Lahontan Regional Water Quality
Control Board

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

October 2004

NORTH BASIN

1. **Lake Tahoe Dredging Projects** –
Mary Fiore-Wagner

Regional Board staff have been busy processing, permitting, and inspecting various dredging projects affecting the California side of Lake Tahoe. Permits authorizing dredging of the Tahoe Keys Property Owners' (TKPOA) West Channel and Meeks Bay Marina Entrance have been issued. Staff has worked with project proponents who will be submitting applications to dredge the inner harbors at Ski Run Marina and Star Harbor during the Fall/Winter of 2004.

Dredging operations using a low impact suction dredge are underway, removing approximately 5400 cubic yards of sediment that has accumulated in the Tahoe Keys' West Channel. The Regional Board also issued the TKPOA a separate permit that allows the discharge of treated decant water back into the Tahoe Keys lagoons under the NPDES Limited Threat Discharge General Permit.

TKPOA's West Channel Dredging Project involves piping the dredged slurry to a land-based treatment system consisting of shaker screens, centrifuges, holding tanks equipped with polymer injectors that deliver flocculant to the water, and sand filters. Though not a part of the original treatment process, a carbon filter system was added when water quality monitoring indicated the effluent contained pesticides at part per billion levels. The treatment process removes coarse, medium, and fine-grained material, organic materials (e.g., plant fragments), and trace levels of pesticides. The solids generated from the treatment system are directed to a containment area and hauled offsite daily. The decant water produced from the treatment process is discharged to the Tahoe Keys lagoons provided the discharge meets the water quality objectives. Daily monitoring shows that the treated effluent is consistently at or below 3 NTU (nephelometric turbidity units). The carbon filters are effectively removing pesticides to below the minimum levels specified by the California Toxics Rule.

The Meeks Bay Marina Dredging Project will likely commence by the end of September. The project involves dredging approximately 300 cubic yards of coarse sand and gravel that has deposited in the marina entrance. The dredged material, which has been analyzed and found acceptable for beach replenishment and protection, will be placed onto the adjacent U.S. Forest Service's shoreline parcel.

2. ***Meyers Beacon Gas Station, El Dorado County*** *- Lisa Dernbach*

Groundwater sampling results for the second quarter of 2004 showed MTBE levels were at concentrations less than the drinking water standard of 5 micrograms per liter (µg/L) at all sampling points at the site. Out of a total of 29 wells sampled, MTBE was detected in six monitoring and extraction wells at concentrations ranging from 0.66 to 3.6 µg/L.

Sampling results were an improvement over first quarter 2004 results, which showed

MTBE concentrations up to 18 μg/L. Following that monitoring event, Board staff directed Secor International, the Board's consultant, to turn on the pump and treat system at the site and resume groundwater extraction from off-site well EX-5. The second quarter monitoring results show hydrocarbon levels in groundwater are protective of beneficial uses. On July 12, Secor shut off the pump and treat system. The next quarterly monitoring event is scheduled for September.

Sufficient funds are available to conduct quarterly groundwater sampling at the site to the end of 2004 and to destroy nearly half of the 60 monitoring and extraction wells. By then, Board staff expects to have spent the maximum funding amount of $1.5 million. Other possible funding sources will be looked at for continuing quarterly monitoring into 2005.

3. ***El Dorado County Department of Transportation Apalachee Erosion Control and Storm Water Treatment Project -*** *Robert Larsen*

The Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) was developed by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and partner agencies to achieve the environmental goals established for the Lake Tahoe Basin. Designing and implementing erosion control and storm water treatment projects continues to be an integral part of the EIP. Such projects also assist local municipalities in meeting National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) storm water requirements.

In an effort to meet strict storm water quality regulations contained in the Municipal NPDES permit and maximize water quality benefits, project proponents have been exploring new and creative methods for controlling erosion and treating urban runoff. The Apalachee Erosion Control Project, being implemented by the El Dorado County Department of Transportation, is an excellent example of how project designers are using new technologies and innovative techniques to improve the effectiveness of storm water treatment projects.

The project area consists of steep eroding cut banks and heavily sanded roadways within the Rolling Woods Heights Subdivision in South Lake Tahoe. Roadway runoff, carrying applied road abrasives and eroded soil, has historically drained to the Upper Truckee River floodplain through a series of eroding channels. The project will revegetate unstable slopes, remove unneeded pavement, and collect and convey storm water to sediment basins and other treatment facilities. In addition to constructing common improvements such as curb and gutter, drop inlets, and treatment basins, El Dorado County will install and test the performance of two innovative technologies – permeable pavement and a sand filter.

