

# Summary of Stakeholder Forum Notes

Under each issue is listed a *summary* of the top concerns, challenges, opportunities and solutions.

## **Social**

1. *Illegal camping, storage, pets:*

Concerns: (1) Huge gap in transitional housing before permanent housing – need more permanent housing, rapid re-housing; (3) not enough storage in overflow shelters; (4) people don't necessarily want to be outside, but with pets (addressed below) and storage, there are limited options; (5) belongings can't be immediately disposed of when collected by agencies or organizations – must be held for 90 days + notice given; (6) owners of pets are attached and shelters aren't always pet-friendly

Solutions: (1) aim for functional zero; (2) continuation of overflow shelter year-round; (3) pet-client program; (4) available public storage; (5) create dialogue with justice system; (6) faith-based community can be more involved

2. *Substance abuse, mental illness:*

Concerns: (1) A lot of disorder issues but no resources; (2) no ease of access to services, substances; (3) Catch 22: when there are resources, medication might have street value and could be stolen or create a market

Opportunities: (1) Vegas example -- assisted outpatient care

Solutions: (1) Longer term hospitalization for mentally ill + secured housing; (2) increase funding; (3) better/speedier access to medication; (4) recuperative care -- work with hospitals

3. *Public health, human waste, sharps:*

Concerns: (1) Bedbugs, other infestations are transferred when animals get into trash or other items left around; (2) installing porta potties won't solve human waste issue due to possibilities of sexual exploitation, etc.; (3) the syringe program is new – not everyone is aware of the laws, don't utilize sharps containers provided

Opportunities: (1) HOPES runs the only legal syringe service program in Nevada, participates in cleanups on a regular basis

Solutions: (1) Pet waste stations, bags for packing out human waste; (2) more accessible garbage cans; (3) more permanent bathrooms with access hours, high visibility, regular patrol

4. *Personal safety and shelter:*

Concerns: (1) People don't always feel safe at local shelters due to pasts of victimization and vulnerability; (2) overflow shelter is only open during the evening – need a daytime shelter; (3) when shelters are busy, there's not enough supervision; (4) more housing for those without income is needed, or at least more publication of places like St. Joseph's or Mill Street; (5) different housing for those in different circumstances (income, no income, etc.)

Solutions: (1) Need more programs like Reno Works; (2) need daytime shelter

## **Education**

1. *Engagement:*

Concerns: (1) The primary concerns under engagement are teachers and their willingness to let outside sources teach; (2) adults' lack of knowledge and understanding of what the river means and provides to Northern Nevada

Challenges: (1) Every school, district a silo; (2) limited access to resources and funding; (3) finding fit into curriculum; (4) conflicting priorities (food on the table vs. seeking knowledge of Truckee River); (5) perception of danger along river

Opportunities: (1) In this case, children can be the connection between the river and their parents – canvassing in neighborhoods; (2) get larger grants; (3) use environmental science teachers; (4) other recreation organizations help spread education, too (hunting groups, Trout Unlimited, rotary club, churches, etc.); (5) education leads to engagement leads to stewardship

Solutions: (1) Coordinate a unified message between agencies, non-profits

2. *Communication and Coordination:*

Concerns: (1) Communication across cultures is difficult, common ground needs to be found; (2) coordination is happening, but there are still limited resources for multiple agencies – we need to share the wealth

Opportunities: (1) Goals need to be identified so solutions can happen; (2) communication builds off of coordination -- make it simple and clean for the public

Solutions: (1) Create list of who's doing what – provide networking opportunities; (2) leverage funds across agencies; (3) STEMEd meetings; (4) reach out to different communities (Spanish-language, Asian, etc.); (5) find overlap between organizations

3. *Knowledge and Content:*

Opportunities: (1) There is a need for a common but powerful message – can't be too simple, though; (2) science education's new standards; (3) policy education; (4) drought and climate awareness; (5) answers to basic questions (What do I do with these tires? What do trees in my yard need?); (6) bring light to topic via schools and informal programming

