

*EUREKA CONSERVATION
DISTRICT*

Annual Work Plan and Budget

July 1st, 2015 – June 30th, 2016

**EUREKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ANNUAL WORK PLAN & BUDGET
JULY 1st, 2015 – JUNE 30th, 2016**

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INTRODUCTION:

The principal goal of Eureka Conservation District is to protect county soil, water, and related resources from unwise use. We believe the following work plan is realistic and helpful in implementing conservation efforts facing our county.

In general, conservation assistance is made available free of charge, to district landowners and operators through mutual and cooperative working agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture, and Natural Resources Conservation Service in Eureka, Nevada. All programs and services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, creed, nationality origin, sex, age, marital statues, disability or sexual orientation. The District encompasses Eureka County.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Eureka Conservation District is to coordinate technical and educational resources to meet the needs of the people within the District for the conservation of natural resources.

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ Concentrate conservation efforts in critical resources problem areas and important land use areas.
- ❖ Provide conservation assistance to district cooperators, individuals, minorities, limited resource farmers, and units of government.
- ❖ Reinforce work relationships with various agencies and groups, and support programs having a common interest.
- ❖ Carry out information and educational programs.
- ❖ Continue to carry out district administration activities.

I. CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE:

	WORKING WITH	WHEN
1) Encourage landowners and operators to become cooperators	NRCS ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
2) Develop conservation plans and provide technical assistance for cooperators to apply practices	NRCS ECD Board Cooperator	fiscal year 2015-2016
3) Work with producers to maintain eligibility under the provisions of the Food Security Act	NRCS ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
4) Hire facilitator to implement long term conservation planning for the Eureka Conservation District	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
5) Long Term Conservation Planning	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
6) Pinyon-Juniper Wildlife Habitat Enhancement	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
7) Biochar project	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
8) Riparian Improvement project	ECD Board	continuous

CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE (continued)

9)	Educational Scholarships	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
10)	Sage grouse	ECD district	fiscal year 2015-2016
11)	Soil health	ECD district	fiscal year 2015-2016
12)	Capacity building	ECD District	fiscal year 2015-2016
13)	Irrigation efficiency/water conservation	ECD district	fiscal year 2015-2016
14)	Wildlife habitat	ECD district	fiscal year 2015-2016
15)	Sponsoring workshops	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
16)	Tree purchasing	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
17)	Sponsor students for Range Camp	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016

II. WORKING RELATIONS:

		WHO	WHEN
1)	Cooperate with individuals, groups, and local officials in land use planning to advance conservation goals and objectives	ECD Board NRCS	fiscal year 2015-2016
2)	Assist the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to carry out conservation programs	ECD Board NRCS	fiscal year 2015-2016
3)	Keep up-to-date on public policy issues and other agency proposals affecting Eureka County	ECD Board NRCS	fiscal year 2015-2016
4)	Participate in public meetings concerning the District	ECD Board NRCS	fiscal year 2015-2016
5)	Be informed on legislative activities and notify legislative representatives on any issue of concern to the Eureka Conservation District	ECD Board	fiscal year 2015-2016
6)	Work with local cooperative extension services to develop demonstrations, research trials and conservation plans	ECD Board NRCS	fiscal year 2015-2016

III. INFORMATION AND EDUCATION :

		WHO	WHEN
1)	Publish District's annual report in local newspaper	ECD Board	Oct/Nov
2)	Publish semi-annual newsletter	ECD Board, UNR Extension, Natural Resources	continuous

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION (continued)

	WHO	WHEN
4) Sponsor Range Camp participants	ECD Board	June
5) Sponsor scholarships for high school and college students interested in agriculture or natural resource fields	ECD Board	May
6) Provide financial assistance to local clubs	ECD Board	continuous
7) Take a leadership role in informing producers of progress being made in weed and pest control activities	ECD Board	continuous
8) Provide pamphlets or books to the public on weed and pest control	ECD Board	continuous
9) Sponsor conservation workshops	ECD Board	continuous

IV. ADMINISTRATION:

	WHO	WHEN
1. Develop annual work plan.	ECD Board	April
2. Review Memorandum of Understanding.	ECD Board	continuous
3. Develop annual budget.	ECD Board	January - June
4. Manage District finances.	ECD Board	continuous
5. Hold regular meetings each month. Special meetings called as needed.	ECD Board	monthly
6. Plan and direct a conservation project.	ECD Board	continuous
7. Operate and maintain a local conservation office.	ECD Board	continuous
8. Hire employees or acquire the services of professionals.	ECD Board	as needed
9. Help orient new supervisors on district activities and programs.	ECD Board	as needed
10. Conduct employee appraisals.	ECD Board	as needed
11. Hold elections of board officers.	ECD Board	November

District Supervisors:

Lynn Conley	Jim Ithurrealde
Jake Tibbitts	Juniece Salas
Jim Gallagher	Denise Moyle

V. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Annual Meeting Committee

Lynn Conley
Jim Ithurrealde
Juniece Salas

2) Research and Education

Jim Gallagher
Jake Tibbitts
Denise Moyle

3) Poster Committee

Jake Tibbitts
Juniece Salas

4) Scholarship Committee

Board of Supervisors

V1 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

District supervisors will attend local, state, and national meetings, conferences, etc, to keep abreast of changing conservation techniques and resource issues, and to further conservation work plan projects.

