

**City of Carson City
Agenda Report**

Date Submitted: March 2, 2012

Agenda Date Requested: March 15, 2012

Time Requested: 15 Minutes

To: Mayor and Supervisors

From: Parks and Recreation Department - Open Space Division

Subject Title: For possible action to approve the Open Space Advisory Committee annual activity report for 2011.

Staff Summary: Section 13.06.090 of the Carson City Municipal Code requires that the Open Space Advisory Committee provide an annual report of their activities to the Board of Supervisors. The attached report contains information on the activities of the Open Space Program organized into four major categories including land management, activities with volunteers, land preservation, and financial considerations.

Type of Action Requested: (check one)

- Resolution Ordinance
 Formal Action/Motion Other (Specify)

Does This Action Require A Business Impact Statement: Yes No

Recommended Board Action: I move to approve the Open Space Advisory Committee annual activity report for 2011.

Explanation for Recommended Board Action: As required by ordinance staff has prepared the report on behalf of the Open Space Advisory Committee describing the most notable activities of the Open Space Program carried out in 2011.

Applicable Statue, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation: Carson City Municipal Code, Section 13.09.090

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Explanation of Impact: The report was prepared by staff as part of the normal business work load.

Funding Source: Parks and Recreation, Open Space Division

Alternatives:

Not to approve the report.
Request additional information.

Supporting Material:

Report to the Board of Supervisors regarding activities of the Open Space Advisory Committee for 2011

Prepared By: Juan F. Guzman Date: 3/2/12
Juan F. Guzman, Open Space Manager

Reviewed By: Roger Moellendorf Date: 3/14/12
Roger Moellendorf, Parks & Recreation Director

Lawrence A. Werner Date: 3/5/12
Lawrence A. Werner, City Manager

District Attorney's Office Date: 3/6/12

Finance Department Date: 3/6/12

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____ 1: _____ Aye/Nay

2: _____

(Vote Recorded By)



CARSON CITY, NEVADA

CONSOLIDATED MUNICIPALITY AND STATE CAPITAL

March 2, 2012

Mayor Bob Crowell
Karen Abowd, Supervisor
Shelly Aldean, Supervisor
John McKenna, Supervisor
Molly Walt, Supervisor

Re: Open Space Program Activity Report for 2011

Dear Mayor Crowell and Board of Supervisors,

As required by Section 13.06.090 of the Carson City Municipal Code, it is our pleasure to present to you the following report containing four broad categories of information including land management efforts, volunteers activities, preservation of land, and financial considerations.

The composition of the Open Space Advisory Committee has changed with the resignation of "Chairman Emeritus" Steve Hartman and Dr. Michael Fischer. Both of these individuals were original members and also served as part of the group of citizens who were instrumental in the development of the Quality of Life Initiative which was approved by the voters of Carson City in 1996. We once more take this opportunity to thank them for serving Carson City for so many years.

The Open Space Advisory Committee held a total of six public meetings and considered 40 agenda items during 2011.

1) Land Management Efforts

The management of fuels on acquired lands is a top priority for the program. With the assistance and through the implementation of the Fire Department, we continue to use grant funds obtained through the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act for fuels reduction within the Carson Range. In addition, our well-received fine fuels management program through the use of sheep continues along the wildland-urban interface. That project receives the strong support and cooperation of the U.S. Forest Service, the Nevada Division of Forestry, and the flock of sheep owned and managed by Ted Borda and his family. We understand that Supervisor Walt and her children look forward to this event every year.

In 2010, taking advantage of an unexpected opportunity and through a private consultant, Carson City was successful in planting approximately 9,000 trees within areas of Lakeview and Vicee Canyon previously burned by the Waterfall Fire in 2004. We also wish to express

our gratitude to the Nevada Division of Forestry for facilitating a grant that was used for reducing the cost of this project to Carson City. We are pleased to report that the Jeffrey Pines planted exhibit a 50% survival rate in the summer of 2011, which is high for our area.

Staff was successful in completing the second annual monitoring of the 175-acre conservation easement at Horsecreek Ranch. We found no violations of the easement. Third party encroachments and trespassing incidents required the reconstruction and extension of fencing, and we are pleased to report that vandalism at the property has been reduced. Monitoring of the easement is an annual activity in order to ascertain compliance with the terms of the transaction. It is our privilege to monitor the easement, and it is important to inform you that the stewardship account donated by the owner has a balance of \$47,875 to be used exclusively for this purpose. Please refer to the attached photograph (Exhibit A) illustrating areas monitored within the meadow area of Horsecreek Ranch protected by the easement.

In coordination with the Parks and Recreation Commission and Carson River Advisory Committee, we have commenced the development of a management plan for the lands to be transferred to Carson City subject to a conservation easement from the Bureau of Land Management as part of the Federal Lands Bill. This effort was expanded to include lands purchased with Open Space funds and existing parks and trail facilities within the river corridor. The result will be the management of approximately 6,000 acres as a cohesive unit providing unique recreation opportunities adjacent to the river and riparian resources. It is anticipated that the management plan will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for review and approval by the summer of 2012. Attached as Exhibit B are photos illustrating Mayor Crowell and City Manager Larry Werner executing the land transfer documents and staff's efforts to become acquainted with the lands being transferred along the river corridor.

It is with a great sense of accomplishment that the committee informs you that the Fulstone wetlands property was enhanced through the completed construction of 1/2 mile of 8-10' width ADA accessible decomposed granite trail and 1/4 mile of full frontage meandering sidewalk. The design included tree planting, rocks, and fencing and is significant since it ties the park side with formal improvements and the rural design of open space. The cost of this effort (\$286,612) was leveraged through grants in the amount of \$195,000 or 68% of the total cost. The grants were obtained from the Carson Water Subconservancy District, Nevada Division of State Parks Recreational Trails Program, and the Q-1 Nevada Division of State Lands programs. Please see attached photographs (Exhibit C).

2) Volunteer Activities

The Open Space Advisory Committee is very pleased to report that our activities and work have immensely benefited from the contribution and assistance of volunteers and groups. Dr. Rob Bauter and Mr. Dick Wipfli regularly assist our full-time Ranger position by providing a presence within open space lands. Dick and Rob particularly enjoy their tours on Ash Canyon Road and Kings Canyon Road. They wear shirts identifying them as being volunteers through the Open Space Program and they offer water and assistance to hikers and visitors. They frequently stop and introduce themselves and point to the landscape while narrating to their listeners the ownership patterns, the effects of the Waterfall Fire such as erosion, and many other subject pertinent to the Open Space Program.



