

**CWP North Lahontan Regional Workshop Summary  
Truckee, CA – April 9, 2008**

**OVERVIEW**

As in the prior update, the 2009 Update of the California Water Plan includes a volume consisting of Regional Reports, which describe the conditions for each hydrologic region in the State – as well as two areas of special interest (the Delta and Mountain Counties areas). Each regional report uses a standardized format in describing the current conditions for each region or area. The content for each report is being developed with the involvement of regional and local interests through a series of public workshops conducted in each region or area.

Each workshop consists of three major presentations to describe: an update on the state of Update 2009 activities; revision of Regional Report outlines, based on previous workshop results; and overview of the initial draft outline. For each workshop, most of the time is dedicated to small group review and comment of the initial draft outline of the Regional Report for that region or area. A workshop for the North Lahontan hydrologic region was held on April 9, 2008 in Truckee, CA. Copies of the workshop presentations, handouts, and materials are available on the Water Plan website at [www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials](http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/materials).

A brief recap of the presentations is provided in the following paragraphs and the remainder of this document provides a summary of the small group discussions. Flip charts and worksheets were used to record ideas generated during the discussions and transcripts of the recorded results are located on the following pages.

Paul Dabbs, Project Manager for Update 2009, made the first presentation regarding the status of major 2009 Update activities. A key element is the integration of the FloodSafe and IRWM (Integrated Regional Water Management) programs with the Water plan. This new content will be reflected in each Regional Report, as well as the scenarios and Resource Management Strategies (RMS). Other additions to the Water Plan include: quantification of scenarios and potential response packages; assessment of climate change impacts and recommended adaptation actions; and incorporation of other State plans with strong connections to the Water Plan.

Outreach efforts to regional, Tribal, and local interests are continuing to expand. A total of six drafts will be available for each Regional Reports and RMS, with opportunities to comment on the five drafts preceding the final report. Workshop sessions for RMS will occur during July and August 2008, with a conference line to facilitate participation. In addition to the feedback solicited for Regional Reports and RMS, review and comment is requested by June 30, 2008 for the Draft Assumptions and Estimate report released at the end of 2007.

In the second presentation, Pierre Stephens with Central District of the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reviewed the key characteristics of the North Lahontan hydrologic region. A recap of the comments heard during the previous workshop was also provided, along with a revised outline for the Regional Report format. The final presentation, by John Headlee with the Central District for DWR, described each section of the Regional Report for North Lahontan. Workshop attendees reviewed, discussed, and provided suggestions for each section, as recorded on the following pages.

**CWP North Lahontan Regional Workshop – Flip Chart Transcripts  
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**Questions and Comments**

- important connections between California and Nevada: groundwater basin sharing, TROA, Lake Tahoe issues, Walker River decree
- many people not here – who are Tribes, water agencies, planning agencies, Federal land management agencies – use Lahontan RWQCB contact lists
- bond language – who do Tribes access funding? How do Tribal priorities and perspectives enter into watershed projects? (sacredness of water v. resource value; more than management alone)
- floods are less of an issue – there needs to be a heavy emphasis on water quality

**Suggestions for North Lahontan Regional Report**

- info source: “Sierra Nevada Wealth Index” by Sierra Business Council

**Setting**

- west slope pulled out, but many issues on both sides of the Sierra
- expand Mountain Counties area to Eastern Sierra

***Watersheds***

- invasive species – impact of water consumption by junipers in Susanville
- info sources: Susanville RCD, Sierra Nevada Alliance – Sarah Green, 530-542-4546, Nikki B. at Sierra Business Council
- restoration of stream channels and meadows – habitat, water supply, flood abatement, stormwater, fire fuels
- forest management and fire management: effects on water quality from mudslides; effects on in-stream flows, groundwater recharge – both after catastrophic fires and from management actions
- South Tahoe Public Utility District used to discharge wastewater into Indian Creek Reservoir (now just below) – what is the legacy of contaminants from wastewater? traditional plants are not present, bird eggshells are softer; this is a willow source – willows are brittle
- meadow restoration by Truckee Meadows Water Authority

***Ecosystems***

- Lahontan Cutthroat Trout efforts up to Independence Reservoir
- invasive species: milfoils, mussels (boat inspections at Lake Tahoe)
- goshawk habitat
- invasive fish species and management for/of introduced fish species on Walker River and lakes system and poisoning by USFWS

***Climate***

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***Demographics***

- include Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (Environmental Dept.) – important Truckee River stakeholders
- Washoe Tribe: Woodfords community; Susanville Rancheria: Washoe, Paiute, Maidu, and Miwok; Brideport and Coleville are Washoe and Paiute; Fort Bidwell: Paiute; X-L Ranch (believed to be Paiute)

