

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council

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WATER TEAM MEETING MINUTES

Tribal Chambers ~ Nixon, NV

February 18, 2026, WTM

Members Present:

Steven Wadsworth, Tribal Chairman
Nicholas Cortez, Councilmember
Judith Davis, Councilmember
Loren Decker, Councilmember
Nathan Dunn, Councilmember

Edward Ely III, Vice Chairman
John Guerrero, Councilmember
Della John, Councilmember
Ceira Sampson, Councilmember
Georgina Wadsworth, Councilmember

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wadsworth called the February 18, 2026, Water Team meeting of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Brenda A. Henry, Tribal Council Secretary, took roll call. All Councilmembers were present at roll call, and a quorum was established for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Wadsworth presented the agenda.

Councilmember Cortez motioned to *approve the agenda for the February 18, 2026, Water Team meeting*. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED**

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were listed under the Consent Agenda:

1. Approval Kemp Jones LLP January 2026 Invoice which includes:
 - a. Tribal Attorney Contract
 - b. Atrium Apartments Attorney Contract
2. Approval Stetson Engineers Inc Invoices:
 - a. Professional Services #1336-2512
 - b. Numana Dam Fish Passage Project #2751-047
 - c. Indian Ditch Fish Screen Project #2958-005

Councilmember Cortez motioned to *approve the Consent Agenda*. Councilmember Dunn seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED**

NATURAL RESOURCES. Donna Noel, Natural Resources (NR) Director

1. Request for Approval of Inter-Disciplinary Team (IDT) Requests. Donna Noel, NR Director

a. Approval “Explore on the Fly” YouTube Film Request with use of a personal drone. Michael Smith

Mr. Smith said he has a planned trip to Pyramid Lake at the end of March. He has a small YouTube channel with sixty-two followers. His channel is mostly to show his fishing adventures which he goes on in Colorado. He mostly fishes in alpine lakes, all catch and release. He is requesting to film a 15–30-minute episode, he uses a handheld GoPro camera attached to his chest and will be purchasing a self-flying drone that goes 1,000 feet in the air and it follows and stays close to him. The Tribe has a great resource in the lake, and he read about the 1972 Supreme Court case over water rights and would like to share that history in his video to let people know about how this resource has been protected.

Councilmember Dunn said he would like to emphasize the use of the drone, that it was approved by the Council since not everyone gets approved to use drones. Mr. Smith agreed that he will specify on the video that he received approval to use a drone from the Tribal Council. He will also be emphasizing the importance of cleaning boots and waders to keep invasive species out of the lake.

Councilmember John wanted to ensure he filmed in the open areas where the fisherman can access since there are closed restricted areas, they don’t want people to get the impression the whole lake is open to the public. Mr. Smith said he will only be accessing the public areas.

Councilmember Cortez asked if the IDT specified the payment of permits and fees. Mr. Smith said he agreed to pay the fees and permits.

Councilmember John asked what he understood about drone usage. Mr. Smith said he was told it might not be possible, but it was a part of the process and to ask the Council for permission. He would love to use a drone but understands if that is not approved.

Vice Chairman asked if he would be using this as a promotion, for profit or a movie. Mr. Smith said he has sixty-two followers at this point. Profit is not his motivation since he enjoys fishing and being in the wilderness, he just wants to share with people what inspires him.

Chairman Wadsworth explained the fees, which is online with the application.

Councilmember Decker motioned to *approve the film permit request with the use of a personal drone.* Councilmember Dunn seconded the motion.

Councilmember Davis asked for more clarification on the drone, how close would it be to him. Mr. Smith said he hasn’t purchased the drone yet but it’s available at Costco. It doesn’t get more than sixty feet from him, it can go around him in a circular motion with a height around thirty feet, it won’t be very far or high from him. His plan is to not fish all day with the drone but to get a few shots then continue with his GoPro

which would be mounted on his chest. Chairman Wadsworth added with the FAA regulations, this type of drone depends on the size of the drone on whether you would need a FAA license to pilot it and with it being sold at Costco it doesn't meet those requirements.

Votes were eight (8) for and one (1) opposed (John) with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED.**

b. Approval "Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful" request to volunteer for the July 4, 2026, Cleanup at Pyramid Lake. *Dehan Dominguez, Natural Resources, Environmental Assistant*

Ms. Dominguez explained she is a board member of Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful, and received approval to be a board member from a previous Council. She is asking for permission to invite the group to assist with the Fourth of July clean-up. They will be cleaning the beaches between July 7th or 8th, this event will also include the Enterprise and Tribal employees. This event will be from 9am-12pm for the cleanup of the five beaches that allow fireworks. Afterwards they will have a BBQ. She is also asking to waive 10-15 permits for the volunteers so they can enjoy the rest of the day at the lake.

Councilmember Davis motioned to *approve the request for "Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful" to volunteer for the July 4, 2026, Lake Cleanup and to waive Day-Use fees with no limit on the volunteers to spend the remainder of the day at the Lake. Ms. Dominguez will provide a confirmed date to the Tribal Secretary.* Vice Chairman Ely seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED**

2. Request for Approval to submit a proposal for the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Clean Air Act Section 103 Grant with Resolution. *Tanda Roberts, Air Quality Specialist*

Ms. Roberts explained this USEPA funding announcement for FY27, for \$172,168 for the development of Tribal Air Program for work to be done in FY27 between October 1, 2026, and September 30, 2027. She is requesting approval to submit a grant proposal that will begin the negotiation process with the USEPA, starting on February 23rd with funding decisions announced in May or June of this year. The grant covers 100% of indirect costs and does not require a cash match.

