



STATE OF NEVADA

Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

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DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Quality Planning

Proposed Changes to Water Quality Standards
Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 445A.180, 181 and 182

Fact Sheet
May 2010

Background

Section 303 of the Clean Water Act and 40 CFR 131 gives states responsibility for setting, reviewing and revising beneficial uses and water quality standards. State of Nevada authorities are contained in the Nevada Revised statutes 445A. 452, 520 and 565 and water quality standards for waters of Nevada are found in the NAC 445A.118 through 445A.225. These NAC citation numbers will change to NAC 445A.118 through 445A.2234. Water quality standards are set for a waterbody segment at a level designed to protect and ensure a continuation of the designated beneficial uses (uses) set for the waterbody. Standards are based on criteria, such as, physical, chemical and biological characteristics, to protect the uses. Workshops are held to obtain comments on proposed beneficial uses and/or water quality standards for federal, state and local agencies and the general public. Proposed standard are presented at a public hearing to the Nevada State Environmental Commission (SEC) for review and adoption. Standards adopted by the SEC are then subject to approval by the USEPA before incorporating into the NAC.

Summary of Proposed Changes to Water Quality Standards

The proposed changes to water quality standards are for Smoke Creek, NAC 445A.180 (445A.1286), Bronco Creek, 445A.181 (445A.1698) and Gray Creek, 445A.182 (445A.1702). The water quality standards for the creeks have not been reviewed since their inception in 1967 (Smoke) and 1973 (Bronco and Gray). Currently there are no uses or reach descriptions assigned to these creeks. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) is proposing to assign uses and reach descriptions to each creek and add appropriate water quality criteria based on the proposed uses for each creek.

Smoke Creek

Smoke Creek flows out of California from the Smoke Creek Reservoir and drains into the Smoke Creek Desert. It is part of the Black Rock Desert Hydrographic Region and is located in Washoe County approximately 30 miles east of Susanville, California. The U.S. Geological Survey operates a water-stage recorder gage (10353800) on this creek.

Proposed Reach description:

The limits of this table apply to the body of water known as Smoke Creek from the Nevada State line to the Smoke Creek Desert. Smoke Creek is located in Washoe County.

Proposed Designated Beneficial Uses:

NDEP is proposing to add the following uses: Watering of Livestock, Irrigation, Aquatic Life, Water Contact Recreation, Water Non-Contact Recreation and Propagation of Wildlife.

Bronco Creek

Bronco Creek flows from its headwaters in Nevada and crosses the state line into California and drains into the Truckee River. It is part of the Truckee River Basin and is located in Washoe County. The U.S. Geological Survey operated a water-stage recorder gage (10345700) in the 1990's on this creek.

Proposed Reach description:

The limits of this table apply to the body of water known as Bronco Creek from its origin to the Nevada State Line. Bronco Creek is located in Washoe County.

Proposed Designated Beneficial Uses:

NDEP is proposing to add the following uses: Watering of Livestock, Irrigation, Aquatic Life, Water Contact Recreation, Water Non-Contact Recreation, Municipal or Domestic Supply, Industrial Supply and Propagation of Wildlife.

Gray Creek

Gray Creek flows from its headwaters in Nevada and crosses the state line into California and drains into the Truckee River. It is part of the Truckee River Basin and is located in Washoe County. The U.S. Geological Survey operates a water-stage recorder gage (10345490) on this creek.

Proposed Reach description:

The limits of this table apply to the body of water known as Gray Creek from its origin to the Nevada State Line. Gray Creek is located in Washoe County.

Proposed Designated Beneficial Uses:

NDEP is proposing to add the following uses: Watering of Livestock, Irrigation, Aquatic Life, Water Contact Recreation, Water Non-Contact Recreation, Municipal or Domestic Supply, Industrial Supply and Propagation of Wildlife.

The rationale document and the draft petition are available online at <http://ndep.nv.gov/admin/public.htm> under Water Quality Planning.

For questions, comments or additional information please contact:

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