

## Meeting Notes

### Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project

August 23, 2004

Elisa Maser welcomed and thanked guests for attending the first Public Meeting on the Glendale Water Supply Improvement Project. Lori Williams, Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) General Manager, explained this is the first meeting in a series to solicit input from the community about the Glendale Water Treatment Plant, Water Supply Improvement Project. The project goal is to improve reliability to TMWA's water system, and the Glendale Water Treatment Plant in particular. Lori stressed that there are a number of different TMWA project alternatives for improving system reliability, and that the Glendale diversion is a preferred alternative. However, each reliability alternative for the TMWA system needs to stand on its own merits, and it is possible that if this project becomes too expensive, another reliability project could prove to be a more viable option and TMWA would leave the existing structure as is. TMWA wishes to keep the community involved throughout this project, and welcomes community input.

Lori introduced the project team:

- Ron Penrose, TMWA Project Manager
- Dean Diederich, JBR Environmental Consultants
- Jay Kidder, Chinook Engineering – Fisheries Consultant
- Brad Hall, Northwest Hydraulic Consultants
- Elisa Maser, MIG – Facilitator
- ECO:LOGIC Engineering – Primary Consultant, with:
- Mike Wilkin, ECO:LOGIC, Design Manager
- John Enloe, ECO:LOGIC, Principal

Elisa briefly explained the Public Input Process. Three public meetings will be held to address the following:

Meeting One – Design Elements

Meeting Two – Preliminary Design Presentations

Meeting Three – Design and Permitting Plan Presentation

A working group will be assembled to address issues associated with the proposed project. Construction is proposed for 2007.

Ron Penrose gave a brief background of TMWA's history. He explained that the Glendale Water Treatment Plant (WTP) was opened in 1976 and was upgraded in 1994 and 1996. The diversion structure, which provides surface water to the WTP, is constructed of rock and rubble, unable to operate at full capacity during normal years

and is unable to capture all of the community's released storage reservoir water during drought years.

Elisa opened discussion from the audience.

**Lynn Zonge asked what was meant by 100% capture?** Ron explained the way TMWA currently operates a water system during a severe drought, the only water in the river could be TMWA's water from the upstream reservoirs (which is the community's drought reserves), and that will probably happen this September. The Army Corps of Engineers requires that 20 cfs must bypass the Chalk Bluff weir to keep the water in the river through downtown Reno to the Glendale Diversion. No bypass flows are required downstream of the Glendale Diversion. The drought supply needs to be captured at Glendale under extreme drought conditions.

**Darrin Price referred to Ron's comments about the drought effects on the Glendale WTP and asked how much more capacity is available at Chalk Bluff<sup>1</sup>?** Ron explained the problem is that there are two diversions for Chalk Bluff, the Highland Ditch and the direct river diversion (both of which are needed to operate Chalk Bluff at its normal capacity). If the diversion off the river is operating, TMWA must bypass 20 cfs past the weir so it needs to be picked up at Glendale, as it is our drought supply. Darrin also asked if the plan is to just do a weir at Glendale. Ron explained there are no final plans; they're examining a design that won't have to be rebuilt after floods or repaired for damages sustained in low flow conditions. TMWA also wants a structure that provides fish passage and protection, and provide for safe boat passage, which the existing structure does not.<sup>2</sup>

**Rose Strickland asked if TMWA intends to take all 20 cfs out of the river, even it that's all that's in the river?** Lori explained that yes, the 20 cfs would be taken from the river because that is the community's drought reserves under those conditions. The community pays for those drought reserves and there is a water right for the drought reserves. The intent is that the drought reserves would be used for the community's water supply, which is how the drought plan works. There is additional water stored in reservoirs upstream, most of which is stored in Stampede by Fish & Wildlife Service for fish purposes, so there would be water available during such conditions if those agencies choose to release more water.

**Bob Ramsey asked what the capacity would be at the Glendale WTP?** Ron stated it would be designed for TMWA to divert about 58 cfs on the high end, which would

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<sup>1</sup> Manager's Note: At peak demand in summer, Chalk Bluff operates at capacity and all of the capacity is required to meet peak demands.