Exhibit A





Exhibit C



Two organizations whose work was incredibly useful to the Open Space Program were the Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch and Muscle-Powered. The Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch (FOSSR) have been involved with management of lands along the Carson River, particularly the Silver Saddle Ranch. FOSSR was also responsible for initiating the charrette process that culminated in the cohesive vision for the management of the lands along the Carson River corridor. FOSSR also engaged the services of the Sierra Business Council in 2010 in order to increase their organizational capacity and develop marketing materials that can be used to generate funding that will help them become a stronger organization. It is their goal to be able to continue working with Carson City in the management of not only Silver Saddle Ranch but also adjacent acquisitions and open space areas along the river corridor.

Muscle-Powered has been instrumental in the development of single-track trails along the Carson Range. Within property owned by Carson City, Muscle-Powered developed a trail on Ash Canyon Road that is extremely popular with mountain bikers. The same trail continues into lands owned by the Masonic Lodge, State of Nevada, and the University Board of Regents (Western Nevada College). One of our efforts currently is to formalize and incorporate that system of trails into Carson City facilities. Presently there are no easements on the private lands where the trail has been built. Muscle-Powered has volunteered to continue to maintain and patrol these trails as well as provide the labor for maintenance of such facilities.

In addition, with the assistance of the U.S. Forest Service Carson District Ranger and under the leadership of Muscle-Powered, we have advanced the process of planning and design of a trail from Ash Canyon to Kings Canyon. This trail will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Some of the work completed includes a cultural resource assessment along the proposed route. The expertise to conduct that work required a registered archeologist in compliance with federal and state guidelines. Vidler Water Company very generously donated their staff archeologist to conduct that work. Lumos and Associates has provided surveying, mapping, engineering, and flood regulation compliance for the proposed creek crossings. The assessment of biological resources was completed by the U.S. Forest Service with the assistance of Ann Bollinger, our Natural Resource Specialist. Muscle-Powered is very hopeful to begin construction of this trail in portions of lands under the jurisdiction of Carson City. We wish to express our gratitude to Supervisor Molly Walt who participated in one of the initial meetings with the U.S. Forest Service. We are also grateful for the letter of support signed by you, Mayor Crowell. The entire Board of Supervisors was effective in explaining the importance of open space and this type of project to U.S. Forest Service Supervisor Jeanne Higgins. At the present time, the Forest Service has incorporated this project into their work program and we continue to work on the development of the documents necessary to be able to construct the trail in its entirety. The Board authorized a \$5,000 grant and through the budget process an additional \$10,000 was set aside to support the efforts of Muscle-Powered to build this multi-purpose trail. In Exhibit D Jeff Potter and Chas McQuery are shown at different sections of the trail, some sections have spectacular views of the valley.

There were three other efforts that resulted in very successful accomplishments. Dion Copoulos, with an Eagle Scout project, managed to gather 45 friends on a Saturday morning and, under the direction of Supervisor John McKenna and Planning Commissioner Mark Kimbrough, assisted in constructing an alternative route into the waterfall at Kings Canyon. Please see the attached photograph of this activity (Exhibit E). The effort initiated in 2010 was completed as to the first leg from the trailhead at the end of the pavement on Kings Canyon