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***Land Use Patterns***

- coordinate with USFS and BLM recreation offices
- conversion of meadows and forest land (timber production zones) into development implied impacts to water quality and stormwater
- increase of secondary homes and peaky water requirements
- urbanization and increase in impervious surfaces
- economic link to snow: recreation
- road impacts: sand from Interstate 80 into Donner Basin and Stampede Reservoir – sediments are 8 – 10 feet deep (Lisa Wallace); toxics
- transportation impacts to air quality, water quality, and vegetation
- Martis Valley General Plan approved in 2005 or 2006 (Placer County was the lead)
- the Lake Tahoe TMDL has GIS maps for land use in the Tahoe Basin – identifies 24 land use categories with cross-references to water quality (see Lahontan RWQCB website)
- Tribal trust lands and allotments (Washoe also manages the USFS Meeks Bay resort)
- ski areas are a big land use

**Regional Water Conditions**

***Water in the Environment***

- big environmental use at Pyramid Lake
- importance of in-stream flows for health of fishery, riparian zones, flood

***Water Supplies***

- all Tahoe M & I is groundwater
- Nevada M & I is surface water
- groundwater reliability – causes of 6 residential wells going dry (perhaps due to increased development)

***Water Uses***

- snow making – any water supply impacts?
- conservation and efficiency measures: So. Tahoe PUD has IRWM funds for conservation; new development is required to have meter (radio telemetry allows meters to be read from the street)

***Water Quality***

- 303 (d) listed water bodies
- PCBs in Donner Lake? (found in fish)
- what's the status of Leviathon mine cleanup?

***Project Operations***

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***Water Governance***

- Lassen County has a new groundwater management agency (in Sierra Sun, article about water issues and resort)
- water entities are separate from town (e.g. Town of Truckee, Tahoe-Donner Public Utility District)
- General Plans (counties, Town of Truckee) address water quality, but have no Water Element per se

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- the EIS for TROA describes current water governance for Tahoe/Truckee area
- the Truckee River General Electric Decree and 1935 Truckee River agreement were incorporated into the Orr Ditch decree; TROA and interstate allocation PL 101-618 §204 allocates water (TROA implements)
- groundwater districts in Modoc and Lassen counties

***Flood Management***

- need to include Nevada stakeholders
- low impact development and stormwater management
- flood protection provided by upper watersheds
- California funding possibilities allow implementation only on the California side, projects and funding stop at the State line
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority has funding for water quality objectives that can support interstate projects (Truckee River Fund)

Historic Floods

- Jan. 1997 Trout Creek flood – projects proposed

Flood Hazards

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Institutions

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Existing Flood Damage Reduction Measures

- four federal reservoirs provide flood protection just for Reno, not Tahoe
- addressed in Tahoe Sierra IRWM, Town of Truckee planning documents, and Lahontan RWQCB Basin Plan

**Relationship with Other Regions** (interstate issues)

- connection between California and Nevada is important, how does this get represented in Water Plan?
- TRPA, Nevada Dept. of Environmental Protection – lower Truckee River TMDL (Tribal liaison is Tansey Anderson),
- Reno flooding and water quality issues
- Fish Springs Ranch and withdrawals from groundwater aquifer shared with California; groundwater districts in Modoc and Lassen counties
- Walker River Irrigation District and Walker Lake water quality (for fisheries)
- Carson Water Sub-Conservancy District

**Regional Water and Flood Planning and Management**

***Integrated Regional Water Management***

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***Accomplishments***

- joint water quality plan for the Truckee Basin surface water streams, developed by the Town of Truckee and Placer County – covers from Bear Creek by Alpine Meadows through eastern side of (town of) Truckee
- 16 water quality projects identified in TRPA’s Environmental Improvement Program have been implemented by Placer County, El Dorado County, and the city of South Lake Tahoe
- Truckee River Watershed Council is a non-profit organization that is working with about 30 – 40 entities, that are Truckee River stakeholders, on habitat restoration, preventative work (policies, programs, suggestions to regulatory agencies), information and outreach (e.g. Groundwater 101 workshop)
- Pyramid Lake Tribe and USFWS working together on Lahontan Cutthroat Trout restoration and recovery; the Tribe is part of the management oversight team
- Pyramid Lake Tribe also working with Lahontan RWQCB on TDS and sediment; also involved with Reno flood projects
- Tahoe-Donner PUD and Town of Truckee working on drinking water issues
- the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center collaborates with many entities on research, education, and outreach

***Challenges***

- Sierra Business Council “State of the Sierra” provides good summary points for challenges

***Drought and Flood Planning***

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**Looking to the Future**

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***Future Scenarios***

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***Climate Change***

- economic link to snow: when and at what altitude it falls
- role of Sierra Nevada as water reservoir and carbon sequestration reservoir; role this area plays for California’s water and economy
- in fire areas at Gray and Bronco creek basins, native vegetation is not coming back as quickly – exotics (cheatgrass and mustards) are taking over and out-competing native species

***Response Strategies***

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***Implementation Next Steps***

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**Water Portfolios from 1998 - 2005**

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**Selected References**

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