

**CRS ANNUAL REPORT**  
**(Period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015)**

On Activities Associated With the  
**Carson River Watershed**  
**REGIONAL FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Submitted for:

**DOUGLAS COUNTY**  
and  
**CARSON CITY**  
and  
**STOREY COUNTY**

August 6, 2015

Prepared by:



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## **1.0 Background**

In 2008, five counties along the Carson River adopted a Regional Floodplain Management Plan (regional plan) that would provide consistency in planning efforts, programs and projects, help protect community members from flooding hazards, and conserve floodplain lands. The 2008 plan was formally adopted by Douglas, Carson City, Lyon, and Churchill Counties in Nevada, and Alpine County in California. A Supplemental Update of the plan was subsequently adopted by these five counties in 2013. Although a small portion of Storey County is within the Carson River Watershed, they have not formally adopted the Regional Floodplain Management Plan or the Supplemental Update. However, CWSD has presented the original 2008 plan and the 2013 update to the Storey County Board of Commissioners as an information item.

This report provides progress on the suggested actions associated with the regional plan for Carson City, Douglas and Storey County to assist with reporting to FEMA on actions associated with the National Flood Insurance Community Rating System (CRS) program.

The purpose of the regional plan is to create long-term vision and strategies for floodplain management to reduce flood damage impacts while protecting the resources associated with the Carson River Watershed. The plan objectives include the following:

- Manage economic development without sacrificing floodplain and river form and function;
- Ensure public safety upstream and downstream;
- Protect property rights while conserving natural resources;
- Protect and improve wildlife habitat and water quality;
- Provide and maintain river continuity and connection of the river to its floodplain;
- Promote conservation of lands within the river corridor.

Responsible parties have been identified for implementation of the plan, and existing or potential funding sources have also been identified.

## **2.0 Activities Conducted for this Reporting Period**

This report details work initiated and/or completed through the Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD) and/or the programs administered through CWSD in relation to the Regional Plan.

### **2.1 Stakeholder Involvement**

Several stakeholder groups provide watershed level input and assistance in the implementation of the Regional Plan.

#### **2.1.a Carson River Coalition Meetings**

Carson River Regional Floodplain Management - Annual CRS Report 2014-2015

The Carson River Coalition (CRC) is a bi-state, multi-county stakeholder group, hosted by the Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD) and funded by CWSD and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP). All counties within the watershed, as well as many other local, state and federal entities, private citizens and non-governmental agencies participate in the CRC and working groups. The meetings are open to the public and information about meetings is available at [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org).

A CRC Forum focused on Floodplain Management Projects was held on April 22, 2015.

**2015 Carson River Coalition's Floodplain Management Forum Schedule**

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)
8:30am	Doors open, Table Set-up Coffee and Tea Available	
9:00am	Welcome and Introductions, Carson River Watershed Floodplain Management Overview	Ed James and Brenda Hunt, Carson Water Subconservancy District
9:20am	Truckee River Flood Project	Jay Aldean, Truckee Flood Management Authority
9:45am	Carson River Watershed Floodplain Modeling and Mapping Project	Mitch Blum, HDR
10:10am	Flood Inundation Mapping Program	Jon Mittelstadt and Mark Faucette, NOAA
10:35am	<b>BREAK—Networking and Tabling</b> snacks available	
10:55am	Markleeville Creek Restoration	Shane Fryer, Alpine Watershed Group
11:15am	Hope Valley and East Fork Carson River Project	Sally Champion, USFS and Julie Fair, American Rivers
11:45am	East Fork Carson River Rocky and Virginia Slough Project	Erik Nilssen, Douglas County and Peter Kulchawik and David Shaw, Balance Hydrologics, Inc.
12:10pm	Lunch Provided, Keynote Speaker, Rob Palmer, Nevada State Floodplain Manager, Division of Water Resources	

  

