NEWS
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TRUCKEE RIVER WATER DISPUTE

RESOLVED

PYRAMID LAKE TRIBE DISMISSES LAWSUIT

Ada E. Deer, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs will represent the Department of the Interior at the signing ceremony of Truckee River Water Quality Settlement Agreement, in Reno, Nevada.

The execution of this agreement ends a long standing emotionally charged lawsuit initiated by The Pyramid Lake Tribe against the Cities of Reno, Sparks, the State of Nevada, and the EPA. This agreement establishes a joint program to improve water quality in the Truckee River through purchase and dedication of water rights and to use treatment plant effluent in place of fresh water for certain uses. For example, the metro-area governments (acting together) and with the Department of the Interior will each purchase $12 million in Truckee River water rights over five years and dedicate them to a joint program to improve water quality and instream flows in the Truckee River from Reno to Pyramid Lake. In addition, water benefits will be enhanced by storing water in federal Truckee River reservoirs so that timed releases during dry periods will improve instream flows. The agreement also improves water quality in Pyramid Lake, home of the endangered cui-ui fish. This fish has long played a significant role in the culture and subsistence of the Pyramid Lake Tribe.

"This agreement set the stage for improved relations between the Pyramid Lake Tribe and the surrounding communities, and water quality in the region will be improved," Ms. Deer said. "The direct benefits will be less pollutants in the water, recovery of endangered species and enhanced recreational opportunities. It is truly my pleasure to be involved in such an historic occasion."

The parties to the agreement are Reno, Sparks and Washoe County; Nevada Division of Environmental Protection; the Pyramid Lake Tribe, EPA, the Department of Justice and the Department of the Interior. The ceremony scheduled for October 10, 1996 will take place at 4:00 PM, at the Wingfield Park Amphitheater, Reno, Nevada.