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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **NOTICE OF PETITIONS FOR TEMPORARY TRANSFER AND CHANGE FILED BY WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT LICENSES 6000 AND 9407 (APPLICATIONS 2221 AND 1389) AND INVOLVING FEDERALLY ADJUDICATED RIGHTS ESTABLISHED BY THE WALKER RIVER DECREE**

On January 5, 2024, Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) filed petitions for the temporary transfer of water and change, including instream flow dedication, under Licenses 6000 (Topaz Reservoir) and 9407 (Bridgeport Reservoir) with the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) pursuant to Water Code section 1725 et seq. and section 1707.

WRID filed the petitions in order to assist with increasing the flow into Walker Lake for environmental restoration as part of the Walker River Restoration Program (Restoration Program), which was established pursuant to Public Law 111-85. The primary purpose of the Restoration Program is to restore and maintain Walker Lake, a terminal lake in Nevada, consistent with the protection of the ecological health of the Walker River and the riparian and watershed resources of the West, East, and Main Walker Rivers.

#### **Walker River Basin Stored Water Program**

WRID has an agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), predecessor of the Walker Basin Conservancy, to administer and manage the Walker River Basin Stored Water Program (Stored Water Program) in the Walker River Basin. The purpose of the Stored Water Program is to release surface water from Topaz or Bridgeport Reservoirs for instream dedication to and including Walker Lake and to obtain information to assist in the development and operation of a longer-term restoration program. The Stored Water Program water transfers were originally intended to occur during three separate years and WRID initially conducted the transfers in 2019, 2021, and 2022. Because there were additional funds available to implement the Stored Water Program following the 2022 water transfer, WRID and NFWF implemented an additional water transfer in 2023 and are now proposing another transfer in 2024.

Pursuant to the Stored Water Program, WRID transferred a total of 17,664 acre-feet (af) of water in 2019, 703 af in 2021, 2,097 af in 2022, and 25,000 af in 2023.

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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## **Current Petitions for Temporary Change and Transfer**

The purpose of the petitions is to temporarily include additional places of use and an additional purpose of use in order to transfer up to a total of 25,000 af of water for instream flow dedication. Specifically, the petitions seek to: (1) add to the existing place of use covered under License 6000 by including the West Walker River from Topaz Reservoir to the confluence of the Walker River, thence the Walker River to and encompassing Walker Lake, and add to the existing place of use covered under License 9407 by including the East Walker River from Bridgeport Reservoir to the confluence of the Walker River, thence the Walker River to and encompassing Walker Lake; and 2) add Fish and Wildlife Preservation and Enhancement as an additional purpose of use to both Licenses 6000 and 9407 for release of up to 25,000 af for instream dedication to Walker Lake involving water that was previously stored or would have otherwise been held in storage at Topaz Reservoir or Bridgeport Reservoir. The transferred water is proposed to be released from the reservoirs during the period of April 1 through October 31, which is generally the irrigation season. Temporary changes involving the transfer of water under Water Code section 1725 may be conducted for a period of up to one year and are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

### **Walker River Decree**

The proposed changes involve waters of the Walker River adjudicated by the United States District Court for the District of Nevada in the federal Walker River Decree (*United States of America v. Walker River Irrigation District*, Case In Equity, C-125). Thus, in addition to applicable California law, the change petitions will be processed in accordance with the Amended Administrative Rules and Regulations adopted by the federal district court in Case No. C-125, as amended through June 3, 1996 (Administrative Rules). The Administrative Rules generally establish procedural requirements for change applications (known as change petitions under California law) filed to change the point of diversion, manner of use, or purpose of use of waters adjudicated in the Walker River Decree. This notice, and the notice of publication that shall be published between the dates of January 16, 2024 and February 15, 2024, serve to fulfill the requirements of Article IV, Section 4.1 and 4.3 of the Administrative Rules and applicable California law.

