

Report from May 13 Public Forum

About a dozen people gathered on a lovely May Saturday morning to discuss future actions of the Mutual Water Company. We spent about an hour talking about issues before the Mutual. A strong sentiment was expressed that the mutual should focus on doing its job well – providing clean, safe drinking water to its customers at a reasonable price. Some members expressed the notion that the Mutual should participate in regulatory actions to protect its water source and water rights, but not participate in legal action. Others argued that it was necessary for the Mutual to stay involved in the different studies on groundwater, aquifer storage and retrieval, and groundwater- Squaw Creek interaction, so that it could protect its interests and the beauty of the valley.

A Board meeting followed the public meeting where the Board discussed what it had heard at the public forum, but took no action.



North and South Fork of Squaw Creek joining
– May 13, 2006

Groundwater Management Planning Process

The Squaw Valley Public Service District (SVPSD) has initiated a groundwater management planning process. The goal is to develop a groundwater management plan that will be agreed to by all the groundwater pumpers in the Valley (i.e. SVPSD, SVMWC, Ski Corp, PlumpJack, Poulsons, and Resort at Squaw Creek) and officially adopted by the SVPSD. The planning process consists of a series of “Stakeholder “ meetings and a Draft Review Committee. Everyone is invited to Stakeholder Meetings.

The first of the Stakeholder Meetings was held June 28th and at this time Derrick Williams of HydroMetrics in Oakland went over the planning process and explained goals, objectives, and elements. The second Stakeholder Meeting was held on August 9th and at this meeting the group discussed the three suggested goals and numerous objectives. The next Stakeholder meeting will be on Wednesday, October 11th from 6 to 9 pm in the SVPSD Community meeting Room.

The three goals that the stakeholder group developed were (not final wording):

1. Manage groundwater basin in such a manner as to provide a sustainable supply for current and future beneficial uses.
2. Maintain or improve existing groundwater quality that is a safe supply.
3. Maintain or improve aesthetics and environmental quality of Olympic Valley.

History of Squaw Valley

Taken from a 1984 report by Craig Poulsen

PRE 1860 Squaw Valley served as a summer home to the Washoe and Paiute Indians. There is some evidence that suggests the Indians periodically burned the dry meadow grasses to encourage new growth and therefore attract wildlife (deer) to facilitate easier hunting. Some evidence of Indian encampments still exists on the Poulsen compound at the eastern end of the valley.

1860-1900 Early settlers grazed cattle and sheep in to Squaw Valley and cut hay for local sale and winter use. Records of 200 tons of hay per year were noted by an early historian. There is also some evidence of early mining activity.

1900-1932 At the turn of the century, the Valley came into heavy use by cattle and sheep. A local dairy was established to supply the Lake Tahoe area. Herds of cattle were driven up through the American River Canyon to summer in Squaw Valley as late as the mid 1930's. Large bands of sheep were driven each spring from the Nevada desert up the Truckee River Canyon and through Squaw Valley to spend the summer in the high back country surrounding the Valley. Squaw Valley was a center for the sheepmen and a supply center for the herders. In the fall, bands of sheep that had grazed in the high meadows were driven back into the Valley, consolidated into a large flock for the long trek to the Nevada desert to spend the winter. In the later years (1940's), the lambs were separated and shipped by truck from the Valley while the older sheep had to walk. Headquarters for the Kuhn and Miller interests were located on the southeast end of *(continued on page 4)*

August Board Meeting

The SVMWC Board met on August 12 from 9 to noon. The Board adopted the proposed budget and discussed financing for the Sandy-Apache galvanized pipe replacement. See the website for more details.

The Board heard a presentation by Lance Poulson of his Olympic Estates (16 houses on 4.16 acres) and his request for a Conditional Use Permit. Les Wilson, General Manager of the SVMWC had written Placer County requesting a full EIR for the project because of the cumulative impact of all the new development in the valley on the groundwater supply (see the last newsletter). The County had issued a Mitigated Negative Declaration stating that impacts were adequately mitigated as proposed. At the request of the General Manager Les Wilson, Marsha Burch, an attorney, wrote a letter protesting the Mitigated Negative Declaration and asking for a full EIR. Lance Poulson asked the Board to withdraw the letter or at least be neutral. After a lengthy discussion, the Board left the letter as it was sent, and asked the General Manager to send all Board members copies of the letters for comment before they are sent to the county. Margot Garcia also sent a letter to the county protesting the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

The Board appointed Margot Garcia its official representative to the Groundwater Management Plan Process and to the Draft Review Committee. She asked for help from the entire board in obtaining information on the water supply actions happening in the valley.

Alisa Adriani, Liz Day, and Les Wilson were appointed as the nominating committee for the 4 Board positions up for election in September.

The next Board meeting is September 2nd at 10 am, before the members meeting at 11.

Water Conservation

As we all know, water is a finite resource. We have as much water on the planet now as we will ever have. The water cycles, and therefore moves to new places, but no new water is being created. Therefore it behoves us to use water wisely.

Water use more than doubles in the summer, compared to winter use, mostly due to outside watering. The summer is when the area has the least amount of rain. August and September are the most water-stressed months.

Outside watering is the biggest water usage in the summer – often more than 60% of overall water use. Amazingly, homes with automatic sprinklers use twice as much water on the average as homes using a hose and sprinkler. There are a number of things the homeowner can do to conserve water during outdoor watering.

1. Water at night to cut down on evaporation.
2. Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops of water and mist often evaporate before they hit the ground.
3. Don't water on windy days.
4. Use a sprinkler for the larger areas of lawn and water smaller areas by hand.
5. Divide water cycle into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption every time you water.
6. Use a kitchen timer when watering a lawn or garden with a hose.
7. Use a screw driver as a soil probe to test for soil moisture. If it goes in easily, don't water.

Proper lawn watering can save thousands of gallons annually.

8. Alternatively, water a lawn in the summer only every three days.
9. Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about six inches apart so that the water will reach the roots rather than run off the surface.
10. Adjust lawn mower to higher setting. Longer grass shades root systems and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.
11. Use a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save 100s of gallons of water a year.
12. Use porous materials for walkways and patios to keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful runoff.

This will be an ongoing column to bring you new ideas and reminders of what we need to do every day to preserve our beautiful Squaw Valley.

Please tell us some of the efforts you make to conserve water, or suggestions that you have heard of that might be appropriate for our mountain homes.

Send comments to: mgarcia@hsc.vcu.edu

New Office Manager Appointed

Cory Giese has been appointed the new office manager for the SVMWD. He has purchased Shawna McLaughlin's business, so the address and phone number will stay the same, but as of July 1, 2006 the business will be called Giese Accounting and Tax, CPA.

Cory has Bachelors' degrees in professional accounting and financial services, a Masters of taxation and is a CPA. He and his wife Anne-Marie are outdoor enthusiasts and are thrilled to moving back to the Tahoe area. Anne-Marie is a biologist.

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History of Squaw Valley *continued from
page 1*

the valley. The Jensen interests had their headquarters at the present Olympic Village site. The cattlemen also built a barn on the south side of the valley.

*This history to be continued each newsletter.
Thank you to Craig Poulsen for letting us use
his story.*

Thank You Shawna

After selling her business, Shawna McLaughlin will be pursuing a Masters degree in accounting and gaining some experience in auditing for a public firm. As of now she will be staying in the area. We wish her all the best of luck in the future. She has been a tremendous asset to the SVMWC.