Kings Canyon to Ash Canyon Non-Motorized Multi-Use Trail

119°50'30"W

119°50'W

119°49'30"W

119°49'W

119°48'30"W

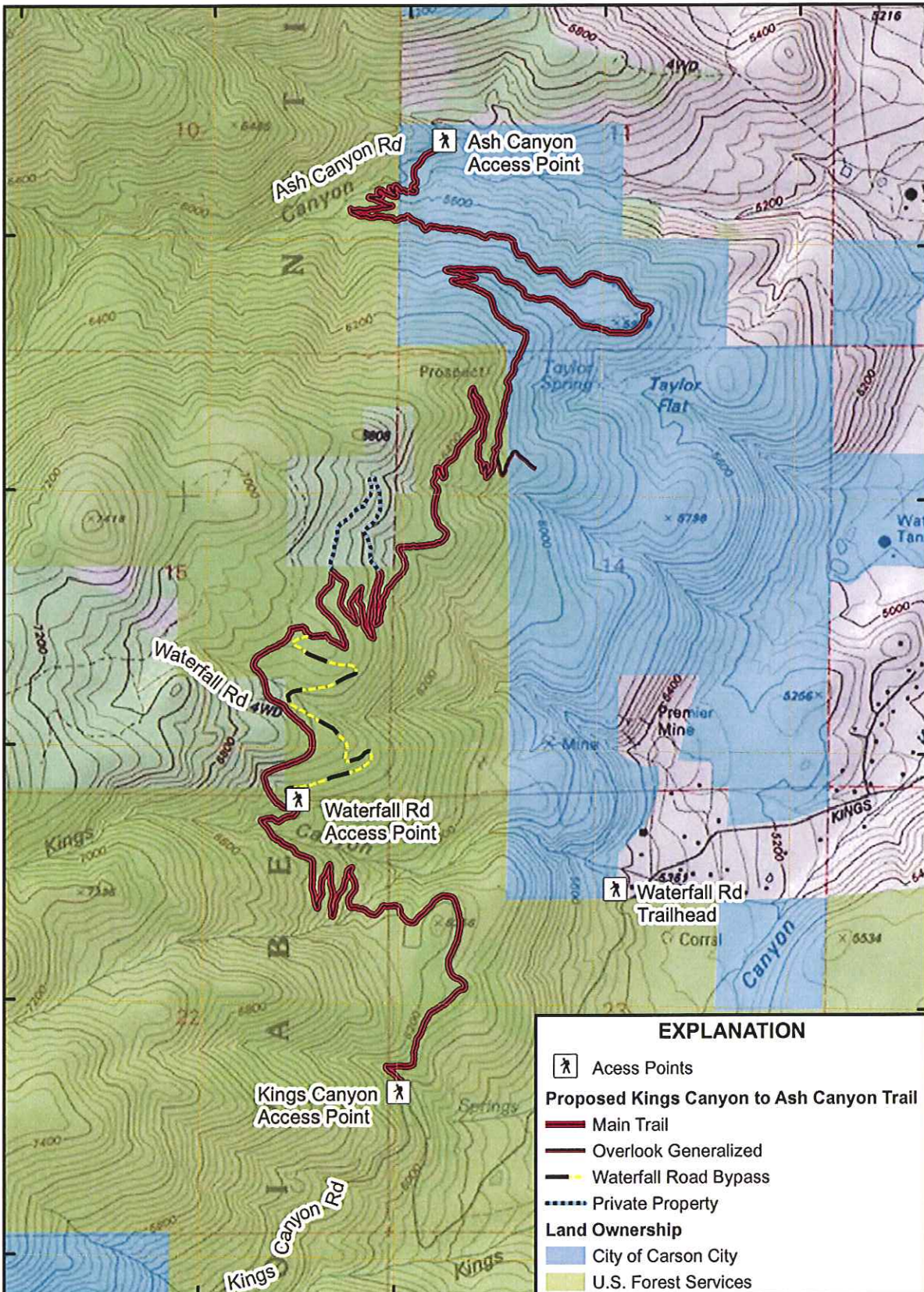
39°10'30"N

39°10'N

39°9'30"N

39°9'N

39°8'30"N



Base from ESRI ArcGIS Online Map service
http://services.arcgisonline.com/arcgis/service:USA_Topo_Maps,2011,StatePlaneNevadaWest
 North American Datum of 1983 (CORS96), Vertical Datum North American Vertical Datum of 1988.

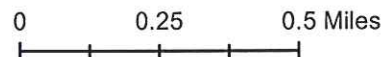
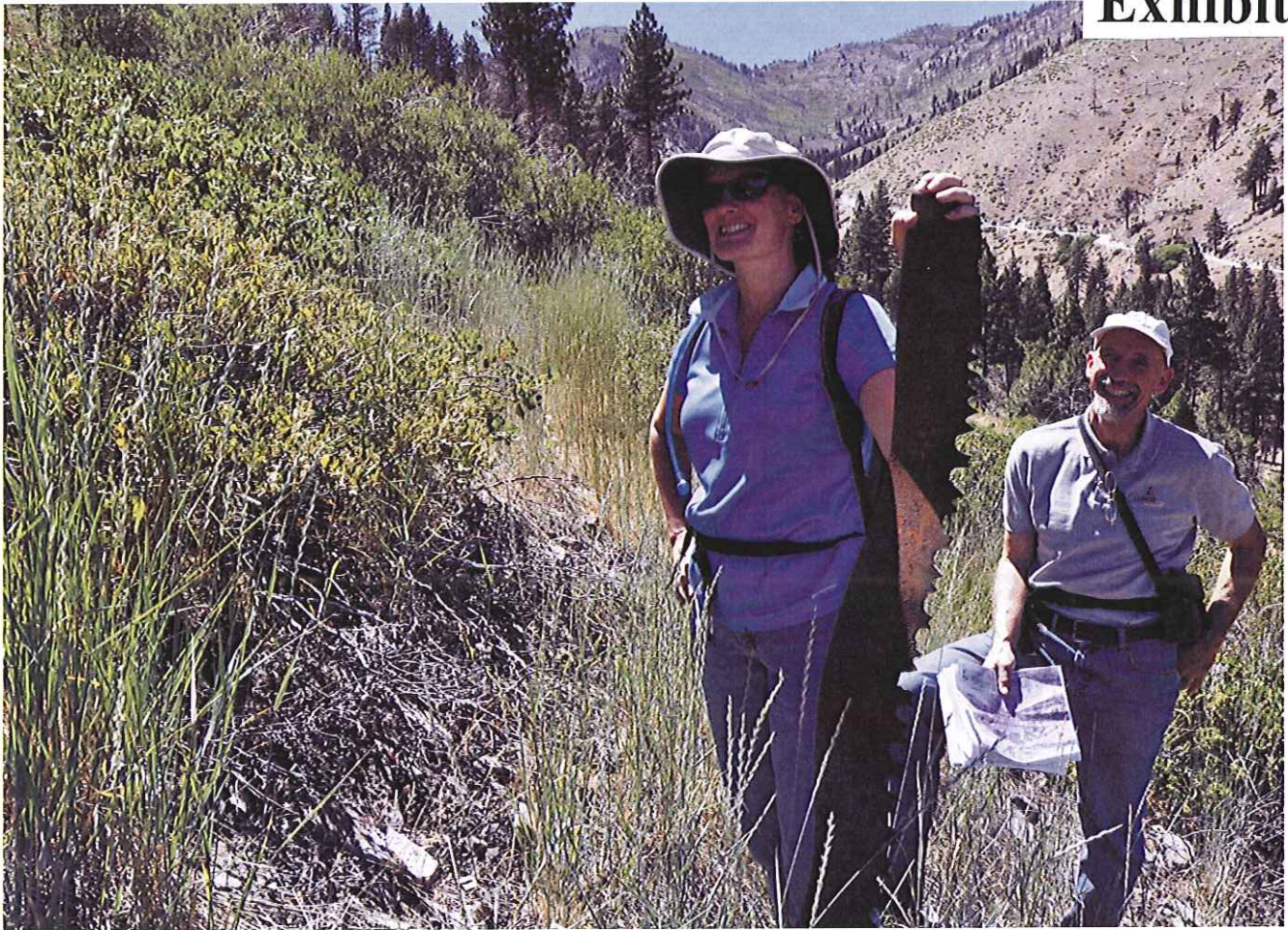


