

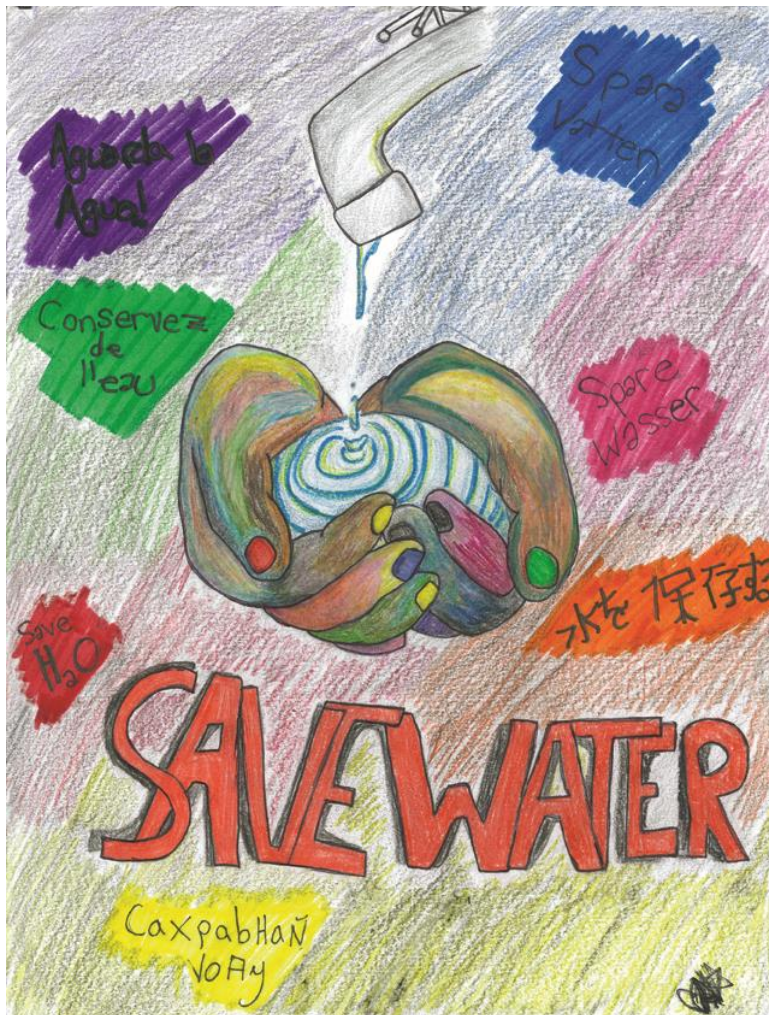


TMWA Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 17, 2016

Press Clippings

June 9, 2016 – August 10, 2016



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

20/20 Visionaries for the Silver State

July 1, 2016 By Tarah Richardson Comments



Perfect vision, otherwise referred to as 20/20 vision, is the ability for an individual to see clearly both in their near field of vision as well as far away. Likewise, a 20/20 executive, such as those featured in the following pages, has a clear vision for their business in both the short and long term. These executives strive to do what is right for their companies, employees, communities and state.

The search for this year's 20/20 Executives began several months ago when *Nevada Business Magazine's* editorial staff asked Nevadans to nominate individuals who have had 20/20 vision in their companies. The nomination form asked for those individuals that are innovative in the face of hardship and have demonstrated a drive to move their organizations forward regardless of what obstacles may be in the way.

Each of the following 20 executives was chosen for displaying the qualities of a true visionary. They have each shown an ability to work creatively in tough situation, they are all leaders in their industry and each has ambitions for their organizations that stretch far into the future.

What began 16 years ago with an old computer, a landline phone and a dining room table has now grown into a multimillion dollar technology staffing organization through the efforts of Debbie Banko. [Link Technologies](#) is a national organization based in Las Vegas and Banko has worked hard to ensure the company's success.

"For me, successful entrepreneurship has always come down to three things," said Banko. "Support the client, hire good people and stay active in the community through networking and charitable giving."

Banko practices what she preaches and, as a result, has managed to grow Link Technologies despite the most recent recession. In fact, the organization, which remains innovative in the IT staffing arena, has thrived and built a loyal customer base.

“Nevada is a small community,” said Banko. “If you excel at supporting your clients, you become part of that community, instead of just an outside vendor.”

Ridge House is an organization that helps individuals with a history of addiction as well as recently released felons re-enter society as competent, law-abiding citizens. At the non-profit's helm is Steven Burt who serves as executive director.

Under his leadership, **Ridge House** has taken those that otherwise might return to drugs or crime and has fostered, cared for and encouraged them, eventually helping them realize their place as valued members of society. Even more impressive, the organization helps them turn around for good. While the state of Nevada's three year rate of recidivism is around 75 percent, the Ridge House has managed to lower that rate in their clients to a striking 25 percent under Burt's leadership.

“I believe in giving everyone the opportunity to make a difference in their lives and in other's lives,” said Burt. “Every day I am inspired by transformational experiences by people who had nothing and now help others achieve their goals.”

Baseball is America's pastime, and quickly becoming a summer staple in Reno thanks, in large part, to the efforts of Eric Edelstein. Having joined the **Reno Aces Baseball** franchise three years ago as president, Edelstein has since revolutionized how the community views the Greater Nevada Field ballpark. While the ballpark was created to host baseball games, Edelstein has worked to add other events to keep the park open year-round.

“I hope to guide Greater Nevada Field to be the community center for Reno, hosting world class events, sporting and non-sporting, all year,” he said.

To that end, Edelstein has helped bring in a professional soccer franchise to co-habitate with the Reno Aces and has launched a Non-Baseball Events department. The newly formed department's mission is to add events such as the City of Reno's annual Ice Rink and the Nevada Craft Brewers event, both of which were recently held at the park.

“I believe in being passionately curious and striving to learn and grow every day,” said Edelstein.

With a vision 44 years ago to turn a small coffee shop and motor lodge into a casino and resort, John Farahi has taken the long-view when it comes to success. What began as the Golden Road Motor Inn with 142 rooms is now the **Atlantis Casino Resort Spa**

with 824 rooms, 61,000 square feet of gaming, 50,000 square feet of conference and banquet space and a 30,000 square foot spa. And, Farahi's name has become synonymous with Nevada entrepreneurship.

The CEO of Monarch Casino & Resort, Inc. (the holding company of Atlantis) credits his success to having a, "clear vision of our mission as an entertainment company, a team that is committed to excellence [and remaining] financially conservative with long-term objectives."

Those clear goals have been effective and helped Farahi's organization stay successful even during tough times. In fact, during the recent recession and despite pressure to do so, Monarch didn't lay off any employees or enforce furloughs or forfeiture of vacation time.

Farahi looks to the future and said that 20/20 vision in his company means, "clearly understanding long-term objectives and having the team and resources to deliver on their goals."

Real estate has not had an easy time of it in the recent past and brokers, especially, have had to prove their mettle through the recession. In order for a brokerage firm to survive the downturn, its team must be resilient, creative and have solid leadership. Nancy Fennell, president and "chief innovator" of [Dickson Realty](#), is an example of that leadership and has demonstrated how a firm with communication and strong vision can achieve success.

Fennell's goal for Dickson Realty is, "to build a profitable company of excellence with outstanding realtors and staff that contribute to the overall success of our community."

She works to achieve that goal through a variety of ways including building relationships with both clients and employees, leading by example and maintaining a commitment to her employees, clients and community.

"Nancy is unlike any other executive I have encountered in the nearly 40 years of my professional life," said Andrew Peel, chief marketing and technology officer for the firm. "She has a clear vision for the future of her company and has the gifts of clarity and eloquence to convey the overall Dickson Realty vision."

Serving over 385,000 residents in the Reno/Sparks area, Mark Foree, general manager for [Truckee Meadows Water Authority \(TMWA\)](#), has a significant responsibility on his shoulders, one he doesn't take lightly. Born and raised in Winnemucca, Foree is no stranger to the water needs of a desert state and his background as a civil engineer has been invaluable as he oversees the community-owned water utility.

“My vision is everyone’s vision at TMWA,” said Foree. “To enhance the quality of life in the Truckee Meadows by delivering exceptional, customer-focused water services.”

Foree has been with TMWA for 15 years and has had a number of successes during his tenure. In fact, just last year, Foree oversaw the intricate merging of two water authorities into TMWA. He has been instrumental in leading the region through a long-standing drought through planning and forethought. TMWA has even consistently brought in a 90 percent customer satisfaction rating despite the challenges facing the organization.

Wanting to create a brokerage firm that efficiently produces favorable outcomes through the use of technology and employee innovation, Brendan Keating, along with partners, founded [Logic Commercial Real Estate](#) less than a year ago.

Keating recognized the importance of being a local resource for their clients and has assembled a team with roots in Southern Nevada, including many who are born and bred. In fact, Keating himself was born at Sunrise Hospital and has spent his professional career helping expand the Southern Nevada market.

“Having the right assets on our balance sheet is part of having 20/20 vision,” said Keating. “Our assets are our team members. Service businesses like ours are valuable because of the people on our team.”

Keating recognizes that his team has been integral to the organization’s success and he credits them with the company’s growth. He hopes to make Logic one of the largest locally owned brokerage and property management companies in Southern Nevada.

“I believe we have something special brewing at our company,” he said. “If we can keep the culture and commitment to our values, we will create a valuable enterprise that we will share with our employees who helped us get there.”

“My vision is to continue to build a practice that provides multi-disciplinary care and fully realize ‘comprehensive’ in the practice’s name,” said James Kilber, executive director for [Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada \(CCCN\)](#).

While an incredibly lofty goal, Kilber, along with his team at CCCN, is living up to the vision. Kilber joined the company in 2007 and has since helped it achieve significant growth including year-over-year revenue increases, more patient visits and high employee retention rates. His achievements at the organization are numerous and have benefited the Southern Nevada community in a variety of ways including helping the state become known for cancer treatment and research.

Kilber explained that the over 550 employees who make up the team at CCCN are critical to his role as a visionary leader.

“I couldn’t do my job without their expertise,” he said. “In return, I need to be there for my employees. Our employees are our best resource and most important asset. If you don’t have a great team, then you can’t grow.”

Founded 13 years ago, **Noble Studios** is a digital marketing agency based in Northern Nevada with a global roster of clients. The company has a “work hard, play hard” culture that focuses on happy employees taking care of happy clients. Much of that culture is due to the efforts of Season Lopiccolo, co-founder and chief operating officer of the company.