<sup>2</sup> Manager's Note: In response and to provide more clarification to Mr. Darrin Price's question asking if there is more capacity available at Chalk Bluff, here is a more clear correct answer: "All capacity associated with TMWA's treatment plants must be utilized to meet customer system demands in the summer. There are no tradeoffs and there is no excess capacity available at either plant to compensate for a loss of capacity at the other.

allow the plant to operate at its full processing capability. It should also be designed for low flow conditions, with the ability to capture all flows up to the design capacity of the Glendale WTP.

**Mike Brisbin added that the water is returned to the river at the sewer treatment plant.** Ron stated that under the extreme condition where the only water in the river would be stored water releases, there would be minimal flows between Glendale and the wastewater treatment plant with the treated effluent (about 30 mgd/45 cfs) being discharged back into the river.

**Lynn Zonge asked for clarification that the upper plan is to treat 58 cfs at full capacity?** Ron confirmed this is correct. He added that the capacity at Chalk Bluff is about 85 mgd (or about 125 cfs).

**Rose asked if TMWA was aware that during the 1997 flood the river broke out near the Glendale diversion, which was the water that flooded the airport?** Ron stated that they are aware of that and hope to make that situation better. He reiterated they are examining different alternatives related to locations and structures. Rose didn't feel all the problems could be solved with the Glendale diversion; the ditch issues need to be resolved. Ron explained that TMWA is working in coordination with the Truckee River Flood Community Coalition.

**Dennis Ghiglieri mentioned the project needs to be compared to downtown Reno, where the old diversions and ditches have been incorporated into the new recreational facility.** The intent was to bring the levels down so during a flood, there isn't so much water eroding the banks. Ron stated that TMWA has done some of the preliminary modeling but offered to take into account the public's concerns relative to the structure and location. They will then present the results of the alternative analysis to the public for discussion.

Brad Hall reported the design team had a meeting a few months ago to discuss where would be the best location for the diversion. He added there has to be a certain elevation at the diversion to enable the water to flow through the treatment plant. Ron stated they're looking at the possibility of incorporating the Pioneer Ditch diversion into the Glendale diversion, thus providing an opportunity for removing an existing diversion from the river, while still providing for diversion of the appropriated water rights.

**Mike Miltner asked what TMWA is considering for recreation and safe boat passage?** Ron explained they want to be able to accommodate the inner-tuber (or least experienced people on the river). The boat passage would be kept at a safe level.

Ron's hope is that the working group will address all the issues, rather than having several different working groups. Elisa added that the working group would discuss criteria for evaluation of the alternatives. The working group meetings will focus on the identification of alternatives, design concepts, flow rate, etc. She clarified that nothing

has been decided on the alternatives, which is why the public was brought in at the beginning of the process.

Regarding funding for the project, Ron explained TMWA would be completing a facility plan and provide a preliminary construction budget. If the project becomes unaffordable based on too many requirements outside of the project's primary objective of assuring a reliable water supply for the community, that TMWA would have to forego the project. Elisa added that TMWA would be open to partnering sources for funding if needed to accomplish additional community or outside agency goals.

**Jim Litchfield asked what is the capital improvement projected funding amount?**

Elisa responded that she asked TMWA not to discuss the funding at this phase of the project, as it was premature to the design elements. Ron added that at the working group meetings, TMWA would provide a baseline budget for the project that would address the major issues and requirements. The budget will be prepared by ECO:LOGIC and TMWA.<sup>3</sup>

**Lori Williams stressed the importance of the Glendale WTP to the water supply for existing customers in the community.**

The plant supplies about a quarter of the water supply for the entire community. TMWA needs all the water from the Chalk Bluff WTP, all from the Glendale WTP and all of the drought reserves and well water in order to provide a reliable water supply for the community that works every year, even under extreme drought conditions. She added that the Glendale plant is critical to the system based on its location, arsenic treatment and its production capability. She reiterated the project goal is to increase the reliability of the plant .

