



Lahontan Regional Water Quality
Control Board



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

March 2014

STATE AND REGIONAL

1. **Status of Local and Technical Assistance Grants Activities from August 2013 to January 2014 - Cindy Wise**

Lahontan and State Water Board staff coordinate to implement the Water Boards' financial assistance programs to help local agencies and individuals prevent or clean up pollution of the state's water. Low-interest loan and grant funding is available for watershed protection projects, nonpoint source pollution control projects, construction of municipal sewage and water recycling facilities. This is an update of grant/loan program activities in our Region, followed by a table of the local technical assistance projects that are currently managed by Lahontan staff.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Program

The CWSRF program provides low-interest loans for the construction of wastewater and water recycling facilities, municipal landfill treatment systems, implementation of non-point source projects and programs; and stormwater treatment projects. It is funded by federal grants, state bond funds, local match funds, repayments, and revenue bonds. The proposed annual business plan (aka Intended Use Plan or IUP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2014 includes a list of projects intended to be financed in 2014. The State Water Board adopted the FFY 2014 IUP at its October 2013 Board Meeting (Resolution No. 2013-0034) and can be found at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/docs/fy1314/ffy2014_iup.pdf

The IUP financing forecast includes over \$69,000,000 in financing for these five projects in our Region:

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority - Upper Narrows Pipeline Repair/Replacement Project (\$4,000,000)

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority - Apple Valley Subregional Wastewater Reclamation Plant (\$26,400,651)

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority - Hesperia Subregional Wastewater Reclamation Plant (\$33,508,515)

Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority - Nanticoke Pump Station Bypass Sewer Project (\$4,500,000)

South Tahoe Public Utility District - Diamond Valley Ranch Emergency Retention/Irrigation Field (\$1,030,000)

The CWSRF Program accepts project applications on a continuous basis and the project priority list included in the annual business plan can be amended as necessary. In January 2014, the State Board announced that it will now offer extended term financing of up to 30 years for all water quality projects that are eligible for the CWSRF program. This increase in term from 20 to 30 years is intended to make projects more affordable for communities throughout the state.

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Program

The IRWM Grant Program provides grants for projects intended to promote and practice integrated regional management of water for both quality and supply. To be eligible for IRWM grant funds, IRWM geographic regions must be approved by CA Department of Water Resources (DWR.) DWR has approved six IRWM groups in the Lahontan Region - Lahontan Basins, Tahoe-Sierra, Inyo Mono, Fremont, Antelope Valley and Mojave. Since the inception of the IRWM program, about \$61.4 million in IRWM grants have been awarded in the Lahontan Region. Round 3 IRWM implementation grant solicitation is planned for 2014. In February, DWR will be holding three workshops to gather public input on potential changes to improve the grant solicitation process for the IRWM Round 3. State and Lahontan Water Board staff will assist DWR staff with project proposal evaluation. DWR staff will manage all IRWM project grants. For more information, see <http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm>

Proposition 84 Storm Water Grant Program

The Proposition 84 Storm Water Grant Program (SWGPs) includes approximately \$82 million in matching grant funds available to local public agencies for planning and implementation projects that reduce and prevent pollution of rivers, lakes, and streams from discharges of storm water. Planning and implementation projects selected for funding in the first round total about \$50 million and include one project in the Lahontan Region titled *Catchment-scale Stormwater Monitoring, Model Validation and Load Estimation to Meet TMDL Requirements in the Lake Tahoe Basin* and awarded to the Tahoe RCD for \$760,000. A second round of project solicitation is underway with the remaining \$32 million to be used for implementation projects. Lahontan Water Board staff will assist State Water Board staff with project proposal review in March with funding recommendations to be announced in Summer 2014. State Water Board staff will

manage all selected projects. For more information on the SWGP, please see: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/prop84/index.shtml

Proposition 84 Agricultural Water Quality Grant Program

The State Water Board's Agricultural Water Quality Grant Program (AWQGP) includes approximately \$13.7 million in Proposition 84 bond funds. Projects funded from the AWQGP include \$1 million for a Lahontan project titled *Grazing Management Practice Implementation and Assessment in One or More Targeted Watersheds in the Lahontan Region (Walker River, Carson River, Susan River and Owens River)* aka "Rivers and Ranches" grant. The project is now underway with Sierra Business Council as the grantee and managed by Lahontan Water Board staff. Tasks of this project include grazing management practice (MP) education and outreach, grazing MP implementation (on a cost-sharing basis with ranchers), and water quality monitoring and analyses to assess the effectiveness of grazing MPs and for bacteria source identification.