Solutions: (1) Align programs to standards, use common language for families; (2) core shared values and focused message (something powerful like Keep Tahoe Blue)

4. *Stewardship*

Concerns: (1) Schools, community groups (Boys & Girls Club ● Linda Brandt), government agencies, and general adults need to be reached out to; (2) remember that getting hands dirty limits participation; (3) need to collaborate with agencies more; (4) make sure projects are what the community *needs* (instead of bird boxes, start a monitoring project); (5) give kids opportunity to have personal relationship with the river, nature

Opportunities: Attend schools, community group meetings; churches, parks

Solutions: (1) Create service-learning, action education; (2) use citizen science more; (3) find/create initiatives that keep routes to schools clean; (4) build unstructured time to create relationships with nature; (5) speakers bureau

## **Water Quality**

1. *Urban Storm Drains/Runoff and Tributaries (Non Point Source Solution)*

Concerns: (1) Known pollutants include nitrogen, phosphorus, TDS (salts), E. coli + more but no data on hand; (2) urban storm drains and runoff in tributaries come from urbanized surfaces

Solutions: (1) Must focus on source control for each source, meaning the community at large; (2) the Best Management Practice for community development is public education and industry outreach/education

a. Municipal way of doing community development – re-evaluate development standards to embrace Low Impact Development, let nature filter stormwater before it enters the river.

a. Residential – public education needs to be cornerstone. Make changes (fertilizing, dog patrol, over-watering, auto maintenance and cleaning).

2. *Encampments (Homeless)*

Concerns: (1) Known pollutants: trash and E. coli + nitrogen and phosphorus to accompany homeless usage; (2) the homeless on the river struggle to survive, thus the river struggles to survive

Solutions: (1) If we want a healthy river, we must address the humanitarian part of the watershed

\* *Missing:* Watchdog group and sharing of data to fully understand what “water quality” actually means. State of Nevada has Truckee River E. coli data; TMWA has raw water data – both not available. Why not more data? We're good at collecting data, but not when it comes to evaluating it with a next project/evaluation/etc. in mind.

## **Funding**

1. *Lack of Coordination:* No communication between entities, private companies and NGOs. Thus no one knows what is being done on the river.

Concerns: (1) Need history of each project

Challenges: (1) Resources, staffing, political competing interests

Opportunities: (1) Coordinated team that meets regularly; (2) agreement between public/private/NGOs

Solutions: (1) Create a working group/task force; (2) identify the scope; (3) create a document of what is being done and spent on the river right now

2. *Lack of Understanding of Current Environment:* Need to identify and take inventory of current projects and find overlap. Lack of sustainable support for NGOs, those that bring in volunteers: no sustainable funding to keep groups going year after year.

Concerns: (1) Everyone doing a lot with too little; (2) people aren't talking to each other. Need to collaborate!

Challenges: (1) Getting everyone to the table; (2) gathering and disseminating the information; (3) department budgets aren't set up to specifically allocate to the river

Opportunities: (1) Have a clearing house for Truckee River for funding/projects

3. *Lack of Sustainable Funding:*

Concerns: (1) Budgets not created around Truckee River; (2) jurisdictions need to earmark for the river and request organizations to notate anything related to the Truckee River

Challenges: (1) Lack of staff/orgs protecting the river; (2) long-term protection needs to be priority over confronting

issues as they appear; (3) clearer understanding of multi-jurisdictional roles and responsibilities when it comes to funding; (4) it's hard to entice public to fund something without a compelling story; (5) river needs to become community priority

Opportunities: (1) Request all agencies to make the river a priority.