Exhibit D



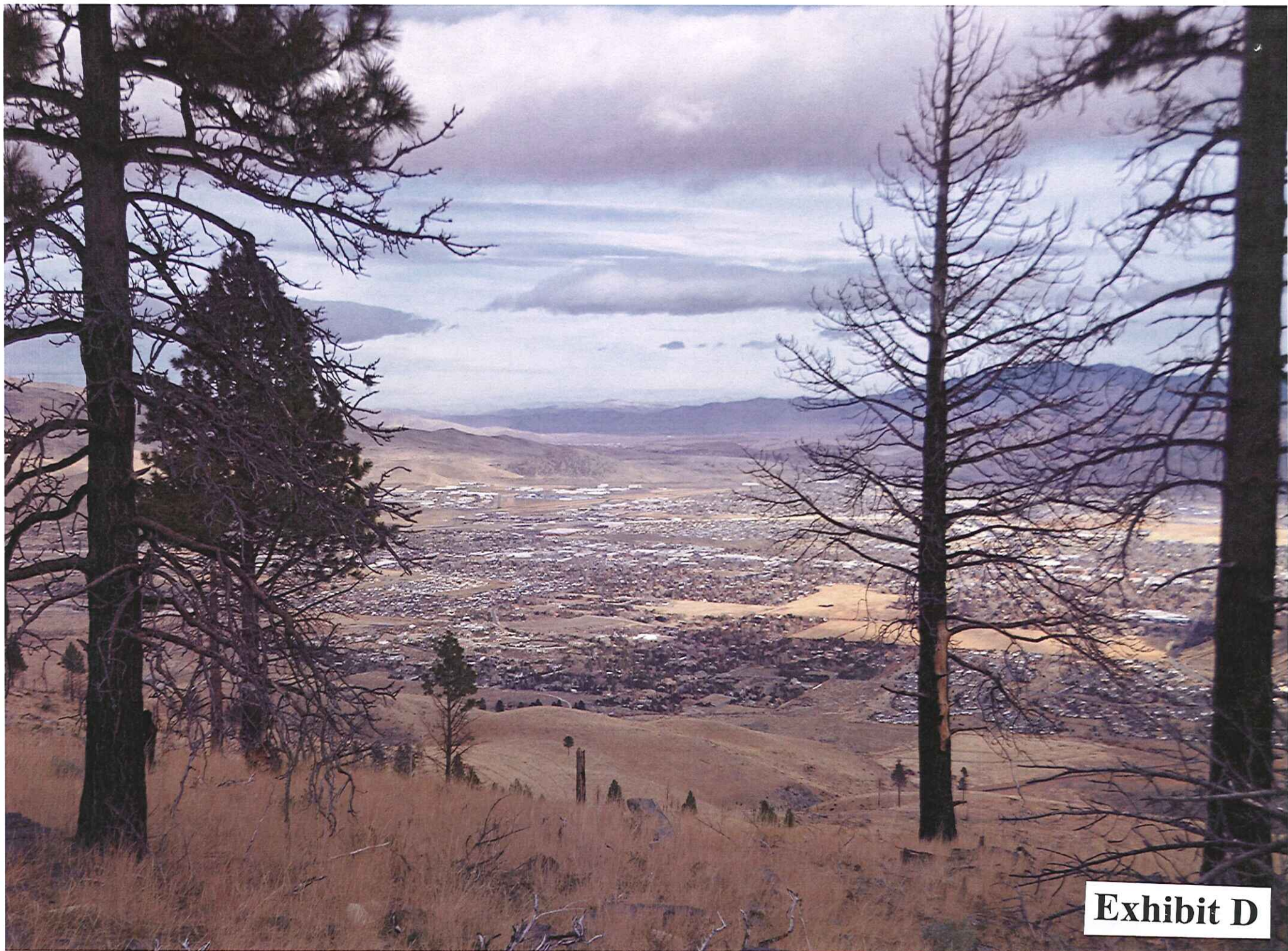


Exhibit D

Road to the waterfall. The upper trail is presently 75% developed through the assistance of Great Basin Institute. We anticipate completing the upper trail with the help of volunteers this summer. Please see the attached photograph of the scouts from Troop 341 and friends constructing the lower trail (Exhibit E).

Dave Reese, also in order to fulfill the requirements for an Eagle Scout project, designed and constructed interpretive signage which was placed on Ash Canyon Road. Dave was successful in installing the sign frames in 2010 and the signs in the summer of 2011. David returned last summer and volunteered to be our motorized ambassador, visiting all of the properties on a rotation schedule throughout the summer. Please refer to Exhibit F attached.

Through the efforts of an equestrian group and Beth Scott, \$50,000 was set aside a few years ago for a preliminary engineering study to be used for the construction of a non-motorized multi-purpose crossing over the Carson Freeway at Valley View Drive. In 2011 the services of Lumos and Associates were obtained through the assistance of the Regional Transportation Commission staff in order to conduct this preliminary study. This study is to facilitate the search for grant funding for future permitting and, hopefully, eventual construction of the multi-purpose crossing. The study was completed and recently presented to the Regional Transportation Commission.

In summary, we received assistance with multiple kinds of management activities from the Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch, Muscle-Powered, Boy Scouts, Great Basin Institute, Kiwanis, the Mormon Church, the Chamber of Commerce, and individuals that are estimated in the vicinity of 3,543 hours. The attached Exhibit G shows a group of 150 Mormon Church volunteers working at the Lompa Wetland. Exhibit H shows Skylar VanRensselaer and his troop and friends after installing signs at the former Serpa property in the Carson River Canyon.

3) Preservation of Lands

During the year 2011, Carson City closed escrow on the Serpa property acquisition (see Exhibit I) containing 418 acres and opened escrow for the purchase of the Bently property (see Exhibit J) containing 497 acres. The Serpa property acquisition was advanced by our partnership with the Nevada Land Conservancy, who passed through a \$1,000,000 grant from the Question-1 Program to Carson City in order to complete the acquisition. These two projects were advanced as a joint ventures with the Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railway. Due to statutory limitations of the grants and the Question-18 funding itself, there was extreme care placed on the structuring of the transactions to demonstrate that the lands purchased with Open Space funds are separate from the lands purchased or reserved by the V&T for future use. In common to these lands is the presence of mercury contamination. The designation with the Superfund area presented difficult challenges in completing these acquisitions, particularly the demonstration to the agencies providing grants that the land may be used for open space and that remediation is not anticipated. The NDEP issued a letter of concurrence with no further action regarding the Phase 2 Environmental - Mercury, Arsenic and Lead sampling at the Bently property. A Class 3 Cultural Resource Inventory was conducted and the historic mill sites and works were identified. This information will be used for interpretive signage and education of the public as to the site. The Bently property was acquired in January of 2012.

