



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 24, 2023

DATE: May 15, 2023

TO: Open Space and Regional Parks Commission

FROM: Faye-Marie Pekar, Park Planner,
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THROUGH: Eric Crump, Operations Division Director
Community Services Dept, 328-3625, ecrump@washoecounty.gov

SUBJECT: Presentation, discussion and possible recommendation to Board of County Commissioners to approve a Grant of Easement granting a permanent, non-exclusive easement (totaling ± 60 square feet) to United States Geological Survey (USGS) on APN 049-752-08 in the Southwest Truckee Meadows Planning Area, for the placement of stream gage housing instrumentation to support the existing stream gage located on Whites Creek (Commission District 2).

SUMMARY

Washoe County owns a ± 3.44 acre site (APN 049-752-08) located on Whites Creek Open Space adjacent to Painted Trail in the Southwest Truckee Meadows Planning Area. United States Geological Survey (USGS) is requesting a permanent, non-exclusive easement totaling ± 60 square feet to support the improvement of an existing stream gage formally operated by Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TWMA) on Whites Creek and accessed off Painted Trail.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic Impacts: Support a thriving community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

None

BACKGROUND

Washoe County owns certain real property, currently identified as APN 049-792-08, commonly known as Whites Creek Open Space, located adjacent to Whites Creek and Lower Whites Creek. The Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TWMA) currently operates an existing stream gage located on the right bank of Whites Creek located off Painted Trail. USGS is seeking an easement to take over operation of the existing stream gage in a joint funding agreement with TWMA so that non-biased, rigorous, and defensible water resource data can be obtained to aid in water resource management.

USGS has a proposed 1-day maintenance installation that would include the utilization of the existing staff gage to collect and provide stream-flow information. Additional proposed installation items include a small metal box housing instrumentation with two

posts. An existing pole will be utilized to minimize disturbance. The second post will be installed with a post hole digger with holes approximately 6 inches in diameter and 1 foot deep. From the gage housing, a galvanized pipe containing a pressure sensor will run on the ground surface to Whites Creek to measure readings every fifteen minutes. Piping will be staked down to prevent movement of the sensor. On the bank of Whites Creek, a staff and crest stage gage will be installed to verify operation and validity of data collected. The gaging station will be visited on a routine basis by USGS staff approximately every six weeks and as necessary during extreme conditions to service the equipment and calibrate the instrument. Should funding for the gage be discontinued, equipment will be removed from the site.

After evaluation, staff have determined that the proposed easement is consistent with the Parkland Easement Policy as is complementary with planned uses and will benefit public safety and welfare. No appraisal was required as it will not limit any future uses and the cost of conducting the appraisal would have been significantly greater than the value of the easement area itself. Additionally, this project serves a public benefit.

Photo Examples of Proposed Staff Gage:





FISCAL IMPACT

Should the easement be approved, there would be no fiscal impact to Washoe County.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve a Grant of Easement granting a permanent, non-exclusive easement (totaling ± 60 square feet) in the Southwest Truckee Meadows Planning Area, for the placement of stream gage housing instrumentation to support the existing stream gage located on Whites Creek.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Commission agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:
"Move to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve a Grant of Easement granting a permanent, non-exclusive easement (totaling ± 60 square feet) in the Southwest Truckee Meadows Planning Area, for the placement of stream gage housing instrumentation to support the existing stream gage located on Whites Creek.