

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

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- Wabuska Bio-Diesel Plant

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# LVEA IN ACTION

SUMMER / FALL 2007

## The Water did turn to GOLD!!

After months of data collection, scientific research and hearings Churchill County is pleased with the recent State Engineer rulings denying over 93% of proposed appropriations, which would have exceeded 42,000 acre feet of new groundwater pumping, near the river in the Tracy segment of the Truckee River. The rulings close that segment to future applications. This was just one of nearly a dozen battles the County and others have engaged in recently to protect Churchill County and Newlands Project water right owners from initiatives by upstream entities to "find" more water for development.

It is a well recognized fact that surface waters and ground waters interact and that the pumping of or depletion of either impacts the other. International, Federal and State laws, with the exception of Nevada, are written to recognize this. The "Water Cycle" is taught in schools and universities throughout the world and is described in USGS and State Engineer presentations and websites. Universities and Government agencies have developed sophisticated models which predict the impacts of changes in surface flows on groundwater and impacts of groundwater pumping on surface waters. Yet, Churchill County and other parties at the end of Nevada's rivers find ourselves being placed in the expensive and unpopular position of having to file protests and to go to hearings and often to court in order to remind upstream interests, legislators and State offi-

cials of these established facts. Churchill County has invested millions of dollars in protecting drinking water recharge, surface water rights and future



water resources and is currently engaged in a number of negotiations and protests to protect your water.

Fernley and Churchill recently worked together to create an inter-local agreement which addresses the needs of both entities and creates a process which enables developers to transfer Truckee Division water across county lines without protest, in exchange for a commitment to mitigating impacts to the environment and water table. Over the next 15 years Fernley and Churchill County will work with developers and Swingle Bench and Hazen area residents to reverse some of the damages caused by stripping irrigation off of farms and wetlands in that area.

Churchill and Lyon Counties are currently negotiating over protests filed by Churchill in response to a number of applications proposing to move points of diversion for a large number of ground water rights in the Dayton

Valley and Stage Coach sub-basins to wells closer to the Carson River. This is a good year for observation of the Carson River and the impacts of diversions and groundwater pumping. As the pressures on the river change from surface diversion for irrigation to municipal and industrial uses and associated year round groundwater pumping, management of the river and groundwater become more challenging.

As many as 180,000 new homes and 500 new industrial sites have been proposed by developers and planners in the Carson and Truckee River basins and Reno area above Churchill County. New proposals and applications for diverting, pumping and importing water resources to support development appear each month. Proposals to "conserve water" by doing away with agriculture, wetlands habitat, springs and recreational uses seem to be gaining momentum. If we want to preserve our way of life, agriculture, wildlife habitat, open spaces, rivers and lakes, and water resources for our own community's future, we will have to be willing to work with our regional neighbors when we can and to battle with them when appropriate to ensure science, not politics or developer dollars, rules the decisions of law.

Submitted by Brad Goetsch,  
Churchill County Manager

# Event and Meeting Dates to Remember

LVEA Board Meetings:  
 October 22nd @7pm  
 November 26th @7pm

Nevada Day Observed  
 October 26th  
 Halloween October 31st



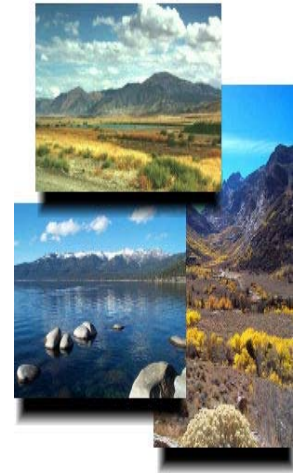
November 1st Board of  
 County Commissioners Meeting  
 8:15

November 6th Fallon City  
 Council 7pm

November 7th TCID Board  
 Meeting

November 12th Veterans Day

November 22-23 Thanksgiving  
 Holiday



Water flows uphill towards money. ~Anonymous, saying in the American West, quoted by Ivan Doig in *Marc Reisner, Cadillac Desert*, 1986

## Notes from the Director

July marks the beginning of the budget for LVEA. I would first like to thank our three contributors, TCID, City of Fallon and Churchill County. Thank you for your support.

LVEA is continuing in its commitment of preserving our agricultural economy through the preservation and protection of our natural resources. My goal for this new fiscal year

is to enhance programs already in place also creating new and exciting programs and events. Last year Fallon held the First National Ag Day Celebration and it was a huge success. This next year the Fallon Farm Festival and National Ag Day will be combining. This will enable this community to make this a true Ag Celebration.

The Newlands Mobile Museum

will be leaving for Carson City in a few weeks to have permanent signage placed on it. This will make the TCID guys very happy. More permanent steps are also being purchased.