Water Board staff anticipate two ranchers (one in Little Truckee River Watershed and one in Bridgeport Valley) will receive grants and begin implementing MPs this summer.

Interested ranchers should contact Water Board staff as soon as possible (no later than April 1) to obtain grants for implementing MPs on their lands this summer. For applications and more information, please visit: <http://sierrabusiness.org/what-we-do/projects/336-rivers-and-ranches-project>.

319 Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant Program

This is the federal grant program for nonpoint source pollution control projects. As shown in the table below, our staff currently manage seven 319 Nonpoint Source grants totaling \$3,843,633. The next solicitation to award approximately \$4 million in planning and implementation projects is underway, with funding recommendations planned for

May 2014. Projects selected for funding from this solicitation will be managed by Lahontan Water Board staff. For more information, see http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/nps/docs/2014/full_proposal/2014_fp_sn.pdf

OTHER GRANT INFORMATION

Grants Roundtable Meetings

This forum continues to meet about quarterly to discuss grant-related issues. It includes a representative from each Regional Board and staff from the State Water Board. The next meeting is planned for Spring 2014.

Funding Fairs

The California Financing Coordinating Committee (CFCC) was formed in 1998 and is made up of several state and federal funding agencies including the State Water Board. The intent of the CFCC is to facilitate and expedite the completion of various types of infrastructure projects by helping customers combine the resources of different agencies. Project information is shared between members so additional resources can be identified. The CFCC conducts free Funding Fairs statewide each year to educate the public and potential customers about the different member agencies, and the financial and technical resources available. The member agencies are in the process of planning the 2014 Funding Fairs. Information regarding the CFCC can be found at: www.cfcc.ca.gov.

Web Site and Electronic Mailing List

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/ is the link from the State Water Board's web page for information on current and upcoming grants. http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/e_mail_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml#financial is the link to subscribe electronically to the grants mailing list to receive notification of new grant information by selected program.

GRANT PROJECTS CURRENTLY MANAGED BY REGIONAL BOARD STAFF

Fund	Title	Recipient	Amount
319 Nonpoint Source	Reducing Sediment Loads through Residential BMPs – Middle Truckee River TMDL	Sierra Nevada Alliance	\$485,000
319 Nonpoint Source	Lake Tahoe BMPs Implementation and Effectiveness	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency	\$770,489
319 Nonpoint Source	Coldstream Canyon Floodplain Restoration	Truckee River Watershed Council	\$250,000
319 Nonpoint Source	Squaw Creek Restoration Preliminary Design	Placer County	\$167,961
319 Nonpoint Source	Upper Owens River Water Quality Project: Assessment and Implementation Measures to Reduce Nutrient Loading	California Trout, Inc.	\$125,000
319 Nonpoint Source	Lake Forest Water Quality Improvement Project	Placer County	\$750,000
319 Nonpoint Source	Truckee River Voluntary BMP Retrofit Program	Truckee River Watershed Council	\$295,183
Proposition 84 Agricultural Water Quality	Grazing Management Practice Implementation and Assessment in One or More Targeted Watersheds in the Lahontan Region	Sierra Business Council	\$1,000,000
Total of Current Projects:			\$3,843,633

NORTH BASIN

2. **Lake Tahoe Marina Association Meeting – Tobi Tyler**

On January 30, 2014, staff and I participated in a meeting with members of the recently re-established Lake Tahoe Marina Association. The Association includes all twelve marinas on the California side of Lake Tahoe that are regulated by the Water Board's Marina General Permit (for industrial storm water and discharges associated with maintenance dredging activities). The Marina Association's stated purpose is to provide an opportunity to discuss common issues, share related experiences, present ideas and work collaboratively going forward.

In the spring of 2013, all twelve marinas received violation notices (NOVs) for monitoring and reporting deficiencies noted in their 2011/2012 Annual Reports. Following a June 19, 2013 letter to marina owners concerning the NOVs, a number of the owners had further questions and sought clarifications regarding the Marina General Permit. The meeting on January 30, 2014 was a constructive meeting in which the Association presented a letter concerning requirements in the Marina General Permit. I relayed my desire to work collaboratively with Association members to come to agreement on how best to come into compliance and improve communication to better understand the Marina General Permit and its intentions. Staff suggested that several meetings be held with Association members and/or their consultants to follow up the 2012/2013 Annual Report review. These meetings will allow detailed discussions with marina owners on site-specific issues. Staff met with one marina consultant in February, and more meetings are scheduled for March.

The 2012/2013 Annual Reports have been reviewed, and reports for all twelve marinas continued to have deficiencies, though reports show significant improvement from last year. The specific violations will also be

discussed at planned meetings in February/March. Following the site-specific meetings, Water Board staff will prepare a response to the Association's January letter.

