

March 2013

# Environmental Protection Department Newsletter



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The 14th Annual Earth Week Celebration is almost here! Learn all about our line up of events and activities on page 2 and 3 inside.

## NPS Pollution & Drought

By Sonia Corleto

I know many of you have been enjoying the lovely spring-like weather we have had for much of the winter. I know I definitely appreciated the lower heating bills and hardly having to scrape the ice off the windows of my car. But a low precipitation season means low water for the next seasons.

During a prolonged dry spell, nonpoint source pollutants accumulate on our lands. When rains do occur, the water picking up these pollutants is not treated before it enters our surface waters. This "first flush" of stormwater carrying pollutants is especially stressful and harmful to our surface waters.

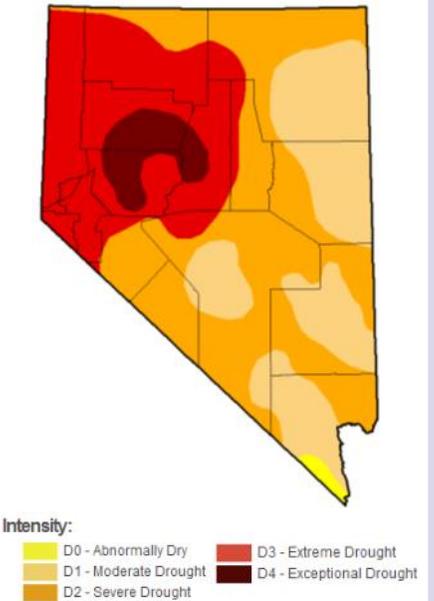
This is also the time to think about how we can conserve water. Think

for a moment about your current water usage habits and where you can cut down on the water you use. For instance, brushing your teeth seems like a quick job, but before you know it, four gallons of water may have slipped down the sink. Another idea is only watering your lawn or garden in the morning or evening. Once the sun is up scorching in the sky, evaporation prevents 14% of the water from even reaching the plants roots.

Droughts affect everyone and we all need to come together to conserve our water. Water is our most valuable resource and we can appreciate and respect the water we are so privileged to have.

## Nevada Drought Monitor

(Released March 13, 2014)



## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Week Celebration

By Carmen Gonzales

The Environmental Department Staff are working hard to bring you this year's Earth Week Celebration. Within the next couple of weeks you will receive your Earth Week Program Booklet that has all the details for each of the events this year.

The theme of this year's Earth Week is: "Water is Life." Water is the sacred force that sustains all life on our planet. And clean water is essential to happy, healthy people and ecosystems. During this record drought year, we are very aware of the importance of water to every facet of our being.

This year's main event, the Earth Day Celebration, will take place on April 19th at Oats Park. We will have a band jamming on the main stage as we bring together educators, nature lovers, local crafters, and many activities that are fun for the whole family. We are honored to create the space for this event every year. This year we extend a warm welcome to our new community collaborators as well as our steadfast partners that make this event possible.

We would like to thank Youth and Family Services for hosting the Pinwheel Walk to bring awareness

to child abuse prevention; Victims Services for being enthusiastic participants with sprouts and seedlings from our own hoop house; the Housing Department for graciously offering the funds to support the dumpsters and staff for the large item pick up; Tribal Resources for equipment and manpower to support clean up activities; and the Tribal Council and Administration for their commitment to supporting these activities that affirm our belief that Water is Life. We look forward to a beautiful and amazing Earth Week Celebration!!

## Earth Week Events Overview: April 15-19

TUES

15

### **Large Item Pickup**

We will pick up your large items and recycle or dispose of them.

By appointment ONLY.

WED

16

### **Community Cleanup**

8am-12pm

Locations TBA

### **Freecycle**

10am—4pm

Tribal Gym

Leave an item, take an item. The best way to recycle is by sharing what you don't need with your neighbors!

### **Dumpster Days**

8am—4pm

Dumpsters will be available for your use at the Tribal Resources Yard & Environmental Department Yard. No hazardous waste, paint, tires, batteries, or burn barrels.

THURS

17

### **Freecycle**

10am—4pm

Tribal Gym

Leave an item, take an item. The best way to recycle is by sharing what you don't need with your neighbors!

### **Dumpster Days**

8am—4pm

Dumpsters will be available for your use at the Tribal Resources Yard & Environmental Department Yard. No hazardous waste, paint, tires, batteries, or burn barrels.

### **Movie Night**

5:30pm—8pm

Tribal Gym

Be our guest for a family-style dinner and movie. We'll be serving up dinner before the feature family-friendly movie. All children must be accompanied by an adult. We'll raffle off the DVD and other great prizes!

SAT

19

### **Pinwheel Walk**

8:30am—10am

Millennium Park

In honor of Child Abuse Awareness Month, Youth and Family Services has teamed up with FRIENDS Family Resource Center to host the annual Pinwheel Walk. The walk will begin at Millennium Park and proceed to Fox Peak Station and end at Oats Park at 10am.