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)
1:05pm	Pinenut Remapping and Alpine View Estates Projects	Todd Cochran and Jeff House, Kimley-Horn
1:40pm	Clear Creek Projects	Eric Yount, NDOT
2:05pm	<b>BREAK—Networking and Tabling</b> snacks available	
2:25pm	Carson City Eagle Valley Drainage Project	Geoff Brownell and Michael Baker, Michael Baker and Associates
2:50pm	Sheckler Shunt and Smelter Creek Projects	Rob Anderson, RO Anderson
3:15pm	Carson River Floodplain Management: Where are we going? Raffle Drawing, Evaluations	Ed James and Brenda Hunt, Carson Water Subconservancy District

  

**Display Table Topics Include:**

- \* Floodplain Model
- \* Water Quality Protection
- \* Truckee 2D Hydrologic Model
- \* East Fork Carson River Projects
- \* Hope Valley West Fork Projects
- \* Markleeville Creek Projects
- \* Carson River Watershed Environmental Education Program
- \* Floodplain Protection Program/Healthy Meadows
- \* Carson River Coalition and CWSD
- \* Floodplain Protection Publication

2.1.b River Corridor/Floodplain Management Working Group –The River Corridor/Floodplain Management Working Group is a sub-committee of the CRC with a focus on regional floodplain management issues. This group met on September 18, 2014 to discuss the July/August 2014 flash flooding events and upcoming FEMA funding. Meeting notes are available at [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org).

2.1.c Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Risk MAP Program

In 2011, CWSD and various federal, state, and county government bodies signed the first FEMA Region IX Risk MAP Charter formalizing collaborative efforts for flood management in the Carson River Watershed. Storey County did not sign the Charter; however, they are participating in the meetings. This collaboration enhances hazard

mitigation plans, improves community resiliency after flooding, protects beneficial functions of floodplains, and raises awareness about local flood risks.

2.1.c.1 Risk MAP Discovery

The Risk MAP Discovery process works closely with communities within the Carson River Watershed to better understand the local flood risk, mitigation efforts, etc., and to spur watershed-wide discussions about increasing the area's resilience after flooding. The Discovery process identified areas at risk for flooding and solutions for reducing that risk on a watershed-wide basis. The 2012 Discovery Report identified priority projects per County. Two RiskMap Charter meetings were held during this reporting period: December 9, 2014 and April 1, 2015. Agenda's and meeting notes are available at CWSD.

**2.2 Low-Level Flooding/Stormwater Management**

2.2.a Combined Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Plan for Indian Hills General Improvement District (GID) area, portions of Douglas County in the Clear Creek and Johnson Lane areas, Carson City, and NDOT in the Clear Creek Watershed

The area subject to the General Permit for "Small MS4s", and initially identified as the Carson City Urban Area by the EPA, is multi-jurisdictional including non-contiguous parts of Carson City, Indian Hills, and Douglas County (Johnson Lane and Clear Creek). With future population growth, the regulated "Small MS4" area has potential to expand in Douglas County (Minden/Gardnerville area) and Lyon County (Dayton area). Presently each jurisdiction manages their MS4 area separately. The impetus for developing a Carson River Regional Stormwater Management Plan is to coordinate education/outreach messages, expand public participation, and encourage consistent approaches to Best Management Practices along the Carson River corridor.

CWSD originally funded a request from Indian Hills GID to pursue the development of a regional MS4 to comply with the revised EPA General Permit as managed by NDEP in 2013. RCI was hired and began the process. Additional funding was obtained in 2014 through NDEP's Stormwater Circuit Rider program for RCI to finalize the plan. The working group has held a series of meetings to identify the goals of the regional plan and address each of the "Minimum Control Measures" required in the general Stormwater permit. Permit conditions were reviewed by the group with clarification being added by BWPC representatives. Needs, opportunities and constraints of the different jurisdictions were discussed for each MCM and presented to the group. A document identifying joint rationale statements and BMP approaches is in draft form. Additional funding may be required to ensure adoption of the final document.

2.2.b Promote Low Impact Development (LID) Use in the Carson River Watershed

CWSD approved the Low Impact Development in the Carson River Watershed report in April 2015. CWSD received 208 Clean Water Act planning funding through NDEP and hired RCI to complete the document. The report outlines how LID can assist in managing stormwater, discusses the benefits of LID and which LID practices are useful in

our area, and makes recommendations on how to implement LID. The report is available on our website at: <http://www.cwsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-04-07-LID-Carson-Watershed.pdf>. CWSD staff will be introducing the document to our respective Counties in the fall 2015.