“Since day one, my vision for Noble has revolved around the idea of building a business that will remain relevant in an industry that is constantly evolving,” said Lopiccolo. She added that there is a saying amongst the employees at Noble, “‘We chart our course by the stars and not by the ships around us.’ In other words,” Lopiccolo explained, “our success is directly affected by our ability to communicate with one another.”

That communication has proven to be key for Noble which has grown by leaps since it’s inception in 2003. The organization, which started with Season and her husband Jarrod, now has over 40 employees and has helped pave the way to Washoe County becoming a haven for technology companies.

A Sparks-based manufacturer of commercial plumbing products with worldwide offices, **Haws Corporation** is over a 100 years old. Having been with the organization for 10 years, which may seem like a drop in the bucket to such a long-standing company, Michael Markovsky has nevertheless been critical to driving Haws forward.

“20/20 means normal or perfect,” said Markovsky. “We aren’t either of those things, nor do we want to be. But, we are constantly adapting and innovating to help define whatever the new normal will or could be.”

He went on to add that his vision for the company is, “establishing bold goals and accomplishing those goals by doing things differently than one would expect from a company that has been around for over a century.”

And, by anyone’s measure of success, Markovsky has been successful. He has been instrumental in restructuring Haws to create better efficiencies and promote leadership from within. He has also worked to establish an “Innovation Team” to work on new product developments.

Armed with the axiom “large enough to be relevant, small enough to be personal,” Scott Muelrath started with the **Henderson Chamber of Commerce (HCC)** four and a half years ago with the intention of growing the organization. That intention has born fruit and the chamber has grown from 700 members to over 1,200. Taking on a new mantra, “business growth through personal connections” Muelrath, who serves as president and CEO, works hard to provide relevance for members.

“People want to do business with people they know, and the HCC serves as the conduit to make this happen,” said Muelrath. “I also believe in innovation and constantly evolving to meet our members’ needs. This gives you an edge in the marketplace. I have an open door to new ideas and am always receptive to dynamic thinking, concepts and people. There is always something to learn and improve upon.”

That attitude has been instrumental in the meteoric growth of the chamber and Muelrath expects that growth to continue.

“Our organization works for the betterment and benefit of others, and we now achieve that in so many measurable ways,” he said.

No industry has faced quite as many changes over the last decade as the health insurance industry. Overseeing many of those changes in Nevada, Mike Murphy, who serves as Nevada president and general manager for **Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield** has had anything but a simple job. Anthem is Nevada’s second largest carrier and has a membership of over 300,000 in the state; it’s safe to say that Murphy has a lot on his plate.

“Every day there’s a flood of new information and issues demanding immediate attention,” said Murphy. “The key is being able to distinguish the signal from the noise and make sure we are always focused on what really matters - expanding access to high-quality, affordable healthcare in Nevada.”

To that end, Murphy has been working towards building collaborative relationships within the community while creatively addressing cost challenges. He says that in achieving these goals its critical that Anthem is, “helping consumers fully understand their benefits, enabling members to develop relationships with healthcare providers who truly care about them [and] arming providers with the tools and resources they can use to meet their patients’ needs.”

He added that, “it all comes back to achieving affordability for employers, consumers and providers.”

“Having 20/20 vision means mapping out a future that extends beyond our role in the community, working with others to create a vision of what Southern Nevada wants to

become and effectively working towards progress,” said Tina Quigley, general manager of the [Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada \(RTC\)](#).

Quigley has been with the RTC for the past 11 years, working her way from deputy general manager to general manager, a role which she has held for the past four years. Having achieved several important “wins” for the RTC in Southern Nevada, Quigley has her eye on the larger picture for the community. She has spearheaded several innovative programs including a fuel revenue indexing program which will provide over \$700 million for 221 transportation infrastructure projects by the end of this year.

“The secret to my success is to surround myself with smart, passionate and innovative people who are just as committed to enhancing Southern Nevada as I am,” explained Quigley. “It takes a team, and I am fortunate to have one of the most dedicated and hard-working teams in Nevada.”

When he founded [Promo Direct, Inc.](#) in 1991, Dave Sarro likely had no idea the number of changes his industry would see in the quarter century since. However, like any true innovator, Sarro found those changes to be a challenge rather than a hindrance and positioned his business to thrive in advance of an online world.

When asked the secret to his success Sarro said, “I’m not sure anyone has a secret. For me, I have tried to study our competitors very carefully and do things a little better in all areas of our business. In addition, my foresight to investing heavily into technology has had a significant impact on Promo Direct’s success.”

Originally founded as a traditional ad specialty company, Sarro has since changed the organization’s business model not once, but twice, in an effort to adapt to market changes. He also heavily invested in Promo Direct’s online presence, creating a proprietary web-based software platform for the organization.

Dan Schwartz has a history in helping business thrive and that history has come in handy in his last one and a half years in office. He’s taken a private career in finance and turned it into a public career as Treasurer of the state of Nevada. In the first year of being in office, Schwartz has improved investment returns on the overall general fund by over 60 percent and has increased returns on the Local Government Investment Pool by fivefold.

Schwartz said his vision for Nevada is two-fold. “To aim to be a competent, honest and responsive public official. If I can put money in residents’ pockets through jobs, growing their tax dollars, preventing fraud and abuse and educate their kids by encouraging a ‘culture of education’, I’m halfway there.”

The second part of his vision involves moving Nevada forward and helping the state innovate beyond gaming, mining and tourism.

“I’ve blended my financial background with practical experience to develop my skills and build businesses,” said Schwartz. He added that he has, “learned to respect other people’s ideas and suggestions, while keeping a commitment to honesty and knowing how to get the job done.”

Value-based healthcare is a philosophy based on the tenet that healthcare should maximize value for patients. Dr. Randal Shelin has been at the forefront of implementing value-based healthcare at [Desert Radiology](#). Having been with the organization since 2001, he has been president since 2012.

Shelin has made a commitment to improving healthcare in Southern Nevada through Desert Radiology in a number of ways. He has sought to improve technology, allowing the imaging company to ensure a rapid transition of information for patients between providers. He has also worked to become more involved in how examinations are ordered.

“We are working with our business partners to ensure that when a provider orders a test, it is the right test for their patient and it is truly needed,” Shelin said. “Only by getting the most utility out of our limited healthcare dollars will we ever be able to control costs.”

Shelin added that, “understanding one’s own limitations is critical to being an effective 20/20 executive. I may have a vision of where I want to take my company, but unless I can pull my team together, communicate that vision and execute a plan to make it happen, it will remain just that: a vision.”

Beginning with a friend, the combination of two delicious recipes and a great idea, [Nothing Bundt Cakes](#) was half the brain-child of Debbie Shwetz who co-founded the baked goods partnership in 1997. Since then, Shwetz has helped take the organization to new places through franchising opportunities.

“In 2006 we franchised our company,” said Shwetz. “Our vision then, and now, was to provide a homemade-quality product that was moist and delicious and would meet the needs of our guests. By never wavering from our quality promise, we would be able to extend a business opportunity to others so they too could recognize their dreams of entrepreneurship.”

Nothing Bundt Cakes now has 139 locations in 24 states and Shwetz has been instrumental in developing the sales process, writing manuals, maintaining compliance records and putting in place the bakery opening process.

“I believe a good leader keeps an open mind and has the ability to disagree with a member of their team, yet leave that disagreement with locked arms around a decision that will move the company forward,” said Shwetz. “Realizing through 20/20 hindsight where you can improve allows you the 20/20 vision to continue to reach for greater excellence.”

Affinity Gaming, which operates 11 properties in Nevada, Iowa, Colorado and Missouri, has had Michael Silberling, chief executive officer, at its helm for the past two years. Silberling brings with him over 20 years of casino industry management experience and has put that knowledge to good use at Affinity. Since becoming CEO, Silberling has helped the organization grow by over 20 percent and has seen net revenues of nearly \$400 million.

“My success comes from a vehement attention to hiring the right people that are motivated and driven to oversee efficient processes to achieve the vision of our company,” said Silberling. “We’ve learned how to deploy technology to support company goals in profitability, customer service and team member morale, while not losing touch with the personal and relationship side of the hospitality sector. I refuse to accept inefficiency and wastefulness, so every resource is used to its maximum potential.”

K2 Energy, which was founded by Dr. Johnnie Stoker in 2006, is a lithium iron phosphate technology company working to replace common lithium batteries. Stoker founded the company when the previous organization he worked for, which was also based in Henderson, decided to move their jobs to China. He then hired some of his co-workers and started K2 Energy. Stoker’s vision for K2 is, “to be recognized as the technology and manufacturing leader in lithium ion (lithium iron phosphate) batteries and systems.”

To that end, Stoker has been focusing the company’s efforts on projects that set them apart as a technology leader. The company delivers anywhere from two to three new products or product improvements per year. Additionally, K2 was able to grow through the recession, when many other technology companies, even those with government subsidies, failed.

Stoker said that the key to his success is, “good people, a hard working team and an attitude that failure is not an option. The K2 team is competitive with any team in the world for problem solving and innovation.”

A leader in engineering, information technology, program and acquisition services and multimedia, Arcata Associates has been in business for 37 years. Leading the organization today is Tim Wong, president and chief executive officer.

“When I took the helm of Arcata Associates as president and CEO in 1993, I had a vision to significantly broaden the company’s defense work and expand into NASA,” he said. “Today, I’m proud to say that we’ve achieved that goal, but we’re not done yet. We’re constantly aiming to grow, excel and innovate.”

Wong’s plans to innovate include positioning Arcata to be an “integral member of programs that are setting scientific milestones in space and aeronautics.” He also wants to assist in preparing the men and women of the United State’s military forces to defend the nation.

“As U.S. and allied fighter pilots enter enemy airspace or astronauts climb into their space vehicle for the first human mission to Mars, we want them to be confident that the best engineers, scientists and technical support personnel have used their expertise and experience to ensure mission success,” said Wong.

When asked what he though made a 20/20 executive he said, “A visionary 20/20 executive believes that dreams can become reality with hard work, a talented and dedicated team and a commitment to integrity. That’s what I strive for.”

