

1 CHURCHILL COUNTY, NEVADA
A Political Subdivision of the State of Nevada
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8 **STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD OF THE STATE OF**
9 **CALIFORNIA**

10
11 IN THE MATTER OF WATER RIGHT
APPLICATIONS 31487 LITTLE
12 TRUCKEE RIVER, and 31488
PROSSER CREEK; AND PETITIONS
13 TO CHANGE APPLICATION NOS.
5169 BOCA RESERVOIR, 9247
14 INDEPENDENCE LAKE, 15673,
STAMPEDE RESERVOIR, 18006
15 PROSSER CREEK RESERVOIR,
FILED BY THE UNITED STATES
16 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION,
17 TRUCKEE MEADOWS WATER
AUTHORITY, AND WASHOE
18 COUNTY WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT THE
19 TRUCKEE RIVER OPERATING
AGREEMENT
20

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF BRAD
GOETSCH IN SUPPORT OF PROTEST
OF CHURCHILL COUNTY, NEVADA**

Date: July 21, 2010

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Dept.: Coastal Hearing Room

21
22 **I. Introduction**

- 23 1. My name is Brad Goetsch. I am the County Manager for Churchill County,
24 Nevada and have served in that capacity since 2004. Previously, I served in the
25 United States Navy, a career spanning 27 years. My military career culminated
26 as commander at Naval Air Station, Fallon, Nevada. There I was actively
27 involved in water resource management relating to naval base operations.
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2. I hold a bachelor's degree in Biology and Environmental Science from the University of Colorado.
3. I am familiar with the Truckee River System, having personally visited every major structure and facility associated with its use and operation, including Lake Tahoe, Prosser Creek, Stampede, Boca, and Martis Creek Reservoirs, as well as Donner and Independence Lakes, from the outlet of Lake Tahoe to the river terminus in Pyramid Lake on the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation.
4. I am also familiar with the general operation of the Truckee Canal and its importance to residents in the Lahontan Valley. Water from the Truckee River is diverted at Derby Diversion Dam (located approximately 36 miles upstream of Pyramid Lake). The Truckee Canal extends approximately 31 miles through the Truckee Division of the Newlands Reclamation Project to Lahontan Reservoir, located in the Carson Division of the Project in the lower Carson River Basin. Benefits of the Truckee Canal extend to the approximate 27,000 residents of Churchill County. The City of Fallon has a population of approximately 9,258 persons. The Truckee Canal provides an average of 26% of the total of water in the Newlands Project.
5. In these proceedings before the California State Water Resources Control Board, the Bureau of Reclamation has filed a Petition for Change – Application 15673, Permit 11605 (Stampede Reservoir), and a Petition for Change – Application 18006, License 10180 (Prosser Creek Reservoir). The Washoe County Water Conservation District has filed Petition for Change – Application 5169, License 3723 (Boca Reservoir). The Truckee Meadows Water Authority has filed Petition for Change – Application 9247, License 4196 (Independence Lake). These petitions may be nominated “change petitions”. Reclamation has also filed Application 31487 (Little Truckee River) and Application No. 31488 (Prosser Creek). These Applications may be referred to as the “applications to appropriate.”
6. The Truckee Carson Irrigation District (TCID), Churchill County, Nevada, and The City of Fallon, Nevada, have protested the change petitions and

1 applications to appropriate (See protest, dated April 2, 2007). For the reasons
2 borne by the protest, and the evidence to be adduced by the protestants at the
3 hearing to be conducted herein, the petitions and applications must be denied.
4 If TROA is implemented, the management scheme that has existed upon the
5 Truckee River and related reservoirs will be undone. The Truckee River
6 Agreement will be abrogated. Flows in the Truckee Canal will be reduced. I
7 believe that the new rules for the accounting and management of water at
8 Independence, Stampede, Boca and Prosser Creek Reservoirs will be imposed
9 to the detriment of the protestants and water right holders in the Truckee
10 Division of the Newlands Project.

11 **II. Impacts of Water Shortages On Churchill County, Nevada**

- 12 1. Drought years have a particular and significant impact on Churchill County. In
13 drought or low water years farm production is curtailed by significant
14 percentages related to Newlands Project water delivery. In dry years larger
15 percentages of project water comes from the Truckee canal. TROA modeling
16 has indicated that it is during these critical drought years that the most
17 significant impacts, shortages due to TROA, would occur. Therefore in the very
18 years that economic and environmental impacts are at their most severe, TROA
19 and these applications will exacerbate the magnitude of negative impacts.
- 20 2. The water carried through the Truckee Canal directly and indirectly supports as
21 much as \$330 million in the economy of the Truckee Division, including the area
22 of Hazen –near Fernley, the City of Fallon, the Lahontan Recreational area, the
23 Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribal Reservation, Naval Air Station Fallon, and the
24 Lahontan Wetlands. Churchill County has actively engaged in a conservation
25 easement program to protect agriculture, open spaces, and recharge to the
26 aquifer. Perpetuation of agricultural fields within the vicinity of NASF has further
27 served to reduce base encroachment concerns. NASF is the premier training
28 facility of the United States Navy and home to “Top Gun”. NASF contributes
over \$200 million dollars to Nevada’s economy annually.

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3. Surface water right owners in Fernley, Hazen, and the Swingle Bench area of Churchill County are served entirely by the Truckee Canal. Lahontan Valley aquifers are interconnected and rely on water from irrigation and the irrigation system of canals to recharge and maintain local water supplies and water quality. In Churchill County there are approximately 4130 domestic wells and 344 non-domestic wells, which include municipal, industrial, irrigation and others –which are permitted through the Office of the Nevada State Engineer.
4. Reduced irrigation water from the Truckee Canal will detrimentally impact the water table. A reduction of water flow in the Canal would have a corresponding result in water table level declines and eventually cause the drying up of many household wells.
5. At the present time, Churchill County enjoys a relatively stable economy thanks in part to agricultural production, including dairies, the Naval Air Station, geothermal, and other industries. The agricultural sector of the county's economy is of vital importance.
6. The Lahontan Valley wetlands are part of the Pacific Flyway, which extends from northern Alaska and Canada through southern Mexico. These wetlands consist of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, Stillwater Wildlife Management Area, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Indian Reservation wetlands, and the Carson Lake Pasture. These wetlands bear international significance; and, they are managed pursuant to international treaty obligations. As an aspect of P.L. 101-618, some 25,000 acres are to be maintained as wetlands. In as much as the wetlands, which rely upon contributions from the Truckee Division, host about 250,000 shorebirds in good years, and approximately, 280 species of waterfowl and other water birds, action which would serve to frustrate the delicate balance relating to perpetuation of these important areas must be denied.
7. Churchill County agricultural activity accounts for as much as \$175 million. Hay production includes alfalfa, Teff grass, Sudan grass, and grain hays. Alfalfa produced here is of extremely high quality. In 2007 the total for hay production in this County exceeded 142 thousand tons. Most of the dairy cattle operations

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in the Northern Nevada are found in our county as are two goat dairies. The value of dairy cattle and milk production annually is approximately \$45 million. In 2008, as an example, Lahontan Valley Dairies produced 34,539,205 gallons of milk. All other crop farming production is approximately \$40 million. Cattle ranching and farming account for more than \$15 million annually.

Respectfully Submitted

Dated: June 28, 2010


BRAD GOETSCH

