

Communications strategies are overall approaches used to achieve stated objectives and are explained below.

Advertising Campaign: Our creative direction is in production. For consistency, we will utilize the look and feel of last year's advertising. The media buy will be based on a strategic media mix to effectively reach TMWA's target audience of age 25+, single-family homeowners. Advertisements will be placed in local print, radio, television and social media channels. We require added value (contributed space) to all placements either in more space, website content, on-air contests, etc. Television stations will again be offering weather sponsorships where forecasters can provide up-to-date information. Campaign dates: May 23 – August 30. (Because of the political primary campaign dates/rates, broadcast will not start until mid-June.)

Content/Messaging: The messages above will appear in all forms — multi-media advertising, digital/online, news releases, FAQ's, videos, infographics, emails, bill inserts, envelope backers, etc. We would like to introduce an infographic: Save Water in the Yard this summer. We will also have tent cards available for restaurants, as this was a popular program last year and reinforces the responsible water use message. Public restroom mirror stickers were also popular last year and will be continued, including all restrooms in the Greater Nevada Stadium. Staff will keep board members informed so they have information needed to answer questions from their constituents and to encourage conservation in the community.

News Coverage: The local media and weather forecasters play an important role in conveying the conservation message to the community. Staff will start with desk sides this month and will be responsive to incoming media requests. Tools used to convey our message include: editorial board meetings, desk sides, interviews, press release, media, FAQ's infographics, tours, etc.

Direct Customer Communications: Monthly inserts, envelope backers, bill messages, etc. will contain all messages. Conservation messages have already begun with the bill inserts.

Landscaping Ordinances: We will continue to work with the local entities to find areas where we are able to simplify and synchronize local landscaping ordinances.

Workshops/Events: The conservation staff will continue to offer efficient-landscaping workshops throughout the spring and summer. A TMWA exhibit will also be present at appropriate events such as Earth Day.

Website: TMWA.com will have a section on conservation/responsible water use. A landing page is planned from which we can track specific ads and social media posts. A web page is also being developed which will have up-to-date information on our available inventory of upstream reserves including how they are being used, or the amount by which they are growing. This will be promoted to help us tell the story of TROA and how we are accumulating more reserves than in the past.

Social Media: To foster conversations and sharing, staff will utilize daily postings, paid and boosted ads, videos, photos, and infographics on various social media channels, including local media, Facebook and Twitter. Active listening and responding as needed is also part of what staff does every day.

B: WATER LEADERSHIP PLATFORM

Because of the implementation of TROA, TMWA also has an opportunity to increase our leadership role and educate stakeholders on the change in water supply operations going forward. During our research phase, we heard the community and our Board members: they want TMWA to take more of a position of water leadership within the community.

Changing the conversation about water security in our community is an audacious goal; hence we believe that this is more than a few tactics or messages. With all feedback and research conducted, we will create a multi-year outreach plan in the next few months. This leadership effort will hopefully result in the ultimate achievement of incorporating this position into TMWA's brand platform.

Goal:

TMWA will expand our leadership role in *all things water* in our community

Objectives:

- Create a multi-year plan on Water Leadership, educating the community about our water resources and how our water resource operations have changed with TROA. Measures are still being established.
- Create an education-based "road show" this year to begin the effort of outreach.

Initial Key Messages:

- TMWA has a very resilient water supply management strategy
- TROA is a game changer
- We are the beneficiaries of decades of water planning
- Conjunctive use better enables TMWA to maximize the efficient use of all of our water resources
- TMWA staff members are trusted water and subject-matter experts in the local community and water industry

First-Year Strategies:

Create an Outreach Plan. To be identified are: objectives, stakeholder groups, further messaging, communication pieces, tactics, and timeline.

Create a Presentation Deck. Put all the pieces of the water planning puzzle together: TROA, Donner Lake, North Valleys Project, Mt. Rose Fan projects, Aquifer Storage and Recovery, and Conjunctive Use Projects. Presentation would be designed for community groups, including city and county planners (peer to peer meetings), regional planning, joint governmental, EDAWN, Chamber, etc.

Create a White Paper(s) and Infographic: From the above presentation deck, create a white paper and infographic to distribute during presentations. Use the White Paper for media, tmwa.com, and other opportunities to be determined.

Advertorials: Research how information could be used in advertorial format.

