

**NORTHERN NEVADA WATER PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 3, 2009**

The regular meeting of the Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission (NNWPC) was held on Wednesday, June 3, 2009 in the Reno City Council Chambers, One East First Street, Reno, Nevada.

- 1. Roll Call and determination of presence of a quorum** – In Chairman Seidel’s absence, Vice-Chairman Ball called the meeting to order at 1:39 p.m. There was a quorum present.

Voting Members Present:

George W. Ball, Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Michael J. DeMartini  
Greg Dennis  
John Erwin (arrived at 2:02 p.m.)  
John Jackson  
Neil Mann  
Rosemary Menard  
Jerry Schumacher

Voting Members Absent:

Wayne Seidel, Chairman  
Michael Cameron  
Darrin Price

Non-Voting Members Present:

John Bird  
Harry Fahnestock  
Jon Palm

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Ray Davis  
Kelvin Hickenbottom  
David Noble

Staff Members Present:

Jim Smitherman  
Chris Wessel  
John Rhodes, Legal Counsel

**2. Approval of the agenda.**

Commissioner Dennis made a motion to approve the June 3, 2009 NNWPC agenda as posted. Commissioner Menard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**3. Approval of the minutes from the May 6, 2009 meeting.**

The minutes of the May 6, 2009 NNWPC meeting were submitted for approval. Commissioner Dennis made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Schumacher seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**4. Public Comments.**

Vice-Chairman Ball called for public comments.

Cathy Brandhorst made several comments not related to water issues.

Vice-Chairman Ball called for further comments and hearing none, closed the public comment period.

**5. Informational report on the Chalk Creek Watershed Project funded by the Truckee River Fund.**

Vice-Chairman Ball welcomed Terri Svetich, Senior Civil Engineer for City of Reno and Coordinator for the Truckee Meadows Stormwater Quality Management Program. Ms. Svetich stated that funding was provided from the Regional Water Management Fund for two significant projects related to the Chalk Creek Project. The first was the Non-Point Source Pollution Trading Analysis report by Tetra Tech, ECO:LOGIC Engineering, Desert Research Institute (DRI) and Sue Oldham, Esq. The report identified

Chalk Creek as one of the top three non-point source pollution trading options for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). Based on the findings, the Regional Water Planning Commission (RWPC) funded the Watershed Management and Protection Plan for Tributaries of the Truckee River.

Ms. Svetich reported that City of Sparks and City of Reno teamed up and applied for a grant via the Truckee River Fund to install a weir and purchase monitoring equipment. The monitoring verified that the TDS level runs approximately 2,600 to 2,700 milligrams per liter (mg/l) with a flow of 0.5 cubic feet per second (cfs) year-round.

Ms. Svetich stated that based on the findings, a multi-faceted approach was desired to characterize and document the Chalk Creek watershed, improve geomorphology and habitat, and evaluate mitigation strategies/recommendations to reduce TDS. Also included was a public outreach and education program within the sub-watershed.

Ms. Svetich reported that the selected team for the project includes, JBR Environmental Consultants, ECO:LOGIC Engineering, and Olsen and Associates. She invited John Enloe, ECO:LOGIC, to speak.

Mr. Enloe reviewed a brief Power Point presentation. He stated that ECO:LOGIC was hired several months ago to examine the feasibility of different treatment alternatives to reduce the TDS, with a secondary objective of reducing nutrients. He added that it was a planning level feasibility study. He stated that ECO:LOGIC met with a number of others to study the feasibility and effectiveness, as well as a rough cost estimate for each alternative. A ranking matrix was developed to prioritize the most suitable alternatives, from which the top three were further investigated for feasibility.

Mr. Enloe referred to the list of treatment and non-treatment alternatives that were identified and gave a brief overview of the pros and cons of each. The water treatment processes included conventional reverse osmosis (RO), advanced membrane, ion exchange, and chemical precipitation. The biological treatment processes include sulfate reducing wetlands and a sulfate reducing bioreactor. The non-treatment alternatives include export to ditch (Orr or Highland), playa disposal (North Valleys), blending with Chalk Bluff influent, deep well injection, evaporation and source control.

Mr. Enloe reported that the study showed that the scoring for the alternatives indicated no clear, strong alternative. He stated that the final ranking resulted in:

- 1) Source control (5.75 points)
- 2) Export via Orr Ditch (5.60 points)
- 3) Advanced VSEP membrane (5.60 points)

Mr. Enloe stated that exporting via the Orr Ditch is a viable alternative that could be implemented seasonally. He added that the creek is piped across the Orr Ditch. He summarized that the VSEP membrane process would be very expensive, exceeding \$10 million. He added that source control would be a good first start in minimizing the flow that reaches the river. He suggested as an interim measure, pursuing the implementation of the Orr Ditch option, which is essentially a no-cost option.

