

Gaining water and northern Nevada's road toward recovery

By Cassie Wilson Monday, July 11th 2016



RENO, Nev. (News 4 & Fox 11) — Around this time last summer, the region was already out of water and had been pulling from drought reserves for three months.

Drought reserves for northern Nevada include Boca, Stampede, and Prosser Reservoirs, which can feed the Truckee River.

The delicate balance of water supply and demand is closely watched by U.S. District Court Water Master Chad Blanchard.

Blanchard said we started dipping into drought reserves in late June this year in order to meet industrial use and agriculture demand, much later in the summer than previous years:

"We had run out of floriston rate water, or basically storage to meet our required flow early in the year last year, earlier than ever. It was in April, so we were significantly down. And we are doing quite a bit better this year; we still aren't great. But we are definitely much better than."

TMWA added that we have not started using drought reserves for residential use, which is something they are very proud of.

As of July 1, here are where things stand:

- Lake Tahoe: 16% capacity vs. 0% capacity in 2015
- Boca Reservoir: 74% of capacity vs. 14% of capacity in 2015
- Stampede Reservoir: 45% of capacity vs. 16% of capacity in 2015
- Prossier Reservoir: 68% of capacity vs. 26% of capacity in 2015

Significantly better -- not full, but we're happy to have it. Blanchard also explained there's enough water to last into the fall:

We have target flows that we have to meet year round which supply agriculture, municipal, and power generation demands. And those supplies should be able to hold up until September. Last year again, they were out in April. So it's not going to be a full year but it's going to be dramatically better than we've seen."