RESEARCH SUMMARY:

First Phase:

The following questions were asked during the first phase of research (email and phone interviews) to 15 communication professionals, media and professionals in the conservation space. These people are “hubs” in the community. This was collected before any meetings took place.

1. **Current Desired Information:** Are there questions you keep hearing or information people frequently discuss regarding water? (Is there information missing in the dialog?)
2. **Current General Beliefs:** Whether true or false, what are some common beliefs about our community’s water resources and conservation practices that you have heard? (Is there information that is misunderstood?)
3. **Current TMWA Beliefs:** What are some common beliefs about TMWA specifically and its role in managing our water resources?
4. **Desired Future State:** What can TMWA do to improve our communications in the community?

Themes from above (taken from three pages of feedback) are listed in the following table:

Themes:	Comments:	Mentions:
TROA:	TROA is very confusing. People very concerned about drought. They don't understand how TROA can be a long-term solution.	All
Water Supply	People think water is going to run out	Five mentions
	Conservation doesn't do anything	Three mentions
	We have good upstream storage, more need to know	Two mentions
Planning:	Climate change should be addressed more	Two mentions
	We will continue to have more droughts in the future and we are not responding	Four mentions
	Stress Water Resource Plan – we are always planning 20 years out	Two mentions
	Uniform landscaping codes	Two mentions
Communications	Stress we live in a desert/7” of rain a year	Two mentions
	We are in this together concept/collective effort	Three mentions
	People moving into the area need education	Three mentions
	Provide how reservoir system works	Four mentions
	Lacking who TMWA is	Three mentions
	More info on our region and landscaping here	Two mentions
	Stress we are a desert community—had to plan	Three mentions
Growth	TMWA facilitates growth	Four mentions
	They are approving new housing developments w/o the water resources to support them/not enough water	Six mentions
	Conserved water goes to growth	Eight mentions
	There is inequity among water users and who conserves	Three mentions
	Stress there is water to serve growth/Water Resource Plan	Two mentions

TMWA Com Plan and Community Conversation

Notes from 2/9. Attending: Kim Mazeres, Andy Gebhardt, Robert Charpentier, Levi Kleiber, Will Raymond, Laine Christman and Jessica Atkinson.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE:

Change the conversation about water supply in our community
(To go from fear to security)

Supporting:

- We live here too
- We've been planning for decades
- Leverage the local angle
- "We got this covered"
- Durable, robust water system
 - Summer reserves
 - TROA
 - Highly efficient
 - Locally owned
 - Your water conservation
 - Planning for decades
 - Highly unique system – cannot be compared – MO added

MYTHS/MIS-INFORMATION TO TACKLE FROM FEEDBACK:

We're running out of water

TMWA's the reason we have no water in the river (in droughts—TMWA is the only entity w/ water in the river)

TMWA is responsible for growth

Conserving saves water for growth

Not doing enough for climate change

POSSIBLE PROOF POINTS:

- Water use declining over time
- Tahoe below rim = no water in Truckee
- Our water savings account
- 3X drought storage over time
- We have lots of drought scenarios (most from outside consultants)
- Unexercised water rights + recycled right

MESSAGES FOR KEY TOPICS:

- Get after the why
- We control the "wet years" to have water for the regular, dry years
- Efficient w/ use—highly efficient
- We changed our habits—water use down
- Community water company/We are your water company
- We can drive our system in a half day (it's not big and we have few users)
 - Regionally contained
- Dynamic/Robust water system

- TROA = game changer
- We are TMWA, we are local
- Mission & Vision feeling
- Homegrown, home use
- Summer reserves vs. summer water reserves vs. drought reserves
- Beneficiary of years of water planning

AUDIENCES:	TACTICS: (Need to cultivate in each of the audiences)
Brand Champions	Identify former board and staff members?
Board & Govt. Mgmt Teams (cities & county)	3 key takeaways @ each staff report Factoids White papers Peer to peer meetings (mgmt team to mgmt team)
Community Leaders	Who is our spokesperson? TED Talk Tell stories of 15 year anniversary
General Customers	Political cartoon 834-TMWA Water savings app
Employees	Lunch & Learn

Summary: Community Leaders Session (February 26)

Attending: Tim Ruffin, Bob Felten, Erica Olsen, Jeff Pickett, Heyden Enochson, Lynda Nelson, Bill Hauck, Dave Aiazzi, Milan Sperka, Nancy Leuenhagen