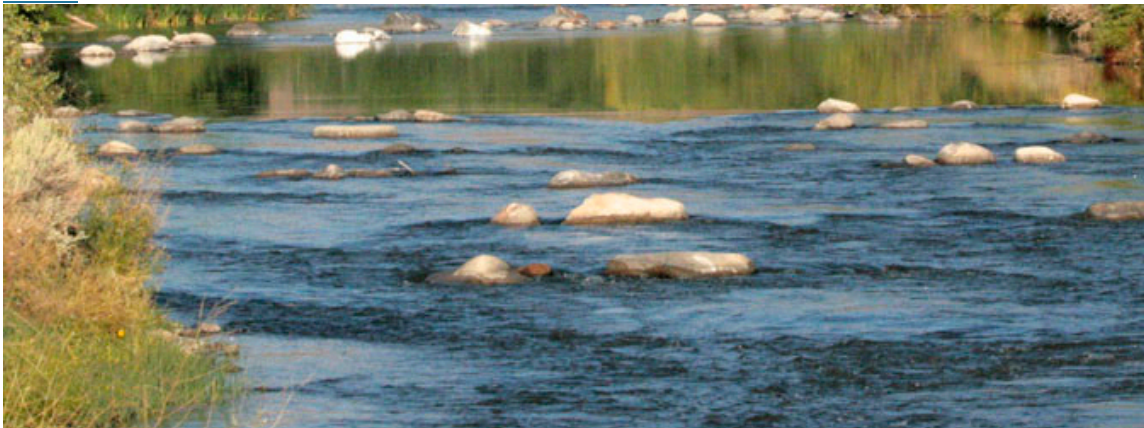
Filed Under: Feature Story Tagged With: Affinity Gaming, Andrew Peel, ANTHEM Blue Cross Blue Shield, Brendan Keating, Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada (CCCN), Dan Schwartz, Dave Sarro, Debbie Banko, Debbie Shwetz, Desert Radiology, Dickson Realty, Dr. Johnnie Stoker, Dr. Randal Shelin, Eric Edelstein, Golden Road Motor Inn, Greater Nevada Field, Haws Corporation, Henderson Chamber of Commerce (HCC), James Kilber, John Farahi, K2 Energy, Las Vegas business, Link Technologies, Logic Commercial Real Estate, Mark Foree, Michael Markovskyy, Michael Silberling, Mike Murphy, Monarch Casino & Resort Inc., Nancy Fennell, Nevada business, Noble Studios, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Promo Direct Inc., Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), Reno Aces Baseball, Reno business, Ridge House, Scott Meulrath, Season Lopiccolo, Tina Quigley, Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)

Keep the Truckee River Healthy and Flowing

Truckee River Yacht Club founded in 1988 works to protect the Truckee River for all of us – human, fish and wildlife.

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TROA is good for urban Washoe County; problems remain to keep Truckee River system healthy

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The [TROA](#) (Truckee River Operating Agreement) took 27 years to be finished and lawsuits against the Agreement (actually completed in 2008) settled or withdrawn. Now that the [celebrations](#) are done and TROA is implemented, what are the benefits to the over all health of the Truckee River?



Mark Foree, Executive Director of TMWA, announcing the purchase of Donner Lake Water Rights.

Water purchases for water quality to increase water in the Truckee River below Derby Dam for the benefit of Pyramid Lake are certainly a benefit; although the amount of water flow is relatively small, it improves the river's health during periods of lower flow. Also, changes in the timing of water delivery to water rights holders to benefit riparian forest regeneration is a good thing for the River.

The benefits for the urban portions of Washoe County served by [TMWA](#) (Truckee Meadows Water Authority) are very tangible – storage for drought supply in up-stream reservoirs and water exchanges between reservoirs to benefit water supply. This allows TMWA to call for more water during periods of drought to help meet its overall water rights to support urban and suburban customers.

Nevertheless, the majority of water rights owned on the Truckee River benefits urban uses and farmers in the Carson River negatively impacting the urban portion of the river and the areas below Vista.



The Derby Dam diverts Truckee River water away from its natural course which flows to Pyramid Lake. The dam diverts a significant amount of the Truckee River into the Truckee Canal to Lahontan Reservoir on the Carson River.

[Are we going to have a healthy and vibrant river system including the Truckee River's unique inland sea – Pyramid Lake?](#) Stay tuned and we'll be discussing the challenges facing the entire Truckee River system in the coming weeks.

Report of sewage going into Truckee River turns out to be water main break



By Staff |

Posted: Thu 3:26 PM, Jun 09, 2016



RENO, Nev. (KOLO) - The Reno Fire Department went to a report of sewage leaking into the Truckee River but believe it is just water coming from a water main break in northwest Reno.

The initial call came in at 2:55 p.m. on Thursday, June 9, that sewage was going into the Truckee River just east of the Arlington Street bridge and the first crews who arrived said there was an aroma of sewage to the discharge.

But Reno Fire Department Battalion Chief Dirk Minore said it does not appear to be sewage.

"We're probably associating this with a water main break at Seventh & Lodge," Minore said. So the water is going through about a mile of storm drains from Seventh and Lodge streets in northwest Reno before emptying into the river.

The Reno Fire Department will advise the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, the Reno-Sparks Water Treatment Plant and the Washoe District Health Department in case they need to take action to protect water quality, Minore said.

Reno Fire: Storm drain water discharges into Truckee River

By Scott Magruder & Juan Carlos Flores Thursday, June 9th 2016



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RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) —

A Reno Fire Department official said a water main break caused storm drain water to discharge into the Truckee River at the Arlington Bridge in downtown Reno Thursday afternoon.

A fire spokesman told News 4-Fox 11 that the city of Reno reported that a water main break at 7th Street and Stoker Avenue caused excess water to flow into the Truckee River from a storm drain.

Fire officials said the discharge is not sewage and is likely dirt and mud from the storm drain.

An RFD battalion chief said the Truckee Meadows Water Authority will no longer be testing the water because a map shows the storm drain leads straight into the river.

component-story-more_media_horiz-v1-01

Debris flowing into Truckee River near downtown after water main break

Jordan Wines, RGJ 6:13 p.m. PDT June 9, 2016



Breaking news(Photo: RGJ)Buy Photo

The Reno Fire Department is asking people to stay out of the Truckee River near the Arlington Bridge after a water main break. The break is causing debris from storm drains to flow into the river.

Dirk Minore, Battalion Chief at the RFD, said that there was a large amount of water coming out of the storm drains near the river after the break. Due to this flooding, they are recommending people stay out of the river for the time being. Minore said the agency is sending a water technician out to test the water before they give the all-clear.

Due to the break, water services are being affected on the 700 block of Lodge Avenue. Tom Clifton, supervisor of distribution and maintenance with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, said that the agency has a team on site, and is working to repair the break. There is currently no ETA as to when services will be restored.

This is a developing story. Check back with RGJ.com for updates.

Read or Share this story: <http://on.rgj.com/28oAqYP>

Kazmierski: Let's not fear growth

Mike Kazmierski 1:05 p.m. PDT June 15, 2016



Mike Kazmierski, President/CEO, EDAWN(Photo: Handout)

It is already starting! I have been asked by some in the community to stop, or at least slow down, doing our job here at EDAWN – the job of bringing quality companies to the region. Yes, Reno-Sparks is growing, and it is growing at an unprecedented rate. More than 18 months ago, [when EDAWN announced we would be adding over 50,000 new jobs to the region in five years](#), there was mostly skepticism and a “let’s wait and see” attitude. That’s understandable, given the magnitude and speed of the projected growth. But now that we are continuing to announce new companies (more than 100 in the past four years), seeing the Tesla building grow, and feeling the increased traffic and activity in nearly every industry - there is *fear*. The growth that we projected is happening. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our community and there are several reasons we should consider the blessings of this long-sought economic revitalization, rather than fear the coming changes.

With growth comes opportunity

Have you ever heard of any community change or improve without growth? With growth comes outside investments, public-private partnerships and increased tax revenue to address the challenges we face. The fuel and energy associated with growth can be harnessed and managed to a large degree to revitalize or reinvent a community. Hundreds of communities throughout the U.S are struggling to survive, just like we were a few short years ago. These communities envy the opportunity we have. Let’s embrace this growth and use it to shape our future, not fear it.



Buy Photo

Gov. Brian Sandoval, Ames Construction workers and officials with the Nevada Department of Transportation shovel dirt as part of a groundbreaking ceremony celebrating the start of the USA Parkway construction that will extend the roadway and connect Interstate 80 to U.S. 50. (Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ)

[RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL](#)

[One View: Major corporate tax incentives bad for Nevada](#)

With growth comes action

We should appreciate that there are challenges associated with this extraordinary growth, and in most cases we are making the necessary accommodations to mitigate the challenges. We have started to shift from a “wait and see” mode to a “let’s get this done” attitude. The motivation of a deadline is impressive when it comes to actually getting things done. With this motivation we are making real progress on issues like affordable (workforce) housing, school infrastructure funding, downtown revitalization and workforce development, to name just a few. So the specter of growth has already spurred us to make our community better in many ways.

[RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL](#)

[Kazmierski: Flawed tax structure drives school capital needs](#)

With growth comes a better quality of life

If we can look past the challenges and focus on the opportunities, we can appreciate the quality-of-life improvements we will gain with this growth. These real quality-of-life factors transcend the petty complaints associated with more traffic or longer lines at your favorite restaurant. For example: quality-of-life improvements like job security, a quality job, a pay raise, home value increases, having your kids close to home because they can now find a job, more activity at your business, and more revenue for local governments.

With growth comes vitality

The excitement and energy associated with growth is what makes a community great. Growth brings talent to the region, more diversity in our job market, and even more events and entertainment to the area. Growth brings more exciting and diverse restaurants and eagerly awaited retail stores. Growth gives our youth hope and motivation with the promise of a quality job as they sharpen their skills through the education system. Growth gives generations of our sons and daughters the opportunity to come home, as many were forced to flee the region to get the jobs they were qualified for – jobs that did not exist in Reno-Sparks before.

So no, we at EDawn will not stop doing our job of attracting, retaining and growing quality jobs because economic development is not a water faucet, something that can just be turned on or off. As many communities have learned, once the flow of growth is turned off, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to turn it back on. EDawn, however, has modified our attraction efforts with a focus on higher-paying jobs and company headquarters, adapted our retention efforts to highlight workforce development, and renewed our emphasis on advancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem to the next level.

As a community we have worked very hard to reinvent our economy. Let's enjoy and embrace the many blessings associated with this growth. The glass of growth may be 20 percent empty, but let's remember it is also 80 percent full. The only thing we should really fear is that without continued economic development efforts, community support and business friendly government, the growth – with all its blessings – will end.

Mike Kazmierski is president and CEO of the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada.

Whitewater crash course on the Biggest Little River

Kayaking Truckee River life-changing experience, especially if you're horrible at kayaking

(RGJ journalists Benjamin Spillman and Jason Bean recently paddled the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake. In this story, Spillman learns to kayak and they paddle from Truckee to Reno, facing the biggest rapids on the river.)