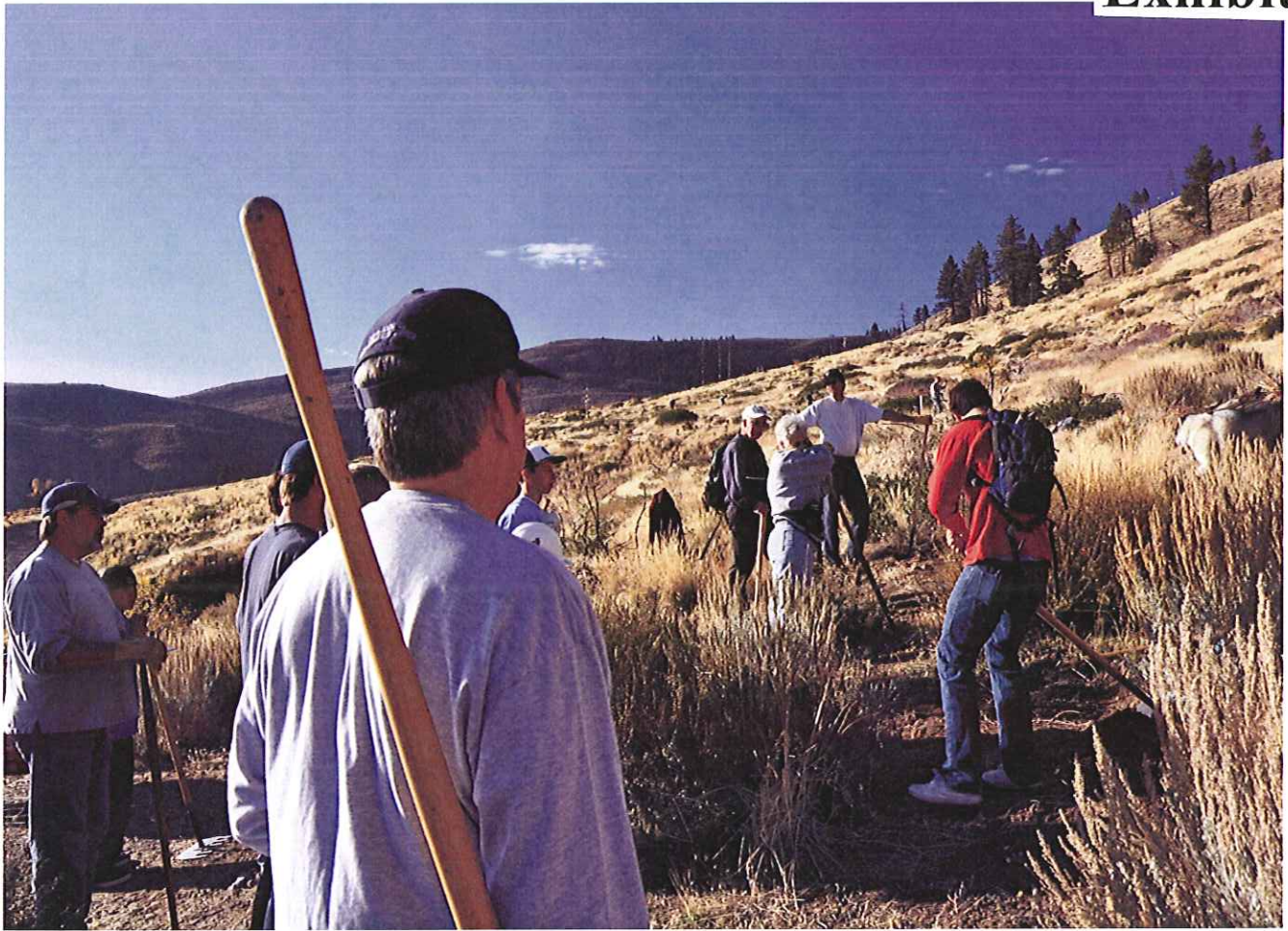






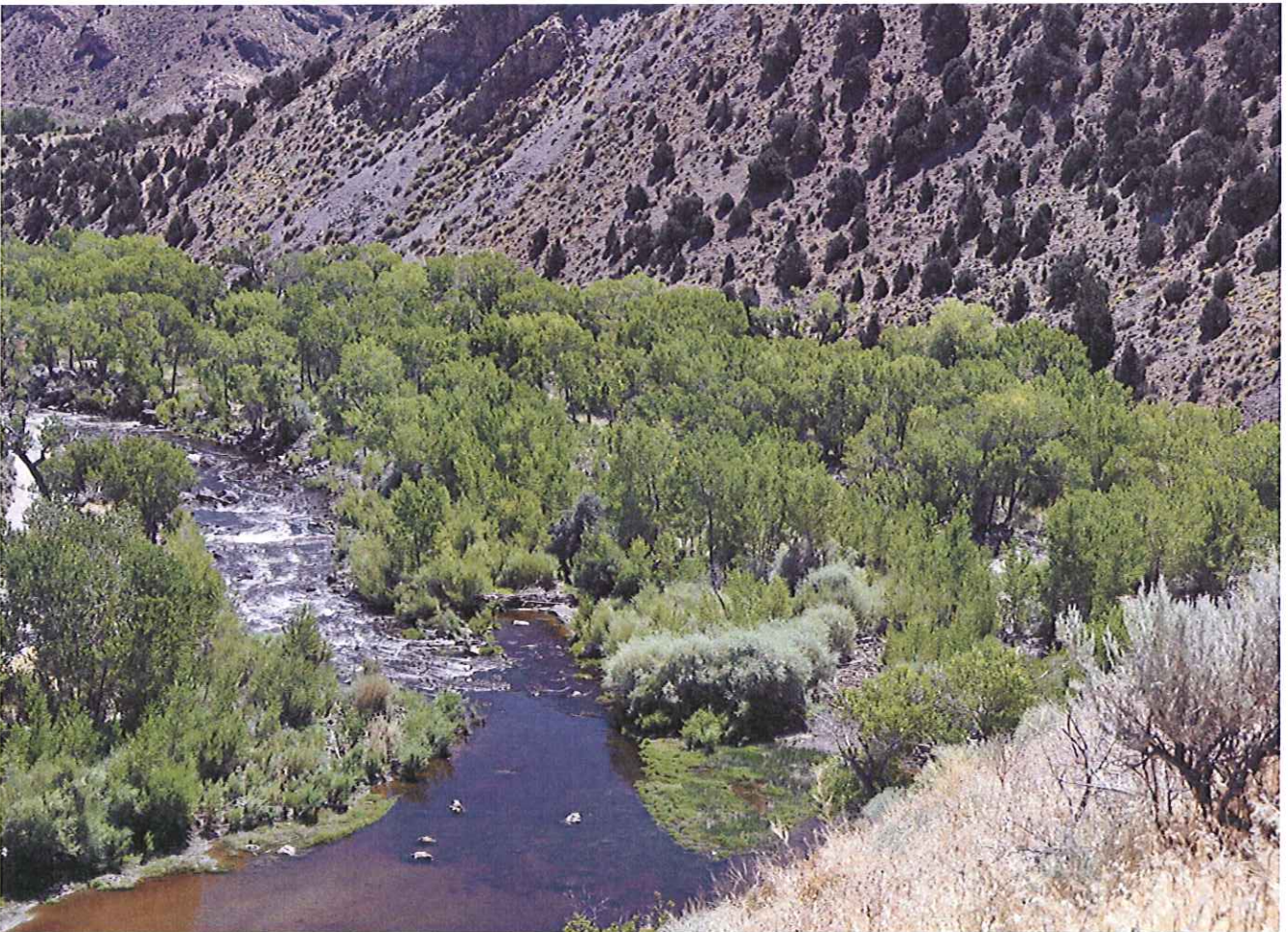