Solutions: (1) Develop a river district; (2) work towards legislative changes for a tax district – get a tax to support the plan; (3) expand local orgs to cover the river; (4) identify core funding; (5) gap analysis on current projects; (6) create a strategic plan on what is *not* being done; (7) bring in marketing firm; (8) donors don't like to be main funders (70/30 – donors are 30); (9) create an MOU

#### 4. *Marketing the Plan:*

Concerns: (1) Need to really sell the One Truckee River Management Plan to get buy-in

Opportunity: (1) Everyone is thinking about the river right now due to the drought

## **Stewardship**

### 1. *Existing programs – what are they?*

Truckee River Pyramid Bikeway, mows weeds and pulls tumbleweeds. Weeds aren't biggest problem – homeless population is.

No River Ranger anymore, now law enforcement does on-foot patrol.

Truckee River Fund – sole purpose to protect water quality and watershed.

Concerns: (1) Too many involved: If you want to put something in the river, you have to get a permit from Army Corp; (2) if you want to take something out of the river, you need to go through Nevada State Lands, etc.

Opportunities: (1) Larger agencies with deeper pockets – US Bureau of Reclamation (Desert Terminal Lakes); (2) create a trust/endowment account; (3) SQ-1 funding – creating and completing restoration projects

Solutions: (1) Incorporate stewardship into local curriculums (WCSD, KTMB, SNJ, Discovery Museum, etc.); (2) really brand One Truckee River, make it available on all levels

### 2. *Maintenance:*

Concerns: (1) Get rid of dangerous structures – other concrete and metal hazards. (2) River trail maintenance is not well defined. (3) Lack of coordination across multi-jurisdictions. (4) Need ability to enforce rules and regulations along river.

Opportunities: (1) Construction of flood project; (2) regulatory regional plan will help with inter-jurisdictional issues; (3) Truckee River bike path as a transportation route; (4) potential partners: RSCVA, casinos, other businesses; (5) increase awareness of business and private homeowners' stewardship

Solutions: (1) Enforcement capabilities of River Rangers -- able to cite regardless of jurisdictions; (2) river monitors or ambassadors -- monitor, educate, identifiable, report via smartphones

## **Ecosystem**

### 1. *Water Quantity:*

Concerns: (1) Water -- too much or too little. (2) Drought + climate change, lack of conservation efforts. (3) River is fragmented by dams and diversions. (4) Storage and distribution of water are imperfect. (5) Unmonitored sections of the river.

### 2. *Ecosystem Function:*

Concerns: (1) No wiggle room for healthy floodplain. (2) Lack of common vision. (3) Invasive species. (4) Competing interests -- ex: recreation vs. healthy ecosystem. (5) Little to no wetland habitat.

### 3. *Multi-Jurisdictional:*

Concerns: (1) River is product of watershed -- what happens to forest in Tahoe matters to river in Reno. (2) Lack of understanding of who oversees what, who is responsible for what. Lack of communication about who's done what.

Challenges: (1) Lack of communication between organizations/agencies; lack of communication/appreciation to/from public; (2) water laws; (3) wildlife agencies not a part of conservation efforts; (4) lack of funding

Opportunities/Solutions: (1) Remove invasive species during low water times; (2) opportunities to educate public; (3) functioning ecosystem is important to public; (4) deter illegal camping by planting beneficial native plants; (5) create list of recommended species for restoration along river; (6) recognize uncertainty, be willing to adapt; (7) system of communication between agencies working along the Truckee River

## **Public Safety**

### 1. *Crime, Patrols, Panhandling, Emergency Response*

Concerns: (1) Assumption -- crime comes from homeless. Reality -- crimes not coming from homeless. Public perception of homelessness. (2) Within 350 feet of river this past year: 3 homicides, 134 family disturbances, 104 random disturbances, 36 sex crimes, 1 battery with deadly weapon, 1 bomb call, 17 shots fired, 111 warrants served, 177 emergency calls. (3) Lack of access.

Challenges: (1) Lack of activity, use. (2) Attractiveness of river also attracts alternative lifestyles.

Solutions: (1) High Crime Area signs posted in county parks have reduced crime. (2) Safety boxes (blue light) might help public feel safer.