	MEETINGS	WHO	WHEN
1)	Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD)	ECD Board	November
2)	Southwest Region Meeting	ECD Board Representative	September
3)	Northeast Area Meeting	ECD Board	June
4)	National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)	ECD Board	February
5)	Annual Meeting of Eureka Conservation District	ECD Board	October/November

VII. AUTHORIZATION:

Adoption of this work plan was authorized unanimously by motion of the Eureka Conservation District Board of Supervisors.

Approved by:

Lynn Conley, Chairwoman

Date: _____

Jim P. Itharralde, Vice-Chairman

Date: _____

Eureka Conservation District – PO Box 323 – Eureka, NV 89316

Annual Budget
JULY 1, 2015 through JUNE 30, 2016

<i>Supervisor's Travel & Training:</i>	<i>\$ 5,000.00</i>
<i>Office Expenses:</i>	<i>\$ 7,800.00</i>
<i>Postal Fees (postage, bulk mailings, etc)</i>	<i>\$ 300.00</i>
<i>Office Supplies (including monthly Internet service)</i>	<i>\$1,500.00</i>
<i>Salary for District Clerk</i>	<i>\$6,000.00</i>
<i>Projects:</i>	<i>\$100,000.00</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Biochar</i> <i>• Capacity Building</i> <i>• Eureka County Conservation poster contest</i> <i>• Long term conservation planning</i> <i>• Irrigation efficiency</i> <i>• Juvenile Department Duck Stamp program</i> <i>• PJ Thinning</i> <i>• Range Camp</i> <i>• Research and Education</i> <i>• Riparian project</i> <i>• Sage grouse/Wildlife habitat</i> <i>• Soil health</i> <i>• Tree purchasing</i> <i>• Water conservation</i> 	
<i>Insurance (worker's compensation & grain drills)</i>	<i>\$ 1,200.00</i>
<i>State and National Meetings and Dues:</i>	<i>\$ 7,375.00</i>
<i>Nevada Association of Conservation Districts</i>	<i>\$ 600.00</i>
<i>National Association of Conservation Districts</i>	<i>\$ 775.00</i>
<i>Registration and Travel Expenses for Meetings</i>	<i>\$6,000.00</i>
<i>Grant request Eureka County (not confirmed)</i>	<i>\$ 29,000.00</i>
<i>State Fund Grant Amount</i>	<i>\$ 3,500.00</i>
<i>Conservation District Reserves</i>	<i>\$ 72,875.00</i>
<i>Total Budget Amount</i>	<i>\$121,375.00</i>

2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Eureka Conservation District



Conserving Natural Resources for Our Future

Mission

The mission of the Eureka Conservation District is to coordinate technical and educational resources to meet the needs of the individuals within the District for the conservation of natural resources.

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Introduction:

The Eureka Conservation District (ECD) was founded in 1950 which covered a land mass of 1,650 square miles. After land owner petitions and land transfers from Jiggs and the Humboldt Conservation District, the ECD now covers 4,175 square miles, the entirety of Eureka County.

The principal goal of the ECD is to conserve natural resources – soil, water and related resources – for current and future wise-use and enjoyment. Conservation assistance is made available free of charge, to district landowners and operators through coordination of working agreements and pursuit of partnerships and project funding with the USDA-NRCS and other federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies such as the Eureka County Natural Resources Department, and many private entities such as the mining industry and wildlife groups.

➤ District Supervisors:

Lynn Conley	Chairwoman
Jim Ithurrealde	Vice-Chairman
Jim Gallagher	Member
Juniece Salas	Member (Resigned 3/22/2016)
Denise Moyle	Member
Jake Tibbitts	Eureka County Representative

➤ District Clerk:

Jessica Santoyo

➤ Meetings Held:

The ECD met eight times from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, hosted one Annual Dinner on October 22, 2015 and hosted numerous workshops.

➤ Outcomes:

The ECD concentrated on conservation efforts in critical resource problem areas and important land use areas. The ECD provided conservation assistance to district cooperators, individuals, producers, and government agencies. The ECD reinforced work relationships with various agencies and support programs having a common conservation interest. The ECD continued providing information, educational programs, and carried out district administrative activities.

Projects and Services:

The ECD concentrates its efforts in resource problem areas and conducts education and on-the-ground projects to conserve water, soil, and other related resources. By hosting various projects they are helping reinforce working relationships with district cooperators, individuals, minorities, limited resource farmers, and Eureka County. ECD provides multiple services in order to help conserve the county's natural resources.

Youth Education:

The ECD continues their educational outreach and efforts by working with the Eureka County School District, Eureka County Juvenile Probation Office, Nevada Youth Range Camp, and by offering ECD scholarships. ECD helps promote educating students on protecting soil, water and related resources from unwise use.