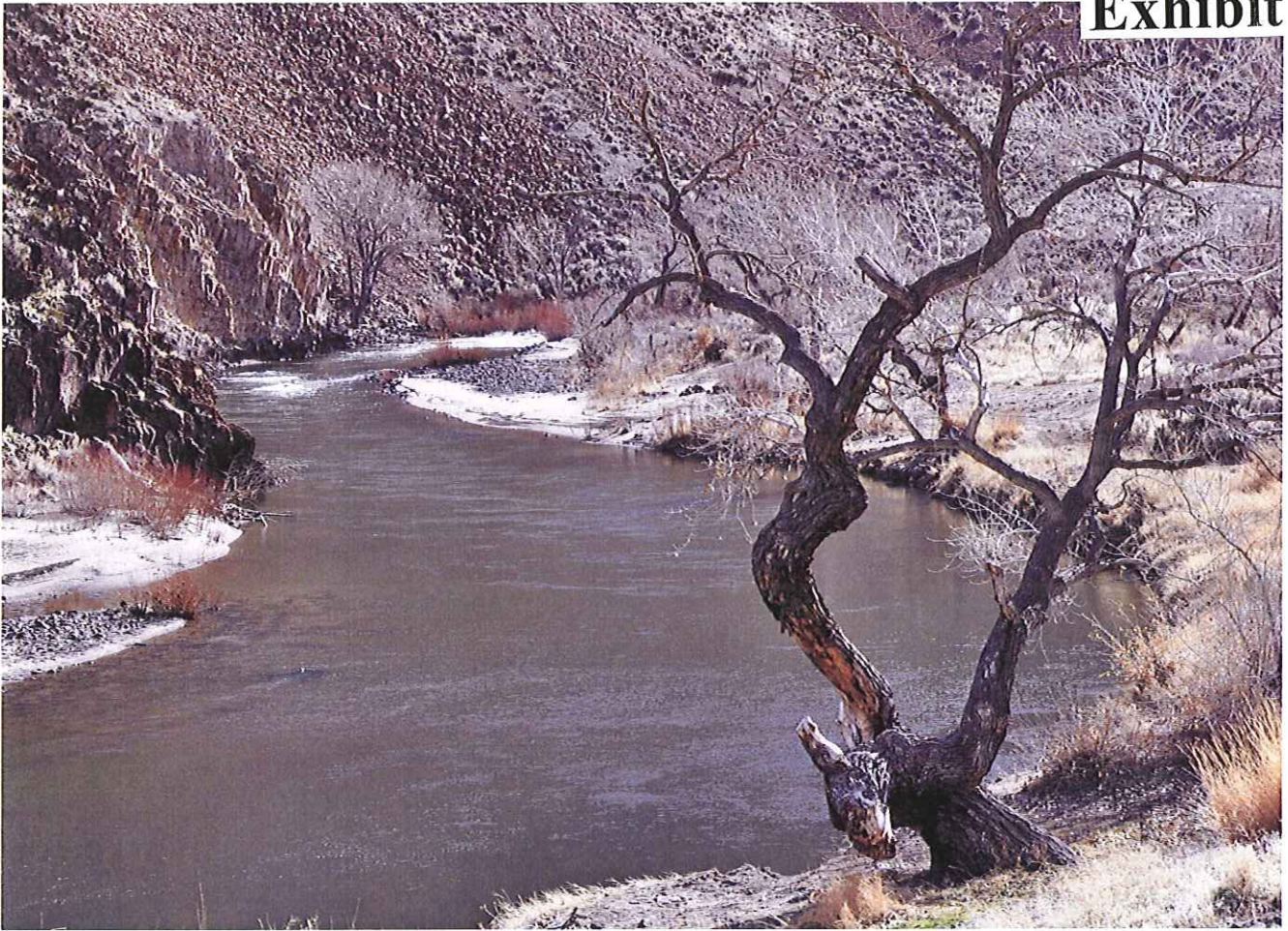
Exhibit G