### **3.0 Implementation of Suggested Actions**

The Regional Floodplain Management Plan divides implementation strategies into six categories and provides suggested actions for each category. The following sections provide an overview of the work that was conducted for each category during this reporting period.

#### **3.1 Protect Floodplain Natural Functions and Values and Responsible Entities**

Suggested actions include:

- a. Adopt a Living River approach. - *all entities*.
- b. Floodplain and flood hazards should be considered with open space program objectives when selecting acquisition targets and establishing management strategies for open space. - *local governments and other entities*.
- c. Plan for and mitigate cumulative effects of watershed urbanization – local governments.
- d. Retain lands that provide floodplain storage and maintain or restore connection of river with floodplain through land acquisition, conservation easements, local open space, etc.... - *local and tribal governments, NGO's, landowners*.
- e. Encourage the incorporation of low impact development principles into subdivision proposals for floodplain lands... - *local governments*.

Progress made during this period:

- Dayton Valley Conservation District and Lyon County continue to enhance floodplain value and function on the 300 acre "Rolling A Ranch" property just outside of Dayton. Weed management and streambank stabilization projects have continued throughout the Dayton Valley reach of the Carson River.
- CWSD helps fund the Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) to continue their work in the Upper Carson River Watershed. The Hope Valley Floodplain Restoration project made significant design phase progress during this reporting period. Alpine County finalized the purchase of the Markleeville Creek Floodplain Restoration Project site on 12/23/13. The project is at 95% design and is expected to cost around 1.2 million. Funding is being pursued from various sources including California's Department of Water Resources Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant program, Supplemental Environmental Project funding through the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, Wildlife Conservation Board, and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The project is expected to be completed by January 2015 depending on funding availability.

- CWSD has obtained funding for the FEMA Mapping Activity Statement Projects (MAS) 1, 2, 3, and 4. This multi-year funded flood modeling and mapping project will ultimately assist in the planning and mitigation of the cumulative impacts of urban development in our riverine flood zones. The Lyon and Carson City portions of the project have been completed and are currently being reviewed by FEMA. The Carson Valley portion (MAS 3 & 4) are in progress with an expected completion date of 2015. A MAS 4 also contains flood outreach funding (Flood Awareness Week) and funding to develop consistent floodplain ordinances and mitigation measures in Alpine, Douglas, Lyon Counties and Carson City. The latter efforts will kick off in fall 2015. See Higher Regulatory Standards Section 3.2 below.
- CWSD obtained additional FEMA grant funding (MAS 5) for \$325,000 - \$375,000 for several flood projects in the watershed including Smelter and Alpine View drainage projects in Douglas County, Eagle Valley Golf Course drainage A & B in Carson City, and the Sheckler Shunt feasibility study in Churchill County. MAS 5 also received funding for flood inundation mapping for the Carson River in conjunction with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These project studies have either been completed or are underway.
- CWSD funded and Douglas County administered a hydraulic and geomorphic analysis study conducted by Balance Hydrologic, on the East Fork of the Carson River at Virginia Rocky Diversion in Douglas County. The study was completed in spring 2015, and provided several recommendations to resolve severe erosion along the bank that if breached during a flood event, could cause damage to existing developed areas, as well as the Virginia Rocky Diversion structure. The report is available at Douglas County.
- CWSD has submitted a funding request to FEMA (MAS 6) for \$327, 000 to complete the following list of project components:
  - Douglas County Stephanie Lane Drainage Identification and Mitigation Project
  - Public Outreach Flood Awareness Program (PSA's to 4 audiences)
  - Carson City Inundation Maps
  - Carson City Goni Wash Restudy and Remapping Project
  - Lyon County Ramsey Canyon Restudy and Remapping ProjectCWSD hopes to be informed regarding our funding request in fall 2015. The full FEMA grant proposal is available at CWSD.
- Draft Floodplain Protection Inventory for the Carson River completed by John Cobourn and Steve Lewis, UNCE. The final version of this inventory should be published as Special Publication 15-00 in fall 2015. The publication focuses on riverine floodplain protection and will provide a baseline amount of protected lands from which to measure our progress toward additional floodplain land protection. CWSD and CRC members helped with data collection and review of the publication. CWSD will be funding the printing of the publication.