➤ **National Association of Conservation Districts Poster Contest:**

ECD board members presented at the Eureka Elementary School, Crescent Valley Elementary School and to the Pine Valley students in September 2015. The theme that was presented was “Local Heroes – Your Hardworking Pollinators”, which was provided by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). Students were educated on the protection of soil, water, and other related resources in order to help them depict the presented theme on their poster. Once all posters were submitted, they were judged by the ECD board, and the top three posters in each category were awarded. All of the poster winners were presented their prizes and certificates at the ECD Annual Dinner in October 2015. Winning posters were forwarded on for entry into the state level, Nevada Association of Conservation Districts (NvACD), contest.

Presentation of Awards to the Poster Contest Winners were presented at the October 22, 2016 ECD Annual Dinner.



Winners

Category: Kindergarten through 1st Grade

1st Place- Brody Sweet

2nd Place- Trent Conley

3rd Place- Trypp Brown

Category: 2nd Grade through 3rd Grade

1st Place- Makenzie Hudson

2nd Place- Jorja Osburn

3rd Place- Megan Johnson

Category 4th Grade through 6th Grade

1st Place– Christopher Burton

2nd Place– Sydnie Osburn

3rd Place– Gabriella Minoletti

Category 7th Grade through 9th Grade

1st place– Carlie Wells

Category 10th grade through 12th grade

1st Place- Julia Hayward

2nd Place- Emily Schwebel



➤ Eureka County Juvenile Probation Office Duck Stamp Contest:

The ECD helped sponsor the Junior Duck Stamp Program that is coordinated through the Eureka County Juvenile Probation Office. The Junior Duck Stamp Program is presented to the Eureka Elementary School and Crescent Valley Elementary School on an annual basis. Students were educated on water fowl habits and conservation efforts. The ECD provides a sponsorship to the Junior Duck Stamp Program for any acquired expenses on materials and educational information.

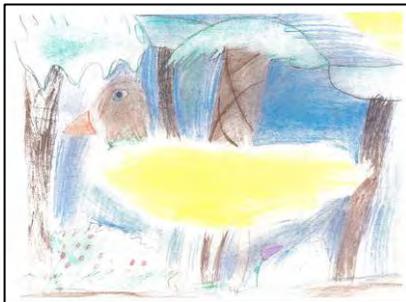
Winners



Julianna Goicoechea
Pre-School



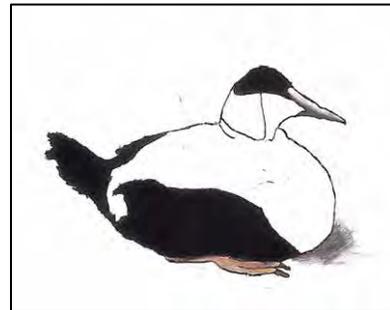
Jayde Rosener
Kindergarten



Olivia Martin
1st Grade



Jenna Rosener
2nd Grade



Jake Glasscock
3rd Grade



Mary Swanson
4th Grade



Kyler Zumhofs
5th Grade



Isabella Minoletti
6th Grade

➤ Nevada Youth Range Camp:

The ECD offered sponsorships for students to attend the 56th Annual Nevada Youth Range Camp. The Nevada Youth Range Camp provides an educational experience to students by learning about Nevada's desert and mountain rangelands. The Eureka Conservation District sponsored Gabe Covington to attend this year's Range Camp. The ECD provided a general donation of \$1,300.00 to the Nevada Youth Range Camp for supplies and to be used on anything else that may be needed for an educational Range Camp experience.

➤ Eureka Conservation District Education Scholarships:

The ECD made continuing education scholarships available to the Eureka High School students who were interested in the agriculture or natural resource fields of study in May 2016. A college scholarship for \$500.00 was made available to any student who meet the required criteria and was currently enrolled in college. Three high school scholarships for \$500.00 were made available to students who meet the required criteria and had plans to attend college after graduation from high school.



Pictured (from left to right): Jessica Santoyo, ECD Clerk, Gracie Damele Scholarship Recipient, William Wyatt Gibbs Scholarship Recipient, Megan Damele Scholarship Recipient, and Jim Ithurrealde ECD Vice-Chairman.

Dear Eureka Conservation,
I'm very grateful to have
been chosen as a
scholarship recipient. You've
really helped me achieve
my goals and dreams.
Thank you all!
Megan Damele

Dear Eureka Conservation District,
Thank you for the generous scholarship!
I greatly appreciate it. Thank you for
recognizing my dreams, goals, and potential.
I won't let you down!
Thanks again,
Gracie Damele

On-the-Ground Projects:

➤ Pinion-Juniper (PJ) Removal Projects:

The ECD participated financially and administratively in a continued effort to cut PJ trees down on privately owned lands. The project was focused on improving wildlife habitat, increasing water availability, and providing additional forage for livestock operations. The PJ removal project was primarily an effort to enhance private land to help benefit Greater Sage Grouse habitats within the private property. In the last three seasons, a total of 5,150 acres of PJ on private land within sage grouse habitat were removed. The project still has a possibility of continue on into the next fiscal year if more private land is made available or BLM authorizes work on public land.