**Michael Cameron thanked TMWA for providing the opportunity for public input.**

He stated on behalf of The Nature Conservancy, he sees an opportunity that goes beyond the Glendale diversion. He reported there are thirty structures on the river between Lake Tahoe and Pyramid Lake, some built as long ago as the 1930s. He sees this as an opportunity to set the standard for diversions or structures to provide recreation and support for ecological habitat purposes. He stated we're lucky that TMWA has the financial backing for the project. He added that if the project funding requirement is more than TMWA can support, we will all need to work on the financing options. He stressed it's an opportunity for our river that goes beyond Glendale. He went on to say The Nature Conservancy doesn't expect TMWA to bear the entire financial burden. Once again, he thanked TMWA for providing the opportunity for involvement.

Ron reiterated Lori's comments and stressed that the Glendale water supply is critical to the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Manager's note: The construction budget can't be determined until the project is better defined.

**Marilyn Brainard asked if the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) would have or receive any impact on or from the project?** Ron responded that the project is independent of TROA.

**Rose Strickland asked if the entire community could possibly be supported by the Chalk Bluff WTP alone?** Ron stated the plants are hydraulically linked; however, the Glendale WTP supplies a lot of the water for Sparks and southeast Reno April through December.<sup>4</sup>

**Franco Crivelli asked for a comparison of TMWA's 80,000 customers to the entire Truckee Meadows?** Lori explained the 80,000 refers to service connections. Washoe County Department of Water Resources serves about 15,000 connections; Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID) serves about 6,000 connections; and there are smaller purveyors. Franco asked if all the water is supplied from the water treatment plants, to which Lori responded yes. He also asked if the TMWA water system could supply an increase from 80,000 connections to 100,000. Lori stated no it could not. TMWA has some ability to expand but more facilities would be needed to supply more customers.

**Darrin Price clarified that we're talking about the problem being the diversion to the water treatment plant.** He asked who will pay and who will decide that. Elisa explained the process would be for the working group to make recommendations for review, and the design team to make recommendations to the TMWA Board of Directors, who would ultimately make those decisions. She added that a baseline budget has not yet been developed. Some issues would be required by law, such as adherence to the Endangered Species Act. She reiterated that it would be up to ECO:LOGIC to develop a baseline budget. Darrin mentioned there are several options, with which Ron agreed. Ron reiterated the project is a reliability improvement; the existing diversion structure in the river is unacceptable. It could be considered equal to a pipeline in the distribution system that had a lot of leaks and needs to be replaced. The diversion structure needs to be replaced.

Mike Wilkin reported some of the fundamental issues that have been identified include the diversion of a certain amount of water the surface WTP needs, fish passage, upstream and downstream screening, and public safety (including recreational and boating safety). Elisa stated this is a different way of approaching such a project. The last time TMWA designed a weir, the public input was received during the permitting process. This time they thought it would be better to bring the public in early in the process.

Michael Cameron motioned that other potential funding sources include Fish & Wildlife Service and grant programs (such as Question One). He suggested inventing or creating new funding sources because he didn't feel we should stop at Glendale in order to help the river. Darrin agreed but doesn't want to see water rates to SVGID

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<sup>4</sup> Manager's note: Both plants are needed, especially during peak summer usage.

increase. Ron stated that any proposed project on the river must address environmental issues, flood issues and others.

Glen Daily mentioned the downtown whitewater park and what an amenity it has proven to be in regard to aesthetic improvements, fish passage, enhanced recreation and safety.

Mary Connelly commended TMWA on the public process and stated that there would be additional interest by stakeholders on the river. She added it's a good policy to include input from the public from the beginning.

Elisa stated the next step in the process would be the working group meetings. She asked attendees to sign in and indicate whether they were interested in receiving information and/or joining the working group. The proposed date of the first working group meeting will be changed as it conflicts with the TROA workshop. Elisa provided the website address and encouraged attendees to access it. She distributed feedback forms and asked for input.

Mike Wilkin offered to contact working group participants when a schedule for the working group meeting is set.

Ron provided his business cards. The team members thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.