



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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CM/ACM	_____
Finance	_____
DA	_____
Risk Mgt	<u>N/A</u>
HR	<u>N/A</u>
Comptroller	_____

STAFF REPORT BOARD MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 13, 2018

DATE: January 12, 2018

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Rick Warner P.E., Senior Licensed Engineer,
Community Services Department. 954-4621, rwarn@washoecounty.us
Lydia Peri, EI, Environmental Engineer II,
Community Services Department, lperi@washoecounty.us

THROUGH: Dwayne Smith, P.E., Division Director, Engineering and Capital Projects
Community Services Department, 328-2043, desmith@washoecounty.us
Dave Solaro, Arch., P.E., Assistant County Manager
Community Services Department, 328-3600, dsolaro@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Adopt a resolution to make \$25,000 annual financial commitments in support of the mission and objectives of the *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, in each calendar year of 2018, 2019, and 2020. (All Commission Districts.)

SUMMARY

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) in collaboration with Washoe County and other regional agencies, has created the *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, intended to assist local, regional, and State authorities develop innovative strategies and methods to address water needs and opportunities in the Truckee Meadows and the State of Nevada.

The *Nevada Water Innovation Campus* will bring specific value to Washoe County through the development of regional sustainable water management practices and methods. *Nevada Water Innovation Campus* research and innovation activities will complement current regional water planning efforts and water utility infrastructure engineering and operations activities.

A regional collaborative effort between the local agencies, including Washoe County, and UNR's *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, to study the feasibility of expanding water recycling within the Truckee Meadows, serves as a positive model demonstrating the benefits of enhanced agency collaboration, and utilizing the vast technical and policy capabilities UNR offers.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Stewardship of our community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

There has been no previous action.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

BACKGROUND

The Northern Nevada region is experiencing economic expansion and is transitioning to a more knowledge-based and technology-centric economy. Sustainable water strategies, thoughtfully planned infrastructure, and water sector leadership are vitally important to the Truckee Meadows at this time.

The Nevada Water Innovation Campus is the outcome of a shared vision by the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Washoe County, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Nevada Department of Transportation, and the Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission/Western Regional Water Commission.

Nevada Water Innovation Campus will be intellectually and administratively located at UNR, and physically located at the regional public agencies. UNR research labs will serve as the basic and fundamental research component of the innovation campus.

The mission of the Nevada Water Innovation Campus is to assist local, regional, and State authorities develop innovative strategies and methods to address water needs and opportunities in the Truckee Meadows and the State of Nevada. The vision of the Nevada Water Innovation Campus is to become a nationally and internationally recognized innovation campus, solving real-world problems in the water sector and providing opportunities for economic growth and water resiliency.

The objectives of Nevada Water Innovation Campus include:

- Develop innovative water management systems and practices.
- Build partnerships with UNR, local agencies, and industry.
- Demonstrate national leadership in water innovation.
- Enhance community awareness and consumer understanding about water issues and practices.
- Educate and prepare the next generation of water professionals.
- Create a local water research hub of activity.

Nevada Water Innovation Campus Activities include:

- Create forums and seminars to assist the Truckee Meadows water-related agencies establish priorities to more effectively manage water resources with respect to regional economic, financial, and social criteria.
- Convene national and international water experts to help guide, critique, and inspire regional agency projects and staff.
- Partner with regional agencies and develop sustainable water management policies.
- Coordinate research and technical activities with the partnering agencies.
- Conduct, with the regional agencies and other participating entities, programs of research, technical assistance, and education related to the NWIC objectives.
- Provide connections with other departments and programs at UNR.
- Connect UNR faculty to the regional agencies to support research, technical assistance, and educational activities.

A regional collaborative effort between the local agencies, including Washoe County, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Truckee Meadows

Water Reclamation Facility, the Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission/Western Regional Water Commission, and UNR's *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, are examining the feasibility of expanding water recycling within the Truckee Meadows. This agency partnership serves as a positive model realizing the benefits of enhanced agency collaboration, and demonstrates the benefits brought to the community by more intentionally utilizing the vast research and policy capabilities offered through UNR's Nevada Water Innovation Campus to help solve complex regional water management challenges.

FISCAL IMPACT

The resolution would require a \$25,000 annual financial commitment in each calendar year of 2018, 2019, and 2020. Funds and budget authority would come from Utilities Fund 566, cost center 668500, account 710400. Revenues in support of these commitments would be provided by developer sewer connection fees.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Board of County Commissioners adopt a resolution to make \$25,000 annual financial commitments in support of the mission and objectives of the *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, in each calendar year of 2018, 2019, and 2020.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to adopt a resolution to make \$25,000 annual financial commitments in support of the mission and objectives of the *Nevada Water Innovation Campus*, in each calendar year of 2018, 2019, and 2020."