The contractor will install permeable pavement to replace existing asphalt at the end of Glen Eagles Road. This area is used primarily for forest service access and does not see heavy traffic, making it good spot to assess permeable pavement durability without affecting a primary road. El Dorado County will also install permeable pavement in several drainage swales. By allowing runoff to infiltrate beneath the surface, permeable pavement can help reduce runoff volumes and thus improve downstream treatment facility effectiveness. El Dorado County plans to inspect the permeable pavement areas during storm events to assess their function.

The county will construct a modified sand filter to treat runoff from the bulk of the project area. Since recent research suggests

traditional storm water treatment basins are not always effective at removing the very fine sediment particles and dissolved nutrients responsible for clarity decline at Lake Tahoe, filters may help improve treated storm water quality. The sand filter has been designed to enhance fine sediment and dissolved nutrient removal. Storm water from the filter will discharge to a vegetated treatment basin for further treatment before it is ultimately released to the nearby meadow floodplain. El Dorado County will implement a water quality monitoring program to document the filter's performance.

The Regional Board supports El Dorado County and other implementers efforts to improve the effectiveness of erosion control and storm water treatment projects. By constructing and monitoring how new technologies function in the field, El Dorado County is improving our understanding of how best to treat urban runoff in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

4. ***Status of South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) B-Line Phase III Project*** *- Erika Lovejoy*

STPUD is constructing Phase III of a multi-segmented pipeline that exports sewage from the Lake Tahoe Basin to the Harvey Place Reservoir in Alpine County. The B-line pipeline is the largest construction project in the Lake Tahoe Basin this summer. The B-line Phase III goes from the Grass Lake Creek Road Pump Station up through the forest and along Highway 89, and then up the US Forest Service Campground Road which crosses Grass Lake Creek. To reduce impacts and as part of the required mitigation, STPUD will replace the culvert at Grass Lake Creek with a bridge and redesign the stream channel to improve fish habitat. It is likely the B-line project will not be completed this year and may be extended two years because of delays in material delivery and shutdowns from failure to maintain erosion control measures. Staff is working with STPUD to ensure the construction site is stable and winterized before the end of the grading season.

5. ***Update on Lower Owens River Project, Inyo County -*** *Alan Miller*

In July 2004, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) resubmitted an application for Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification (WQC) for the proposed Lower Owens River Restoration Project (LORP). The project involves allowing a portion of Owens River water (approximately one-sixth of annual average flow) to bypass the LADWP aqueduct. This would reestablish flow into 62 miles of the Lower Owens River, approximately half of which currently receives no flow except during periods of flooding. The project also includes constructing a new pump station at the lower extremity of the project, above Owens Lake, to recapture a majority of the bypassed flow for use in dust control mitigation projects in the Owens Lake area, and to supply the LADWP aqueduct. Other major elements of the proposed project include supplying water to maintain existing waterfowl and wetland habitat in off-river areas, and managing grazing leases on 77,000 acres of rangelands within the project area.

The LORP is intended to be a large-scale habitat restoration project for the Lower Owens River. The project is to mitigate impacts related to groundwater pumping by Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) from 1970 to 1990. It is being driven by court-imposed deadlines for LADWP to complete a CEQA Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and initiate the project. The LADWP has recently certified its EIR. However, the USEPA is considering funding a sizable portion of the project, and must

therefore complete a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project. Completion of the EIS is expected later this year if outstanding issues can be resolved.

Regional Board staff reviewed the WQC application and determined that it was substantially incomplete. In addition, the application raised substantial additional issues with regard to water quality. The EIR contains statements and information indicating the project will not comply with applicable water quality standards contained in the Basin Plan. Particularly, standards for temperature, dissolved oxygen, toxics (such as hydrogen sulfide) and ammonia, may not be met, either in the short term, or the long term. In addition, the WQC application did not adequately delineate wetlands and demonstrate that Regional Board wetland protection policies and no net loss goals would be met.

On September 14, 2004 Regional Board staff convened a meeting with involved agencies to discuss issues associated with the project. The parties included LADWP and their consultants, Inyo County Water Commission, USEPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and CA Dept. of Fish and Game. The meeting established a coordinated framework to proceed with resolving various project approval processes.