Myths Heard in the Community/Topics to address:

TMWA controls growth
How much can we grow? (skepticism)
Why do I have to conserve when we have a surplus?
Why doesn't more water storage equate to more growth?
Why should I conserve just so they can build?
How can we be ok when the river is dry?
I took my lawn out, while others are putting lawns in...
Water is the pawn in the growth game

Thoughts/Ideas from the group:

Inconsistent landscaping codes across jurisdictions
TROA changes the conversation
What happens if we oversell TROA?
Use an infographic to explain the complexities of water resources/planning and TROA
Build the story from 1933—vignettes
List out the goodwill points
Do a SWAT
Do an infographic that can be put on walls:
 Why is our water future secure

Messages to use:

TROA is water insurance against the drought
We live in a desert—people get that
Smart water planning
Smart water = Smart growth
The benefit of not building another costly water treatment plant
You're covered with TMWA

Headlines:

You own this water company
We/TMWA provides water security
Continuum
Planning for years
Passionate staff
Quality –water and organization
Smart water planning
Conservation works
Sustainability
TROA is a rung on the ladder

Opportunities:

Water security—explain
Water quality—our water is great—separate ourselves from Flint
Public owns the water company
Over 90% Customer Satisfaction
Positive emotion –build on this
TMWA are great water manager
Ted Talk—Smart People. Smart Water.

Conclusion: (w/ key members)

Get key people in the community on board
Presentations to EDAWN/Chamber/Planning Departments, etc.
Spell out why our water future is secure/
Proof Points
Core Issues
Key thresholds/topics
Explain key arguments
What are the goodwill points

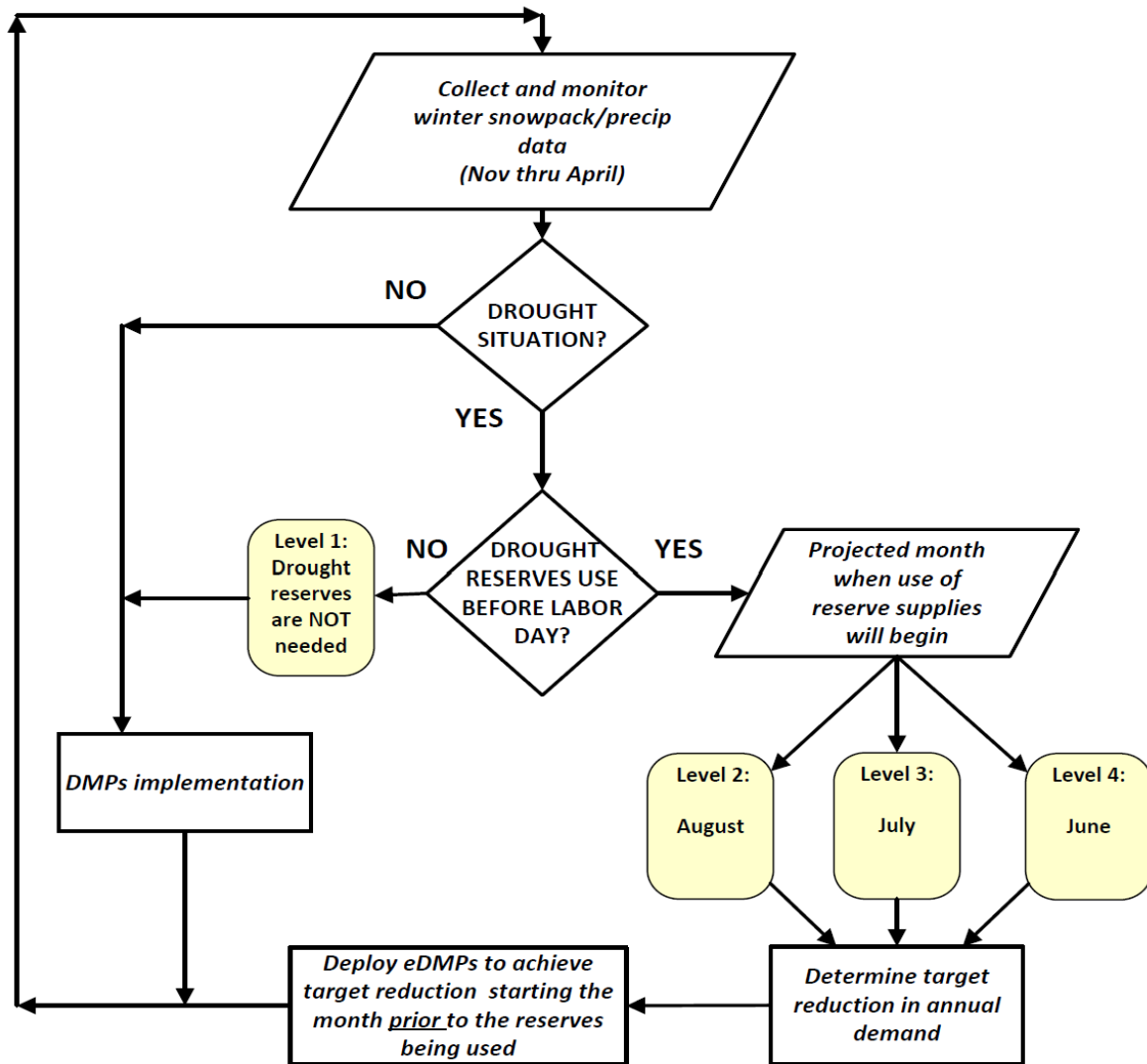
Water Leadership Platform:

