



# WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: February 11, 2025

**DATE:** January 17, 2025

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Aaron Smith, Div. Director Operations, Community Services Department, (775)328-3625, [AASmith@washoecounty.gov](mailto:AASmith@washoecounty.gov)

**THROUGH:** Eric Crump, Director, Community Services Department (775)328-3625, [ECrump@washoecounty.gov](mailto:ECrump@washoecounty.gov)

**SUBJECT:** Authorize the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to execute a Resolution declaring Washoe County's intent to convey to Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a joint powers authority entity created pursuant to a cooperative agreement among the cities of Reno, Nevada, Sparks, Nevada and Washoe County, Nevada, pursuant to NRS Chapter 277, approximately 479.774 acres of land commonly known as American Flats (APN 079-332-37 and 079-332-36), with a taxable total value of \$479,780, without consideration as authorized in NRS 244.284. If ultimately approved, the conveyance would contribute to the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility, an initiative to diversify the region's water supply. TMWA is required to operate the property for civic purposes for the community on terms specified in the Grant, Bargain and Sale Deed and if the property ever ceased being so used, it would revert automatically to the county. Community Services. (Commission District 5) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

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### **SUMMARY**

Washoe County owned parcels 079-332-37 and 079-332-36 are being proposed for transfer to TMWA for the location of the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility. Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a joint powers authority entity created pursuant to a cooperative agreement among the cities of Reno, Nevada, Sparks, Nevada and Washoe County, Nevada, pursuant to NRS Chapter 277. The parcels in question comprises approximately 479.774 acres, commonly known as American Flats near Red Rock Road.

Historically, Washoe County has engaged in similar land transfers under the provisions of NRS 244.284, which allows the Board of County Commissioners to convey or lease

**AGENDA ITEM # \_\_\_\_\_**

real property to a corporation for public benefit without consideration if the property is not needed for public purposes and is used for charitable or civic purposes.

Washoe County has previously used NRS 244.284 for similar transfers. TMWA has joint powers authority per NRS 277. Although NRS 244.284 does not require appraisals or a resolution followed by a public hearing, the Board has historically adopted a resolution followed by a public hearing in the spirit of NRS 277.050 and NRS 244.281 to ensure transparency and public involvement.

The proposed resolution includes the following language: "WHEREAS, NRS 244.284 authorizes the Board of County Commissioners to convey or lease real property to a corporation for public benefit without consideration if the property is not needed for public purposes of the county and is used for charitable or civic purposes; WHEREAS, while not required by state law before ordering the conveyance of property to a corporation for public benefit, the board of county commissioners of Washoe County has determined that it would be in the public's best interest, in a regular open meeting, by a majority vote of its members, to adopt a resolution declaring its intention to lease the property and set a date not less than 2 weeks later than the declaration of its intent to lease the property in the spirit of NRS 277.050."

**Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item:**

Economic Impacts: Support a thriving community.

**PREVIOUS ACTION**

**July 25, 2024** - District Board of Health approved a letter of support for the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water Facility at American Flats.

**August 6, 2019** - Board of County Commissioners (Board) approved an Interlocal Agreement between Washoe County and the City of Reno for the Stormwater Land Application - American Flat Road Site project located on Washoe County property APN 079-332-36 and 079-332-37 for the purpose of land application of water from Swan Lake.

**October 23, 2018** – the Board approved an Agreement with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, the County of Washoe and the City of Reno for the Aquifer Storage and Recovery American Flat Road Site on APN 079-332-37 to initiate a groundwater aquifer feasibility study.

**February 13, 2018** - the Board adopted a resolution to make \$25,000 annual financial commitments to support the mission and objectives of the Nevada Water Innovation campus.

**November 28, 2017** - the Board approved an agreement between Washoe County and the Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education, on behalf of the University of Nevada, Reno to provide technical and economic analysis supporting a regional reclaimed water [A+ water] feasibility study.