Regional Board staff is currently following up the meeting with a letter to LADWP concerning various aspects of the project that may require permitting and approval by the Regional Board and/or SWRCB as, during the course of review, it has become apparent that several permits and/or other approvals may be necessary for different aspects of the project. Regional Board staff is considering combining all the necessary requirements into a single Order that would be brought before the Regional Board. Staff would combine requirements from the various General Permits and/or other permits and approvals (i.e., WQC) into one regulatory document that will facilitate compliance by the LADWP, and oversight and monitoring by Regional Board staff.

6. ***Multi-Agency Enforcement Conference Held at UC Davis*** *- Alan Miller*

On September 22-23, several Lahontan Regional Board staff attended a by-invitation-only conference titled *More Than Pollution: Fraud and Other Water Crimes*. The conference was organized by the SWRCB. The Keynote Speaker for the conference was CalEPA Agency Secretary Tamminen. During his introductory remarks, he asserted that "environmental crime is real crime" and urged the participants to pursue vigorous enforcement using the full array of administrative, civil and criminal laws, as appropriate. He also emphasized agency coordination and use of citizen groups to forward mutual environmental enforcement goals of the District Attorneys, California Dept. of Fish and Game, USEPA, U.S. Attorney General, and others. The conference involved a series of presentations discussing various kinds of environmental crimes and misdemeanors, with a focus on fraud, and effective use of multi-agency Task Force resources to coordinate enforcement efforts through developing ongoing relationships. The conference concluded with an exercise involving a mock-up Task Force case evaluation. The conference set the framework for increased involvement in Task Forces already established in various parts of the Lahontan Region.

SOUTH BASIN

7. ***Molycorp, Status Update*** **-** *Christy Hunter*

Status of Pipeline Removal

The draft Biological Opinion (BO) by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has been completed and is being reviewed by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff. It is anticipated that a final BO will be issued by the end of September 2004. When finalized, the BO will be incorporated into a BLM-issued Biological Assessment, which will require Molycorp to follow certain restrictions for pipeline clean-up activity on BLM land.

Off-Site Groundwater Investigation – CAO 6-98-19

Molycorp has submitted their interim off-site investigation report to reflect the most recent well installation/groundwater sampling activities. Regional Board staff is currently reviewing this report and will meet with Molycorp staff to discuss their findings and recommendations. Molycorp recommends that additional wells be installed in both Wheaton Wash and in the western drainage to help define the extent of groundwater impacts. They conclude that impacted groundwater extends to at least the most recent wells drilled in the western drainage, but may not extend beyond the recent well drilled in Wheaton Wash. They base this conclusion primarily on water quality analyses. The additional well locations proposed in this report include some that were previously requested in their 1998 Work Plan and sites not previously proposed. It is anticipated that for those sites on BLM land that were previously proposed, access will be granted relatively quickly.

Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs)

On June 29, 2004, a consent judgment was filed, which requires, in part, Molycorp to fund in the amount of $1 million certain SEPs approved by the Lahontan Regional Board. Molycorp has prepared the Request for Proposals for SEP(s) and is in the process of mailing them out to interested parties. Both the Regional Board and Molycorp entered into this consent judgment as full and final settlement of all claims for civil penalties and oversight costs related to the series of accidental discharges during maintenance operations from Molycorp's wastewater pipeline to the Ivanpah Playa during the summer of 1996 and other operations from January 1, 1996 through the date of filing of this consent judgment. Molycorp has paid an ACL penalty to the Regional Board in the amount of $125,000 and also sent a $1 million check to the California Attorney General to be held in trust for funding of SEPs approved by the Regional Board.

8. ***Hein Hettinga, A&H Dairies, El Mirage*** **-** *Joe Koutsky*

The owner of the two A&H Dairies in El Mirage has completed construction of six groundwater monitoring wells in the upper aquifer. The discharger installed these wells between October 2002 and May 2004 required in Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs). The WDRs directed the discharger to conduct a groundwater investigation to evaluate the elevated levels of nitrates and total dissolved solids in groundwater due to dairy operations. Data recently submitted by the discharger show a small, localized nitrate plume near a former stormwater retention basin. The reported concentration range of nitrate (as N) is 8.71 mg/L to 61.7 mg/L and TDS is 1,640 to 3,950 mg/L. The discharger lined the basin with clay in 2003 to protect underlying water quality.