A portion of the overall project was funded through the Sage Grouse Habitat Grant Program. This part of the project removed additional downed trees to break up ground fuel continuity. Also, the biomass was used as feedstock for pyrolysis/biochar for associated but separate biochar projects (see below). Downed trees near roads, primarily Simpson Creek Ranch Road, were selected for removal to leverage the use of the road as an extended fire break and trees removed were transported to a nearby area and chipped for use as feedstock in producing biochar.



Pre-Project Photo



Wood Chip Pile for
Biochar Project.

Post-Project Photo

➤ Biochar Project:

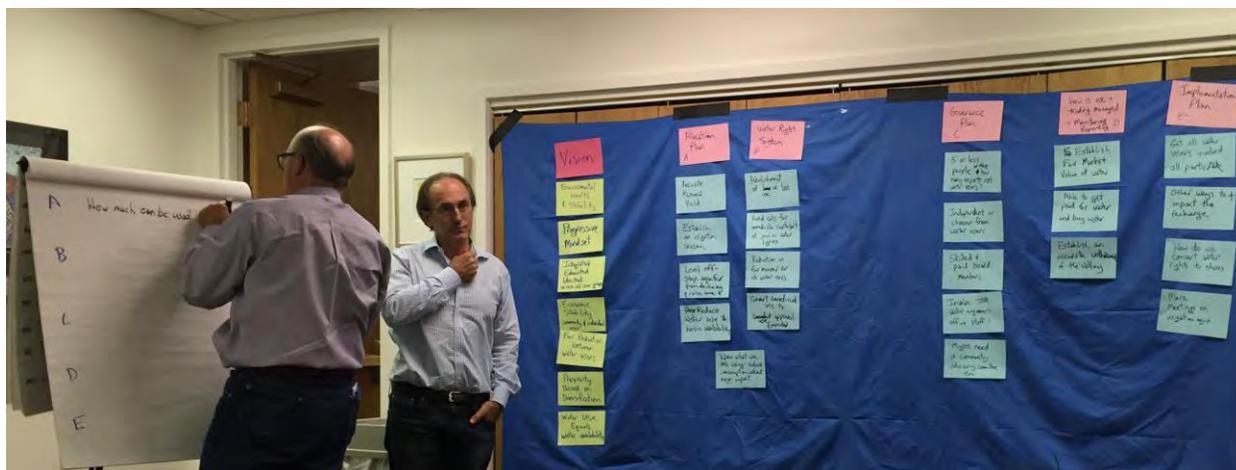
The ECD has been involved and continued in this project to find a use for the PJ biomass removed for the above habitat projects. There is also a focus on the potential of locally sources biochar being used as a soil amendment to increase soil moisture holding capacity in Diamond Valley and for local mining reclamation in order to reduce irrigation needs and increase vegetation establishment. The project was created in order to look into different alternatives for water issues being faced in Diamond Valley as well as ways to increase mining reclamation success. The biochar was researched and was determined to be a possible alternative for water conservation. The biochar was made using the PJ wood chips that resulted from the PJ removal project. Working with Amaron Energy in June 2015, 13 tons of biochar were produced from local PJ. There is still continued interest to continue to produce biochar with the remaining PJ wood chips in the future. There are ongoing efforts to now apply this biochar to fields and mine reclamation.



Biochar: Biochar has been shown to aid in moisture and nutrient holding capacity and shown to help absorption and efficient release of fertilizer and pesticides as it has a sponge like aptitude. Biochar is the product of cooking (not combusting) biomass at high temperatures with little oxygen resulting in a nearly pure carbon.

➤ **Diamond Valley Groundwater Management Planning (DVGMP):**

The ECD has been participating in the DVGMP in order to be better understand alternatives for the water issues being faced in Diamond Valley (DV). DV is severely over pumped resulting in water table decline and unsustainable use. Two-thirds of the population of Eureka County derives their water from DV and DV hosts roughly 200 center-pivots and contributes millions of dollars to the local economy. ECD has spearheaded “getting a pulse” on the opinions and issues in DV through informational and facilitated meetings, sending of questionnaires to all water users, and general administrative support. A local work group of farmers and other water users in DV have come together to develop and implement a plan that will determine their needs and every else’s needs regarding water resources in DV and will work to reduce groundwater pumping over time in a way that is fair and non-detrimental to the community. The ECD strives to participate in public meetings that may impact the district. The ECD has been providing administrative assistance, sponsoring lunch, and providing professional facilitators at the DVGMP workshops.



Steve Lewis (left) and Professor Mike Young (right) lead a Groundwater Management Plan workshop, hosted by the ECD, in Eureka June 11, 2015.

➤ **ECD Rangeland Drills:**

The ECD owns three rangeland drills that continue to be leased and used by local land owners. By cooperating with individuals, groups and local officials in having the rangeland drills available, the county is advancing in conservation goals and objectives. The use of the drills by local landowners has proven beneficial for post-fire rehabilitations, pasture restorations, and noxious weed control. Having this service available not only benefits the local landowner but helps improve long term conservation planning. The drills were rented out a handful of times over this past year.