Commissioner DeMartini mentioned the Orr Ditch alternative and the inability to utilize it in the winter. He asked if it would be possible to put the water into the Chalk Bluff treatment plant during the winter. Mr. Enloe stated that the possibility was discussed with Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA); however, unless the water was treated before going to the treatment plant, it would not be a good option due to the pesticides, herbicides, etc. He summarized that a water treatment operator would not want to add poor quality source water to the drinking water system.

Mr. Enloe turned the presentation over to Molly Reeves, JBR Environmental. Ms. Reeves stated that her presentation would focus on the watershed characterization of Chalk Creek. She referred to a map that shows the location of the watershed. She reported that the goals were to identify flow inputs to Chalk Creek, identify sources of TDS and nutrients, evaluate mitigation measures to reduce TDS and nutrient

loading, and improve geomorphology and habitat.

Ms. Reeves reviewed the project tasks. She referred to infrared aerial photos of the watershed comparing 1980 to 2006. She stated that in 1980 the watershed was not yet developed so there was no riparian vegetation at the bottom of the drainage, indicating there was no perennial hydrology source prior to development of the watershed. She referred to the water quality monitoring locations and the associated TDS and sulfate concentrations.

Ms. Reeves reported that rather than analyzing soils from the watershed, JBR infiltrated water through the soils and analyzed the leachate, which was high in sulfate and TDS. She summarized that the source of the sulfate in the watershed is from leaching of the minerals from the geologic material.

Ms. Reeves stated that the next steps include installing mitigation geomorphic treatments, including permanent erosion controls for stabilization, or flow dissipation to increase infiltration, and increase riparian vegetation. She reported that also in conjunction with University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), City of Reno and the Truckee River Fund, an investigation will be performed on the potential for treatment of sulfate, selenium, and nutrients in a pilot wetland. She lastly referred to the treatment wetland schematic.

Ms. Svetich thanked Mr. Enloe and Ms. Reeves. She also thanked the Truckee River Fund for making the project possible. She stated that the Public Outreach program would be developed by Olsen and Associates, which is currently conducting a survey within the watershed to assess the knowledge of the residents related to watering practices. She stated that the effort is being tied into some of the work being done by TMWA related to their conservation efforts. She summarized that based on the results; the hope is to target the source control. She added that the plan is to apply the successes to the entire watershed. She welcomed questions or comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Menard referred to the pilot project, which JBR intends to implement and asked if the project is funded. Ms. Svetich stated yes, it is funded by the Truckee River Fund.

Commissioner Menard referred to the issue of over-watering and asked if there is a plan to assist with funding technical solutions, such as evapo-transpiration (ET) controllers. Ms. Svetich stated yes and added that discussions are ongoing with TMWA to utilize their staff and their approaches. She added that they have also been working on how to identify and coordinate with the homeowner's associations and large water users.

Commission Erwin referred to the wetland pilot program mentioned by Ms. Reeves and asked if a location had been selected. Ms. Svetich stated that the area selected for the pilot project is close to Simons toward the freeway. She added the area is near a trail so with proper signage, the public will be aware of the goals of the project. Ms. Reeves referred to the map and showed where the pilot program would be implemented.

Vice-Chairman Ball asked when the treatment pilot test is scheduled to begin. Ms. Svetich stated that the project team includes UNR and introduced Keith White, a graduate student and stated that Dean Adams is also involved. Ms. Reeves stated that the project is still in the design phase, which began March 1, 2009. She stated that the hope is to begin permitting and construction in July. She added that the monitoring period is just beginning and anticipated to last approximately 13 to 14 months.

Vice-Chairman Ball asked Mr. Enloe, regarding the alternative of discharging directly to the Orr Ditch, if it was analyzed to discharge 365 days per year, whether or not it had water. Mr. Enloe stated that no, they did not because during the winter many times the ditch gates are opened so the ditch acts as a stormwater conveyance facility. Vice-Chairman Ball asked Ms. Svetich if consideration has been given to trying to expedite permission to discharge to the Orr Ditch. Ms. Svetich stated that process has not been initiated because it just recently came to light as a very viable option. She added that she does not know how well it would be received and therefore, some groundwork is needed.

Commissioner DeMartini referred to the conflict and solution and mentioned that the Low Impact Development (LID) Manual's goal is to infiltrate the stormwater into the groundwater. He added that the Health Department has policies to treat runoff to pre-development levels by infiltrating it through catch basins and other means. He asked if it would be appropriate to seal off the infiltration devices. Ms. Svetich stated that the issue has been discussed extensively; however, based on this particular area's geology it is probably not the best thing to do. Commissioner Mann stated that this issue is fairly unique to the Chalk Creek watershed, with which Ms. Svetich agreed. Ms. Svetich added that similarities to the Chalk Creek watershed have been noted in the Mogul Creek drainage. She stated that many lessons have been learned in this process.