3. **Presentation at the Leavitt Lake Community Service District Board Meeting, Lassen County - Rob Tucker**

At the Leavitt Lake Community Services District (District) January 28, 2014 Board meeting, Water Board staff provided a presentation regarding the District's waste discharge requirements and compliance challenges. Water Board attendance had been requested by the District's General Manager. The main agenda item for the Board meeting was to consider an increase in the District's monthly service charges for sewer service upgrades and operational costs associated with the wastewater treatment system. Water Board staff covered the issues the District has been facing with respect to failing to meet effluent limits, the basis of those limits, and issues with possible ground water pollution resulting from the District's discharge.

Water Board staff's presentation included State Water Board survey data from 2012-2013 on sewer fees from similar districts with populations of 1,000 or less. The information showed that the sewer fee the District was proposing was close to that of similarly sized districts. Staff answered questions about why the nearby Susanville Sanitary District charges less for sewer service, and explained that Susanville has a greater number of people to share the cost of the facility, and that certain previous upgrades could have caused a rate increase but the federal stimulus package for economic recovery provided funding to offset increased costs. The meeting discussion concluded with adoption of the proposed sewer fee increase.

SOUTH BASIN

4. **Composting General Order Update –** *Brianna Bergen*

State Water Board staff are developing substantive conditions for a Draft *Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Composting Operations* (General Order) that would address appropriate water quality protection measures at composting facilities that currently exist or may be constructed. The Department of Resources, Recycling and Recovery (Cal Recycle) has an 'Organics Policy Roadmap' that identifies the need to compost more organic materials and reduce the amount of organics being landfilled by 50 percent by 2020. The draft General Order seeks to: 1) streamline the permitting process, 2) implement consistent regulation of qualifying compost facilities throughout the State, and 3) protect water quality while reducing disposal of organic materials in landfills.

On February 6, 2014, State and Regional Water Board staff attended a workgroup meeting to discuss a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Draft PEIR) that is being prepared to address potential impacts to the environment under the General Order. State and Regional Water Board staff met to discuss the scope of the proposed Draft PEIR, and State Water Board staff clarified that they are looking for alternatives to evaluate in the Draft PEIR, not alternatives to composting. During this meeting appropriate siting requirements, definitions, and economic considerations were discussed. The General Order will be an alternate permitting mechanism for composting operations that may pose a lower threat to water quality than those that would need to comply with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 27. We plan to continue participating in these meetings and provide comments to State Water Board staff on the draft General Order and the Draft PEIR. State Water Board anticipates releasing the General Order and the draft PEIR for public comment during summer 2014.

5. **City of Barstow Compliance with Enforcement Orders –** *Ghasem Pour-ghasemi*

Following is the compliance status for the City of Barstow (City) Wastewater Treatment Plant, regulated under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). The Water Board issued three orders to the City related to nitrate polluted groundwater.

Cleanup and Abatement Order – Groundwater Nitrate Pollution Cleanup

In December 2013, the City submitted a Remedial Design Report. This report describes how the City will clean up groundwater to maintain hydraulic control of nitrate pollution downgradient of the Northern Reclamation Field. The plan proposes to:

- Extract a total of approximately 1,000 gallons per minute from the seven groundwater extraction wells;
- Remove excess nitrate from the extracted groundwater using a fluidized bed reactor;
- Discharge treated water into percolation ponds on the south side of the Mojave River authorized by existing permit; and
- Monitor groundwater conditions and treatment plant effectiveness.

The City is required to begin groundwater extraction and treatment by November 10, 2014.

Cease and Desist Order - Requiring Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The City is making progress to comply with Cease and Desist Order R6V-2004-0029. An upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant was completed in July 2009 and subsequent monthly reports indicate that the wastewater treatment facility is in compliance with the WDRs. Effluent total nitrogen concentrations have been less than 10 mg/L for the entire year 2013 (except for December which was

13.6 mg/L). The December event was caused by taking an aerator out of service for maintenance. The City is now in the process of making additional upgrades to the wastewater treatment facility and percolation ponds, to be completed in two phases. The Phase I improvements will cost the City eight million dollars, of which 2.8 million dollars is from federal grants. The rehabilitation of percolation Ponds 1, 2, and 3 is completed. Pond 3 was not used for a long time because solid waste deposits in the Pond contained elevated metals that have been removed. A future Phase II will address additional improvements to wastewater treatment.