As part of the investigation the discharger also sampled for hexavalent chromium, Cr(VI). The findings showed Cr(VI) in four monitoring wells exceeding state and federal MCLs (0.050 mg/L and 0.100 mg/L, respectively). The Cr(VI) is suspected of originating from the Ducommun AeroStructures facility (Aerochem), a site with a known Cr(VI) plume, located approximately 1 to 1 1/2 miles east-southeast of the dairy. The

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the lead regulatory agency for groundwater contamination at Aerochem and will be evaluating the suspected Cr(VI) release from Aerochem at the dairy. In mid-September 2004 staff of the Regional Board and DTSC conducted a joint sampling effort to sample the six monitoring wells. Regional Board staff also sampled drinking water wells for Cr(VI) and total chromium on-and off-site of the dairy to evaluate potential impacts to domestic drinking water wells.

9. ***Meadowbrook Dairy, El Mirage*** - *Joe Koutsky*

The Meadowbrook Dairy in El Mirage recently started up its anaerobic digestion and gasification electricity generation project. This is the first project of its kind in the Lahontan Region. It will help the Meadowbrook Dairy offset the purchase of electricity, and provide environmental benefits by reducing air and groundwater pollutants associated with storage and disposal of livestock manure.

The manure digester is an airtight container that uses bacteria to break down manure. As part of the process, methane gas is produced and used to power an electrical generator. Liquid waste coming out of the digester would still be applied to the dairy's agricultural fields as fertilizer. The remaining solids would produce a high-grade, saleable compost.

The project was partially funded through buydown grants through Western United Resource Development, Inc. (WURD) which covers up to 50% of the capital costs of the system (based on estimated energy production). WURD administers the California Dairy Power Production Program with funds from the California Energy Commission.

10. ***Searles Valley Minerals Operations –*** *Elizabeth Lafferty*

Compliance Status with the Waste Discharge Requirements for Interim Effluent Limits

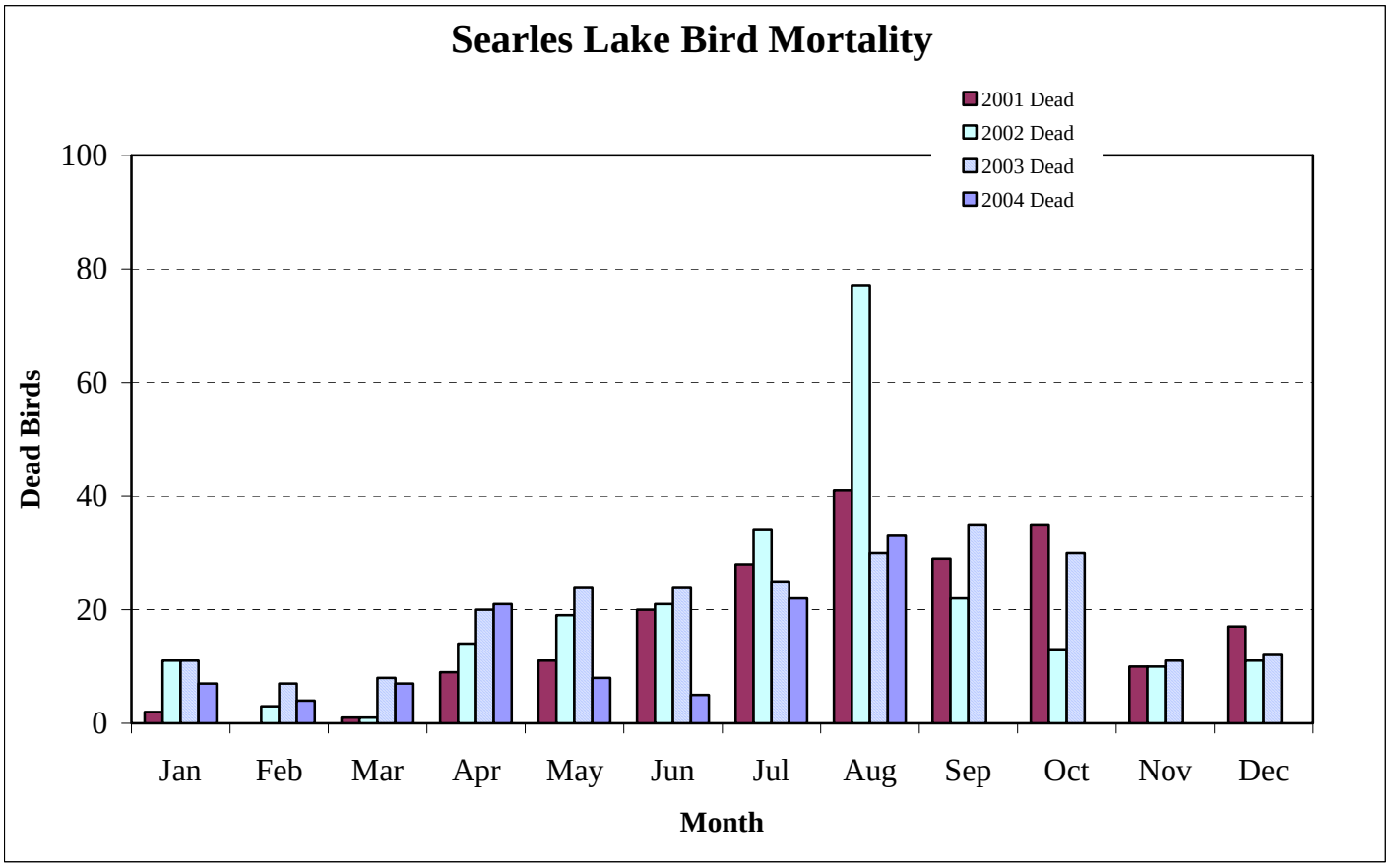
Two violations of interim effluent limits occurred during the reporting period. On August 24th the Argus effluent injection brine showed a concentration of 4.8 milligrams per liter (mg/L) total recoverable petroleum hydrocarbon (TRPH). A retest of the sample showed 4.7 mg/L TRPH. Each slightly exceeded the 4.5 mg/L limit listed in the WDRs.