### **Earth Day Celebration**

10am—2pm

Oats Park

Bring your lawn chairs and picnic blankets out to the park and enjoy a beautiful day of live music, nature learning, raffles, local crafters faire, food, and fun! We're happy to expand this event to a new venue and bring you even more activities, and booths. We still have space for volunteers, arts and crafts, department, and community organization booths!

Call us for more information at (775) 423-0590.



## A Prayer for Water

By Carmen Gonzales

with information adapted from [www.themendingnews.com](http://www.themendingnews.com)

I will be taking a few days off of work and putting away my files, documents, and data reports on water. I will be doing this because I care very deeply about my work here.



I have been invited to participate in a beautiful and amazing event at Montezuma Well, AZ with The International Council of the 13 Indigenous Grandmothers. The Grandmothers Council includes indigenous female leaders and elders from First Nations around the world and was formed to raise awareness through ceremonial gatherings about critical environmental and humanitarian issues affecting every

culture around the world today.

Hundreds of women will gather together with the timely intention of learning to remember how to live and interact as a global village in balance with the natural world. The collective messages of the Grandmothers calls for all peoples to understand the endemic disconnection we have created with Nature, and the importance of reviving indigenous

ways to preserve life and balance in the natural world for future generations to come.

I am deeply honored to be called on at this critical time to offer prayers and share in the wisdom and teachings of my elders. I will be attending as voice for native peoples, women in science, and beings everywhere who rely on water as a source of life.



## People Helping People: Training Update

By Jackie Conway

The Environmental Protection Department will be hosting a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training scheduled for April 25-26, 2014. This training is open to all community residents at no cost.

### What is CERT?

The CERT program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist

others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.



CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens will be initially on their own and their actions can make a difference. Through training, citizens can

manage utilities and put out small fires; treat the three killers by opening airways, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock; provide basic medical aid; search for and rescue victims safely and organize themselves and spontaneous volunteers to be effective.

If you are interested in being a part of a team that is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety and doing the greatest good for the greatest number, this training is for you. Call us at (775) 423-0590 to sign up.

<http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>

## TERC Update

By Jackie Conway

On March 11th, the Tribal Emergency Response Commission (TERC) conducted a Point of Distribution (POD) trailer exercise. The FPST will use the POD to respond to a public health emergency requiring mass vaccination or prophylaxis. The FPST will also provide response to the Lovelock Paiute Tribe and the Yomba Shoshone Tribe if necessary. The Tribal POD sites must be exercised as often as possible prior to an actual event.

The exercise tested the ability to set up and break down a POD at the Education Center. An After Action Report will be completed which includes recommendations which support development of any corrective actions that will help with future events. For more information please contact the Environmental Department.



*Elijah Hess, Cody Downs, Edwin Conway, and Willie Steve unloading the POD Trailer*



*Edwin Conway, Jackie Conway, Krystal Williams, Lynette Fisherman, Tarita Waseta, Sami Davies, Miranda Chappell, Nathan Strong, Cody Downs, Scott Downs, Elijah Hess, and Richard Black (Not pictured: Roy Redner and Willie Steve)*

## They're Back...

By Sonia Corleto

Mosquito season has started! It's time to think about protecting you and your family and pets from the potential threat of mosquito-transmitted diseases, aka West Nile Virus (WNV)! WNV is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes feed on infected birds and pass it to other birds, animals, and people. It does not spread person to person.

Most people who become infected with WNV will have no symptoms. Approximately 20% of infected will experience headache, fever, skin rash, body aches and/or swollen lymph glands. These mild flu-like symptoms may develop 3-14 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Healthy people of any age can become ill with WNV. It can be fatal or permanently disabling.



Here are some ideas to help you fight the bite.

- ◆ Limit evening outdoor activity and wear mosquito repellent containing 20-30% DEET for adults and 10% for children.
- ◆ Wear long sleeve shirts and pants when outdoors.
- ◆ Avoid wearing perfumes when outdoors.
- ◆ Repair window and door screens and keep them closed.
- ◆ Eliminate standing water around your home.
- ◆ Change water daily in bird baths, pet water bowls, and troughs.

## Public Notice on Controlled Burns

By Richard Black

If you are planning a controlled burn on tribal lands, please notify the FPST Volunteer Fire Department at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled burn.

The V.F.D. Fire Chief can be reached at 426-8636. In addition, please notify the Churchill County Sheriff's Office at 423-3116.

Please provide your name, contact telephone number, the exact location and day, with proposed starting and ending times.

Plan your burn and consider the weather forecast. You are responsible for your fire.

For more information, please contact the V.F.D. Fire Chief or the Environmental Protection Department at 423-0590.



## Down in the Dumps

By Carmen Gonzales

(adapted from an article by Gabby Centeno)

### What is open dumping?

Open dumping is the improper disposal of any kind of waste. This includes household trash, tires, burn barrels, chemical waste, bio-hazardous waste, construction waste, appliances, shingles, pipes, metal, or any material that can rust, rot, or burn.



### Oh no! Where is it?

Open dumps can be found in an open lot or pasture; down a canal; along the road, or in the middle of nowhere. Open dumping threatens the health and safety of everyone around it--especially children and older adults. It is also against the law.

