



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

February 2013

NORTH BASIN

**1. Stampede Dam Safety Project Update,
Little Truckee River**
- Alan Miller

In June 2012, staff identified work needed to rectify dam safety issues at the Stampede Dam on the Little Truckee River which is owned and operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). To prevent a dam failure by overtopping, Reclamation has proposed a project to raise the dam crest height. The Water Board must review and permit the project consistent with Clean Water Act section 401 Water Quality Certification requirements for dredged and fill material, the California Environmental Quality Act, Clean Water Act section 402 storm water control requirements, and the Basin Plan discharge prohibition exemption requirements.

The Water Board is the Lead Agency for California Environmental Quality Act certification. Staff is in the process of identifying all potentially significant issues that may affect the environment from the proposed project, and is working with Reclamation to resolve any issues that would result in significant effects and necessitate an Environmental Impact Report. The Water Board has received an application for Water Quality Certification and expects to also regulate the project under the Water Board's timber waiver and the State Water Board's Construction Storm Water Permit. Staff anticipates resolving all potentially significant issues to submit a mitigated Negative

Declaration and proposed Water Quality Certification order for a 30-day public review in February 2013. After the close of the public comment and consideration of comments received, the Executive Officer will determine whether to certify the project.

2. Tahoe Forest Fuels Team Meeting
- Douglas Cushman

The Tahoe Forest Fuels Team (TFFT) was formed following the 2007 Angora Fire and is a collaborative effort between Tahoe Basin Fire Protection Districts, Basin Land Managers, and Basin Regulatory Agencies. The TFFT improves efficiency by sharing resources and wisdom in implementing the 10-year strategy to address concerns outlined in the numerous Tahoe Basin Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

In January 2013 the TFFT met in Incline Village, NV, after a two year suspension due to funding reductions for implementing fuel reduction projects. The TFFT has reconvened and meeting bi-annually. Participation at the January TFFT meeting was high and Water Board staff informed the TFFT that the 2009 Timber Waiver is up for renewal in 2014. Water Board staff encouraged input to the renewal process, including creative ways to further streamline permitting, within the Timber Waiver.

3. Lake Tahoe TMDL Management System
- Robert Larsen

As reported at the October 2012 Water Board meeting, staff is working with Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a comprehensive adaptive management program for the Lake Tahoe TMDL program. The project, funded by the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, will provide a formal process for periodically gathering, synthesizing, and making use of new information related to the TMDL effort. The process will include regular public reporting of TMDL implementation progress and a transparent approach for assessing the need for policy adjustments based on updated research and monitoring findings and other relevant information.

The management system project team is crafting a guidebook to provide Water Board and NDEP staff with standardized protocols for compiling relevant TMDL implementation information, including Lake Clarity Crediting details, non-urban pollutant load activity tracking reports, research and monitoring reports, and preparing periodic TMDL progress reports. The progress reports will provide the opportunity for stakeholders to make recommendations for possible policy adjustments. The

management system will also include an internet-based public reporting platform to share TMDL implementation progress details.

The United States Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) have initiated a discussion among forest land managers about how best to track and report TMDL-related projects and activities. Water Board and NDEP staff participated in the preliminary discussions and are working with LTBMU and the management system project team to align those efforts. Water Board and NDEP staff will be meeting with forest implementation partners again at the end of January to continue collaborating on forest activity tracking measures.

The management system guidebook is currently being drafted, with an initial product scheduled for early March 2013. The project team is working to establish adaptive management roles and responsibilities for NDEP, Water Board, and EPA and will be holding a meeting with agency executives in early February 2013 to describe expectations. Once the guidebook is complete, the project contractor will work with NDEP and Water Board staff to beta test the program during the 2013 calendar year.

SOUTH BASIN

4. **Senior Air Force Staff to Host Rapid Improvement Event with Senior Staff from USEPA, DTSC and Water Board—** *Tim Post*

To help overcome the challenges of cleaning up groundwater and streamlining the process of getting approved remedies in place at Edwards Air Force Base (Edwards), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Air Force are planning a two-day meeting among senior-level representatives of the Air Force, USEPA, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), State Water Resources Control Board, and the Water Board. One purpose of the meeting is to familiarize members of USEPA's Remedy Review Board and senior staff with the most challenging sites and operable units at Edwards. The meeting is scheduled for February 20 and 21, 2013.

This meeting is important because Edwards has numerous groundwater plumes containing primarily solvents and fuels, covering thousands of acres. In fiscal year 2014, the Air Force plans to

implement a base-wide performance-based remediation contract where the Air Force will only specify the desired result for a particular site or operable unit and it's up to the contractor to achieve that result in the most timely and cost-effective manner.

For a remedy to be implemented, it must meet the requirements set by the Water Board, USEPA, and DTSC. The Air Force is planning to propose that certain plumes cannot be practically cleaned up and should receive a technical impracticability waiver/containment zone designation. The Air Force is looking for a path to decision documents and closure for the remaining sites at Edwards.

The Air Force and the regulatory agencies want to move as expeditiously as possible to cleanup and close sites. During the meeting, issues such as what data is required to support cleanup decisions, what is needed to show infeasibility and applicable laws and requirements will be discussed.