- See Section 2.2.b regarding Low Impact Development (LID) progress.

### **3.2 Higher Regulatory Standards**

Suggested actions include:

- a. Implement or enhance county ordinances that require 1:1 or greater mitigation ratio for floodplain storage volume. - *local governments.*
- b. Include the suggested ordinance language in county ordinances to provide watershed wide consistency. - *local governments.*

Progress during this period:

- With assistance from the FEMA MAS 4 funding, CWSD issued an RFP in July 2015 to hire a planning consultant to review adequacy of current county flood ordinances to ensure consistency in application and mitigation measures associated with the new flood hazard maps from MAS 1-4. These new maps will help address cumulative impacts on a watershed scale and the review will also include determining an effective and consistent process for assessing cumulative impacts and updating the model with each completed development. Consultant interviews will be conducted in Aug/Sept 2015 with the aim of finishing the ordinance and mitigation measure review and recommendations by Dec 2015. CWSD is working collaboratively with County planners and floodplain managers on this project.

### **3.3 Flood Data Information and Maintenance**

Suggested actions and responsible parties:

- a. Support FEMA'S Map Modernization Program and encourage FEMA to update FIRM'S with current and future conditions. - *FEMA, CWSD and local governments.*
- b. Develop and conduct unsteady state modeling to identify storage requirements - local and state governments, and CWSD. *Potential funding thru NDEP, CWSD and other local and state entities.*
- c. CWSD continue to participate in FEMA'S Cooperating Technical Partner Program. - *CWSD and FEMA*
- d. Flood studies should be conducted for the main channel and be used to update FEMA maps and fill data gaps. - *CWSD and FEMA. Potential funding by Federal, state and local grant sources.*
- e. Elevation Reference Marks (ERM) should be permanent monuments and updated on regular basis. -*local governments*
- f. ERMs should be in the same datum as base flood elevations on FIRMs or a datum that is readily convertible to FIRM datum. - *local governments*
- g. A master list of ERMs should be developed, maintained, and made available to interested parties. - *local governments and CWSD*
- h. Photo-Monitoring program should be developed to document flooding and flood hazards in consistent matter. - *CWSD, CRC, and local governments*

Progress during this period:

- FEMA MAS 1-5 are in progress. See Section 3.1 above for details.
- FEMA MAS 6 application for funding was submitted in July 2015. See Section 3.1 above for details.

### **3.4 Channel Migration and Bank Erosion Monitoring**

Suggested actions include:

- a. Known and projected hazard areas, including channel migration hazards, should continue to be documented, and updated information should be incorporated in the planning processes.
- b. LiDAR and/or aerial photography (on a watershed level) should be conducted on a 5-year basis to provide updated information on channel movement and floodplain condition.
- c. Establish building set-backs or buffers in flood hazard areas, where appropriate, to reduce severe hazards from channel migration.
- d. Channel cross-sectional surveys should be conducted and well documented to track long term changes in river channel.
- e. Identify unstable areas and areas with high potential for erosion, including areas prone to channel meandering and avulsion.
- f. Promote the use of bio-engineering techniques in river restoration projects in combination with other proven methods.

Progress during this period:

- Bio-engineering techniques continue to be used by the Carson Valley Conservation District and The Nature Conservancy at River Fork Ranch along Brockliss Slough. CWSD assisted with funding for this project.
- Dayton Valley Conservation District is in the process of completing a monitoring study of all the bank stabilization projects completed. This project is jointly funded by NDEP Clean Water Act 319 funds and CWSD. The project will help determine what projects are still in place and what will need repair. A final report is expected to be available from NDEP in Dec 2016.
- The Friends of Hope Valley in partnership with the Alpine Watershed Group continue to plant willow stakes and complete bio-engineering bank stabilization projects in Hope Valley.
- The Alpine Watershed Group (AWG), in partnership with Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Friends of Hope Valley and Alpine County, was recently awarded a restoration grant from California State Parks' Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) program. The OHMVR grant project will restore riparian habitat along the banks of the East Fork of the Carson River currently impacted by off-road vehicle travel associated with dispersed camping. All proposed restoration sites are located on USFS and BLM lands within Alpine County. The project area includes the reach of the East Fork from its confluence with Silver Creek to Hangman's Bridge just east of Markleeville. This reach of river is