➤ Weed Control:

The Eureka County Board of Commissioners, through the authority granted in SB 276, designated the ECD Board of Supervisors to become the Weed Control District Board of Directors in January 2016. While the budgeting for the Weed District falls under the Board of Commissioners, ECD has directed the work completed under the Weed District and continued partnerships with landowners to control noxious weeds. Many thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours were devoted to weed control since ECD took the helm over the Weed District; mostly through contract spraying, herbicide distribution to landowners, and technical assistance.

Weed District Newsletter

Eureka County Noxious Weed Newsletter
Spring 2016

Update on Eureka County Weed Control

- State law requires each "owner or occupier of land in this State to control weeds on his or her own land" (NRS 555.502). The Diamond Valley Weed Control District (through the Eureka Conservation District) can assist land owners and occupiers with technical support in controlling noxious weeds.
- With budget constraints, lands not included in the Weed District cannot receive complimentary herbicide as has been done in the past. Lands within the Weed District are eligible for herbicide assistance, and in some cases, spraying assistance. Nearly all properties in the Town of Eureka and in and adjacent to the Town of Crescent Valley, are outside of the Weed District. However, we still provide technical assistance and information to all residents regarding noxious weeds. If you have property outside of the Weed District that you wish to be considered for inclusion in the Weed District, please see the next page for more information.
- Administration of the Diamond Valley Weed Control District and Eureka County Weed Control is in the Eureka County Department of Natural Resources. Weed control projects, planning, and prioritization are accomplished under the direction of the Eureka Conservation District Board of Supervisors.
- Currently, we are working with a contractor to prioritize our noxious weed treatment efforts for the current and upcoming weed season. You may notice the contractor around Diamond Valley and throughout the County spraying weeds. Spraying of weeds on County roads has been coordinated with the Public Works Department.
- Contact information is:

Eureka County Department of Natural Resources
 701 South Main Street
 PO Box 582
 Eureka, NV 89316
 775-237-6010

HELP, TECHNICAL SUPPORT, AND REFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE AT THE DIAMOND VALLEY WEED CONTROL DISTRICT LOCATED IN THE NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE IN THE EUREKA COUNTY ANNEX. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO COME IN, FEEL FREE TO CALL (775) 237-6010.

"The Legislature declares that it is primarily the responsibility of each owner or occupier of land in this State to control weeds on his or her own land, but finds that in certain areas this responsibility can best be discharged through control by organized districts"
 Nevada Revised Statutes 555.202

How Are Lands Included in the Weed Control District?

- In accordance with NRS 555.217, in order for lands to be included in the weed control district the following must take place:
1. The owners of lands that wish to be included in the district must file with the board of directors a petition in writing asking for inclusion in the district. The petition must describe the tracts or body of land owned by the petitioners for inclusion. Areas proposed for inclusion in a weed control district need not be contiguous to other portions of the district.
 2. The owner or owners of the lands described in the petition will be contacted, in addition to notice published in a newspaper of general circulation of the County. The notices must require all persons interested to appear at the office of the board at the time specified in the notice and show cause in writing why the request should not be granted.
 3. The board will meet at the time specified in the notice to hear the request and all written objections presented.
 4. Upon conclusion of the hearing the board by resolution shall approve the request, subject to ratification by the Board of County Commissioners, or deny the request.
 5. The board may approve the inclusion in the district of the described lands only if it determines that the lands contain weeds that are harmful to owners of land in the district, inclusion does not impair or affect its organization or its rights in or to property, or any of its rights or privileges whatsoever, and does not affect or impair or discharge any contract, obligation, lien or charge for or upon which it or the owners of property in the district might be liable or chargeable had the inclusion not been made.

What Are Noxious Weeds?

Noxious Weeds are unwanted plants that cause harm to:
 Agriculture People Recreational Areas Wildlife Rangeland Health

- Noxious weeds are harmful because they are invasive.
- Noxious and invasive weeds are not native to our area and have no natural enemies to control reproduction. They can and often do crowd out desirable vegetation.
- The management of noxious weeds is necessary to conserve and improve natural resources such as cropland, soil, forage, and wildlife habitat and to manage land resources for multiple use values and improve the economic stability within Eureka County.
- Keep in mind that weeds on the Nevada Noxious Weed List have to be our first priority. While plants like halogeton and purple mustard can be considered toxic they aren't considered noxious and we aren't treating them at this time.

NEVADA'S NOXIOUS WEED LIST (alphabetical by common name)

African Rue Austrian fieldcress Austrian peaweed Black Henbane Camelthorn Common crupina Dyer's woad Eurasian water-milfoil Giant Salvinia Goats rue Green fountain grass Hemlock, poison Hemlock, water Horse-nettle, Carolina Horse-nettle, White Houndstongue Hydrilla Johnson grass Klamath weed Knapweed, Diffuse Knapweed, Russian*	Knapweed, Spotted* Knapweed, Squarrose Leafy Spurge Mayweed chamomile Mediterranean sage Medusahead* Perennial pepperweed* (tall white top) Perennial sweet sudan Puncturevine* Purple loosestrife Rush skeletonweed Saltcedar (tamarisk) Sorghum alium Sulfur cinquefoil Syrian bean caper Thistle, Canadian Thistle, Musk* Thistle, Scotch* Thistle, Sow	Thistle, Iberian star Thistle, Purple star Thistle, Yellow star Thistle, Malta star Toadflax, Dalmatian Toadflax, yellow Whitetop or Hoary cress* *Weeds listed in bold italics with asterisk (*) have been identified in the county and are top priority in the weed management plan. Weeds in bold print have been identified, control measures taken, and don't pose a serious threat at this time.
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WE NEED YOUR HELP IN CONTROLLING AND ERADICATING NOXIOUS WEEDS IN EUREKA COUNTY!