Commissioner Jackson stated that he likes the idea of discharging to the Orr Ditch and added that he does not believe there would be a problem with the Water Master in doing so if the water in the Truckee River is replaced. He urged that the alternative be pursued.

Vice-Chairman Ball thanked Ms. Svetich and the presenters.

*Vice-Chairman Ball apologized for the late start of the meeting and stated he had forgotten that Chairman Seidel had previously mentioned that he would not be present for today's meeting.*

**6. Informational report on the May 5, 2009, "Working in the River and Permitting Workshop" utilizing the Truckee River Restoration and Construction Permitting Handbook, and possible direction to staff.**

Vice-Chairman Ball welcomed Terri Svetich to present this item. Ms. Svetich reported that 166 people attended the workshop, of which 18 were speakers. She stated that case studies presented included specific types of projects that are conducted in the Truckee River. The speakers included Patti Bakker, Steve Volk, Dave Roundtree, and Andy Hummel. She also commended Q&D and Granite Construction for participating on a panel.

Ms. Svetich reported that other speakers included Mel Johnson, Terri Hendry, Matt Setty, and Candice Siwarga. She stated that a regulator panel included speakers from many of the regulatory agencies with great participation.

Ms. Svetich stated that the workshop included discussion of Truckee River restoration permitting and construction sites. Handouts were provided that highlighted the permitting flow charts. She added that the information is also available on the website, [www.TMstormwater.com](http://www.TMstormwater.com). She acknowledged Doug Youngs and City of Reno GIS staff, which hosts the watershed map server. She gave a brief overview of the website and its use with navigational tools.

Ms. Svetich thanked the Commissioners for funding the effort and making the workshop possible.

Vice-Chairman Ball thanked Ms. Svetich and commended her on a great job. He welcomed questions or comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Mann thanked Ms. Svetich for the time and effort that was put into coordinating the workshop. He commended her on a job well done.

**7. Discussion and possible recommendation to the Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC) concerning professional services for watershed-based water quality planning and the Truckee River third-party total maximum daily load for nutrients, including 1) funding not to exceed \$400,000 from the Regional Water Management Fund (RWMF) to support a scope of work for an amendment to an existing interlocal agreement with the City of Reno for the continuation of technical services provided by LimnoTech, Inc., and 2) funding not to exceed \$65,000 from the RWMF to support an additional interlocal agreement with the City of Reno for technical services to be provided by MBK Engineers..**

Jim Smitherman reported that the WRWC through the RWMF has been supporting this watershed-based water quality planning effort, including development of the third-party TMDL for nutrients on the Truckee River since last July. He reported that to date the effort has cost just under \$200,000 for a contract with LimnoTech. Another contract with California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) for a public process was approved for approximately \$140,000.

Mr. Smitherman stated that as discussed at the last meeting, a contract was also approved for Somach Simmons & Dunn as a retainer in the amount of \$50,000 to provide specialized legal services.

Mr. Smitherman stated that previously this effort was addressed by City of Reno and City of Sparks, which was targeted by the discharges from the Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (TMWRF). The efforts have been ongoing since 1998.

Mr. Smitherman reported that the scope of work from LimnoTech to continue work includes:

- Educate stakeholders and participants
- Identify regulatory issues
- Resolve technical issues and refine tools
- Screen potential alternatives and frame a TMDL approach

Mr. Smitherman referred to the scope of work, which includes a status report of accomplishments to date.

Mr. Smitherman next referred to the scope of work presented by MBK Engineers, which would provide technical knowledge of the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) and the Truckee River operations model (a computer model that models flows on the river based on TROA). MBK proposes to provide technical and modeling assistance, as well as collaboration with Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP).

Mr. Smitherman reported that approximately \$585,000 was budgeted in the RWMF for the next fiscal year. He stated that the proposals add up to that amount as follows:

- LimnoTech - \$400,000
- MBK - \$60,000
- CSUS - \$100,000 to \$120,000

Vice-Chairman Ball thanked Mr. Smitherman and welcomed input from the Commission.

Commissioner Jackson asked if the stakeholders list and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes a member of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (PLPT). Mr. Smitherman stated that the PLPT is included as a stakeholder; however, the TAC has not been formed to date.

Commissioner Dennis clarified that the group including LimnoTech, MBK and CSUS forms a core group for moving the TMDL forward and specifically working with the TAC, which will be formed shortly.

