

## **TMWA's Plan for Groundwater Sustainability on the Mt. Rose Fan**

Due to dependence upon groundwater and the continued decline in water levels aggravated by the ongoing drought, it is necessary to provide a supplemental source of supply for the water systems located on the upper Mt. Rose and Galena fan areas. These areas currently rely on groundwater wells for 100 percent of their water supply.

TMWA is implementing a \$7.8 million groundwater sustainability / conjunctive use plan for the Mt. Rose and Galena fan areas. The plan includes three projects which will deliver limited amounts of treated surface water from the Truckee River to the area to replenish wells:

- Arrowcreek/Mt. Rose Conjunctive-Use Facilities, in service January 2016
- Expanded Conjunctive-Use Facilities/Aquifer Storage and Recovery Program, scheduled to be constructed in 2016-2017
- South Truckee Meadows General Improvement District (STMGID) Conjunctive-Use Facilities, scheduled to be constructed in 2017-2018

These facility improvements are included in TMWA's existing budget and will not affect rates.

Conjunctive use management maximizes use of surface water when it's available, thereby reducing groundwater pumping. This approach allows us to meet demands with surface water, and to rest and recharge specific wells when enough surface water is available. The more water we can recharge and store during the off-peak season, the more we will have available when river and creek flows are low. It's like money in the bank.

In order to provide for the long-term sustainability of the local groundwater aquifer, TMWA's plan also includes a small (8,800 square foot) water treatment plant off of Whites and Thomas Creeks. When adequate creek flows are available, a portion of the flow will be diverted to the water treatment plant, and sufficient flows will remain downstream in both creeks to maintain wildlife and habitat needs, as well as downstream irrigation requirements.

By supplementing the groundwater resource with water supplies from both the Truckee River and Thomas and Whites Creeks, TMWA's goal is to pump less groundwater from the Mt. Rose and Galena fan aquifer than we do today, even with additional development.

TMWA is a water purveyor required to respond to development approved by local governments, we do not set growth policy. Our role is to provide a reliable, high-quality water supply to homes and businesses within our service territory. TMWA's integrated planning process ensures the long-term water resources, facility capacity and funding mechanisms are in place to meet current and future water supply and demand conditions.

## **Project History / Timeline:**

**2002 Washoe County South Truckee Meadows Facility Plan** - The County's Facility Plan recognized that, "The upper treatment plant is an integral component of the recommended water supply plan ... Most importantly, it will provide recharge water and/or offset winter groundwater pumping in the upper Mt. Rose fan area."

**July 20, 2011** - The Washoe County Board of County Commissioners approved its recommended program for mitigation of unreasonable adverse effects of municipal pumping on domestic wells in the Mt. Rose/Galena Fan area, and Washoe County Domestic Well Mitigation Policy.

**August 26, 2014** - TMWA Domestic Well Mitigation Workshop

Residents voiced broad concerns relating to the long-term health of the groundwater aquifer, including:

- What commitments will TMWA make to prevent further impacts to domestic wells;
- How long it will take to bring surface water to the area;
- What is to prevent TMWA from pumping the wells and sending the water out of the area;
- General concerns about surface water quality compared to groundwater;
- Stabilizing water levels, resource sustainability;
- Concerns over past land development approvals
- Drought, water conservation;
- Lack of transparency.

**October 15, 2014** - TMWA Board of Directors public meeting: TMWA adopts Mt. Rose / Galena Fan Domestic Well Mitigation Program, effective upon the closing date of the successful merger of Washoe County Community Service Water Utility and STMGID into TMWA.

**April 15, 2015** - TMWA Board of Directors public meeting: Rule Change 1st Reading

**May 21, 2015** - TMWA Board of Directors public meeting: Rule Change 2nd Reading

The newly adopted rules, water rights dedication policies and Water Service Facility Charges for this area require developers to dedicate supplemental surface water (creek) supplies when dedicating groundwater for new service in the area.

## **Project History / Timeline (continued):**

**July, 2015** - Letter on groundwater sustainability and conjunctive use projects sent to 8,000 area residents and businesses.

**November 18, 2015** - TMWA Board of Directors public meeting: Water Treatment Plant Parcel Purchase Agreement

**November 18, 2015** - Monte Vista Home Owners Association Meeting

**December 15, 2015** – Mt. Rose Water Treatment Plant Special Use Permit Application filed with Washoe County

**January 1, 2016** - Open House invitations (1,500 +/-) and Status Report letters (6,500 +/-) sent to area residents

**January 11, 2016** – TMWA Mt. Rose Water Treatment Plant Open House (South Valleys Library)

South Truckee Meadows / Washoe Valley Citizen's Advisory Board - Thursday January 14, 2016, 6:00 p.m. at the South Valleys Library

District Forum hosted by Commissioner Lucey - Thursday January 21, 2016, 6:00 p.m. at the South Valleys Library

Washoe County Board of Adjustment - Thursday, February 4, 2016, 1:30 p.m. at the County Commission Chambers, 1001 E. 9th Street, Building A, 1st Floor, Reno.

The entire SUP application may be reviewed at:

[https://www.washoecounty.us/csd/planning\\_and\\_development/applications/files-planning-development/comm\\_dist\\_two/sb15-012w.pdf](https://www.washoecounty.us/csd/planning_and_development/applications/files-planning-development/comm_dist_two/sb15-012w.pdf)