

# CARSON WATER SUBCONSERVANCY DISTRICT FINANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes  
February 22, 2022, 8:30am – 12:20pm

**Committee Members Present:**

David Griffith, Alpine County  
David Nelson, Douglas County (Zoom)  
Ernie Schank, Churchill County  
Lisa Schuette, Carson City  
Mike Workman, Lyon County

Jim Hindle, Storey County

**Staff Present:**

Edwin James, General Manager  
Catrina Schambra, Secretary to the Board

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**Others Present:**

Jim Barbee, Churchill County  
Lyndsey Boyer, Carson City  
David Bruketta, Lyon County Utilities Director  
Rob Holley, Dayton Valley Conservation District  
Lori Leonard, The Nature Conservancy  
Chris Mahannah, Churchill County

Kimra McAfee, Alpine Watershed Group  
Darcy Phillips, River Wranglers  
Christy Sullivan, Lahontan Conservation District  
Georgia Vasey, Carson City  
Rich Wilkinson, Carson Valley Conservation District

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The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Committee Member Schank. The meeting was held via Zoom and with in-person attendees at the Conference Room of the Carson Water Subconservancy District, 777 E. William St., #110A, Carson City, Nevada. Roll call was taken, and a quorum of the Finance Committee members were present.

**Item #2 - Public comment:** None

**Item #3 - For Possible Action: Approval of Finance Committee Minutes of May 5, 2021**

*Director Schuette made a motion to approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of May 5, 2021. The motion was seconded by Director Workman and approved unanimously by the Finance Committee.*

**Item #4 - For Discussion Only: Review the Tentative General Fund FY 2022-23 Budget and hear presentations for proposed projects; Review the Tentative Acquisition/Construction Fund FY 2022-23 Budget; and Review the Tentative Floodplain Management Fund FY 2022-23 Budget**

Mr. James explained the tentative budget spreadsheets and the committee process. The committee will reach consensus on budget recommendations to be brought to full Board for action at the March 16, 2022, meeting. The funds granted need to be for projects enhancing the watershed. For clarification, FEMA & NDEP Grants have specific requirements, and these funds cannot be diverted to other projects.

Mr. James presented the proposed budgets noting it includes transferring \$100,000 to the Acquisition/Construction Fund and \$16,800 funds to the Floodplain Management Fund per earlier Board direction. The \$16,800 matches that amount of funds CWSD is receiving from Storey County.

Mr. James started by explaining the General Fund income section. The proposed county taxes are based on 4% increase over last year projections, but the official numbers from the state will not be available until March 25. He also noted that \$6,000 needed to be added to Misc. Income/Watershed Tour with the hope that the bus tour will happen next fiscal year.

Mr. James mentioned that the proposed increase in salary was based on the projected COLA increase of 4.5% and annual merit increases. Committee Member Griffith suggested the COLA be at least 5% and the committee agreed. Rent and Telephone expenses were listed in red because of the possibility of moving at the end of our lease in June. CWSD is currently looking at options. He reminded the committee that this is the tentative budget and we do not submit the final budget until May, and we can adjust the budget as needed once we have variables set.

Mr. James reviewed the continuing, multi-year projects and grants, as well as all the grant expenses that are offset by the grant income. He also noted that it is required by law that there be a minimum 4% of expenses in our ending balance.

## **Presentations of Proposed Projects**

### **Carson River Projects:**

#### **Carson Valley Conservation District –**

#### **Genoa River Restoration & Flood Damage Recovery - Phase 3 (Proposal #1)**

*Rich Wilkinson, Grant Manager/River Coordinator*

The Carson Valley Conservation District will attempt to restore vertical cutbanks that are approximately 1/4 of a mile long and 12 to 15 feet high. This unstable section of river has migrated into local agricultural fields causing impacts to local producers. The overall goal of this project is to use a combination of traditional rip-rap and bioengineering techniques to stabilize the soil, improve water quality and re-establish desirable vegetation for wildlife. The district considers this project a high priority since this area was severely impacted by recent flooding events in 2017. The district would like to partner with CWSD, CTWCD, NDOW, USFWS, Nevada Dream Tag, Douglas County and NDEP to complete these river restoration projects by the spring of 2023. The district already contracted both a fluvial Geomorphologist and Engineer for this area. The Geomorphological Assessment is complete along with Engineered Plans. The section 106 review, endangered species evaluations have already been completed in phase 3 for the proposed project sites.