### **Summary of Licenses 6000 and 9407 and Changes Proposed with Petitions for Temporary Transfer**

#### **Water Right License 6000 (Application 2221)**

**Source:**

West Walker River tributary to Walker River thence Walker Lake

**Point of Diversion:**

Within the SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 12, T9N, R22E, MDB&M

**Amount:**

Storage of 57,580 af per annum in Topaz Reservoir  
Maximum rate of diversion to off-stream storage of 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs)

**\* Amount Proposed to be Transferred:**

A maximum total of up to 25,000 af combined under License 6000 and License 9407  
30-day average combined release of 420 cfs under both Licenses 6000 and 9407  
Maximum instantaneous release of 750 cfs under License 6000

**Season of Diversion:**

From about October 1 of each year to about July 15 of the succeeding year

**Purposes of Use:**

Domestic and Irrigation

**\* Proposed Additional Purpose of Use During Transfer:**

Fish and Wildlife Preservation and Enhancement

**Place of Use:**

A net area of 79,174 acres within a gross area of 132,573 acres, being within the boundaries of WRID, as shown on a map filed with State Water Board

**\* Proposed Additional Place of Use During Transfer:**

West Walker River from Topaz Reservoir to the confluence of the Walker River, thence the Walker River to and encompassing Walker Lake, as shown in Exhibit C of the Petition

**\* Location of Proposed Instream Flow Dedication:**

Upstream Point of Dedication: Topaz Reservoir located within the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 12, T9N, R22E, MDB&M

Downstream Point of Dedication: The terminus of Walker River into and including Walker Lake in T9-11N, R29-30E, MDB&M

**Water Right License 9407 (Application 1389)**

**Source:**

East Walker River tributary to Walker River thence Walker Lake

**Point of Diversion:**

Bridgeport Reservoir located within the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 34, T6N, R25E, MDB&M

**Amount:**

Storage of 39,700 af per annum  
Maximum amount held in reservoir at any time of 42,500 af  
Maximum withdrawal in any one year shall not exceed 36,000 af

**\* Amount Proposed to be Transferred:**

A maximum total of up to 25,000 af combined under License 9407 and License 6000  
30-day average combined release of 420 cfs under both Licenses 9407 and 6000  
Maximum instantaneous release of 550 cfs under License 9407

**Season of Diversion:**

From about September 1 of each year to about July 20 of the succeeding year

**Purposes of Use:**

Irrigation and Recreational

**\* Proposed Additional Purpose of Use During Transfer:**

Fish and Wildlife Preservation and Enhancement

**Place of Use:**

A net area of 52,062 acres net within the gross area of WRID, as shown on a map filed with the State Water Board

**\* Proposed Additional Place of Use During Transfer:**

East Walker River from Bridgeport Reservoir to the confluence of the Walker River, thence the Walker River to and encompassing Walker Lake, as shown in Exhibit C of the Petition

**\* Location of Proposed Instream Flow Dedication:**

Upstream Point of Dedication: Bridgeport Reservoir located within the SE¼ of NE¼ of Section 34, T6N, R25E, MDB&M

Downstream Point of Dedication: The terminus of Walker River into and including Walker Lake in T9-11N, R29-30E, MDB&M

**Procedure for Submitting Comments**

Pursuant to California Water Code section 1726, subdivision (f), and unless otherwise expressly provided under the Administrative Rules, any interested person may file a comment regarding the petitions. **Comments must be received by the Division of Water Rights by 4:30 p.m. on February 15, 2024. The State Water Board requests that a copy be provided to the petitioner at the following addresses:**

1) Walker River Irrigation District, c/o Angela Bezzone, MBK Engineers, 455 University Ave., Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95825, or by email at [bezzone@mbkengineers.com](mailto:bezzone@mbkengineers.com); and 2) Bert Bryan, Walker River Irrigation District, P.O. Box 820, Yerington, NV 89447, or by email at [bert@wrid.us](mailto:bert@wrid.us).

Electronic copies of the petitions are available on WRID's website at:

<http://www.wrid.us/WRID/News>

### **Contact Information**

Copies of the petitions and related documentation, including maps, are available upon request. Please direct all requests and questions regarding this notice to Arvin Chi by e-mail at [arvin.chi@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:arvin.chi@waterboards.ca.gov). Written correspondences or inquiries should be addressed as follows: State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights, Attn: Arvin Chi, P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000.

**Date of Notice:** January 16, 2024