

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *2006 WHITE PINE COUNTY WATER RESOURCES PLAN*

The 2006 White Pine County Water Resources Plan has been prepared to guide the development, management, and use of water resources within the County during the next fifty years. Decision makers in White Pine County can use the information in the Plan to achieve the goals of: 1) maintaining and improving environmental quality in White Pine County and 2) maintaining and improving quality of life for the residents of White Pine County. The 2006 White Pine County Water Resources Plan identifies the goals and objectives and the institutional framework for the planning process, the guiding principles, and the Water Resources Plan's relationship to other planning documents. The plan details the County's economic history; current conditions and water use; on-going development and water use based on projects underway, in development, or under discussion; and potential future economic development. The Plan concludes with a discussion of the issues, goals and objectives, policies, and strategies for management of water resources. The Attachments to the Water Resources Plan provide additional detail on the statutory and regulatory setting, basic hydrographic information, an annotated bibliography on related topics, and the workbook for the GIS database. In addition, the Attachments provide an annually updated demographic profile, an annual evaluation of the progress made in accomplishing the County's water resource goals, and the White Pine County Water Resources Annual Action Plan to implement the Plan's recommendations.

The 2006 Water Resource Plan has been developed in a manner consistent with Nevada State water law and with the assistance and guidance of the state's Water Resource Planning Section.

The Plan envisions growth in the next five to ten years in traditional economic sectors including mining, agriculture, and tourism (which is based largely on outdoor recreational opportunities in the County). In addition it projects growth due to development of the White Pine Energy Station proposed by LS Power, the Ely Energy Center proposed by Sierra Pacific Power, proposed wind energy projects, residential growth including second and retirement homes, new facilities to accommodate increased tourist and business travel, growth of new small industrial firms locating in the area due to the quality of life, and industrial growth due to reinstatement of rail freight service. The Plan projects potential economic development over the next fifty years in agriculture, mining and oil exploration and production, residential development, tourism, and industrial development based on the location, known resources, climate and soil conditions, existing land uses, and transportation and transmission corridors. The Plan identifies Steptoe, Spring, Snake, Butte, and White River Valleys as the primary basins for development in the County. Newark, Railroad, Long, Jakes, Tippett, and Pleasant Valleys support agriculture as well as some mining and oil exploration activity and have been identified as secondary basins. Small portions of Huntington, Ruby, Antelope, Deep Creek, Hamlin, Cave, Lake, and Little Smokey Valleys are located in White Pine County but their economic development and water use are tied to development in neighboring Counties. Steptoe Valley currently houses the primary municipal, commercial, and industrial sectors for the County plus historical use for agriculture, wildlife, and tourism. The development potential in Steptoe Valley may exceed its available water resources and the County has identified the need to consider future intra-county, inter-basin transfers of water to accommodate its potential for growth.

The County has identified the need to integrate its planning efforts including water resources, land use, economic development and community development. It identifies a critical concern that potential exportation of water to southern Nevada through the Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine County Groundwater Development project proposed by Southern Nevada Water Authority as well as the emergence of private water purveyors who view water as a commodity to be delivered to distant urban markets may conflict with the County's ability to accomplish its goals of maintaining and improving the area's environmental quality and quality of life for White Pine County residents. The need to respond to internal development pressures as well as those from outside the County prompted the plan's focus on an active approach to understanding and managing its water resources for White Pine's future generations. The Plan outlines strategies for conservation, importation and exportation of water resources, water quality, drought protection, monitoring and mitigation, and administrative structures.

The Water Resources Plan is not a static document. It is meant to be used, evaluated, and revised. The Plan calls for annual review of the progress toward accomplishing the goals and objectives; revision of the Plan's recommendations; and establishment of an annual Action Plan. Each annual evaluation and annual work plan will be included as part of Attachment 5. The Plan will be completely revised at least once every five years to incorporate the annual changes in conditions, projections, and recommendations.

The 2006 Water Resources Plan has been developed through the efforts of the White Pine County Water Advisory Committee and reviewed in open public meetings from mid-2005 through mid 2006. The largely volunteer effort has been supplemented by a grant funded through the Nevada State Water Rights Technical Assistance Fund which allowed the County to employ Lumos & Associates to provide the technical information and assistance needed for the socio-economic and hydrology portions of the plan. The Committee also relied on the assistance of Kurt Suchsland from the Nevada State Division of Water Resources, Water Planning Section, as well as Alan Welch and Jon Wilson from USGS and its BARCASS project to assist with review of the 1999 Water Resources Plan and collection and evaluation of the data for the 2006 plan.