### 2. *Multi-Jurisdictions, Roles and Responsibilities*

Concerns: (1) Local government not knowing what obstacles are. (2) More camping in Sparks than Reno. (3) Lack of communication between Reno and Sparks. (4) River is small percent of what officers respond to -- not enough going on + lost officers in recession. (5) Geographical limitations, private property. (6) Equally applied rules and laws across river.

Challenges: (1) Multi-jurisdictions. (2) Lack of communication between jurisdictions.

Solutions: (1) Community Service and Safety Team -- "Truckee River Regional Public Safety Team"? (2) Mile by mile assessment. (3) Build relationship with animal shelters to help house pets while people are getting help. (4) Citizen involvement every step of the way.

### 3. *Hazardous Waste, Sewage, Needles*

Concerns: (1) Needle use and disposal is a problem. (2) Adding more bathrooms might create more problems. (3) Camp fires.

Challenges: (1) Bad behavior; (2) law issues -- waste vs. personal property; (3) public health perception

### 4. *Vegetation Management*

Concerns: (1) Vegetation encourages building of camps/hideouts.

Challenges: (1) Lack of environmental design encourages illegal camping

Solutions: (1) Mile by mile river assessment; (2) bring in trees/shrubbery that are low maintenance and won't add building materials; (3) change environmental design = limit camping

## **Recreation**

### 1. *Access*

Concern: (1) Limited by private property; (2) need to identify legal access points; (3) feeling safe along the river; (4) not maintaining or identifying what we have

Challenges: (1) Lack of funding, resources, regulation; (2) multi jurisdictional differences; (3) no signage -- people don't know where to go

Opportunities: (1) Quality of life; (2) getting people on the river

### 2. *Maintenance*

Concern/Challenges: (1) Lack of money/people; (2) lack of knowledge from elected officials; (3) no parks department in Washoe County; (4) trash/litter

Opportunities: (1) Perception; (2) success = more people wanting to be involved; (3) recreation is the customer-facing side, selling and packaging the river

### 3. *Multi-Jurisdictional Roles*

Concerns: (1) Don't agree/not the same -- no one team; (2) confusion in education for the public

Opportunities: (1) Recreation simplifies the story and sells it, gets funding, tourism, partners

### 4. *Land Acquisitions*

Concerns: (1) Ownership, liability; (2) money, funding; (3) defending lawsuits; (4) immovable objects/acts of Congress

Opportunities: (1) Connectivity; (2) access; (3) protection of resources, floodplain

Solutions (not all are listed): (1) Mobile app; (2) "Love Your River" signage; (3) specialized crew; (4) survey of users; (5) Truckee River District; (6) continuity of law enforcement across jurisdictions

## Quality of Life

### 1. *Cultural Resources*

Concerns: (1) Protection of cultural resources, spirituality and traditional use of river; (2) access to river by wildlife; (3) need easement plan; (4) sediment and pollutants

Solutions: (1) App with a map including trails, art, kayaking/fishing, food/drink, learning opportunities; (2) drone images of journey down river; (3) access

### 2. *Multi-Jurisdictional Roles*

Concerns: (1) Need to go piece by piece down river; acquire easements; (2) homelessness

Solutions: (1) Celebration along entire length of river; (2) Traditional Cultural Property -- like a landmark on a national registry

### 3. *Recreational Amenities*

Concerns: (1) Need good draws to the river -- safe, clean; (2) need cultural change in perception; (3) removal of old structures; (4) promote importance of individual responsibility of river

Solutions: (1) Embrace opportunities (ex: call graffiti "street art"); (2) Courtyard Marriott being built; (3) sustainable recreation, increase recreation resources; (4) whole river should be conducive to nature

### 4. *Sense of Place*

Concerns: (1) History needs to be protected

Solutions: (1) Remove non-natural structures along river; (2) be authentic to area; (3) posted information about waters and wildlife; (4) bring classes to river; (5) Grand Opening of the river?