As a journalist I'm used to watching people struggle to answer tough questions.

I'm not used to being the one struggling.

But that's exactly where I found myself several weeks ago as I waded, soaking wet, out of the Truckee River.

"Are you ready to do this for about 20 miles a day," asked Charles Albright, a longtime paddler on the Truckee and other Sierra Nevada streams.

The obvious answer was no.

In the previous two miles of paddling I'd dumped my boat about a half-dozen times. By the time we reached the White Fir Street bridge behind Patagonia, I was too exhausted to keep pace with the other boaters who started in Mogul with a plan to reach downtown Reno before dark.

Unfortunately, the easy answer wasn't going to do me any good. I was on the river to practice for a paddle trip over the length of the Truckee River, which runs 105 miles from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake. The trip was about two weeks away, and answering no to Albright's question would have been meant pulling the plug before it even started.

But it was obvious to me, and likely Albright and the others, that if I couldn't complete an easy, eight-mile float through town, there was no way I was ready to take on the whole river.



RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean, along with guide Scott Sady, left, paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

Fullscreen

So I did what I've seen other interview subjects do when the desired answer doesn't mesh with reality. I mumbled through some non-statements about needing to keep practicing and pulled my boat to the riverbank so the others could continue without me.



Ben Spillman and Noah Fraser paddle the Truckee River west of Reno on May 14, 2016. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of

2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean/RGJ)

The genesis of a (bad?) idea

A casual observer might think the fact I was learning how to paddle on moving water just weeks before a river trip that included class IV rapids was an indication things were hastily planned.

They'd only be half right.

Sure, videographer Jason Bean and I had agreed to paddle the Truckee for journalistic purposes just a few days earlier. But I'd had an inkling for a couple of years that this trip was in my future, whether or not I was prepared to make it.

The first clue came sometime in 2014, shortly after starting my job as the outdoors reporter for the Reno Gazette-Journal.

I'd heard mention of a Truckee River trip by former RGJ journalists Brian Beffort and Scott Sady in 1999. I skimmed through the archives to learn Beffort and Sady rafted from Tahoe to Pyramid in three days. Then I pretty much forgot about it.



Anglers near the confluence of the Little Truckee and Truckee rivers. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean)

Tackling a potentially dangerous, multi-day trip based on a skill I didn't possess was easy to push off to another day. Still, the idea hovered in the background of my life with all sorts of other anxieties.

It started echoing louder in April when

Bean pitched an end-to-end Truckee River trip to a group of reporters and editors. And unlike so many ideas people toss out in meetings, this one didn't die before it landed.

Quite the opposite. Everyone loved it. Not only that, they loved it so much they thought it needed to happen as soon as possible, and within a few minutes we had a planned departure date.

The date was roughly two weeks out. No more time to procrastinate. I had to learn to paddle. Fast.

My first call was to Albright. I knew him only as the voice on the other end of a phone call for a story I'd done about snowpack and river levels.

I'd been told he was the dean of Truckee River paddling in Reno, and it turned out to be true. Albright has an encyclopedic knowledge of the river, and is incredibly enthusiastic about encouraging other people to take up water sports.



Scouting rapids on the Truckee River. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean)

By the end of that conversation, he was urging me to borrow one of the dozens of boats he owns to join a weekly river outing.

Crash course on river travel

The plan was to join Albright and friends on their weekly paddle from Mogul to downtown Reno.

As I sat in the boat on shore, I did my best to listen to advice, such as how to lean downstream in current and that if a collision is inevitable to lean into boulders.

The main thing I remember, however, before shoving off was Albright saying that normally he would have a green paddler give the boat a try in flat water before hitting the river.

By then it was too late.

The next hour or so of my life was chaos.



Preparing to run rapids on the Truckee River between Truckee, Calif., and Verdi, Nev. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

For starters, I had no idea how to steer the boat. The only times I'd paddled previously was on flat water where you can steer by merely using a forward stroke on one side of the boat or another. That's not very effective on moving water, I quickly learned, and I found myself being carried by the current into branches, rocks and gravel bars.

While the others glided through the current, I struggled mightily just to move the boat one way or the other to avoid obstacles. It was exhausting. I can't tell you how many times I flipped the boat or fell out, but I can tell you it was a regular occurrence. Without a dry suit, I would have risked hypothermia; I was expending so much energy that inside the suit my clothes were entirely soaked through with sweat.

By the time we reached Patagonia it was clear I would never reach downtown before dark. I dragged my boat out of the water and caught a ride back to town.

The only thing that kept it from being a complete failure was the advice I got from Albright and the other paddlers. One boater, Todd Barber of Reno, offered to loan me a larger inflatable boat. I took him up on the offer.

I scheduled another practice session, this time with Scott Sady at the whitewater park downtown. In addition to being a successful professional photographer, Sady's one of the most skilled and avid kayakers in Reno.

Bean and I were going to need someone with experience to join us for the first stretch of river between Lake Tahoe and Reno, because that's the segment with nearly all of the real rapids. Sady was on board.

The whitewater session was much more productive. The park has a variety of features that let people of different skill levels practice maneuvers without having to travel downriver.



RGJ reporter Benjamin Spillman paddling the Truckee River in an inflatable kayak. Spillman and videographer Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

Sady showed me different paddle strokes and maneuvers that helped me understand how to enter, cross or leave the current. After about two hours, I could handle going through the features in the park.

After one more session in the whitewater park and a practice run from Mayberry Park to downtown with the boat loaded with gear, it was time to tackle the river for real.

No more excuses

On the morning of Thursday, May 12, Bean, Sady and I launched our boats into the river in Truckee. We chose the location because, despite the solid winter snowpack, there still wasn't enough water upstream to paddle from Lake Tahoe.

Our plan was to paddle from Truckee through the biggest rapids until we reached Farad, where we had permission to camp on NV Energy's power plant property.

After about the first mile of paddling through Truckee, I wasn't sure I was going to make it. I was reverting to bad habits with my paddle strokes, oversteering which was contributing to fatigue.

But after a quick stop to rest, the butterflies settled in my stomach and my boating settled into a nice pace. We soon paddled out of the urban area, through a portion of the river that's marked by a private fishing club and into what passes for wildland on the Truckee.



Setting up camp near Farad, Calif. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.
(Photo: Jason Bean)

After about 10 uneventful miles, we reached the Little Truckee River inflow near Boca reservoir. The plan was a quick lunch stop before heading into the biggest rapids on the river. What we didn't plan for was our first serendipitous encounter with a river expert.

River guide Frank Pisciotta was fishing with a client when we pulled up.

Pisciotta, 72, has been fishing the Truckee since 1979. He's spent countless days on the river in those decades and even though my thoughts were preoccupied with the upcoming rapids, I couldn't help but to be inspired by Pisciotta.

He talked about the contrast between experiencing the Truckee River by car versus wading into the water. The latter, he said, is the only way to enjoy the experience of escaping from the challenges and anxiety of daily life.

"My spiritual salvation is in the water," Pisciotta said. "Once you are in the river ... your life could be collapsing, your business failed, something dramatic happening and you are not even thinking about it."

The Truckee gets real

Downstream from Boca is where you'll find the most serious rapids on the Truckee River. We were facing at least five sets of Class III or Class IV rapids, on a scale of six.

The most serious is the Bronco and Jaws set near Floriston -- a quarter to half-mile stretch with some big drops and steep river banks that make it hard to portage.

In the days leading up to the trip I'd made some trips to Floriston. I told myself I was scouting the rapids, but really I was mainly looking for a way to avoid running them.

It didn't help that two days before we left I'd covered some Reno Fire Department swiftwater rescue training at that very location. A raft piloted by another rescue group that was also training approached the rapids.



RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean)

They lined up their approach, entered the whitewater and three of the four people in the boat promptly fell out.

So when Sady and I climbed out of the water to scout the section I was mainly wondering how I might carry my boat around.

But something changed when we were overlooking the river. Sady pointed out a line he planned to run in a way that made it seem pretty simple: approach from the center, hit the fast water and paddle forward as hard as possible.

Once I was able to envision running the section my decision was made. I wanted to try it.

Sady went first while Bean shot video. As expected, he shot through the rapid with no problem, popped out the other side and gave me the signal to go. So I went.

I approached from the center and paddled forward as hard as I could. I remember the water splashing over and around me and realizing the boat was still upright and moving forward.

I popped out the other side, paddled to shore and got out of the boat. My hands were shaking but it felt great.

On video it was obvious from my furious paddle strokes my adrenaline was running high.

Bean made his run. Without the benefit of a kayak with knee straps the big water bounced him from the boat despite a solid approach. Fortunately, he was able to grab his paddle and boat and make an easy float to slower water.



Without the benefit of knee straps to hold him down, videographer Jason Bean gets bounced from his boat on the Truckee River. Bean and RGJ reporter Ben Spillman paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean)

As we resumed paddling downstream I felt a huge sense of relief. I'd gone from being unable to keep a boat upright to running the biggest rapid on the Truckee River in just a few weeks.

Little did I know there was much more drama to come.

More rapids, camping at a body dump and a scare

I was pretty tired by the time the Farad power plant came into view. We'd received permission from NV Energy to camp in a meadow adjacent to the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway and I was looking forward to it.

Although I couldn't get the phrase "dead body exit" out of my mind.

During a conversation with a source a few days earlier, I happened to mention our camping plans. Her response was to say she'd heard Farad called the "dead body exit" in the past and was reminded of the name thanks to a recent news story.

I did a Google search and found that, sure enough, just about a month or so previous someone had, indeed, dumped a human body near the Farad exit from Interstate 80. A suspect was arrested but the tragedy was on my mind. It mainly served as a reminder that while it's easy to lose yourself traveling on the river you're never really far from societal problems on the shore.



Fishing guide Frank Pisciotta has been fishing on the Truckee River since 1979. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

The real scare on the trip didn't happen until the following day.

After an uneventful night we launched our boats around 9 a.m. on Friday the 13th. Our biggest rapid that day was about four miles downstream at a place called Dead Man's Curve.

That's where the river makes a sharp left turn in the middle of a small canyon. To the right is a large rock wall that boaters need to avoid. But if you go too far left, you'll end up getting pinballed through a boulder garden. Even if you hit the rapid just right, you're still going to bounce through some bumpy water.

Sady ran first with me not far behind. He entered the rapid at the right angle but his boat stopped briefly in a hole -- just long enough to make me wonder if I needed to do something to avoid him. Fortunately, he got moving again, but the instant threw my timing a bit.