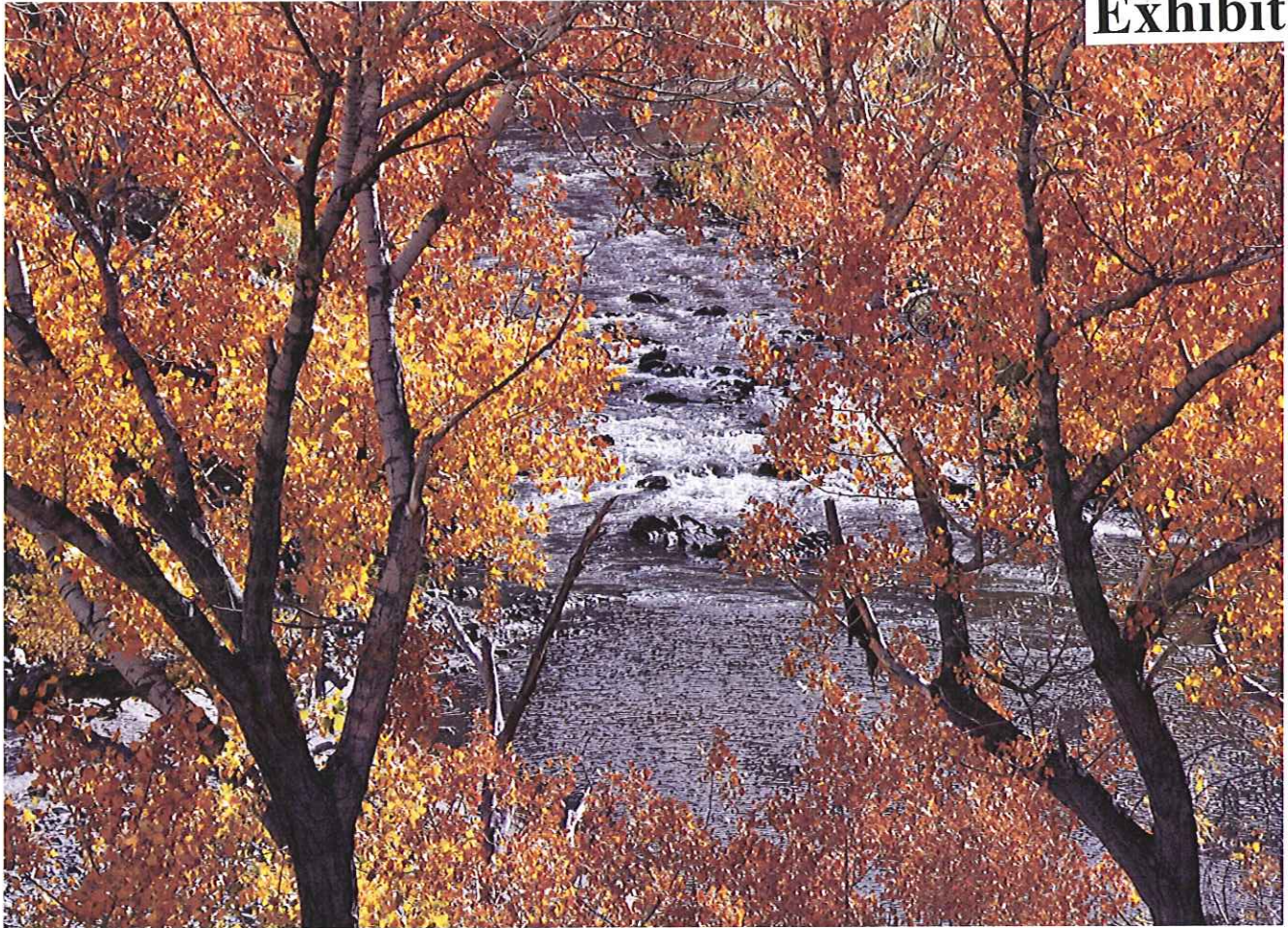


Exhibit H



Exhibit I





As part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, approximately 962 acres were transferred from the U.S. Forest Service to Carson City west of Highway 395 for open space related use. Carson City transferred approximately 2,000 acres to the U.S. Forest Service, mostly land devoted to watershed protection. These transfers are to facilitate the management of these lands. As required, the committee oversaw lot line adjustments, Phase 1 Environmental Reviews, and title corrections necessary to be completed prior to the transfers. Please see the attached reduced map of the west side opportunities and note the contiguous ownership of U.S. Forest Service lands and Carson City lands.

In reference to the public lands east of Highway 395, please see the attached map entitled, "Silver Saddle Ranch and land acquisitions." The purpose of this map is to illustrate the amassing of lands within the Carson River corridor that are to be managed in unison as a conservation area and for the passive recreation enjoyment of residents and visitors. As this map illustrates, the lands will facilitate the implementation of the Aquatic Trail, Unified Pathways Master Plan, and the common vision developed through the charrette process for the Carson River. This common vision was developed through the initiative of the Friends of Silver Saddle Ranch and many of stakeholders including the Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, equestrian groups, pedestrian groups, and federal and state agencies.

As the Board of Supervisors is aware, Carson City and its partners were recognized by the American Planning Association and Econet with awards for the Federal Lands Bill efforts.

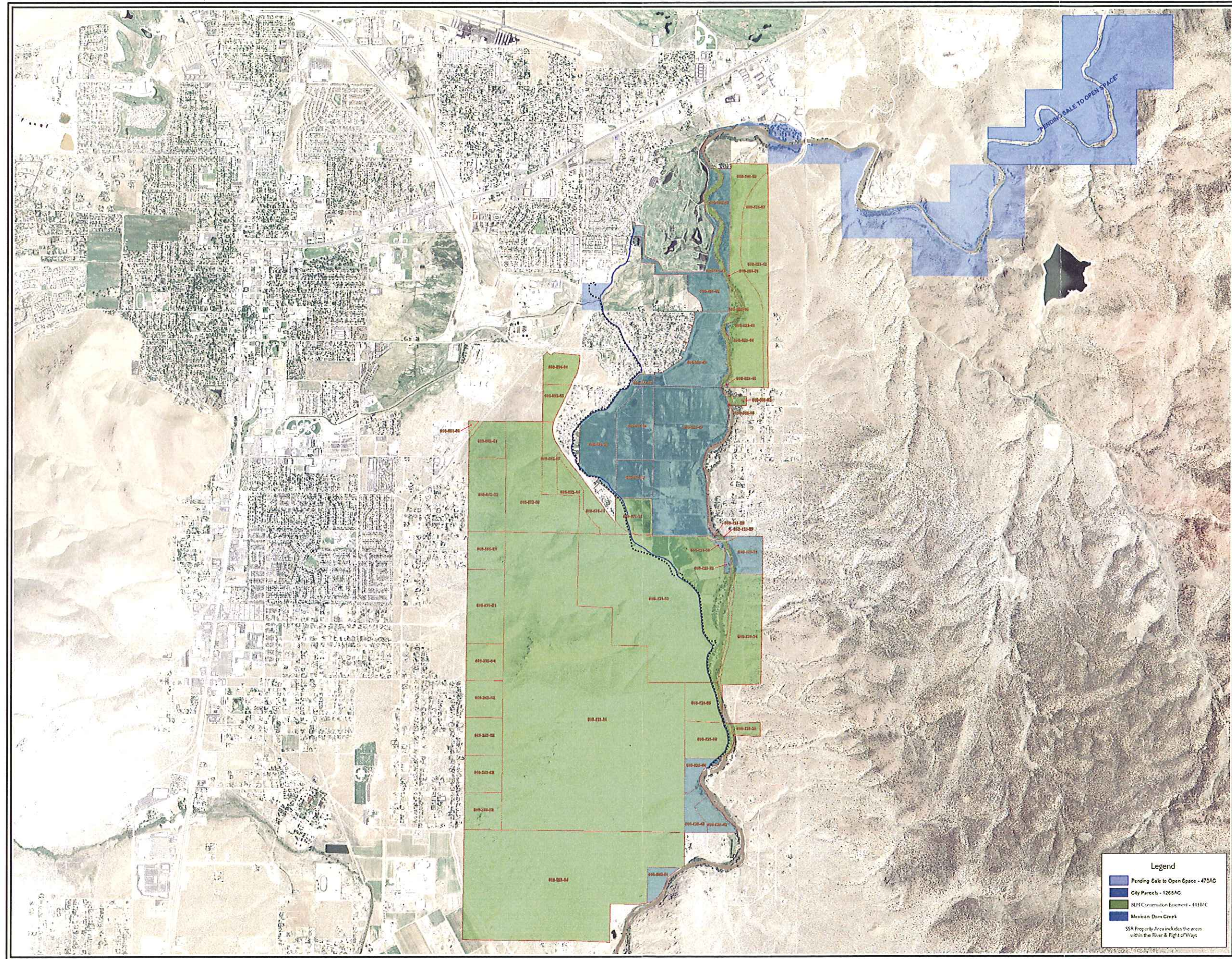
4) Financial Considerations

In specific, one of the functions of the Open Space Advisory Committee is to provide oversight for the administration and expenditures of funds from the Open Space Division of the Quality of Life special revenue fund established by Carson City Municipal Code Section 21.07. The Section states, "The Committee shall review and provide input and comment to the City Manager's proposed budget as it relates to Open Space matters and perform other duties as may be specifically assigned to it by the Board of Supervisors."