Commissioner Jackson reiterated that he would like to see a representative from the PLPT on the TAC.

Commissioner Menard made a motion to approve staff's recommendation. Commissioner Mann seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Ball referred to the second page of the staff report regarding the background and water quality related to TMWRF. He stated that Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency (TTSA) has as much impact on the river as TMWRF. He requested that TTSA's discharge to the river be recognized. Commissioner Dennis stated that information is received from TTSA on a monthly basis, which can be included.

Vice-Chairman Ball referred to the travel costs included in the \$400,000 budget for LimnoTech. Commissioner Dennis reported that LimnoTech is located back east; however, facilities at TMWA have been set up to enable video-conferencing communication rather than extensive traveling.

Vice-Chairman Ball noted for the record that Cathy Brandhorst submitted a request to speak card; however, she left the meeting at 2:33 p.m. so she did not speak.

#### **8. Review and possible approval of the fiscal year 2009-2010 routine operating budget for non-staff services, and possible direction to staff.**

Mr. Smitherman reported that this is a "housekeeping" item. He explained that the WRWC authorized him, as the Program Manager, to approve in-budget expenditures from the RWMF not to exceed \$25,000 on recommendation from the NNWPC. He added that he is also authorized to sign contracts for the same work.

Mr. Smitherman stated that although the WRWC authorized the routine operational expenditures; it was not clear whether those items had to come through the NNWPC. He stated that he and John Rhodes attempted to get clarification. He referred to the staff report, which included "Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Routine Operating Budget for Non-staff Services". He requested that the NNWPC approve the non-staff operating budget so that each item does not have to be brought back individually.

Commissioner Mann made a motion to approve the non-staff operating budget as presented. Commissioner Menard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

#### **9. Program Manager's Report**

Mr. Smitherman reported that he included updates on the following topics as requested or that he thought would be of interest to Commissioners. He stated that the purpose of this agenda item is for Commissioners to review the information included in the agenda packets and feel free to ask questions, make comments, or request additional information.

##### **a. Status Report of Projects and Work Plan supported by the Regional Water Management Fund**

The updated Status Report of Projects was provided in the agenda packets.

##### **b. Financial report on the Regional Water Management Fund**

The updated financial report on the Regional Water Management Fund was provided in the agenda packets.

Vice-Chairman Ball referred to the budget item for the North Valleys – Amendment to include Regional Integrated Wastewater System Planning and asked if the \$96,000 was from the RWMF. Mr. Smitherman stated it is; however, he clarified that \$40,000 in grant money might be received.

##### **c. Report on Legislative Activities**

Mr. Smitherman referred to latest update on legislative activities that was provided to Commissioners at the meeting. He stated that the list is current.

Commissioner Schumacher referred to Assembly Bill (AB) 119 and asked about the status. Mr. Rhodes stated that AB 119 was attached to Senate Bill (SB) 175, which is the Washoe County Flood Bill. The attachment was withdrawn from SB 175. He added that AB 119 still stands as presented.

**d. Truckee River Flood Management Project status report**

Mr. Smitherman reported that a status update on the Truckee River Flood Project was included as an informational item.

Mr. Smitherman welcomed questions or comments from Commissioners.

**10. Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding agenda items for the July 1, 2009, Commission meeting and future meetings.**

Mr. Smitherman referred to the list of agenda items for the July 1, 2009 NNWPC Agenda that was included in Commissioner's packets. The potential items include:

1. Status report and future plans on the satellite radar differential interferometry (D-InSAR) ground deformation observations in the southern half of Washoe County; discussion and possible approval of an Independent Contractor Agreement with Dr. Gary Oppliger in the amount of \$11,084 to be funded from the RWMF to conduct the remainder of the three year project, and possible direction to staff.
2. Report on additional resources necessary to make the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) Water Usage Review Program available to the customers of the other public water purveyors, and possible direction to staff.
3. Program Manager's Report:
  - a. Status of projects and Work Plan supported by the Regional Water Management Fund
  - b. Financial report on the Regional Water Management Fund
  - c. Report on Legislative Activities
  - d. Truckee River Flood Management Project status report
4. Other Informational Items

Vice-Chairman Ball thanked Mr. Smitherman for his update.

**11. Commission Comments.**

Vice-Chairman Ball reported that Robert Martinez, Nevada Division of Water Resources, was recently appointed as the President of the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. He congratulated Mr. Martinez on his appointment.

**12. Staff Comments.**

None

**13. Public Comments.**

Vice-Chairman Ball called for public comments and hearing none, closed the public comment period.

**14. Adjournment.**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Niki Linn, Recording Secretary

Approved by Commission in session on \_\_\_\_\_ 2009.

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Wayne Seidel, Chairman