I managed to bounce through. But because I was so focused on regaining my line it took me some time to get to shore after popping out below the rapid.

By the time I turned around to look back at the rapid, Bean was already in the water. None of us are sure how long he was under but it was long enough that by the time he emerged, he was exhausted and shaken.

"I thought I was going to die," he repeated a few times as he made it to shore.

We spent the next 30 minutes or so on the river bank recovering and buoying ourselves for the rest of the day, which still included another 15 miles or more of river.

A struggle and a refreshing finish

After the scare at Dead Man's, we still had to run Staircase, the final major rapid before the river smoothed out for the paddle into Reno.

Scouting Staircase was more difficult than running it. To get a good look, we had to take out on the left side of the river and fight through thick brush. The line to run the rapid was on the right which meant, after fighting through the brush to get back to the boats, we had to paddle hard across the river to make the run.

But that wasn't the main event, as it turned out. Sadly, my strongest memory of the segment was the portage at Washoe-Highland dam.

The portage is on the left side of the river and involves dragging boats through brush, over a concrete retaining wall, through an RV park and down an embankment below the dam. After more than a half day on the water, it's a tough assignment. And to make matters worse the river flow weakens downstream due to diversions.



Railroad tracks parallel the Truckee River. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.
(Photo: Jason Bean)

The flows diminish noticeably around Mogul, and we spent much of the final miles of the day trying to avoid getting hung up in shallow water.

After paddling all day, it was frustrating and exhausting to keep getting stuck in shallow water. For future trips, I'd recommend taking out at Crystal Peak Park in Verdi and skipping ahead to Mayberry Park in Reno, which would bypass the portage and the shallow spots near Mogul.

Still, it was great paddling into Reno after running rapids much of the previous two days.

Knowing the most challenging rapids were behind us was a huge relief, and the satisfaction of running rapids I'd planned to avoid was incredible.

To top it off, we reached our takeout point at White Fir Street at about 4 p.m. on a Friday, timing that coincided with the weekly beer sampling at the nearby production facility for the Brewer's Cabinet.

The anxiety of the previous days washed away while we relaxed with a post-float beverage. I was finally looking forward to the rest of the trip, through Reno, Sparks and on to Pyramid Lake.

(Come back to the RGJ for more on upcoming segments of the river, including how the challenges of homelessness and drought affect the river and community in Reno and Sparks, the hidden beauty of restored river segments east of Sparks and the segment of river on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation that few people get to experience.)



Takeout site near White Fir Street in Reno. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016.

(Photo: Jason Bean)

RGJ Reno Gazette-Journal

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River ride exposes Reno’s scenic side, also her flaws



[Benjamin Spillman](mailto:bspillman@rgj.com), bspillman@rgj.com 5:34 p.m. PDT June 21, 2016



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The Truckee River from Reno to USA Parkway represents a confluence of nature and urban life.(Photo: Jason Bean/RGJ)Buy Photo

(RGJ journalists Benjamin Spillman and Jason Bean recently paddled the Truckee River from Truckee, Calif., to Pyramid Lake. Part Two of their trip was the 25-mile segment from west Reno through Sparks to USA Parkway. Read Part One which covered Truckee to Reno here.)

Few people know better than Noah Fraser the promise and peril of the Truckee River through Reno and Sparks.

Fraser is in charge of kayaking competitions for Reno River Festival at Wingfield Park, one of the highest profile events in the region.

He's also an avid boater who moved to Reno nearly a decade ago in large part because of its proximity to the river.

Fraser has enjoyed the plentitude of 2011 when abundant snowfall in the Sierra Nevada fueled one of the best boating seasons in memory. And he's struggled through recent seasons of drought, including last year when segments of the river nearly went dry.

For Fraser the tough times provided poignant, first-hand evidence that the fate of Northern Nevada is directly tied to the health of the Truckee River.

"It was very depressing," Fraser said of the three years prior to 2016. "Boaters left the city and the area and moved away so they could keep boating."

Fraser's passion for the river and its role in the health of the Reno-Sparks area was evident when he joined myself and RGJ photojournalist Jason Bean for a day on the water.

Bean and I were paddling from Truckee, Calif., to Pyramid Lake and Fraser joined for the segment from west Reno to the Sparks whitewater park, a 10-mile section through the heart of the urban area.

Fraser was still riding high from a successful River Festival and his relief at the return of runnable water was palpable.

"Having it back now is awesome," Fraser said. "It's like having your best friend back."

Easy paddling in scenic west Reno



Buy Photo

Paddlers Ben Spillman, left, and Noah Fraser navigate some class II rapids on the Truckee River in the Reno/Sparks area on May 13, 2016. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean/RGJ)

We put in near the footbridge behind Patagonia, just east of White Fir Street.

The mild Class I and II water was a change of pace from the previous two days that included Class III and IV rapids between Truckee and Verdi.

But even though we weren't shooting through raging whitewater there was still plenty to think about and learn as we paddled.

Between White Fir Street and downtown Reno the river passes goes over an abandoned diversion dam, the active Chalk Bluff Diversion Dam and the Orr Ditch Diversion.

All three were passable even by novice paddlers but acted as a reminder of intense human management that controls much of the flow in the river.

For most of the stretch through west Reno backyards in residential neighborhoods are the dominant shoreline feature. It makes for fun viewing for those who want an alternative take on Reno's neighborhoods. It's also a reminder of just how much of the river's shore is private property and inaccessible to the public.

The most exciting part of the run to downtown, at least in terms of rapids, happens at a large bend at Oxbow Nature Study Area.

Not only is this where the river narrow and picks up speed and turbulence it's also where it goes through the Oxbow Nature Study Area, one of the few publicly accessible natural areas on this stretch.

After Oxbow the water slows a bit as it carries boaters to downtown and the whitewater park, the signature river feature in downtown Reno.

Downtown's defining feature



RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

Opened in 2004, the Reno Whitewater Park is a series of berms and boulders arranged to create pools, drops and rapids that maximize opportunities for kayakers to practice maneuvers.

By creating a venue for Reno River Festival the park put the city on the map for elite boaters. More importantly for Reno, it improved the perception of downtown among locals and visitors.

“This whitewater park saved downtown,” kayaker Scott Sady said. “All of a sudden everyone came downtown not just to drink and gamble but to hang out.”

Although the whitewater park is considered a huge success for downtown Reno, the park and the area around it still has challenges.

Sady and Fraser said more frequent cleanings could prevent debris such as branches and sediment from building up in some of the water features.

More importantly, because it affects more than just kayakers, are problems on the riverbank that become especially apparent from downtown Reno and into Sparks.



Paddlers Ben Spillman, right, and Noah Fraser take a break while paddling the Truckee River Whitewater Park in downtown Reno on May 13, 2016. RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

Downstream from downtown Reno homeless encampments and their remnants become more visible.

Often they're in the underbrush between the water and the paved bike path that runs the length of the segment.

While Reno-Sparks officials are embarking on creative ideas to alleviate homelessness, from the river the scope of the problem facing the river seems daunting.

"It is dirty, it is nasty, people use it as their restroom because they are living on it and have nowhere else to go," Fraser said. "Until we solve those issues there is not really a way to clean up the river."

Pleasant surprises on the lower Truckee



RGJ reporters Ben Spillman and Jason Bean paddle the Truckee River from Truckee to Pyramid Lake during May of 2016. (Photo: Jason Bean)

After paddling through Reno-Sparks the Truckee River once again enters a canyon.

Although it the river shares the canyon with Interstate 80 and a busy rail line, this segment of water from Sparks to USA Parkway has some incredibly peaceful paddling.

That's because much of the land on either bank is part of a restoration effort by The Nature Conservancy.

Beginning nearly 15 years ago the conservancy and federal, state and local governments have restored about 10 miles of river on ground that was once portions of the Mustang, 102, McCarran and Lockwood ranches.

The restored stretches, beginning downstream of Lockwood Park, provide a natural buffer between the river and highway and railroad tracks.

Various public agencies and the conservancy have spent nearly \$30 million lowering the banks closer to the waterline to create a more natural floodplain.

They restored the channel to a meandering path and added riffle structures to improve the habitat.

"It is not likely the Truckee River will ever be exactly like it was in the past, but it can function similarly," said Mickey Hazlewood of The Nature Conservancy.

What's surprising about this stretch of river is how quickly paddlers can lose themselves in the lush greenery, despite the proximity to the highway and rail line.

Trees cast shade on the river and make it feel cooler than the surrounding landscape. The water moves at a pleasant pace with the occasional whitewater structure to make it interesting.

By the time we paddled up to USA Parkway I was already making my own mental plan to return to the former ranches with restored riverfront.

But that would have to wait.

Our next, and final, segment would take us through the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation. It takes special permission from the tribal council to paddle through the reservation. So we were about to travel through a portion of the Nevada landscape few people see from the water.

Keep watching RGJ.com for the third and final installment of the Truckee River trip.

