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Board of County Commissioners of Washoe County Approves Placement of Ballot Question for Truckee River Flood Control Funding

(RENO, Nev.) – Today, the Board of County Commissioners of Washoe County approved the placement of a ballot question to increase property taxes, for registered county voters at the General Election on November 6, 2018, to help fund the Truckee River Flood Control Project. This tax measure was recommended by the Truckee River Flood Control Project Needs Committee (FCPNC), which was created by the Truckee River Flood Management Authority Board of Directors as directed by the 2017 Nevada Legislature to examine the means of funding the federally approved Flood Control Project for the Truckee River.

The tax measure voted upon today is required to meet the statutory requirements outlined in Assembly Bill 375, which stated that if the FCPNC makes a recommendation for a tax for the citizens of Washoe County, that the Board of County Commissioners 'shall' submit the question to be placed on the ballot. The FCPNC was comprised of representatives of public and private entities that were dictated by the legislation, and was tasked to analyze, consider and recommend the imposition of one or more taxes, fees, rates, charges, levies or assessments to fund the construction of the Truckee River Flood Project. The FCPNC unanimously approved submitting a property tax increase recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. If the voters do not approve the property tax increase in November, then more than \$181 million in federal funds that could help pay for the Flood Project will be in jeopardy.

The Truckee River Flood Project is a 100-year flood management project that would be designed, implemented and managed by the Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA) in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In November, the voters of Washoe County will be asked to approve a property tax increase of \$0.0248 per \$100 of assessed valuation for the purpose of funding the Truckee River Flood Project. The proposed tax per each \$100,000 of assessed value for a home is estimated at only \$8.68 per year. The assessed value of a home is determined by the Washoe County Assessor's office.

The property tax would sunset upon repayment of all bonds issued for the project, which is approximately 30 years from the date of the final bond issue.

The Washoe County Ballot Question submitted by the FCPNC reads:

Shall Washoe County be authorized to levy an additional property tax rate for the purpose of paying for the cost of designing, acquiring, constructing, improving and equipping a flood protection project by the Truckee River Flood Management Authority for the Truckee River in

the amount of \$0.0248 per \$100 of assess valuation and for the Truckee River Flood Management Authority to issue up to \$89,000,000 of general obligation bonds for those purposes? The bonds are expected to require a property tax levy of 30 years for each series of bonds from the dates of issuance. The tax will terminate when these bonds have been retired in approximately 30 years from the dates they are issued. The cost of the \$0.0248 property tax levy for the owner of a new \$100,000 home is estimated to average \$8.68 per year. If this question is approved by the voters, any property tax as authorized by this question will be outside of the caps on the taxpayer's liability for property (ad valorem) taxes established by the legislature in the 2005 session and exempt from partial abatement from taxation as provided by NRS 361.4722, 361.4723 and 361.4724.

As part of the criteria for recommending the placement of a tax proposition on the ballot, the FCPNC was also required to develop a recommendation to the TRFMA Board of Directors, comprised of elected officials from the Cities of Reno and Sparks and Washoe County, to enact a fee on properties that will directly benefit from the construction of the Flood Project. The fee that the FCPNC recommended for the TRFMA board to consider is to be an amount not less than \$3.00 per thousand square feet of developed square footage, and not more than \$8.00 per thousand square feet of developed square footage per month for properties that would directly benefit from the Flood Project. Those properties considered in these "direct benefit" areas are typically flooded in an event similar to the Flood of 1997, or which have other substantial impacts caused by flooding, such as access limitations or business interruption. The TRFMA board has the authority to impose fees to help fund the Flood Project.

If approved, the property tax funding will greatly help TRFMA to negotiate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for federal funding authorized by Congress in 2014.

The Flood Project will help protect properties that are prone to flooding along portions of the Truckee River from Booth Street downtown to the railroad bridges east of Vista Blvd. This also includes properties in the commercial area from the airport to McCarran Blvd. in Reno and commercial properties located north of the river to Interstate 80 and in some cases north of I-80 in Sparks. It also includes selected residential properties along Steamboat Creek located north of the Rosewood Lakes subdivision.

The use of the proposed tax funds is limited to Flood Project construction including:

- Engineering, design and permitting of the Truckee River Flood Project;
- Construction of levees and floodwalls along the Truckee River;
- Widening of the Truckee River Channel at the Vista Narrows;
- Terracing and environmental restoration along the Truckee River;
- Elevating homes within the home elevation project boundaries; and
- Downstream mitigation project planning, design and construction.

The proposed property tax increase, the recommended direct benefit area fee, the existing 1/8 cent sales tax (which has been funding TRFMA projects to date), and the authorized federal funding will together fund the estimated \$400 million cost of the project.

For more information on the Truckee River Flood Management Authority, please visit trfma.org. For frequently asked questions, [click here](#).

About the Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA):

The Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA) is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the Truckee River Flood Management Project. The agency is a joint powers authority created in 2011 by an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement executed among Washoe County, the City of Reno and the City of Sparks. The agency's primary mission is to plan, design, build, operate and maintain infrastructure to reduce flood damages, safeguard public health and create a more resilient community.

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