The preservation of agriculture is very important to me and I hope that my work here at LVEA shows that. I will continue the quest.

Sincerely, Erica

## Cantaloupe Festival & County Fair

Heart of Gold Cantaloupe



The 22nd Annual Cantaloupe Festival and Country Fair was held Labor Day Weekend at the Churchill County Fair Grounds. The fair was bigger and better than years past. As usual many quilters

came out to show off their creations. I (Erica Behimer) was given the unique opportunity to help Kathy Lofthouse place the ribbons on the photos at the photo show. There were so many great photos taken by the community. Sue Frey and Pat Whitten co-chaired the Fair and did a

wonderful job. I will be joining them as Co-Chairman for the 2008 Country Fair. If you have never been to the Festival and Country Fair it is something not to miss. You will not see such a talented group of individuals all gathered around one event in all of Nevada, I hope to see you at the Fair, Erica

# Sand Mountain Blue Butterfly



## Sand Mountain Recreation Area

This document reported that the butterfly was not to be listed and that the mountain could stay open to recreation. There are limits to this recreation however. Some of the mountain has been closed completely and other portions now have limited use.

The user restrictions were placed on the mountain to help protect the vegetation and habitat of the butterfly, mainly the Kearney Buck-

wheat. This particular plant happens to be mainly used by the butterfly for breeding and early stage development. Working together with the users, National, State and Local government interests the Sand Mountain Blue Butterfly Working Group created a conservation plan. This plan included a marked trails system that is currently under construction.

If you would like to learn more about this or would like to see any of the documents talked about please contact LVEA at 423-0525

Many of you may or may not know that the Sand Mountain Blue Butterfly was not listed as an endangered species. There was a 90 day finding completed by United States Fish and Wildlife in early spring.

We never know the worth of water till the well is dry. ~Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia*, 1732

## Biodiesel and the Farmer – A Great Partnership

Infinifuel, is focused on producing biodiesel from Nevada crops, using Nevada's geothermal resources to provide electricity and process heat for the plants. The goal is to expand the geothermal production in our State, and build on our agricultural heritage by introducing new oilseed crops to Nevada. Biodiesel is made from vegetable oil or animal fats, not petroleum. The hope is to someday be producing tens of millions of gallons of biodiesel in Nevada, but that will only happen if we can secure a reliable and consis-

tent feedstock source. Infinifuel is looking at feedstock from two sources: oilseed dirt crops and algae. Most of the biodiesel in the US is made from soy and canola oil. While these two crops grow very well in other climates, they may not be best suited for our State. Working with UNR's Ag Extension and a few growers to identify oilseed crops that would thrive and yield high amounts of oil per acre in Nevada, crambe, safflower, and flax. The response from growers has been enthusiastic, and results from the first

few acres planted will be known this summer, but the outlook is good so far. The crops we are considering use less resources too, less labor is needed, less fertilizer and less water too.

We will never be able to build our biodiesel business without the help of the farmer. We need to cooperate to develop an AG-Energy economy in Nevada, much like the farmers in the midwest have done with corn and ethanol. Every gallon of fuel we produce benefits Nevada's agriculture, because biodiesel *is* agriculture. —Claude Sapp, Infinifuel

## LVEA Board Members

Richard Harriman, Chairman  
Truckee-Carson Irrigation District

Willis Swan, Vice-Chairman  
Shirley Walker  
City of Fallon

Gwen Washburn  
Ron Anglin  
Paul Ortiz  
Jason Carter  
Churchill County

Joanne Hanks  
Conservation Districts

Charles Shepperd  
City of Fernley



Lahontan Dam

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Lasting Solutions”**



## Mission of LVEA

Created by an interlocal agreement, the members of Lahontan Valley Environmental Alliance include Churchill County, the City of Fallon, the City of Fernley, the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District, and the Lahontan and Stillwater Conservation Districts,

The LVEA acts in a cooperative manner to:

- Provide education regarding issues affecting the natural resources of Churchill County and Fernley.
- Formulate and present positions supported by members to relevant agencies pertaining to common goals.
- Coordinate members and com-

munity interest groups in negotiations with other affected groups on common goals

- Recommend appropriate federal and state legislation to further LVEA objectives.
- Conserve, protect and enhance the levels and quantities of groundwater within the recharge areas of Churchill County and Fernley.

- Assist in planning for and adequate future water supply for the region.

LVEA is committed to reaching and maintaining an effective environmental balance through the preservation and protection of our limited water resources. The LVEA works to inspire people to join in protecting local natural resources and the vitality of rural lifestyles, The LVEA coordinated efforts in the Lahontan Valley to protect and manage our water resources while working to preserve our growing rural community both now and in the future. Funding for LVEA comes from appropriation by its members.



Thank you.