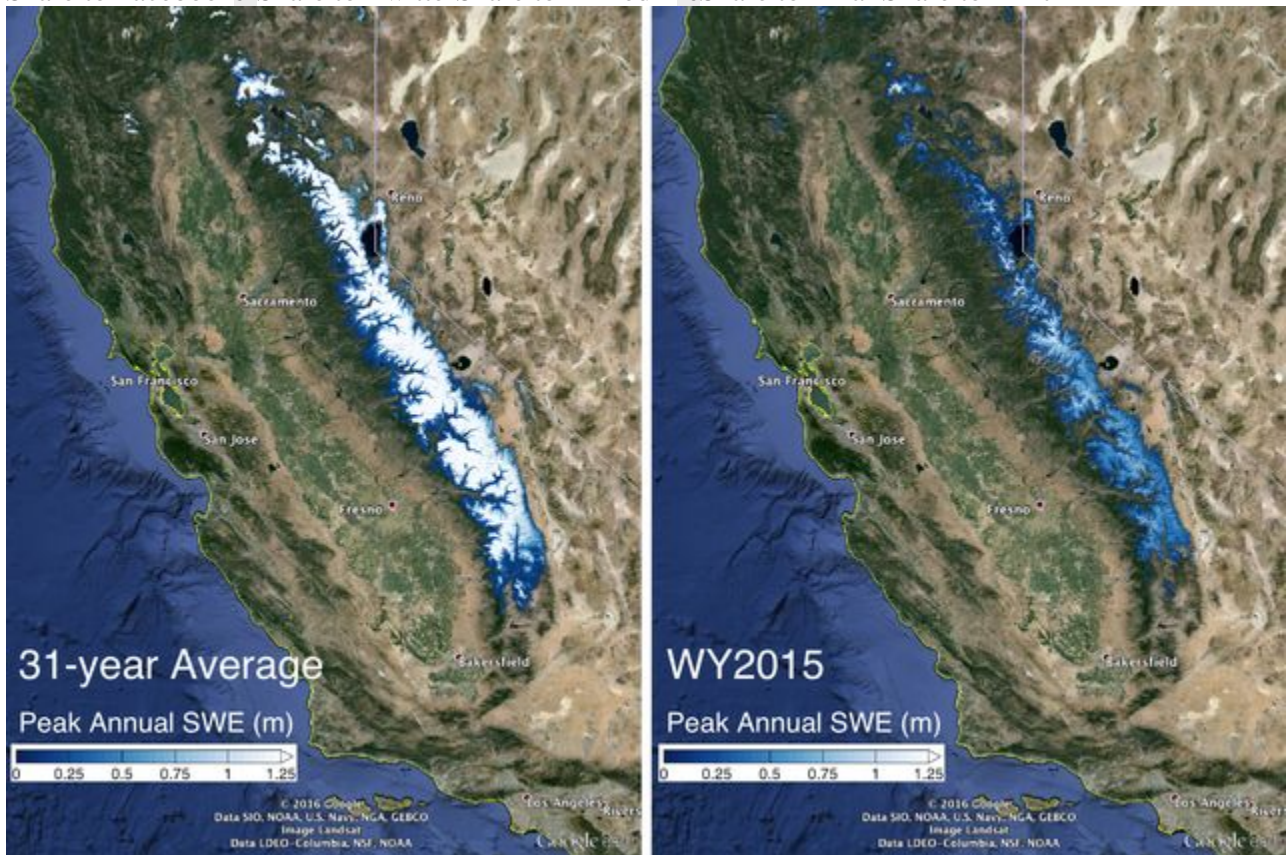
Sierra Nevada snowpack not likely to recover from drought until 2019

UCLA researchers' new method could be useful for analyzing snowpack in other mountains

Matthew Chin | June 21, 2016

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Steve Margulis/UCLA

The image on the left shows the 31-year average snow water equivalent in the Sierra Nevada mountains compared with the snow water equivalent in 2015.

Even with this winter's strong El Niño, the Sierra Nevada snowpack will likely take until 2019 to return to pre-drought levels, according to a new analysis led by UCLA hydrology researchers.

Additionally, they suggest their new method, which provided unprecedented detail and precision, could be useful in characterizing water in the snowpack in other mountains, including ranges in western North America, the Andes or the Himalayas. These areas currently have much less on-site monitoring than in the Sierra Nevada.

The study was [published online today](#) in The American Geophysical Union journal Geophysical Research Letters.

“With the consecutive years of ongoing drought, the Sierra Nevada snowpack’s total water volume is in deficit and our analysis shows it will take a few years for a complete recovery, even if there are above-average precipitation years,” said the study’s principal investigator, Steve Margulis, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the UCLA Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science.

Much of California’s water comes from the snowpack when the Sierra Nevada snowpack melts. The winter of 2015 capped four consecutive years of drought that resulted in the largest cumulative drought deficit spanning the 65 years that have been examined. The water volume of the snowpack in 2015 was just 2.9 cubic kilometers, when a typical year is about 18.6 cubic kilometers.

“It is critical for regions like California, that rely on their regional snowpack for water supply, to understand the dynamics of the system,” Margulis said. “Our new tool could help not just California, but other regions, gain insight about their regional snowpack.”

The researchers created a dataset covering 31 years (from 1985 to 2015), using measurements from NASA Landsat satellites, which provide daily maps of the full Sierra Nevada snowpack that have about 10 times sharper resolution than previously available. While there are on-site sensors throughout the mountain range, they are typically in the middle elevations and do not provide a full, high-resolution picture of the entire range, particularly at higher elevations, Margulis said. The researchers combined their new dataset with other snow survey data, collected by the state’s Department of Water Resources, to extend the time series of range-wide snowpack volumes back 65 years to 1951.

Using the data, the researchers applied probabilistic modeling methods to make predictions of snowpack water availability. Accounting for the four-year snowpack deficit from the 2012-2015 drought, the researchers say it will likely take until 2019 to get back to pre-drought conditions.

“Our larger goal is to build a very detailed, continuous picture of the historical snowpack, diagnose the primary factors that cause it to vary, and then ultimately improve models for predicting how much water will be available from it,” Margulis said. “This unprecedented information can help policy makers make more informed decisions with regard to this critical resource, especially as climate change affects it.”

Other authors include graduate students Gonzalo Cortés and Laurie Huning, both members of Margulis’ research group at UCLA; Manuela Giroto, a research scientist with NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center and with the Universities Space Research Association in Columbia, Maryland; and Dongyue Li, graduate student, and Michael Durand, associate professor of earth sciences, both of The Ohio State University.

The research was supported by NASA and the National Science Foundation.

Feds: Drought kills 66M trees in Sierra

Scott Smith, Associated Press 11:52 a.m. PDT June 22, 2016



A burned out truck is seen near Cobb, California, on September 15, 2015.(Photo: Josh Edelson/AFP/Getty Images file)

FRESNO, Calif. - The number of trees in California's Sierra Nevada forests killed by drought, a bark beetle epidemic and warmer temperatures has dramatically increased since last year, raising fears they will fuel catastrophic wildfires and endanger people's lives, officials said Wednesday.

Since 2010, an estimated 66 million trees have died in a six-county region of the central and southern Sierra hardest hit by the epidemic, the U.S. Forest Service said.

Officials flying over the region captured images of dead patches that have turned a rust-colored red. The mortality from Tuolumne to Kern counties has increased by 65 percent since the last count announced in October, which found 40 million dead trees.

California is in the fifth year of a historic drought, which officials say has deprived trees of water, making them more vulnerable to attack from beetles.

Gov. Jerry Brown in October declared an emergency, forming a task force charged with finding ways to remove the trees that threaten motorists and mountain communities.

These efforts have hit obstacles, slowing the tree removal as California enters a potentially explosive wildfire season.

Brown pushed for burning the trees at biomass plants to generate electricity, sending them to lumber mills or burning them in large incinerators, removing potential fuel for wildfires.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who oversees the Forest Service, said disaster awaits if more money isn't invested in managing forests in California and across the country. He urged Congress to act.

"Tree die-offs of this magnitude are unprecedented and increase the risk of catastrophic wildfires that puts property and lives at risk," he said in a statement. "We must fund wildfire suppression like other natural disasters in the country."

The Forest Service has committed \$32 million to California's epidemic, and the state budgeted \$11 million for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to buy tree removal equipment and to grant local communities money for their own work.

So far, the Forest Service says it has cut down 77,000 trees that pose the greatest risk to people, along roads and near communities and campgrounds. Crews from CalFire and Pacific Gas and Electric Co. also are at work using chain saws and wood chippers to remove dangerous trees.

Kathryn Phillips, director of the Sierra Club California, said the die-off from drought should signal to policy makers the urgency of curbing pollution that contributes to climate change.

"This is a warning to all of us," she said. "We need to cut our air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions more. We're on the right path, but we need to accelerate our effort."

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TOP VIDEOS

TMWA truck downs pole on Moran Street in Reno



[Marcella Corona](mailto:mcorona@rgj.com), mcorona@rgj.com 11:22 a.m. PDT June 23, 2016



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A utility pole on the 300 block of Moran St was broken after a truck caught a power line. Power and Internet access were initially disrupted by the incident. Power has been restored but not access to the Internet in the area.(Photo: James Ku/RGJ)Buy Photo

A Truckee Meadows Water Authority truck downed a telephone pole Thursday morning in a neighborhood street south of downtown Reno.

A crew was working on fixing a water leak when the truck's boom was caught on a communication line, pulling down the one pole in the 300 block of Moran Street, Andy Gebhardt, TMWA director of customer relations, said Thursday.

The power was temporarily out and has since been restored, but residents still don't have Internet access.

It was not known when the Internet access would be restored.

Check with RGJ for more updates as they become available.

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River homeless get visits, help from police



[Mike Higdon](mailto:mhigdon@rgj.com), mhigdon@rgj.com 6:09 a.m. PDT June 30, 2016



Buy Photo

Aphyr Feeney and her dog live outside next to the Truckee River. On June 29, Reno Police, Sparks Police and local service providers swept the river to find people in need of services. Feeney said she has been homeless with her boyfriend for three years. She uses a large area and has a drum set, several carts full of belongings and food and a motor scooter. (Photo: Mike Higdon/RGJ) Buy Photo

At 6 a.m., police woke Aphyr Feeney and her dog, who have been homeless for three years. Feeney sleeps near the Truckee River behind the Reno Sparks Tribal Health Center on Kuenzli Street and Kietzke Lane.

Local service providers, Reno and Sparks police picked through brush, shaky rocks and partial trails to reach well-hidden encampments along the Truckee River over the last two days. From Rock Park to Idlewild Park, they found about 50 people living along the river and told them about the new overflow shelter opening today and medical and psychiatric assistance programs in the area.

Sparks Police officials said most people accepted food, water, hygiene packets and some kind of service offers.

[RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL](#)

[Community wellness clinic brings 'Hopes' to downtown Reno](#)

No one was removed or arrested, but people were encouraged to clean up their areas and mark debris for disposal. Reno and Sparks public works employees picked up trash and several bicycles that were later donated to the Reno Bike Project.

Reno Police Sgt. Wade Clark said many people living on the river resist services because the shelter does not allow pets or unmarried partners to stay together. Other people just want to be left alone, he said, and don't want to be around people at the shelter who may be violent or steal their property.

Feeney kept a drum set — her third one since others were stolen — a propane tank with flame torch, a motor scooter, carts filled with food and other personal belongings in her camp. She moved to Reno from Portland after the city impounded her RV, making her homeless. She said she moved to Reno with her boyfriend because his family lives here.

Before losing her home, Feeney said she studied sound recording and science in Oregon. Now she cannot get a job because her identification keeps getting stolen too, she said.

Clark said this large-scale outreach is part of a new initiative the two police departments want to do three or four times each year.

"While it is not illegal to be homeless, several concerns have arisen from illegal encampments along the river to include health and safety concerns that affect all members of our community," wrote Sparks Police Department in a press release. "Trash, discarded hypodermic needles and discarded human waste are among the issues to be addressed. The Truckee River is the major source of drinking water for our community and deserves to be protected."