There are many potentially harmful weeds but at this time the weeds that pose an immediate threat to Eureka County belong to the sunflower family or mustard family.

There are many identifying features in each plant family. One easy way to identify both of these families is to look at the flower. The mustard family flower always has four petals, four sepals, and 6 stamens. Also, even though the seed pods come in many shapes they are always arranged in a radial pattern around the stem.

- ❖ Hoary Cress (Short White Top)
- ❖ Perennial Pepperweed (Tall White Top)
- ❖ Both weeds have white flowers

The sunflower family flower is actually made up of many small flowers growing on a disc (like a sunflower). Often the flowers are so small it is almost impossible to see. It is easier to look under the petal where you would expect to find the sepals. What you see is several rows of bracts, like an artichoke or bachelor button.

- ❖ Thistles and Knapweeds belong to this family
- ❖ These weeds have purple/pinkish flowers

HOARY CRESS



EUREKA KNAPWEED



Community Outreach:

The ECD reaches out to the community by providing educational material, publications, projects, services, and hosts an annual dinner. Providing community outreach helps the community know that the ECD has resources available to benefit them as land owners and Eureka County. By working with the community the ECD has advanced their conservation goals and objectives for the present day and the future.

➤ Annual Meeting:

The ECD hosted an annual meeting, dinner, and presentation of Conservation Awards on October 22, 2015 at the Eureka Opera House. The Annual meeting and dinner was open to the general public and the poster contest winners and their families were also invited to attend. The poster contest winners received their certificate and prizes during the dinner. The dinner is very well attended by district cooperators, community individuals, and students.

Conservation Awards:

- Diamond Cattle Company-Conservation Excellence Award.



ECD Chairwoman Lynn Conley presenting the ECD's projects to the community.



Certificates of Appreciation



In the News

North America **COMMUNITY**

Newmont recognized for support of conservation district



EUREKA, Nevada - Newmont once again supported the Eureka Conservation District's annual poster contest and award dinner. Lisa and Joe Becker represented Newmont at the dinner to present prizes to the poster contest winners. This year's theme was "Local Heroes - Your Hardworking Pollinators." Newmont was also recognized by the Eureka Conservation District for our longtime support of the organization and its local conservation efforts. [NAN](#)

Far left: Newmont's Joe and Lisa Becker present an award to a poster contest participant. Near left: Joe and Lisa receive a certificate of appreciation on behalf of Newmont from Jim Ithurralde (right), Eureka Conservation District member and former Eureka County commissioner.

The Eureka Sentinel

. Workshop held for Groundwater Management Plan

July 2, 2015 By [Eureka Sentinel](#)



Water users in Diamond Valley kicked off efforts to develop a Groundwater Management Plan for the groundwater basin at two workshops sponsored by the Eureka County Conservation District on April 23 and June 11, 2015. The workshops, held at the Eureka Board of County Commission Chambers and Eureka Opera House, respectively, were facilitated by Steve Lewis of the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Services. Steve is well-known for his ability to help groups reach consensus with challenging issues. He is intimately familiar with water issues in Eureka County, having previously served as the Extension Service’s Agent in Charge in Eureka County from 1984 to 1990.

The June 11 session included an appearance by Professor Mike Young of the University of Adelaide, Australia where he holds a Research Chair in Water and Environmental Policy. He was a founding Executive Director of its Environmental Institute, is a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, and is a Distinguished Fellow of the Australian Agricultural and Resources Economics Study. As the Whitiam and Malcolm Fraser Chair in Australian Studies at Harvard University, Professor Young was instrumental in fashioning a “blueprint for a western water initiative.” He was influential in the development and implementation of changes in water policy to combat the worst drought in Australia’s history between the years 2003 to 2012. As luck would have it, Professor Young was in Nevada to meet with representatives of Governor Sandoval to discuss a range of water issues. He had heard about Diamond Valley’s water problems and was interested in gaining a better appreciation of them, so Jake Tibbitts, Eureka County’s Natural Resource Manager, and Eureka County Commission Chairman J.J. Goicoechea invited him to the workshop. Upon completion presentation highlighting the Australian experience, the attendees of the June 11 session drew him into the conversation to help categorize the basic elements of a plan to manage water resources in Diamond Valley.