### What's the problem?

Besides looking bad, open dumps threaten surface and drinking water; provide breeding grounds for vermin and mosquitoes; and are a safety hazard. Dumps present safety risks from sharp objects or needles; flammable materials, and unstable slopes that can shift and create a dangerous situation. If you come across an open dump on Tribal Lands, report it immediately to the Environmental Department and Tribal Police.



*“Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”*

*Aldo Leopold  
1887-1948*

## Composting to Revitalize Your Garden Soils

By Carmen Gonzales

Spring is here and if you're a gardener, you are probably excited to get out and plant your first seeds this season. Growing food organically, without chemical fertilizers and pesticides is better for your health and the planet. But you may wonder, "how can I revitalize the soil to grow beautiful healthy plants without the use of harmful chemicals that can pollute our precious waters?"

Good, healthy, organic compost is the perfect soil amendment for all types of soil, especially for our alkaline desert soils. Compost gives back nutrients and also improves the structure of our clay soils. Adding good compost to your garden during every season can help to hold moisture in the soil by improving the amount of organic material and microbiology present. Healthy soil promotes the growth of strong, healthy plants and when grown in a polyculture design, it can also deter pests from your garden! It is the perfect match for your beautiful organic garden.



### Composting is Easy

Composting isn't as difficult as you might think it is. It just takes a little planning, time, and care. You don't

have to buy any special equipment to get started. You can keep your compost in piles or contain them in your yard using old pallets. Give us a call at the Environmental Department if you need a few to get started.



### Microorganisms are Your Friends

The real work of converting food waste into rich soil happens at the microscopic level. Microorganisms eat the organic waste and break it down. When you're caring for your compost pile, you are really caring for the billions of tiny microbes that are living in your pile. Think of it like caring for a pet. Microbes in your compost pile need food (organic waste), water, air, and love (turning the pile).

### Get the Balance Right

All organic matter is made up of carbon (C) and nitrogen (N). The balance of carbon to nitrogen is important in optimizing the performance of the compost pile. A good rule of thumb for maintain a good C:N ration is to add 2 parts "Green" material to 1 part "Brown." Don't get bogged down by the chemistry, though. You can use what you have to get started and learn as you go. Here are some ideas for

"greens" and "browns" you can add to your pile.

#### High In Carbon ("Brown")

- ◆ Leaves & pine needles
- ◆ Straw, shredded newspaper
- ◆ Fruit waste

#### High in Nitrogen ("Green")

- ◆ Veggie waste & Coffee grounds
- ◆ Grass clippings & non-invasive weeds



### What About The Smell?

A well cared-for compost pile should not smell bad. In fact, the smells emanating from a healthy pile should be sweet and earthy. Also avoid adding meat, dairy, and fats to your pile. If your compost pile smells bad chances are that the pile needs to be turned to ensure that the microbes in the pile have plenty of air to keep living and working. Excess nitrogen in your pile can also cause a bad odor. If you notice bad odors coming from your pile or white powdery growth in your pile, try adding more "brown" material.

If you need advice for how to get started feel free to call us at (775) 423-0590.



## Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

Environmental Protection Department  
1011 Rio Vista Drive  
Fallon, NV 89406

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## Dawn Breaks, Evening Sets

By Elijah Hess

Shades of lilac, lavender, and indigo paint Fox Peak as rays of light illuminate cloud blanketed skies with varying degrees of orange and red. The sunrise signals spring, and the wildlife begins responding in kind. The series of arrivals and departures delicately balanced and timed to maximize resources begins playing itself out in what we call the Spring Migration. Departing from the area, Tundra Swan will migrate north, making way for arriving American White Pelican. As the advancing sun changes the appearance of the sky, so do the Wetland's Birds change the appearance of their feathers. Wintering Mallard drakes will shed their brown chest feathers, while Ruddy Duck males will adopt colorful arrangements of blue, cinnamon and white.



*Sunrise of the Stillwater Mountains Range.*



*Killdeer*

Newly arriving Killdeer begin

searching for nesting grounds, often using sun heated rocks as incubation for their eggs. A small bird with bands of White and Black on its front and shades of grey on its wings and back, shrills like a hawk as it soars across the Wetlands in search of shallow waters to hunt small insects. Flying, the Killdeer resembles a small falcon with reddish tail feathers and sharp pointed wings. When running along the ground they are mindful of their nesting sight, leading predators away from incubating eggs.

If you were to visit the Wetlands today, you will likely see wintering populations of Northern Pintail.

Named for their pointed tail feathers, males display a unique patterning on their wings similar to

blades of grass that drape across their body: coat tails for an already ornate male. Both male and female stand tall, elongated figurines compared to their neighbors.

Stay in the Wetlands long enough and you can get a glimpse of sunset reflecting on the water, a band of mud hens breaking the surface. Jets flying overhead create long bands of white cloud that propagate light against a backdrop of blue, orange and black. Winter slowly fades, still fighting to bring us needed resources as spring arises and makes way for summer. Enjoy these cool days while they last.



*Northern Pintail*