Become water leaders in the community
Be a water partner
Road Show—w/ deck—five rotating key topics about water people want to hear about
water
Long range Goal of platform—Change mindset of community it becomes ingrained in
TMWA’s brand

Table 5-4. TMWA’s Drought Situation Classification System

	NON-DROUGHT SITUATION Reserve Supplies NOT Released	DROUGHT SITUATION	
		Reserve Supplies Release AFTER Labor Day (Level 1)	Reserve Supplies Release BEFORE Labor Day (Level 2, 3, or 4)
A. Watering Restrictions Between Memorial Day and Labor Day	12 to 6 P.M.	12 to 6 P.M.	11 to 7 P.M.
B. Public Education and Advertising	Standard programs	Standard programs	Increased programs
C. Water Waste Prevention	Standard enforcement	Standard enforcement	Increased enforcement
D. Other Actions			Additional <i>enhanced</i> DMP are deployed depending on the severity of the drought and time of impact to water supplies. These include but are not limited to; 1) Drought Rates during irrigation season 2) Reduced number of watering days 3) Daily water allotments set 4) See Appendix 5-5 this Chapter for other options

Figure 5-3. Drought Situation and Demand-side Management Response Flowchart



NOTE:
DMP – standard Demand-side Management Program
eDMP – enhanced Demand-side Management Program

Table 5-5. TMWA’s Enhanced Demand Management Programs by Drought Situation

		Month					
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
<i>Non-Drought Situation</i>		DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP
<i>Drought Situation</i>							
Reserve supplies not needed before Labor Day	Level 1	DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP	DMP
Reserve supplies needed <i>before</i> Labor Day	Level 2	DMP	DMP	EMC	eDMP	eDMP	DMP
	Level 3	DMP	EMC	eDMP	eDMP	eDMP	DMP
	Level 4	EMC	eDMP	eDMP	eDMP	eDMP	DMP

DMP - standard demand-side management program

eDMP - *enhanced* demand-side management program

EMC - enhanced message campaign begins at least a month prior to eDMP deployment

Tactics Used in Drought Years/Non-Drought Years

Non-Drought Year:	2015	2016
Radio Advertising*	Radio Advertising	Radio Advertising
TV Weather sponsorships	TV weather sponsorships	TV weather sponsorships
Website/social Media	Website/Social Media	Website/Social Media
Print*	Print	Print
PR/ News Coverage	PR/News Coverage	PR/News Coverage
Customer Comm**	Customer Comm**	Customer Comm**
Workshops	Workshops	Workshops
	Online/Digital Ads	Online/Digital Ads
	TV Ads	TV Ads*
	Infographics	infographics
	Restaurant Tent Cards	Restaurant Tent Cards
	Mirror Stickers	Mirror Stickers
	UNCE Partnership	UNCE Partnership
	Direct mail/Social norms	
	Microsite	
	Vehicle Wraps	Vehicle Wraps
	Conservation Heroes	
	HOA Letters	
June – August***	May - October	Late May – August***

* Limited

** Bill inserts, one-panel, e-newsletters, envelope backers

*** End date is flexible depending on weather