



# The Flow

News of the plans, projects and people of the Carson River Watershed



Spring 2009

Many people enjoy the East Fork Carson River in Alpine County when the flows are up and the sun is out!

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## Carson River Coalition Tenth Anniversary Celebration!!!

Working together is key to successful projects on the Carson River. The Carson River Coalition (CRC) has been in existence for over ten years and provides a critical format for organizations and agencies to work together and expand our limited resources. Examples of our collaborative efforts include the Regional Floodplain Management Plan and associated program, Carson River Watershed Stewardship Plan, Environmental Education Program, and numerous river restoration projects.

On May 19 we will celebrate the accomplishments of the CRC and strategize items, such as our vision for the 21st century, focus for the next ten years, CRC structure and process enhancement & more! The

CRC is open to anyone and involves people from all regions of the Carson River Watershed from Alpine County to Fallon. The full agenda is available on [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org). **Please make sure to RSVP for this special meeting.**

**GUEST LUNCH SPEAKER** – Jacques Etchegoyhen, Terra Firma Associates

**When:** May 19, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Includes lunch & cake)

**Where:** Ormsby Room at the Carson City Sheriff's Office Building, 901 E. Musser Street, Carson City

**Contact:** Genie Azad, CWSD, 887-9005 [genie@cwsd.org](mailto:genie@cwsd.org)

## Spring 2009 Middle/Lower Watershed Bus Tour

The Carson River bus tour response has been great, there's only a couple of seats left! The first stop

is the Ambrose Natural Area in Carson



Ambrose Natural Area

City and the last is the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge in Churchill County. This portion of the Carson River system includes many areas of interest. In the high desert, the Carson River



Lahontan Dam - Credit Bureau of Reclamation

provides a lifeline in the desert to Western Nevada for agri-



Western Tanager

culture, recreation, and urban use. The first project ever undertaken by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Newlands Project, is part of the Carson River System. The river terminates in Churchill County, where water-filled marshes like the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge, provide critical habitats as a stop-over for migratory birds. Getting acquainted with the hydrology, ecology and history of the Carson River Watershed will be the focus of this one-day tour that will be held May 30, 2009. Tentative stops include: Ambrose Natural Area, River Park Estates,



Black-necked Stilt

Buckland Station, Lahontan Dam, and Stillwater Wildlife Refuge.

This tour is only \$40 for registration, and includes bus transportation, snacks and lunch.

**One continuing education credit** can also be earned. If you can't attend this tour, plan on coming to the Upper Watershed tour in the fall, or next year's spring tour. For information, contact CWSD at 887-7450, or visit our website at [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org).



Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge



Buckland Station, Weeks, Nevada  
Credit: Nevada State Parks

Alpine County, California encompasses the headwaters for the Carson River. The river begins as two forks, the East and West Forks. The two forks merge to form the main Carson River near Genoa, Nevada.



East Fork Carson River by Monitor Pass during low flow conditions



East Fork Carson River with around 1,500 cfs flow on May 8, 2009—ideal for rafting!



West Fork Carson River in Hope Valley

## Alpine Watershed Group Funding Runs Dry!

Submitted by Jim Donald

Over the past four months, the Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) has seen its funding reduced to a trickle. Effective December 17, 2008, the State of California shut down all grants under the aegis of propositions 50 and 84, AWG's primary sources of operating capital.

The voter approved bonds that fund these grants didn't sell so state funders turned off the spigot. Recently these bonds began to sell again but funders, such as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and Department of Conservation, warn that it will be 6 to 12 months before any hope of grant rededication occurs and even then there is no guarantee that specific grants will be restored.

Those who have their ear to the ground get the feeling it could be two years or more before local groups get relief.

Unfortunately our Coordinator, Chris Katopthis, couldn't wait that long and has taken a position with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe doing water quality and fisheries studies. Chris did an excellent job with AWG, expanding the scope of our bio-assessment, nutrient and bacteriological studies while maintaining quarterly ambient data collection. His outreach skills, ability to interface with group members, neighboring groups and local,

state and federal agencies will be sorely missed.

Chris was able to stay on as long as he did due to a grant from the Carson Water Sub-conservancy District. AWG expresses much gratitude to CWSD for the support it has shown over the years, not only through funding but in providing training and manpower too. AWG hopes to continue that relationship.

Meanwhile AWG, a 501(c)3 nonprofit stakeholder organization, has become an all volunteer group. As of this writing, group members have voted to continue monthly meetings and quarterly Citizen Water Quality ambient data collection. With a dedicated core group of WQ monitors and stakeholders, we are confident we can accomplish this until funding issues are resolved.

AWG's mission is to support and enhance the natural system functions of Alpine County's watersheds. This is done using an evolving strategic plan based on the Upper Carson River Watershed Assessments, previous impact studies and criteria developed by the California Department of Conservation and other State and Federal scientific agencies.

Alpine County has some of the finest watersheds in the coun-

try and supplies a significant percentage of water for the Carson Valley and downstream users. There have been impacts from past mining, grazing and logging practices. Currently such uses are, for the most part, much more enlightened and therefore better controlled. Wildfires and development can have significant water quality impacts. Climate change will affect future water availability and quality. Remember that watersheds are defined by ridgelines and that the water flowing down that creek, stream or river measures the health of the entire ecosystem. It's crucial that we keep data on water.

What you can do: **volunteer, volunteer, volunteer** - - monitor, assess, do outreach, attend meetings, develop a website, write copy for the newsletter, donate (tax deductible), brainstorm funding ideas. Call or write to our legislators and urge them to restore funding.

The success of the Alpine Watershed Group depends in large part on its diversity. Citizen participation is the key. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month, 6pm at the Alpine County Library in Markleeville. Call 530 694-2327 or contact AWG via email at [watershed@alpinecountyca.com](mailto:watershed@alpinecountyca.com) for more information.