Cleanup and Abatement Order – Requiring Soapmine Road Area Replacement Water

The City continues to conduct residential well sampling of drinking water wells in the Soapmine Road area, as required by Cleanup and Abatement Order R6V-2007-0017. In the fourth quarter 2013, the City sampled 37 residential wells. Currently, the City is supplying 32 residences with uninterrupted replacement water service (bottled water) for residences where nitrate has been detected at concentrations at or exceeding 5 mg/L nitrate as N.

6. Proposed Plan, Operable Unit 1, Site Cg070, Former George Air Force Base, Victorville, San Bernardino County – Linda Stone

On February 18, 2014, the U.S. Air Force (Air Force) issued, for public review and comment, a Proposed Plan for Former George Air Force Base (GAFB), Operable Unit 1, Site CG070. The Proposed Plan presents the Air Force's selected remedy for Site CG070, a large area of trichloroethene (TCE) contamination in groundwater. The Air Force estimates that the areal extent of groundwater containing TCE in excess of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 5 micrograms/liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$) is approximately 680 acres and extends approximately 2,000 feet

north of the facility's northeast boundary. The TCE contamination has impacted the perched Upper Aquifer and spread to the Lower Aquifer, which is hydraulically connected to the Flood Plain Aquifer of the Mojave River. Both the Lower Aquifer and Flood Plain aquifers are important water supply sources for the region.

The Air Force's proposed remedy for the TCE groundwater plumes is Monitored Natural Attenuation (MNA), with Land Use Controls, and a Water Supply Contingency Plan. The Air Force estimates that it will take 500 years for contaminant concentrations to be reduced to MCLs in groundwater using MNA. The Air Force proposes to monitor over time to determine if the groundwater contamination is behaving as the Air Force's groundwater model has predicted. Land use controls would identify measures to prevent land uses that could pose an unacceptable risk to human health. A water supply contingency plan would provide an alternate water supply source if drinking water wells are installed within the area of groundwater contamination.

Water Board staff reviewed the Proposed Plan and supporting documentation and does not concur with the Air Force's selection of MNA as the preferred remedy for CG070 due to the excessive remediation time of 500 years. Staff provided comments to the Air Force describing our concerns that MNA has not been shown to be sufficient to restore the water quality of the aquifer in a reasonable timeframe. Staff found that additional active remediation should be included in the Air Force's selected remedy.

The Air Force will hold a public meeting on February 25, 2014 to present its proposed plan. Staff will attend that meeting and will continue to work with the Air Force to resolve these concerns. We hope to reach agreement on the remedy objectives prior to the Air Force's issuance of the Draft OU1 Record of Decision Amendment for remediation of this site.

7. **Update on TXI/Riverside Cement – Oro Grande Facility – Christy Hunter**

Groundwater impacted by hexavalent chromium beneath the TXI/Riverside Cement (TXI) Oro Grande closed landfill (Facility) is being investigated under an Evaluation Monitoring Program (EMP), as required by Board Order No. 6-98-1. The TXI site is northeast and adjacent to the Mojave River near the town of Oro Grande. Offsite water supply wells in the town of Oro Grande have not been impacted and are slightly up-gradient of the nearest impacted monitoring well on TXI property. Depth to groundwater in the town has been measured at about 43 feet below ground surface. Recent monitoring results show that hexavalent chromium concentrations in wells outside and upgradient of the plume range from non-detect (less than 0.30 micrograms per Liter [$\mu\text{g/L}$]) to about 2 $\mu\text{g/L}$ (background levels). The higher hexavalent chromium concentrations were measured in onsite wells in the northern portion of the site and range from background levels to 330 $\mu\text{g/L}$.

Prior to 2008 and during the initial phase of groundwater investigation, TXI discovered that hexavalent chromium and low concentrations of volatile organic compounds were originating from the (now closed) municipal solid waste landfill at the Oro Grande Facility where bricks containing chromium were disposed. At that time, the hexavalent chromium concentrations appeared to have been attenuating within the stable contaminant plume on TXI's property.

Between 2008 and 2011 however, hexavalent chromium concentrations began to increase in two wells, one well located along the perimeter of the plume. In response, TXI developed a work plan and monitoring program to investigate plume movement. A phased approach has been taken that includes conducting an additional onsite seismic survey, a groundwater elevation and

sampling investigation of off-site water supply wells, and the installation of 17 additional onsite groundwater monitoring wells and 6 additional piezometers. These additional monitoring points are included in the existing EMP, which also includes monitoring of several offsite water supply wells in the town of Oro Grande.

In 2013, TXI agreed to participate in the site cleanup cost recovery program to reimburse staff costs for oversight of the investigation and remediation efforts. Water Board staff continues to work with TXI as they proceed through the investigation phase.