Benefits of project include:

- Improve water quality stabilize the entire project reach
- Stabilize eroding banks
- Establish native or desirable vegetation
- Improve wildlife habitat
- Establish meander bends to dissipate hydraulic energy if feasible
- Help protect ranch irrigation infrastructure improve overall function
- Assist local agricultural producers with ability to grow food and fiber
- Keep riverbanks intact minimizing sediment deposition and impacts downstream
- Multi agency input and contribution coordinated effort to improve river conditions

**Funding request: \$210,000**

#### **Dayton Valley Conservation District –**

#### **Pradere & Ricci Stabilization/Channel Maint & Riparian/Bridge Protection (Proposal #2)**

*Rob Holley, District Manager*

The requested funds intended to match other funds, and help fund the cultural assessment, engineer's survey, engineering costs and staff time required to initiate and coordinate permitting and construction of critical bank stabilization and channel maintenance at and directly upstream from the Dayton Bridge.

1. Increase the capacity of the river channel in the area adjacent to and upstream from frequently flooded areas and eroding stream banks.
2. Stabilize and protect private property, restore actively eroding banks, sequester mercury, and minimize its introduction into stream flows, and protect the mature cottonwood gallery in that area from continued loss.
3. Restore the location and function of the US Army Corp's levee to protect the Baroni diversion from continued obstruction, to reduce active sediment deposition in the river, and to prevent uncontrolled river flow from entering the Baroni ditch and adjacent private lands.
4. Restore and protect the capacity of the Dayton Bridge and remove willows, cottonwood trees and sediment at the bridge, below the confluence with Eldorado Canyon, and to a point near and below the bridge. Stabilize eroded banks at the terminus of Eldorado Canyon, left eroded by the 2017 floods.

**Funding request: \$150,000 (\$100,000 FY 2023, \$50,000 FY 2024)**

(Mr. Holley modified his funding request to \$118,000 for FY 22-23)

### **Lahontan Conservation District – Clearing & Snagging Carson River (Proposal #3)**

*Christy Sullivan, District Manager*

The project is an ongoing effort to create a river channel that is clear of obstructions and provides a free flow at natural choke points. For example, the Reno Highway Bridge has historically been clogged by debris during high water flooding events. Obstructions in these locations causes back up and overflow that moves into residential housing areas in both the county and City of Fallon. Locations where sediment caused islands changed the flow, eroded banks, or blocked flows under bridge. Removal of sediment will provide debris/obstructions to flow downstream more freely.

- Continue with a long-term monitoring program on the lower Carson River.
- Beaver and beaver dam removal to improve water flow in the channel.
- Clear brush and sediment back to original riverbank starting at Diversion Dam and continuing downstream.
- Remove sediment build-up above and below Sheckler Bridge.
- Remove sediment build-up above and below McLean Bridge.
- Remove sediment build-up above and below Highway 50 Bridge.
- Remove sediment build-up above and below Highway 95 Bridge.
- Remove sediment build-up above and below Bafford Bridge.

This project will prevent and minimize property loss and other damage during flood conditions.

Riverbank stabilization after sediment removal will minimize erosion, improve water quality, and re-establish native vegetation. Maintaining a clear channel will enable the citizens to utilize the river for recreation. Maintaining an adequate velocity of the river flow prevents stagnant pools from developing where mosquitoes can propagate and create health issues for residents along the course of the Carson River.

**Funding request: \$27,000**

### **River Wranglers- Conserve the Carson River Workdays (Proposal #4)**

*Darcy Phillips, Executive Director*

River Wranglers continues to Conserve the Carson River Workdays (CCRWD) throughout the Carson River watershed. We are thrilled to be back in the classroom and at the river with students. We plan to go into high school FFA and science classrooms to teach high school students the necessary information and skills so that they in turn can teach elementary students at the river in a combined workday. The

high school students are trained on activities that teach children about our watershed, the importance of clean water, the water cycle, and non-point source pollution. At the river, they become “mentors” to the younger students, spending the day with them, leading them through the activities. In addition to the educational stations, we partner with conservation districts to include river work projects that the students complete together. After the workdays, elementary students are visited by River Wranglers staff to do a “wrap-up,” which reinforces the messages they learned at the river. We once again discuss non-point source pollution, the geography and features of the watershed, and the importance of the river and watershed to their own lives. We do a pre- and post-test with all involved students to track their increase in knowledge about the watershed and non-point source pollution to gauge the effectiveness of our programs.