**May 05, 2010** - Washoe County acquired the American Flats land, which later became APN# 079-332-37 and 079-332-36, through a Boundary Line Adjustment Deed (Doc # 3878236) with a Declaration of Value of \$1,236.00 (DV-3878236)

## **BACKGROUND**

Droughts are common in Washoe County and can cause challenges in managing regional water resources. There is increasing risk to ensuring access to safe, sustainable water sources for the region due to sustained low precipitation years and increased growth in the community. TMWA has been working on mitigating these risks and addressing challenges since 2001. As technological advancements in water treatment have improved and the public desire for better water reuse has increased, the potential for wastewater reuse has become a feasible option. TMWA began testing the treatment techniques utilized in the APW FACILITY as early as 2009. A path forward was created when the Nevada legislature passed regulations creating the Category A+ IPR in 2016. Testing of the treatment technologies through pilot studies and benchtop experiments continued until 2020, when the first demonstration study was performed at RSWRF. At that point, planning began in earnest, though testing continues today.

The project is projected to have many public benefits, including expanding access to clean water and proper sewage disposal, which are core public health needs. The project can reduce the reliance on the Truckee River, which currently provides the bulk of water within Washoe County, by diversifying the water resource portfolio and diverting wastewater. Underground aquifer storage has added benefits from reservoir storage in that it does not suffer from evaporation and continues treating water through natural processes. This storage can supplement the available water supply during years of low precipitation or drought. The project will also benefit the community by diverting effluent from RSWRF. RSWRF discharges are treated effluent into Swan Lake, which is prone to flooding. The project will reduce the discharge by up to 2 million gallons per day, and the effluent the lake receives will be of higher quality. Finally, as these reuse techniques are proven, they will lay the groundwork for diverting effluent releases from other facilities, potentially reducing the cost of sewage infrastructure and allowing for more growth in the community.

To achieve Category A+ IPR, the water will need to meet or exceed all state and federal drinking water standards. Taking a forward-looking approach, the innovative treatment train for APW also treats currently unregulated constituents and recently regulated contaminants such as PFAS. Testing was conducted for a variety of unregulated constituents, and the treatment was found to be highly effective at removing personal care products and pharmaceuticals as well.

The source water for the APW FACILITY will be treated effluent from the RSWRF that undergoes additional polishing steps of filtration and ultraviolet (UV) disinfection prior to undergoing the advanced treatment process utilizing ozonation and biological activated carbon filtration. The water will then undergo further polishing and disinfection using granular activated carbon filtration, PFAS removal, and a secondary UV light treatment process. After completing the treatment train, the A+ water will be recharged into the groundwater aquifer via an injection well.

## **Legal and Regulatory References**

The legal framework governing this conveyance is primarily based on NRS 244.284, which states:

- **NRS 244.284:** "Lease or conveyance of real property of county to corporation for public benefit. The board of county commissioners may lease or convey any of the real property of the county, except property of the county that is operated or occupied by the county fair and recreation board, without consideration, if such real property is not needed for the public purposes of the county and is leased or conveyed to a corporation for public benefit, and the property is actually used for charitable or civic purposes."

The conveyance process aligns with NRS 277.050, which outlines the procedures for cooperative agreements between public agencies, including the requirement for a public hearing to consider objections and ensure public involvement.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact is expected for the setting of a hearing

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Board of County Commissioners authorize the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to execute a Resolution declaring Washoe County's intent to convey to Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a joint powers authority entity created pursuant to a cooperative agreement among the cities of Reno, Nevada, Sparks, Nevada and Washoe County, Nevada, pursuant to NRS Chapter 277, approximately 479.774 acres of land commonly known as American Flats (APN 079-332-37 and 079-332-36), with a taxable total value of \$479,780, without consideration as authorized in NRS 244.284. If ultimately approved, the conveyance would contribute to the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility, an initiative to diversify the region's water supply. TMWA is required to operate the property for civic purposes for the community on terms specified in the Grant, Bargain and Sale Deed and if the property ever ceased being so used, it would revert automatically to the county.

## **POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to "authorize the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to execute a Resolution declaring Washoe County's intent to convey to Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a joint powers authority entity created pursuant to a cooperative agreement among the cities of Reno, Nevada, Sparks, Nevada and Washoe County, Nevada, pursuant to NRS Chapter 277, approximately 479.774 acres of land commonly known as American Flats (APN 079-332-37 and 079-332-36), with a taxable total value of \$479,780, without consideration as authorized in NRS 244.284. If ultimately approved, the conveyance would contribute to the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility, an initiative to diversify the region's water supply. TMWA is required to operate the property for civic purposes for the community on terms specified in the

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