The need for a Groundwater Management Plan is a result of massive over-appropriation of Diamond Valley's groundwater resources under the oversight of the office of the Nevada State Engineer. More than 50 years ago predecessors to the current State Engineer approved applications for permits to appropriate groundwater totaling more than 180,000 acre-feet per year (an acre-foot is equal to approximately 326,000 gallons of water) in a basin that is estimated to safely yield only about 30,000 acre-feet per year (also referred to as the Perennial Yield). There are currently more than 130,000 acre-feet of groundwater rights on the books in Diamond Valley, more than four times the Perennial Yield. For decades, groundwater consumption in the Valley has been more than double the amount the resource can sustain indefinitely and groundwater has essentially been mined.

Since groundwater exploitation in the basin began in the 1960s and accelerated into the 1970s, water levels in the basin's aquifer have declined by more than 100 feet in the center of southern Diamond Valley where agricultural pumping is concentrated. This drawdown has resulted in wide-spread declines that now extend well beyond the area of concentrated agricultural pumping and have affected or eliminated the flow of springs in northern Diamond Valley. Well owners and water rights holders are engaged in a "race to the bottom of the aquifer" as pumps are lowered and wells deepened to respond to the declining water levels.

The current State Engineer Jason King inherited the problem from his predecessors. He has made two formal presentations to the water users in Diamond Valley – the most recent in February 2014 – where he strongly urged stakeholders to take the initiative to come up with community-based solutions to the overdraft problem. He has also held numerous meetings with County officials and staff, individuals and groups all of whom welcome the opportunity to work toward an equitable resolution. If the community cannot help the State Engineer resolve the matter, the State Engineer has no option but to curtail pumping solely on the basis of priority, which could result in a 60 percent reduction in current irrigation use. In Diamond Valley, any groundwater right with a priority junior to May 18, 1960 is in jeopardy of being curtailed. The State Engineer also has the authority to regulate pumping from domestic wells. His records show only two domestic wells in Diamond Valley have a priority date that is senior to May 18, 1960.

This community-based approach to addressing water resource management was made possible through legislation sponsored by State Senator Pete Goicoechea when he was a member of the State Assembly. His legislation was conceived specifically to address areas like Diamond Valley where groundwater is being mined and water levels are steadily declining. Such areas would be designated Critical Management Areas (CMAs) either through petition from water right holders or unilaterally by the State Engineer. The process allows flexibility on behalf of the State Engineer over a 10-year period to implement a Groundwater Management Plan developed by the water users. However, if a plan cannot be successfully implemented within the statutory period, the State Engineer would be forced to curtail pumping on the basis of priority. Presently, only Diamond Valley and the Pahrump area are actively moving toward declaration as CMAs, but there are two dozen additional basins waiting in the wings to be designated as such. The important points to remember are: the Groundwater Management Plan is developed by the water users; once the State Engineer approves the Plan, it guides how water is used in the basin.

The two workshops sponsored by the Conservation District are the latest in a series of steps taken by Diamond Valley water users to come to grips with the problem. To date, the Diamond Natural Resources Protection and Conservation Association (DNRPCA) sponsored two economic analyses by Hansford Economic Consulting that were funded by grants from the Eureka Board of County Commissioners to examine the economics of groundwater management strategies. The Eureka County Conservation District engaged Steve Walker of Walker and Associates to conduct two workshops in Eureka to poll residents as to their concerns, the issues and possible solutions. Steve also privately interviewed a number of water users in Diamond Valley for their input. More recently, the Eureka County Conservation District circulated a

questionnaire to all residents in Diamond Valley with valid post office boxes to poll the valley residents – irrigators, ranchers, domestic well users, Devils Gate GID water users, Eureka Town water users, and mining interests – regarding whether or not they backed designation of the basin as a Critical Management Area. Approximately 75 percent of the poll respondents favored such a designation. It is expected that the State Engineer will designate Diamond Valley as a CMA in the near future.

Since there are no CMAs currently on the books in Nevada there are a lot of questions how the whole process is expected to work, who will be in charge, how will the process be financed, how will it be enforced, etc. – in summary, the governance. To quote Jason King, “We are building the airplane and flying it at the same time.” Many stakeholders have voiced an opinion that we need to know how the whole process might work before we can work out the specific actions that might be taken to address the overdraft problem.

The April 23 workshop focused on the governance of a CMA. Steve Lewis led discussions that included:

- Crafting a vision of Diamond Valley agriculture and other water users,
- A review of the events and actions leading up to today,
- Identifying the parameters under which a Plan must operate,
- Describing the duties and characteristics of an ideal governance body,
- How to get more water users involved in the process, and
- Developing a timeline for completing a Groundwater Management Plan.

A committee was formed to consolidate the ideas put forth in the workshop into a format that can be distributed to all water users in Diamond Valley. The summary, prepared by Denise Moyle, Craig Benson and Jake Tibbitts, was circulated at the June 11th meeting at which time a vision statement for Diamond Valley’s water plan was drafted. It states:

“Diamond Valley and southern Eureka County are prosperous and economically stable by all means including education and diversification. We are a community that is united, fair and forward thinking about our water usage in order to ensure stability for ourselves now and our future generations.”

Discussion then migrated to the goals of a Groundwater Management Plan. The primary goals were identified as

- Balance discharge with recharge to stop the overdraft and help stabilize groundwater levels,
- Maintain the economy of the basin, and
- Avoid unmitigated curtailment of water rights

From there, the conversation flowed to how these goals might be achieved.