Clark said the Reno Police used to patrol the Reno side of the river alone, but now that most of the homeless encampments moved to the Sparks side near Grand Sierra Resorts, they joined forces with Sparks and invited other groups, such as:

- Veterans Affairs
- Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada
- Kids to Senior Corner
- Step 2 Family Service Center
- Northern Nevada Hopes
- Volunteers of America Northern Nevada

"If someone is afraid and not informed, this is going to help them," said Sean Reece.



Buy Photo

On June 29, 2016, Veterans Affairs service workers talk to Sean Reece about his options for care. He lives with a group of three other people in a series of tents next to the Truckee River. Reece is a veteran of the Navy. He said he is trying to get sober after moving to Reno, abusing drugs and becoming homeless. The VA services can help him with substance abuse, housing and personal care. (Photo: Mike Higdon/RGJ)

Reece said he is a Navy veteran who fought in the Gulf War. He said he moved to Reno and began abusing drugs. He became homeless in October when he couldn't work due to a broken hand that still hasn't healed. He said he stopped abusing drugs and found comfort with other homeless veterans. He appreciated the Veteran Affairs workers who came out to talk to him about options for care and housing.

Since he was "[other-than-honorably discharged](#)," the VA cannot give him lifetime health care. But they can help him review his discharge and upgrade it so he can receive benefits in the future.

All of the people living on the river might qualify for [Reno's new Housing First initiative](#) that focuses on the chronically homeless or [HUD-VASH vouchers](#) — a partnership between U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing.

Las Vegas bets on becoming a hub for water innovation



New York Times / Jim Wilson

Lawns landscaped for water conservation in the Nevada Trails neighborhood of Las Vegas, Dec. 18, 2013.

By Elizabeth Daigneau, Governing (TNS)

Saturday, July 2, 2016 | 2 a.m.

As the nation's driest big city, Las Vegas knows a thing or two about water. With a metro population of more than 2 million people and just 4 inches of rain a year, the city has learned how to be very, very frugal. Now it's taking that water consciousness — and all the years of experimentation it's driven — and using it to transform itself into a hub for new and innovative water technologies.

Long a leader in water conservation, Las Vegas has kept its water use down through a combination of fines, enforcement, incentives, education and innovation. For instance, front

lawns have been banned for years. For those homeowners grandfathered in, the city pays them to rip up their grass. Golf courses pay huge penalties when they exceed their water budgets. And the city recycles most of the indoor water used.

It's this experience that the city, in partnership with the state, the regional water utility, the University of Nevada and private industry, hopes to build on. The group has teamed up to create WaterStart, an incubator that tests promising water technologies and then helps companies bring those innovations to market.

Of course, this isn't just about water. It's about jobs, too. The idea was dreamed up in 2014 — in the wake of the Great Recession. For an economy dependent on tourism, officials are hoping that the companies WaterStart helps will stay in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas will have some company, though. Milwaukee started setting itself up as a water hub back in 2013. Still, Las Vegas already has some nifty new technologies and partnerships it's piloting through the WaterStart incubator.

High-tech hydrophones

Late last year, 13 rectangular boxes were installed along the Las Vegas Strip. Inside each one is an acoustic device the size of a fist that listens for the faintest noise emitted by leaks along a 3-mile section of aging pipe. The idea is that these sensors, or hydrophones — microphones designed to be used underwater for recording or listening — will detect a pipeline leak before a catastrophic rupture.

The PipeMinder

Where the hydrophone hears leaks, the so-called PipeMinder sees leaks and other stresses on water systems. The device, through high-resolution data capture, lets a water utility identify where it's at greatest risk of pipeline failure. The Southern Nevada Water Authority in the Las Vegas metro area will test the gadget, which hopefully will help utilities prioritize infrastructure maintenance based on where it's needed most.

Drones

Winnemucca Farms in the northern part of the state is using drones to measure plant stress from the air in an effort to improve irrigation precision. The unmanned aerial vehicles will be able to tell farmers where water is being used efficiently and where it's not.

The Israeli connection

Nevada, the driest state in the U.S., is partnering with Israel, one of the most arid nations in the world, to bring two Israeli startups stateside. The company Ayyeka produces sensors that can monitor water temperatures and levels in remote storage tanks; Outlocks works on physical security for facilities owned by water utilities.



July 5, 2016
Contact: Marlene Olsen
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Truckee Meadows Water Authority Announces Water Quality Report Available Online

(Reno, Nev.) – Every year Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) releases a Water Quality Report, as required by the Environmental Protection Agency. The report features important data and information regarding the quality, source and treatment of the community’s drinking water.

“At TMWA, we take a lot of pride in the high-quality water delivered to our customers,” said Paul Miller, TMWA’s manager of water operations and water quality. “The Water Quality Report is a welcome opportunity to show the stringent safety standards that our staff adheres to in ensuring water quality on a daily basis,” he added.

The Water Quality Report is available online at www.tmwa.com/quality2016 . To receive a hard copy, in either English or Spanish, please contact Will Raymond, TMWA’s water operations supervisor, at 834-8138 or wraymond@tmwa.com.

Last year TMWA received the President’s Award from the *Partnership for Safe Water*. With this award, TMWA’s Chalk Bluff Water Treatment Plant ranks among the highest-performing water treatment plants in the country for individual filter performance. At the time of the award, only 18 utilities across the country had been so honored.

Tours of the Chalk Bluff Water Treatment plant will be offered throughout September. Visit <http://tmwa.com/news/events-calendar> for more information and to sign up.

Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) is a not-for-profit water utility, overseen by elected officials from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. TMWA employs a highly skilled team who ensure the treatment, delivery and availability of high-quality drinking water around the clock for more than 385,000 residents of the Truckee Meadows. For more information, go to www.tmwa.com.

Team searching for Washoe water wasters

By [Colin Lygren](#) |

Posted: Thu 6:33 PM, Jul 07, 2016 |

Updated: Fri 8:55 AM, Jul 08, 2016



RENO, Nev. (KOLO) -- Whether it is a broken sprinkler head or someone just watering on the wrong day, **water** waste is happening. Truckee Meadows Water Authority, though, is methodically reducing the amount of that waste through its "Water Watchers" program.



"Say we see a broken sprinkler, we'll let them know and then we will mark it with a blue flag," said Gage Kabisch, a Water Watcher.

Kabisch drives around the region looking for customers who are wasting water.

"A lot of people think that they are there just to bust them or catch an issue but that is really not what they are there for. We really try to educate," said Andy Gebhardt, Director of Customer Relations at TMWA.

Gage finds most people are happy to comply with TMWA's requests because solutions result in customer savings.

"We are observing quite a bit of water runoff coming down the street," said Gage, describing what he looks for while looking for water wasters.

Over-watering is one of the most common violations, but a broken sprinkler head is the violation that will cost a customer the most – in water cost, not in fines.

"We just had someone in the lobby that had a high bill and their sprinkler head was broken and their bill was \$585, so that broken sprinkler head, it can add up," said Gebhardt.

Without a broken sprinkler, that same customer's bill would have been about \$50.

"The primary thing we are looking for is waste. Waste is never good," said Gebhardt.

Ultimately, preventing waste is why water watchers are employed by TMWA. They are able to alert customers of issues they may not be aware of.

"We'll mark them and let them know and just say 'hey, to help keep your bill low and conserve water, this is what we have observed,'" said Kabisch.

TMWA continues to provide high-quality drinking water in 2016 EPA report

By Cassie Wilson Friday, July 8th 2016

RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) — Every year, Truckee Meadows Water Authority releases a water quality report. The report features important data and information regarding the quality, source and treatment of the community's drinking water.

The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act was amended in 1996 and requires states to develop and implement programs to analyze any threats to public drinking water.

Some of the big testing areas include chlorine, lead, arsenic, pesticides and volatile organic contaminants. And our water didn't receive a single violation.

You can download the full report below. For more information on TMWA or questions regarding the report, you can head to their website online, contact them by email at waterquality@tmwa.com or by phone at 834-8118.

[2016 TMWA Water Quality Report](#) by [cwilsonmynews4com](#) on Scribd

Gaining water and northern Nevada's road toward recovery

By Cassie Wilson Monday, July 11th 2016



RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) — Around this time last summer, the region was already out of water and had been pulling from drought reserves for three months.

Drought reserves for northern Nevada include Boca, Stampede, and Prosser Reservoirs, which can feed the Truckee River.

The delicate balance of water supply and demand is closely watched by U.S. District Court Water Master Chad Blanchard.

Blanchard said we started dipping into drought reserves in late June this year in order to meet industrial use and agriculture demand, much later in the summer than previous years:

"We had run out of floriston rate water, or basically storage to meet our required flow early in the year last year, earlier than ever. It was in April, so we were significantly down. And we are doing quite a bit better this year; we still aren't great. But we are definitely much better than."

TMWA added that we have not started using drought reserves for residential use, which is something they are very proud of.

As of July 1, here are where things stand:

- Lake Tahoe: 16% capacity vs. 0% capacity in 2015
- Boca Reservoir: 74% of capacity vs. 14% of capacity in 2015
- Stampede Reservoir: 45% of capacity vs. 16% of capacity in 2015
- Prossier Reservoir: 68% of capacity vs. 26% of capacity in 2015

Significantly better -- not full, but we're happy to have it. Blanchard also explained there's enough water to last into the fall:

We have target flows that we have to meet year round which supply agriculture, municipal, and power generation demands. And those supplies should be able to hold up until September. Last year again, they were out in April. So it's not going to be a full year but it's going to be dramatically better than we've seen."

NDOT pledges \$13 million to improve stormwater treatment across Nevada

BY CASSIE WILSON THURSDAY, JULY 14TH 2016

RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) — The Nevada Board of Examiners has approved a consent decree between the Nevada Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The resolution includes a \$60,000 payment to the EPA and acknowledges past violations regarding stormwater management and an agreed path forward.

Waste water treatment at the Chalk Bluff Wastewater Treatment Plant currently does not include stormwater, and that runoff from roadways and construction sites can go untreated into the Truckee River.

NDOT said it is working to improve the situation.

The terms approved include 59 new positions and an investment of \$13 million dollars, which include enhanced stormwater improvements on construction sites, state of the art equipment, specialized staff, internal training, and public outreach. District Engineer Thor Dyson explained some of the new improvements,

"So this is a brand new state of the art storm water interceptor, it collects all the water and material from our facility and traps it here. So we are able to catch it, collect it and then dispose of it. before it goes into a drain down to the Truckee River."