The TRPH exceedences appear to occur on the days when the carbonator is washed. Intermittent in-plant samples find slightly elevated TRPH in the Argus injection brine. This is believed to be a partial cause for the elevation. A procedure for modifying carbonator washes is being analyzed and a written procedure change is due to be completed later in September.

The extended volume of flow through the system during the washing may have created a density inversion in the settling basin and skimmers and impacted skimmer performance.

Documentation of Dead or Affected Wildlife
Forty-one birds were found at Searles Dry Lake during the month of August. Thirty-three of those were dead. Species of dead birds found were: American Avocet, Blue Winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, a double crested Cormorant, a Dove, and a Gadwall, a Common Loon, and two songbirds. Eight live birds found and included four Redheads, three Blue-Winged Teals, an American Coot, a Pied Billed Grebe, a Pintail, a Cinnamon Teal, and a Mallard.

The International Bird Research Rescue Center (IBRRC) oversees all birds found at Searles Dry Lakebed.


Searles Lake Bird Mortality
2001 Dead
2002 Dead
2003 Dead
2004 Dead
100
80
60
40
20
0
Dead Birds
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Month

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
LAHONTAN REGION

REPORT ON STATUS OF STANDING ITEMS

October 2004

The Regional Board has requested that it be kept informed of the status of a number of issues. The following table lists the items, the reporting frequency and where the report can be found.

ISSUE	REPORT FREQUENCY	STATUS/COMMENT
Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 14	Monthly	See October Agenda Item No. 8
Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 20	Monthly	See October Agenda Item No. 9
Meyers Beacon UST Site	Quarterly	Item No. 2 of October 2004 EO's Report
Mojave River/El Mirage Dairy Issues	Quarterly	Item Nos. 8 & 9 of October 2004 EO's Report
Molycorp Status Update	Quarterly	Item No. 7 of October 2004 EO's Report
Searles Valley Minerals Operations - Compliance Status	Monthly	Item No. 10 of October 2004 EO's Report
Caltrans-Tahoe Basin	Annually	Due November 2004 Board Meeting
Tahoe Municipal Permit	Annually	Due November 2004 Board Meeting
Wetland Restoration Progress in Mono County	Annually	Due November 2004 Board Meeting
Caltrans-General Permit	Annually	Due September 2005 Board Meeting
Eagle Lake Spalding	Semi-Annual	Due March 2005 Board Meeting
Status of Basin Plan Amendments	Semi-Annual	Due March 2005 Board Meeting
Town of Mammoth Lakes - Erosion Control	Semi-Annual	Due March 2005 Board Meeting