## Noxious Weed Management Forum

On February 18 the Carson River Coalition held its annual noxious weed management forum in Carson City at the beautiful new Capital Christian Conference Center. Over 75 individuals attended the forum with representation from all five counties along the Carson River



Yellow Starthistle - *Centaurea solstitialis*

Including private landowners, federal, state and local organizations, universities, and local weed management groups. Controlling noxious weeds, such as perennial pepperweed and knapweed, in the Carson River Watershed is a huge effort involving many people and considerable funding. This annual forum provides the opportunity for folks to come together and share their experiences, meet new contacts, and add new tools to their arsenals.



Russian Knapweed—*Centaurea repens*

dating back to the 1800's. The wide variety of speakers did an excellent job of presenting many other topics and we thank you all! A hands-on weed activity developed by Margie Evans (Carson City Weed Coalition) and the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group, provided participants an opportunity to see how well we know our weeds. Many of us found that we need to attend "Weed Warriors" training! Numerous attendees walked away with raffle items provided by Robin Powell of the Audubon Society Nevada Important Bird Areas Program. Special thanks to Steve

Dan Kaffer of Western Nevada RC&D/NRCS opened the forum with a history of weeds in the watershed



Puncturevine - *Tribulus terrestris*

Lewis for facilitating the afternoon session and to CWSD for organizing & facilitating.

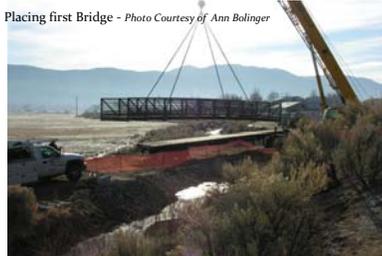
What aspect of the weed management puzzle is the toughest? Lack of water, funding, and manpower were the top issues, followed by burnout. There is a great need to recruit new weed warriors. Effective outreach was stated as always being a challenge, as is mapping and monitoring of weed infestations. Take home messages from the presenters include: be flexible, be aware and use every tool in the toolbox; don't try to do it alone; get to know other weed warriors; recruit the youth; prevention, early detection and rapid response are key; and, keep learning, keep trying new things and share what you've tried.

Perennial Pepperweed—*Lepidium latifolium*



## Question 1 Update

In the Winter 2009 issue of "The Flow", we began a series about Question 1 projects. This issue will highlight the Mexican Trails Bridge project.



Placing first Bridge - Photo Courtesy of Ann Bolinger

### Mexican Ditch Trail Bridges

The purpose of the project was to replace an existing bridge, and to build a new bridge serving the Mexican Ditch Trail. The new bridge linked a 0.5 mile section of trail south of Buzzy's Ranch Road to the northern section of trail beginning at Hells Bells Road. Question 1 funding provided approximately 50% of the total project costs. Grant Award: \$85,000.00

**Carson City completed project:** (Submitted by Ann Bolinger, Natural Resource Specialist, Carson City Parks & Recreation Dept.)

These two bridges were installed on February 4, 2009, along the Mexican Ditch Trail. The total project cost was approximately \$175,000. Grant funds were awarded by Question 1 and the Nevada State Parks Recreational Trails Program. Additional funding was provided from the Carson City Quality of Life Initiative. Applied Engineering Consultant Services, American Society of Civil Engineers - Capital Branch, Lumos and Associates Inc, and Muscle Powered partnered with Carson City by providing significant in-kind services towards the project.

**There will be a celebration on June 13, 2009 at 9 a.m.** Mayor Bob Crowell will do the ribbon-cutting, and a 5k run and 1-mile walk/kids run will follow (in coordination with National Trails Day). The ribbon-

cutting is a free event, but race participants pay \$10 entry fee. Race participants receive a t-shirt and must register at Fleetfeet Sports.

### Carson City's Q1 projects in process &

Carson River Park, Phase 2	\$145,548.
Anderson Ranch Fee Title Acquisition	\$1,750,000.
Desormier Fee Title Acquisition	\$129,070.
Morgan Mill Road Trailhead Improvements	\$264,000.



Placing 2nd Bridge - Photo Courtesy of Ann Bolinger



## [Upcoming Special Events](#)

**May 19—Carson River Coalition** 10 Year Celebration and Meeting. 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Contact Genie Azad at 887-9005 or [genie@cwsd.org](mailto:genie@cwsd.org) for more information. RSVP required.

**May 30 - Middle/Lower Carson River Bus Tour.** 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cost \$40 (includes lunch and snacks). For more information contact the CWSD at 887-7450.

**June 13— Celebrate National Trails Day at Mexican Ditch** (See Question 1 article). 9:00 am. Contact Ann Bolinger for more information: 887-2262, Ext 30337.

**June 13—Weed Track and Attack Workshop.** Silver Saddle Ranch from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Limited to first 50 sign-ups. Contact Margie Evans at 887-2252 to register.

**June 20— Santa Maria Ranch Park Volunteer Day.** 9:00 a.m. to noon. For more information contact Robin Powell at 775-247-2798.

## [Upcoming Editions](#)

CWSD is working to increase conservation efforts in the Carson River Watershed as part of the Comprehensive Regional Water System Plan. This year, a ***Water Conservation Pilot Program*** aimed at peak demand times is being implemented by the CWSD and Linda Mathiesen. Stay tuned to the next edition of “The Flow” to find out more about this program and the ***Regional Water System Plan!!***

***Reducing Our Impact—Best Management Practices for Homeowners Program.*** Carson City, CWSD, NDEP, UNCE and the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District have teamed up to develop a pilot program for interested landowners in Carson City. The project will be presented in detail in the next edition.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org)**

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