

July 2, 2004

**Contact: David A. Breninger
(530) 823-4850
or: Dave Carter
(530) 265-NEWS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Auburn - Directors of the Placer County Water Agency traveled from Auburn to Lake Tahoe on Thursday (July 1) to consider water issues affecting eastern Placer County.

In a brief morning session at the PCWA Business Center, before traveling to eastern Placer county, directors:

- approved an \$8400 contract with Stewart Feldman of Meadow Vista for preparation of a fire danger assessment and management plan for PCWA facilities. The water agency has water and power systems in many remote areas where fire is a threat.

- heard that beginning July 1, California local governments will collectively be cut \$2.6 billion in local tax revenues over a two-year period so the state can divert the money to offset its massive deficit. PCWA will lose \$180,000 this year and \$200,000 next year to this state mandate, adversely impacting the agency's general services. Various cost-saving strategies were reviewed including not filling a recently vacated position in the Manager's Office. The Board supported various cost-saving consolidations along with assigning Agency Secretary Cheri Sprunck to assume Clerk to the Board duties. (The Clerk to the Board/Administrative Assistant position was vacated June 30 by Kathleen A. Smith who was appointed Nevada County Clerk-Recorder.) Other administrative duties including records management, document imaging and supervisory functions were consolidated into the agency's Department of Administrative Services.

-more-

Directors then traveled to Lake Tahoe for a meeting at the Tahoe City Public Utility District office where the board heard presentations on Lake Tahoe water releases, the California Tahoe Conservancy, Squaw Valley Public Service District, Tahoe Search and Rescue, Inc. and the Talmont Resort Improvement District.

Chad J. Blanchard, chief hydrologist for the U.S. District Court Water Masters Office, briefed the board on historical and current water release programs for Lake Tahoe. He said a five-year below average precipitation pattern will result in the lake dropping to its 6223-foot natural rim level by September.

Dennis Machita, executive director of the successful California Tahoe Conservancy, reported on current legislative efforts to create a 22-county Sierra Nevada Conservancy. He praised PCWA and Placer County officials for supporting the effort, which he said would generate financial benefits to a region that includes 20 percent of the state's land mass.

Rick Lierman, general manager of the Squaw Valley Public Service District, briefed directors on the district's new firehouse/administration building now under construction near the valley entry, efforts to improve its groundwater supplies and current studies on the potential for use of water from the Truckee River.

Larry Sevison, a founder and charter member of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue, Inc., thanked the board for the LMC 1500 Snowcat donated last October by PCWA to the all-volunteer rescue group. Sevison showed the refurbished vehicle and said it has already has been useful in winter rescues.

William S. "Bill" Briner, longtime board member of the Talmont Resort Improvement District, described the water system serving 325 west shore properties and thanked PCWA for providing funding for studies of future improvements.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 3 p.m. on July 15 in the Placer County Board of Supervisors chambers, 175 Fulweiler Avenue, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.