**Funding request: \$26,000**

### **Alpine County Watershed Group- Upper Carson River Watershed Programs (Proposal #5)**

*Kimra McAfee, Executive Director*

Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) seeks funding for the fiscal year 2022-23 from the Carson Water Subconservancy District for the coordination of its Upper Carson River watershed programs. AWG’s mission is to preserve and enhance the natural system functions of Alpine County’s watersheds for future generations. For 21 years, AWG has organized volunteers and inspired widespread participation to address water quality monitoring and restoration needs in Alpine County. To further the stewardship of our county’s natural resources, our organization has developed diverse partnerships around watershed issues. As the nonprofit environmental organization for the Carson River headwaters, our positive impacts extend downstream, where the Carson River flows into Northern Nevada. Through this project, AWG staff will: (1) involve local citizens in watershed stewardship; (2) plan and implement watershed monitoring and restoration activities; (3) recruit diverse stakeholders and strengthen community partnerships; and (4) support local watershed education and community outreach.

**Funding request: \$25,000**

## **New Projects:**

### **The Nature Conservancy – Riparian Revegetation & Streambank Stabilization (Proposal #6)**

*Lori Leonard, River Fork Ranch Preserve Manager*

TNC is looking for effective cost-effective methods to use native plant materials to stabilize streambanks, create wildlife habitat, and improve ecological diversity and floodplain resiliency at The Nature Conservancy’s 805-acre River Fork Ranch Preserve. The goal of the proposal is to reduce nonpoint source pollution from agriculture and irrigation in the Carson Valley. This project aims to experiment with cost-effective streambank restoration options, using native willows, cottonwood trees, and native shrubs along river, stream, and irrigation ditch banks to improve and enhance streambank stabilization, reduce sediment, and improve water quality.

**Funding request: \$25,142**

### **Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space – Carson River Pollinator Gardens (Proposal #7)**

*Georgia Vasey, Senior Natural Resource Specialist*

Pollinators are vital species in Nevada, supporting healthy watersheds, ecosystem diversity, and invaluable food production. Yet, over the years many pollinators have been in decline due to habitat loss. For pollinators to thrive, they need ample pollen and nectar from established native wildflowers and grasses, water for drinking and reproduction, and bare ground and available nesting materials for shelter. In addition, having connected natural areas provides a wildlife corridor for pollinators to breed among different populations to ensure genetic diversity and stability. The riparian habitat along the Carson River in Carson City is a perfect location to augment pollinator habitat by having five miles of contiguous protected natural areas free from development and within close proximity to year-round

water supply. The gardens will be strategically located in areas that are highly accessible to the public, with the goal to educate about pollinator importance using new interpretive panels, building nesting sites like bee hotels, and engaging community members in stewarding the gardens through planting and weeding programs.

- In the fall 2022, plant approximately 1,100 plants in four pollinator gardens along the Carson River using volunteer support during organized planting events. Each garden will have 200-300 plants.
- Install two interpretive panels on pollinators at Carson River Park and Riverview Park.
- Install at least one bee hotel in one of the pollinator gardens.
- Install bat boxes on poles throughout the river corridor.
- Lead weeding volunteer programs in the spring 2023 to reduce noxious and nuisance weed competition within pollinator gardens.

**Funding request: \$7,200**

### **Churchill County – Dixie Valley Water Level Meas & Precip Gage Monitoring (Proposal #8)**

*Jim Barbee, County Manager & Chris Mahannah, PE, SWRS*

Churchill County's Water Resource Plans have identified Dixie Valley as a potential long-term underground supply for Quasi-municipal purposes in the Lahontan Valley. This would involve a groundwater importation project which would represent the only supply to Lahontan Valley totally independent of the highly litigated and contested waters of the Truckee and Carson River watersheds and associated underground aquifers. Churchill County currently has the senior most priority pending applications before the State Engineer dating from the mid-1980's to appropriate all remaining underground waters in Dixie Valley for export to the Lahontan Valley.