experiencing riparian habitat loss, bank erosion and associated water quality impacts, in part due to motor vehicle impacts. These rehabilitation efforts will further the protection of the riparian corridor by better defining vehicle access locations and restoring and replanting impacted areas. When complete, restoration activities will provide many recreational and environmental benefits. These include maintaining access to public lands and improving the sustainability of dispersed camping and other recreational uses along this reach of the East Fork. The rehabilitation of riparian habitat helps reduce silt and other water quality impacts to this economically important trout fishing reach. This project will greatly improve visitors' recreational experience at these sites and further the protection of this California designated Wild and Scenic River. AWG is actively seeking partners to help implement the project. Implementation begins fall 2015 and the grant expires at June 2017.

- CWSD funds Lahontan and Stillwater Conservation Districts in Churchill County to undertake both sand bar removal, and clearing and snagging projects to alleviate potential flood choke hazard points.

### 3.5 Floodplain and Flood Hazard Outreach and Education

Suggested actions for this category include:

- a. Develop a watershed-wide outreach and education program about floodplain importance and flooding hazards.
- b. Brochures should be developed for distribution on a watershed level with consistent messages and information for the general public.
- c. CWSD website will provide information on the Regional Floodplain Management Plan and provide emergency contact information. Local governments and other entities can link to this website to increase distribution.
- d. Annual Flood Awareness Week will be established with the objective of providing information about flooding and flood hazards to the general public.
- e. Special events, River Work Days, and other outreach opportunities should be utilized to help raise awareness of flooding hazards and importance of floodplains.

Progress during this period:

- CWSD staff is working with the NV Flood Awareness Week planning committee on a bi-monthly basis. NV Flood Awareness Week this year is scheduled for Nov. 1-7, 2015 and will include state and county proclamations, specific events, bill board advertisements and PSAs. Each County is encouraged to participate by having local events, etc. A website has been created, housed by Nevada Division of Water Resources (NDWA) at [NevadaFloods.org](http://NevadaFloods.org). Funding is available for this year, 2015, through NV Division of Water Resources, and various other agencies. CWSD staff is supported through the FEMA MAS 4 grant. CWSD is seeking additional

funding through FEMA MAS grants to assist with a similar event in subsequent years.

- CWSD is seeking FEMA MAS 6 (submitted in July 2015) funding to complete 4 PSA's looking at "Floodplains as Community Assets". See Section 3.1 and/or the FEMA grant application at CWSD.
- Watershed website provides link to the Floodplain Management Plan and emergency manager information at [www.cwsd.org](http://www.cwsd.org).
- Numerous articles about floodplain protection and flooding were included in CWSD's newsletter, "The Flow" that is distributed to over 1000 individuals throughout the six counties located in the Carson River watershed.
- Several Conserve Carson River Work Days were held and included a station about flooding and the importance of floodplain protection.
- See Section 3.1 regarding details on UNCE's Floodplain Protection Inventory of the Carson River Watershed publication.

### **3.6 Reduction of Infrastructure Impacts**

There are opportunities throughout the watershed for the enhancement and/or design and maintenance of roads, culverts, grade controls, and bridges to accommodate floodwaters better, protect floodplains, and decrease harmful erosion.

Progress made during this period:

- See Section 3.1 relating to the study on the Virginia Rocky Diversion.

### **4.0 Conclusion**

CWSD is working diligently to coordinate the completion of the 38 suggested actions in the Floodplain Management Plan adopted by the five counties along the Carson River. Please contact Ed James or Brenda Hunt at 775.887.7450 with any questions or comments regarding the above report.