Topics included:

- What might a governing board look like?
- What powers would a governing board have?
- How will the amount of water available for use each year be determined and how might it be distributed for maximum benefit?
- The importance of accurately measuring how much water is being pumped and monitoring water levels.
- Will a management plan allow water not used in one year to carry over to later years?

Professor Young was enlisted to describe how the Australian experience might be used to formulate management schemes appropriate to Diamond Valley and a number of ideas were bantered about. He stressed that at this early stage, the plan does not need to be perfect and that it should be expected to evolve. The immediate objective should be to develop a “high-level strategic plan” and to identify individuals who can serve as “champions” to guide the plan through to its end. In the end, Professor Young stated he was impressed with the group’s accomplishments to date and the level of involvement by the community.

A workshop to further flesh out the high-level strategic plan was scheduled for Thursday July 16, 2015. It will be moderated by Steve Walker who facilitated the initial sessions sponsored by the Eureka County Conservation District. Professor Young volunteered to attend the workshop and the attendees expressed a desire for State Engineer Jason King to attend. Attendees were invited to each bring at least two new people with them; in particular, residents who own domestic wells and residents who get their water supply from the Eureka Town Water System and the Devils Gate GID Water System because these groups have not been well represented at the previous two workshops.

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Annual Budget-Summary of Receipts

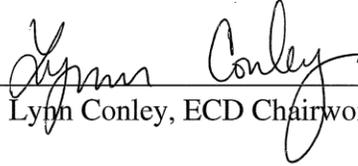
FINAL YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT	
EUREKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT	
Fiscal Year July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016	
SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS	
RECEIPT SOURCE	AMOUNT
State Funds-Annual Distribution	\$ 4,105.82
County Funds-Eureka County Grant	\$ 28,687.50
City Funds	\$ -
Other Government Funds	\$ -
Administrative Income	\$ -
Interest – CD, Savings, and Checking	\$ 52.16
State Funds: Sage-Grouse Habitat Grant	\$ 16,235.02
Project: Barrick Gold Corporation Reimbursement for Noxious Weed Spraying	\$ 5,446.50
Projects: Eastern NV Landscape Coalition (Biochar Project)	\$ 24,400.00
Project: State of NV Grant Landowner Incentive Program (Pinyon Juniper Removal) *Includes Reimbursements for expenditures in previous Fiscal Year's.	\$ 124,247.36
Rental Income (equipment, Rangeland Drill, etc.)	\$ 200.00
Contributions	\$ -
Building/Property Rental Fees	\$ -
Other Income: Annual Dinner and Meeting	\$ 3,180.00
Other Income: Donation from Mt. Wheeler(Groundwater Management Planning)	\$ 500.00
Other Income: Donation from Carter Ag. (Groundwater Management Planning)	\$ 500.00
Other Income: Donations from DonateWell.org	\$ 162.49
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 207,716.85

Annual Budget- Summary of Expenses

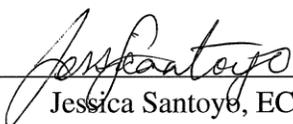
FINAL YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT	
EUREKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT	
Fiscal Year July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016	
SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES	
EXPENDITURE	AMOUNT
Employee Salary/Eureka Conservation District Clerk	\$ 1,981.46
Fringe Benefit Expense	\$ -
Supervisor Travel and Training	\$ 366.96
Registration and Travel Expenses for Meetings	\$ -
Building Rent	\$ -
Telephone	\$ -
Insurance: Rangeland Drill and Worker's Compensation	\$ 926.60
Rangeland Drills: Maintenance/Repairs	\$ -
Office Expenses: Postal Fees (Postage, Mailbox, and Buk Mailing)	\$ 893.54
Office Expenses: Office Supplies/Copying Costs	\$ 855.72
Membership Dues: Nevada Association of Conservation Districts	\$ 600.00
Membership Dues: National Association of Conservation Districts	\$ 775.00
Project: Pinyon-Juniper Removal (Non-Sage Grouse Specific)	\$ 66,402.58
Project: Biochar/Biomass Projects	\$ 12,265.00
Project: Groundwater Management Plan Workshops	\$ 1,638.12
Project: Poster Contest	\$ 535.45
Project: Juvenile Probation Duck Stamp Contest	\$ 350.00
Project: Range Camp Sponsorships	\$ 3,000.00
Project: College Scholarships	\$ 2,000.00
Project: Research, Education, and Outreach (Includes Annual Dinner)	\$ 3,863.12
Project: Irrigation Efficiency	\$ 39.95
Project: Tree Planting	\$ -
Project: Riparian Restoration/Protection	\$ -
Project: Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Improvement (State Grant)	\$ 16,235.02
Project: Other Requested Conservation Assistance	\$ -
Project: Sponsorship/Funding Requests	\$ 2,250.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 114,978.52

Certification

The Eureka Conservation District approved the July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016
Final Annual Report On September 13, 2016.



Lynn Conley, ECD Chairwoman

Submitted by: 

Jessica Santoyo, ECD Clerk