Other improvements include upgrading wash racks to clean residue off trucks and vehicle, additional street sweepers, and new vector trucks to clean storm drains. Already in place, are drainage pipes on all roadways. Dyson explains why it is important to keep roadways clear of water,

"Those vector trucks are basically to clean out our pipes, clean out our drainage system, to get all the not so nice particles, the dirty particles that develop from the roadways and keep them from going onto the water ways."

NDOT is also taking steps toward creating public awareness, including students from the University of Nevada to develop an outreach plan.

Nevada officials OK settlement with EPA over polluted stormwater runoff

Rudy Malfabon, Director of Nevada Department of Transportation, talks about the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Sean Whaley/Las Vegas Review-Journal)



By SEAN WHALEY
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

CARSON CITY — Nevada officials on Tuesday approved a \$120,000 settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency over violations relating to [polluted stormwater runoff from state Transportation Department-run facilities](#).

The consent decree, approved by the Board of Examiners, which includes Gov. Brian Sandoval, acknowledges past alleged stormwater management violations and formalizes a plan to prevent future occurrences.

Half the fine will go toward the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

Sandoval said Nevada could have been fined millions of dollars for the violations, which involved transportation department facilities in Reno and at Spooner Summit near Lake Tahoe. In Reno, rainwater at the agency facility would run into a drain directly into the Truckee River, but no longer.

“They could have really brought the hammer down on Nevada in a big way,” he said.

“Effective and efficient storm-water management and clean water is a top priority for the state, and Nevada has chosen to invest in a strong program to preserve one of our greatest natural resources,” Sandoval said. “Clean water is important to us all and we must take measures to protect Nevada’s water for today and future generations.”

Transportation Department Director Rudy Malfabon said his agency added 59 positions, 42 of them new, to address storm-water runoff at facilities and on roads statewide. The budget was also funded with \$13 million; the additional resources were approved by the 2015 Legislature.

Sandoval said Nevadans need to have confidence that the water coming out of their taps is safe.

“Not only have we minimized, to a fraction, of what the exposure could have been to the state,” he said. “But we have developed a process and an infrastructure to ensure the quality of water for many decades to come.”

Contact Sean Whaley at swhaley@reviewjournal.com or 775-461-3820. Find him on Twitter: [@seanw801](https://twitter.com/seanw801)

Reno Fire responds to water main break after vehicle falls through Stewart Street

By Jaclyn Shearer Saturday, July 16th 2016

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Reno Fire Department)



tweet now!

RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) — UPDATE 7/17/16 10:44 a.m.

TMWA reports that the water main has been repaired and service has been restored to the area.

A spokesperson believes that a water main had been leaking under the road which caused the road to weaken.

TMWA reminds citizens to call in any kind of leaks or strange water activity they may notice in their area so that they can investigate.

Reno Fire report that they are responding to a water main break on Stewart after a car fell through the road around 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 16.

Stewart Street is closed in the area of Kirman Avenue.

Officials report that a vehicle was traveling westbound on Stewart east of Kirman and broke through the street. Water then began to flow.

Three people were in the vehicle. Two were transported to the hospital for evaluation, and the third was released at the scene. One person is thought to have minor head injuries but officials say all three passengers should be okay.

Truckee Meadows Water Authority has shut down the water, and officials are now working to assess the situation and determine how best to remove the vehicle. NV Energy has also been notified to determine whether or not any of their underground resources may be compromised.

We have a crew en route. More as we get it.

Water restored in Stewart Street water main break

By Sydnee Scofield |

Posted: Sat 3:16 PM, Jul 16, 2016 |

Updated: Sun 11:14 AM, Jul 17, 2016



RENO, Nev. (KOLO)-- 11 a.m. update:

Water was restored to all 22 customers who lost water Saturday when a water main broke, Truckee Meadows Water Authority spokeswoman Marlene Olsen said.



This vehicle fell into a sink hole on Stewart Street, alerting authorities to a broken water main. Photo by Sydnee Scofield/KOLO.

The water was restored by midnight, Olsen said.

Original story:

A Land Rover was in the wrong place at the wrong time today. It fell into a sinkhole caused by a water main break around 2:45 p.m. on Saturday near Stewart Street and Kirman Avenue.

"We're not sure if the water main broke first or the car breaking through the street was part of the problem, but we did have the water main break and water flowing out of the hole," Mark Winkelman of the Reno Fire Department said.

Three people were in the car at the time, two were sent to the hospital with minor injuries.

"So far, it looks like they're going to be okay, minor head injury to one person, not clear on the status of the other," Winkelman said.

They were able to tow the car out of the hole and restore water to 22 affected residents late Saturday evening.

While water main repairs took less than a day, street repairs will be a different story.

"It's going to be a long process. The street's going to have to be dug up. They're going to have to expose the leak then get the street repaired, so I wouldn't expect the street to be open any time soon," Winkelman said.

The 900 block of Stewart Street near Kirman Avenue will be closed until further notice.

Water Main Break Causes Vehicle to Fall Through Stewart Street

Posted: Jul 16, 2016 3:37 PM PDT Updated: Jul 17, 2016 11:19 AM PDT

By Meghan Breen

CONNECT



Truckee Meadow Water Authority reports all customers are back in service after a water main break Saturday afternoon.

A vehicle traveling westbound on Stewart Street drove into a sinkhole caused by a water main break.

Officials say they are not sure if the water main broke first or the car broke through the street causing the sink hole.

The water main break was fixed late Saturday night.

Three people were in the vehicle, two were taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

Ask Joe: Does TMWA really read your water meter every month?

By Joe Hart Thursday, July 28th 2016

From the Ask Joe file, we're answering a question about water use and water meters here in the Truckee Meadows.

Hal Arnott wrote in asking how the Truckee meadows water authority knows how much water customers are using each month? He says he never sees anyone reading the meters in his neighborhood.

I checked with TMWA about this. Brent smith is the field services manager for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

Smith says they have more than 121-thousand water meters and most of them are in the sidewalks so customers would not necessarily notice when the staff is out reading the meters.

All single family homes and business customers have meters and yes, TMWA takes readings every month.

Bu the way they do it is interesting.

Smith says TMWA meters have radios attached and those radios transmit the information electronically to someone driving by or on a mountain top tower. They say this is a much more cost effective way to read the meters than doing it manually and it also eliminates human error.

So yes, the meters do get read in order to track your water use.

Also if you check your water bill you will see the date that your meter was read

Climate change: Lake Tahoe warming faster than ever



[Benjamin Spillman](#), bspillman@rgj.com 12:25 p.m. PDT July 29, 2016

Lake Tahoe is warming faster than ever thanks in large part to human-caused climate change. (Photo: CelsoDiniz, Getty Images/iStockphoto)

The biggest alpine lake in North America is warming faster than ever thanks in large part to a changing global climate.

That's according to scientists who study Lake Tahoe to produce reports on everything from water temperature to clarity to invasive species.

The [latest data in the State of the Lake](#) report shows average water temperature in the lake increased nearly half a degree in one year, that's 15 times the long term rate of warming. The average surface temperature reached 53.3 degrees. The overall average water temperature is a little over 43 degrees.

Geoffrey Schladow of the University of California-Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center said the changes at Lake Tahoe highlight the magnitude of human-caused global climate change.

"That is a huge amount of water," Schladow said of Lake Tahoe, which reaches more than 1,600 feet in depth. If the water were spread out over an area the size of California it would still be 15 inches deep, he said.

"It takes a lot of energy to raise that a half degree," Schladow said.

[RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL](#)

[Hot in here? Warming climate bad news for Sierra snow](#)

Average annual clarity also decreased 4.8 feet to 73.1 feet, although it's still more clear than it was in 1997 when clarity was 64.1 feet.

The changing nature of Lake Tahoe is a reflection of the world around it. Air temperatures in the region are getting warmer and a shrinking percentage of precipitation is coming in the form of snow.

In the year covered by the most recent data, which ended Sept. 30, 2015, only 6.5 percent of precipitation came in the form of snow.

That means the inflows to the lake came in the form of rain, which is warmer and contributes to the warming conditions of the water.

Schladow noted the warming climate is most pronounced when looking at nighttime low temperatures.

The average low temperature at the lake in the most recent year covered by the study was 33 degrees. Although it was a decrease of .7 degrees from the previous year, it was still the fourth warmest on record and continues an overall warming trend.

Also, there were only 24 days with a daily average temperature below freezing. Since 1910 the average number of days with an average temperature below freezing has dropped from about 80 to fewer than 60.

Although the Lake Tahoe region enjoyed a slightly snowier-than-normal winter after the period covered in the latest data, Schladow doesn't expect the warming trend to change much.

That's because 2016 is on track to be the warmest year on record globally, he said.

"It is a lot warmer than it used to be so it is not going to change that much," he said.

Warming water can have major implications for Lake Tahoe, or any lake. Among them is reduced mixing of the water.

Mixing occurs when cold inflows sink to the bottom of the lake and push water from the depths toward the surface.

"Largely on account of climate change the lake is warming," Schladow said. "The same factors that are affecting Tahoe are playing out in every lake and every reservoir not just in California but through the entire west."

285 CONNECT [TWEET](#) [1 LINKEDIN](#) 35 COMMENT [EMAIL](#) [MORE](#)

TMWA Dedicated to Sustainability and “Green” Projects

AUGUST 1, 2016 BY [THISISRENO](#) [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



Solar Array located at TMWA’s Corporate Office

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Truckee Meadows Water Authority’s vision is “to enhance the quality of life in the Truckee Meadows by delivering exceptional, customer-focused water services.” In doing so, TMWA takes on projects that improve the reliability of high-quality water while protecting the environment, and evaluating economic and financial impacts of those decisions. Because water is one of the greatest resources in our community, it’s important to protect its viability for generations down the road.

As environmental concerns grow within the Reno-Tahoe community, so does TMWA’s corporate responsibility. TMWA is dedicated to continually reducing its carbon footprint and reevaluate its energy consumption.

It takes energy to divert, treat and deliver high-quality water to TMWA’s customers. Although gravity does a lot of the work, it requires an average of 50 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per year to maintain water operations. Three run-of-the-river hydroelectric plants, on the Truckee River and just west of Reno, provide enough clean, renewable power to make TMWA carbon neutral during a normal precipitation year.

TMWA has several other green strategies in place:

1. Using off-peak energy to operate the treatment plants and pump stations whenever possible
2. Ensuring capital improvement projects incorporate energy savings wherever possible
3. Installing other renewable energy projects with reasonable payback periods
4. Running our fleet of work trucks on biodiesel fuel
5. Reducing, reusing and recycling as many office products as possible

For details on TMWA’s green initiatives and to [find out more, visit here.](#)

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