Due to the decrease in revenue generated by the sales tax and the state of the economy, there were adjustments in the salary section and the amount contributed by the Open Space fund toward the administration of the program. Deliberations on those matters involved the participation of the City's Finance Director and City Manager. The final budget recommendation presented to the Board of Supervisors was reviewed and recommended by the Committee. Internally, the Committee requested and has been receiving from the Parks and Recreation Department staff monthly reports as to the status of the different budget accounts that comprise the Open Space Program budget. The Committee finds that these reports are useful in providing a clearer picture of the status of the program funding.

In addition and in accordance with the measures adopted by the Board of Supervisors in order to reduce expenditures, the Committee has agreed to a schedule of meetings once every other month in order to reduce administrative costs. The City code otherwise requires a monthly meeting.

The acquisition account has been almost depleted with a present balance of approximately \$400,000. Future acquisitions will be minimal at best and involve, by necessity, very creative thinking. Our efforts will continue to be directed towards the management of lands and the



Carson River Management Area
GRAND TOTAL: 6116 AC

Legend

- Pending Sale to Open Space - 470AC
- City Parcels - 1268AC
- RMC Conservation Easement - 4431AC
- Mexican Dam Creek

SSR Property Area includes the areas within the River & Right of Ways



Carson City Parks and Recreation Department - Open Space acquisition

Carson City Ownership / Property Name	Acres	Date Acquired	Carson City Question 18	Grants	Grant Funding Source	Purchase Price	Cost Per Acre
West of Hwy 395 / Carson Street							
Horsecreek	374.91	May 2005	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 1,000,000	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 2,300,000	\$ 6,134.81
Horsecreek conservation easement	175.33	Mar 2009	\$ 503,653	\$ 596,347	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 6,273.78
Hutchinson	40.00	Dec 2006	\$ 100,000	\$ 300,000	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 400,000	\$ 10,000.00
PH Casey Preserve	77.01	Mar 2008	donation	--	--	\$ -	\$ -
Wilson	111.28	Jan 2009	\$ 146,480	\$ 439,440	Forest Legacy	\$ 585,920	\$ 5,265.28
Lands Bill (USFS Exchange) - approx.	962.44	Sep 2011	\$ -	\$ -	Transfer	\$ -	\$ -
East of Hwy 395 / Carson Street							
Andersen	86.00	Jul 2007	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 1,750,000	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 40,697.67
Bently	497.70	Jan 2012	\$ 876,796	\$ 513,900	SNPLMA	\$ 1,390,696	\$ 2,794.25
Desormier	19.28	Feb 2007	\$ 170,930	\$ 129,070	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 300,000	\$ 15,560.17
Fulstone wetlands	8.62	Aug 2001	donation	--	--	\$ -	\$ -
Goni Canyon - 50 year open space protection	40.00		donation	--	--	\$ -	\$ -
Jarrard	368.78	May 2010	\$ 931,048	\$ 2,793,000	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 3,724,048	\$ 10,098.29
Lompa wetlands	17.62	Aug 2001	donation	--	--	\$ -	\$ -
Mexican Dam LLC	64.31	Mar 2008	\$ 1,650,000	--	--	\$ 1,650,000	\$ 25,656.97
Moffat	17.80	Nov 2000	\$ 327,600	--	--	\$ 327,600	\$ -
Serpa	418.77	Jan 2011	\$ 2,065,775	\$ 1,075,000	State of Nevada Question 1	\$ 3,140,775	\$ 7,500.00
Vidler / Hells Bells property	39.02	Nov 2010	donation	--	--	\$ -	\$ -
Lands Bill (BLM Exchange) - approx.	3,589.05	Pending	\$ -	\$ -	Transfer	\$ -	\$ -
Open Space Acquisitions	2,356.43		\$ 7,756,507	\$ 7,521,757		\$ 15,278,264	
Lands Bill	4,551.49		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	
Grant Total	6,907.92		\$ 7,756,507	\$ 7,521,757		\$ 15,278,264	

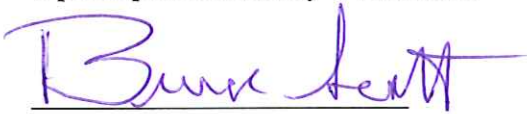
Exhibit K

annual operations budget will reflect the shift from acquisition to stewardship. The use of volunteers for this effort is extremely important.

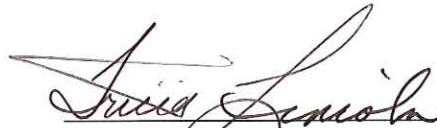
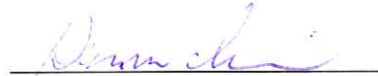
The Committee has spent time discussing with the City Manager and the Finance Director the internal revenue charge. The Board's decision to use methodology that results in a reduction of charges to the program is greatly appreciated. Staff, under the direction of the Committee, has successfully sought grants and provided outside funding sources for just about all the transactions conducted since the beginning of the program. It is our pleasure to inform the Board of Supervisors that as of January of 2012, and since the program's inception approximately 6,907 acres of land have been obtained through purchases, donations, or transfers with a Question 18 cost of \$7,756,507 and additional grants for \$7,521,757 for a total of \$15,278,254. We have managed to leverage 49% of our monies. This information is presented in Exhibit K.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present this report.

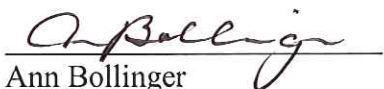
Open Space Advisory Committee



Bruce Scott, Chair


Patricia Lincoln, Vice Chair
Margie Evans, Member
Donna Inversin, Member
Teri Green-Preston, Member
Howard Riedl, Member

Parks and Recreation Department Staff


Roger Moellendorf
Parks and Recreation Director
Juan F. Guzman
Open Space Manager
Ann Bollinger
Natural Resource Specialist