The Water Advisory Committee presented its preliminary recommendations to the County Commission at its meeting on June 28. The full Draft Plan was reviewed at the Water Advisory Committee meetings on July 20 and public comments were reviewed on August 22. The Draft Plan was made available for public review and sent to the Division of Water Resources, Water Planning Section for review and comment. It was reviewed in public meetings by the County Commission on July 26, Regional Planning Commission on August 2, Public Land Users Advisory Council on August 8, Ely City Council on August 10, and a Water Advisory Committee sponsored public workshop on August 16. Public hearings were held on August 21 by the Regional Planning Commission and on August 23 by the White Pine County Commission. and both Boards approved resolutions adopting the 2006 Water Resources Plan as part of the County's Comprehensive Master Plan on August 21, by the Regional Planning Commission and August 23 by the County Commission.

John A. Chachas, Commissioner  
Brent Eldridge, Commissioner  
David Pound, Commissioner  
Gary Perea, Commissioner  
Raymond Urzaga, Commissioner  
Dennis M. Beth, Ex-Officio Clerk of the Board

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White Pine County  
Board of County Commissioners

RESOLUTION 2006-16

ADOPTING THE 2006 WHITE PINE COUNTY  
WATER RESOURCES PLAN ELEMENT TO THE  
WHITE PINE COUNTY MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, N.R.S. 278.150 to 278.210, inclusive, requires the White Pine County Commission to prepare, conduct hearings on, and adopt a Comprehensive plan for the physical development and orderly management of the growth of the County; and

WHEREAS, the White Pine County Commission, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of August, 2006, in cooperation with the White Pine County Regional Planning Commission and Water Advisory Committee and after conduct of two years of public meetings and hearings has now completed its deliberations on the water resources element; and

WHEREAS, the White Pine County Commission believes that the White Pine County Water Resources Plan as contained in document and map form is properly drafted to represent the long term interests of the residents of White Pine County; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2006, the Regional Planning Commission voted to adopt the White Pine County Water Resources Plan as an element to the County's master plan by an affirmative majority of its members; and on August 23, the White Pine County Commission voted to adopt the White Pine County Water Resources Plan as an element to the County's master plan by an affirmative majority of its members; and

WHEREAS, the White Pine County Commission finds, pursuant to N.R.S. 278-020, that the White Pine County Land Use Plan promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, the maps, findings, and policies contained within the water resources plans are severable and if any portion thereof is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the Commission finds that the remaining elements and policies are intended to survive and remain in effect;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the White Pine County Commission does hereby find that the White Pine County Water Resource Plan is in conformance with N.R.S. 278-150 to N.R.S. 278.210, inclusive, and the same shall be, and hereby is, adopted.

Adopted this 23 day of August 2006.

VOTE:

AYES:

Brent Eudine  
Chair of Board of  
Planning

NAYES

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ABSENT

Kenneth Hainkaugh

Brent Eudine  
Chairman, Regional Planning Commission Date  
wpoo

8-23-06

ATTEST:

Dorothy A. Balle  
Clerk of Said Board, Date

RESOLUTION 2006- /

ADOPTING THE 2006 WHITE PINE COUNTY  
WATER RESOURCES PLAN ELEMENT TO THE  
WHITE PINE COUNTY MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, N.R.S. 278.150 to 278.210, inclusive, requires the Regional Planning Commission to prepare, conduct hearings on, and adopt a Comprehensive plan for the physical development and orderly management of the growth of the County and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Commission, on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of August, 2006. In cooperation with the White Pine County Water Advisory Committee and after conduct of two years of public meetings and hearings has now completed its deliberations on the water resources element; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Commission believes that the White Pine County Water Resources Plan as contained in document and map form is properly drafted to represent the long term interests of the residents of White Pine County; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2006, the Regional Planning Commission voted to adopt the White Pine County Water Resources Plan as an element to the County's master plan by an affirmative majority of its members; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Commission finds, pursuant to N.R.S. 278-020, that the White Pine County Land Use Plan promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, the maps, findings, and policies contained within the water resources plans are severable and if any portion thereof is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the Commission finds that the remaining elements and policies are intended to survive and remain in effect;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the White Pine County Regional Planning Commission does hereby find that the White Pine County Water Resource Plan is in conformance with N.R.S. 278-150 to N.R.S. 278.210, inclusive, and the same shall be, and hereby is, adopted.

Adopted this 21<sup>st</sup> day of August 2006.

VOTE:

AYES:

Carol O. McKemie  
Michael Speas  
Robert [unclear]  
Robert [unclear]  
John A. [unclear]  
Jane [unclear]

NAYES

ABSENT

Carol O. McKemie 8/21/06  
Chairman, Regional Planning Commission Date

ATTEST:

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Clerk of Said Board, Date