This project is technically and environmentally sound and will assist the water users, managers, hydrologists and public in understanding climate, water issues and the status of their aquifers. It will help identify potential areas where discharge exceeds recharge and aquifer storage change. The project has regional benefits to the Carson River watershed in that it is supporting data collection efforts for an importation project, which if constructed, would lessen the demand on the over allocated and contested waters of the Truckee and Carson River watersheds. There also exists the possibility of resource trading in the Carson watershed if the importation project were implemented, however this would require additional consideration of feasibility and investigation of possible legal/physical constraints that would need to be overcome. The project also has a larger regional benefit for the west-central portion of Nevada in helping define high altitude precipitation distributions with site specific data where virtually none exists now, and reliance is currently on models such as PRISM.

The ongoing funding request is for an additional three-year term through FY24/25; however, it is anticipated for this program to be successful as a long-term management tool, it be continued as an ongoing effort.

**3-Year Funding request: FY22/23: \$23,000; FY23/24: \$23,000; FY24/25: \$25,000**

Mr. James reviewed the Acquisition/Construction and Floodplain Management Funds with the committee.

### **Lyon County – Highway 50 Utility Right-of- Way Project – Funding Request Extension**

*David Bruketta, Lyon County Utilities Director*

Lyon County is requesting a two-year extension of the funding for the Highway 50 Utility Right-of-Way Project (CWSD Interlocal Contract #2020-10) that expires June 30, 2022. Vidler Water Company has provided in-kind engineering to identify a possible route. The land crossed is a combination of NDOT, Private, Public, and BLM property. A section of the route runs through BLM property that is unavoidable. Vidler submitted the Plan of Development in May 2021 and is awaiting processing.

According to the latest from BLM, a response is not expected until Fall 2022. Vidler continues to work on the project. The original funding amount was \$125,000 and it is estimated that only \$25,000 will be spent this current fiscal year. The contract ends June 30, 2022, and Lyon County would like to extend the contract for 3-years with an end date of June 25, 2025, to complete the project.

*No action was taken.*

**Item #5 - For Possible Action: Make recommendations for the Tentative General Fund, Acquisition/Construction Fund, and Floodplain Management Fund FY 2022-23 Budgets**

Based on further discussion and consideration, the committee proposed the following recommendations to the Board. The Committee recommended not funding the project Carson River Pollinator Gardens. The Finance Committee consensus was this project was outside of our mission and funding guidelines, but the committee recommended that additional \$4,000 be given to the RW program with could facilitate the pollinator garden.

The Committee recommended funding these projects in amounts listed:

- Carson Valley Conservation District – Genoa River Restoration & Flood Damage **\$210,000**
- Dayton Valley Conservation District – Stabilization/Dayton Bridge **\$118,000**
- Lahontan Conservation District – Clearing & Snagging **\$27,000**
- River Wranglers- Conserve the Carson River Workdays **\$30,000**
- Alpine County Watershed Group- Upper Carson River Watershed Programs **\$30,000**
- The Nature Conservancy - Riparian Revegetation & Streambank Stabilization **\$25,142**
- Churchill County – Dixie Valley Water Level Meas & Precip Gage Monitoring **\$23,000**

*Committee Member Griffith made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the Tentative Budget for the General Fund be approved to include funding the projects as note above, extending the Right of Way Project to June 30, 2025, adding \$5,000 to AWG project, adding \$4,000 to RW project, and adding \$10,000 for Weed Abatement Program in Storey County. Director Workman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by the Finance Committee.*

*Committee Member Griffith made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the Tentative Budget for the Acquisition/Construction Fund be approved as presented. Director Workman seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by the Finance Committee.*

*Director Hindle made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the Tentative Budget for the Floodplain Management Fund be approved as presented. Director Schuette seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by the Finance Committee.*

**Item #6 - Public comment:**

Mr. James did want to note that he had received a letter from DVCD that they would like a time extension for their current funding. This would just be an addendum to their contract.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Catrina Schambra*  
Secretary to the Board