Frequency	**Board Meeting Month**
Quarterly	January, April, July, & October.
Semi-Annual	March & September
Annually	Varied

CASE CLOSURE REPORT

State of California
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

Date Closure Issued	Site Name	Site Address	Case Number	Case Type	Remaining Groundwater Concentrations above Water Quality Objectives (in micrograms per liter)	Remaining Soil Concentrations (in milligrams per kilogram)	Distance from Site to Nearest Receptor	Remedial Methods Used
Sept. 3, 2004	Amerigas	11380 Donner Pass Road, Truckee	6T0370A	UST (empty)	TPHg: 59 TPHd: <100	TPHg: <1 TPHd:<1	First groundwater 4-5 feet bgs: Municipal Well > 1 mile cross-gradient	Natural attenuation
Sept. 17, 2004	Beacon Station 3688	2304 Lake Tahoe Blvd. South Lake Tahoe	6T0062A	UST (gasoline)	MTBE: < 0.5	TPHg: <50	First groundwater 9 feet bgs Municipal well 385 feet down gradient	Excavated 1,475 cubic yards soil; Soil vapor extracion; Pump and treat > 22,000,000 gallons groundwater

Notes:

UST = Underground storage tank program

TPHd = Total petroleum hydrocarbons quantified as diesel

TPHg = Total petroleum hydrocarbons quantified as gasoline

MTBE = Methyl tert-Butyl Ether

bgs = below ground surface

EO'S MONTHLY REPORT FOR
SEPTEMBER 2004
UNAUTHORIZED WASTE DISCHARGES

****COUNTY - El Dorado**

DISCHARGER	FACILITY	LOCATION	BASIN	REGULATED FACILITY	SUBSTANCE DISCHARGED	HAZAR -DOUS	DATE REPORTED	DISCHARGE VOLUME	DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE	DISCHARGE TO	PROP	STATUS
South Tahoe PUD	South Tahoe PUD	Hwy 50 @ Long's Drug Store & Winnemucca Ave., SLT	N	N	Raw sewage.	N	8/16/2004	~250 gals	Child's toy apparently blocked a gravity flow sewage system & caused overflow of raw sewage from MH into the Upper Truckee River Meadow. No surface water impacted.	Land	N	Blockage cleared. No Further Action Recommended.
Pro-Clean Carpet Cleaner	STPUD	2324 Sutter Trail, SLT	N	N	Carpet Cleaning Waste Water	N	8/30/2004	~50-60 gals	A Pro-Clean Carpet cleaning truck discharged ~50-60 gals of carpet cleaning waste water to the street	Land	N	Pro-Clean Manger will remind his staff of appropriate disposal methods. No Further Action Recommended.

****COUNTY - Nevada**

DISCHARGER	FACILITY	LOCATION	BASIN	REGULATED FACILITY	SUBSTANCE DISCHARGED	HAZAR -DOUS	DATE REPORTED	DISCHARGE VOLUME	DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE	DISCHARGE TO	PROP	STATUS
OES	OES	West-bound I-80 @ Floriston	N	N	Diesel fuel	N	9/15/2004	Unknown	Truck involved in an accident, saddle fuel tank ruptured. Spill was contained within the roadway shoulder.	Soil	N	Caltrans responded to initial cleanup. No Further Action Recommended.

****COUNTY - Placer**

DISCHARGER	FACILITY	LOCATION	BASIN	REGULATED FACILITY	SUBSTANCE DISCHARGED	HAZAR -DOUS	DATE REPORTED	DISCHARGE VOLUME	DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE	DISCHARGE TO	PROP	STATUS
NCSD/Northstar	Grant Miller	Echo Chairlift Replacement Project	N	N	Sewage	N	9/9/2004	25-100 gals	Contractors working on installation of new pipe for Echo Lift Project discovered an existing leak.	Trench	N	Hole patched after trench cleaned of liquid waste. No Further Action Recommended.
North Tahoe PUD	Dale Rogers	Hwy 28 between Chipmunk & Beaver Sts.	N	N	Raw sewage	N	9/14/2004	~20 gals	During installation of pipe liner 2 spills occurred while pumping to temporary above-ground pipe.	Hwy	N	~10 gals entered storm drain & contaminated sand in sand trap. Spills vactored & chlorinated. No Further Action Recommended.