



STAFF REPORT

TO: TMWA Standing Advisory Committee
THRU: Mark Foree, General Manager
FROM: John Enloe, Director Natural Resources
DATE: March 1, 2016
SUBJECT: **Informational report on the Fish Springs Ranch/North Valleys Water Importation Project (“Vidler”)**

BACKGROUND

A request was made to update the Standing Advisory Committee on the status of the Fish Springs Ranch/North Valleys Water Importation Project (NVIP). The following information is a brief update on the operations of the NVIP since the merger.

DISCUSSION

Under the terms of the Banking Agreement with Fish Springs Ranch, LLC, TMWA is authorized to use the Dedicated Water Rights for “its general temporary purposes, including groundwater recharge or conjunctive use management” until the water is otherwise committed for service. To date, virtually no water rights from the NVIP have been committed for service in the North Valleys. At present, however, there are a substantial number of new projects in Stead/Lemmon Valley and Cold Springs which have expressed strong interest in obtaining water supply from the NVIP. These projects include: Heinz Ranch, Taintown and White Lake Vistas in the Cold Springs; NVIG, Silver Hills and The Lakes at Lemmon Valley within Stead/Lemmon Valley; and a project referred to as Evans Ranch, which encompasses an area in both Cold Springs and Stead/Lemmon Valley.

8,000 acre feet of will serve commitments can be made against the NVIP, with a potential to increase the water supply in the future by an additional 5,000 acre feet, subject to favorable water level and water quality monitoring data, and obtaining all necessary permits. The amount of Water Rights Credits required to support a will serve commitment shall be calculated in accordance with TMWA Rule 7.

Subsequent to the merger of the Washoe County water systems into TMWA, staff has operated the NVIP water supply facilities for drought mitigation and conjunctive use purposes. During 2015, over 957 acre feet of groundwater was supplied from the NVIP to the North Valleys. A portion of the water was supplied to the former Washoe County system in Lemmon Valley rather than pumping existing wells. This operation provided East Lemmon Valley with “passive recharge” benefits amounting to 366 acre feet compared to 2014 pumping levels. The balance of the water, approximately 591 acre feet, was supplied to the existing TMWA system in Stead through a connection referred to as the Bravo Intertie. A majority of this NVIP water supply to

existing customers in Stead offset water that would have otherwise been supplied from the Truckee River.

At present, the North Valleys Integration Project, a \$12.5 million, 24-inch diameter pipeline project is under construction along Lemmon Drive. This project, once completed in June 2016, will give TMWA the ability to deliver the full 8,000 acre foot NVIP water supply to the North Valleys. In addition, it provides a substantial non-Truckee River water resource to the region in the event of ongoing drought conditions. A low interest rate SRF loan was obtained to fund the project; costs will be recovered from both customer rates and WSF fees paid by new development.

TMWA has also developed a Basin Monitoring Plan for the Southeast Honey Lake Valley, Hydrographic Basin 097, which was recently approved by the State Engineer. In addition to submitting a Monthly Pumpage Report and Water Level Report forms to the NDWR, TMWA will submit an annual Basin Monitoring Report detailing and presenting results of the data collected during the previous reporting period. The report will include the following:

- Groundwater Withdrawal
- Groundwater Levels
- Groundwater Chemistry
- Weather Station Data
- Surface Water Monitoring - Cottonwood Creek
- Spring Monitoring - Cottonwood Springs
- Numerical Groundwater Flow Model Updates

The annual basin monitoring report will be submitted by January 31 of each year. The first annual basin monitoring report submittal will be on or before January 31, 2017, for data collected during the 2016 calendar year.