Councilmember Cortez motioned to *approve the request to submit a proposal for the EPA Clean Air Action Section 103 Grant with resolution.* Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION NO.: 014-26 EPA CLEAN AIR ACT SECTION 103 GRANT**

3. Request for Approval to submit for the FY26 Wildlife Management Institute, White-nose Syndrome Small Grants Program with Resolution. *Emily Lamb, Natural Resources Department*

Ms. Lamb explained that the Natural Resources Department currently does White Nose surveillance under a US Fish and Wildlife Service grant that is currently tied up in the federal process. This small grant program is to supplement the bat monitoring program in the interim and is primarily funding new monitoring equipment and the source of acoustic detectors along with staff training. Costs will cover staff hours as well as training. The total amount of this grant is \$13,184 with no tribal match. The deadline to submit has been

extended to March 2nd to accommodate the Council approval process because the initial deadline was only three weeks.

Councilmember Dunn motioned to *approve submission of the FY26 Wildlife Management Institute, White-nose Syndrome Small Grants Program with resolution*. Vice Chairman Ely seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED. RESOLUTION NO.: PL 015-26 FY26 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM**

3. Request for Approval to Change Tribal Funding name from Attorney Fee to Water Team Funding. *Donna Noel, Natural Resources Director*

Ms. Noel explained her Attorney Fee Fund pays for both Kemp Jones LLP, the water attorney and Stetson's Engineers Inc, the water engineers depending on which one is short for the year. For example, she received an additional \$65,000 and \$100,000 for attorney fees which will get them through next year but then they also were cut \$100,000 from their water 638 grant. So, this year she was planning to split it to get through the year for both the water attorney and water engineer. Instead of being the Attorney Fee Fund it would be the Water Team Funding to accommodate both the water attorney and water engineer. The Tribe provides \$278,000 but she ensures she uses the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funding before she uses tribal funds. There would be only these two-line items, depending on how much funds she gets from BIA. For the attorney fees, it would be per the \$200 per hour out of BIA funds and the rest out of tribal funds.

Councilmember Cortez said with these being line items, is it possible to change the line-item name without it affecting any other programs. Chairman Wadsworth explained it was not the line-item name; it's the funding name because the funding is specifically "attorneys."

Councilmember Cortez motioned to *approve the name change from Attorney Fees to Water Team Funding*. Councilmember Wadsworth seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions. **MOTION PASSED.**

WATER TEAM

1. Kemp Jones, LLP. *Chris Mixson, Kemp Jones LLP Law Firm*

TROA Navy Water Litigation. This is where the Tribe agreed to split the Navy water 80% to benefit Pyramid Lake and 20% to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. This Settlement Agreement is to resolve the Tribe's lawsuit against the Department of Interior and is pretty much completed, they are just waiting on the Federal team to prepare a water rights map to attach to the Settlement Agreement that will split the water rights 80% to benefit Pyramid Lake and 20% for the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. They went through mapping processes at the end of last year with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the Water Team and with Allan Richard's assistance, they went as far as they could go. The records of the water rights mapping are held by TCID, and the Tribe doesn't have access to it but BOR does, so they've asked them to prepare the maps to be attached to the Settlement Agreement which they are waiting for them to provide to the Water Team. Once they get that they will be ready to bring it to the Council for formal approval of the settlement.

CEMEX. Mr. Mixson provided a resolution with an amendment to the CEMEX lease which is for a small expansion of the lease area, so CEMEX can achieve the three-to-one slope on these pit walls in the southern Area A Pit. In the southern pond or southern pit, this area was already mined before CEMEX took over the lease but they used it as a settling pond from when they were dewatering the north pit, they would pump the water into the south pit so the settlement could settle out and then it would enter a ditch and drain off into the river. They never mined the south pond and felt they didn't have to do any reclamation in that area pond because they didn't do any mining. He told them they wouldn't be so lucky and that the pit walls were too steep in the south pond and they needed to get them to a three to one slope. To do that they will need to lay back the berms on the top in this area that is shown on the map. He let them know the lease would need to be amended for going outside the boundary of the lease.

Councilmember Guerrero motioned to approve the second amendment to Mineral Materials Lease solely for purposes of completing repair and reclamation of the southern pit lake in Area A of the mine. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. Votes were nine (9) for and zero (0) opposed with zero (0) abstentions.

MOTION PASSED.

TROA JOINT PROGRAM FISH CREDIT WATER. Mr. Mixson explained they have been working with the State of California for some time now to complete a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State to put additional sideboards on the management of the Joint Program Fish Credit Water and those sideboards are in addition to what is already in TROA because they had a dispute with the State of California about how they were managing the water. The MOU is done and the State of California, for whatever reason, took a long time to get their informal approval. They are in a holding pattern waiting for the State of California to give them approval to bring to the Council but because it implicates TROA, they also want to take the draft to the Federal Water Master to make sure he understands what the Tribe is proposing and doesn't have any concerns. He doesn't want to bring it to the Council first and then have the Federal Water Master come back and say he had concerns with it. To bring the State of California to the table to have discussions on this MOU, the Water Team stopped establishing fish credit water which means that California didn't get any Joint Program Fish Credit Water. They are in their second or third year of doing this. Stetson ran some analysis and due to hydrologic conditions this year, there wouldn't have been much, if any, fish credit water established and they decided to not continue doing that because it wasn't going to impact the amount of water stored by the Tribe in those reservoirs. He did hear from Ms. Noel that the State of California is agitated because they don't have any Joint Program Fish Credit Water of their own but that is an incentive for them to get this MOU completed.

ATRIUM APARTMENTS. The Tribe's lawsuit was filed on December 12, 2025, summons was issued on January 21, 2026, and the defendants were served. The landowner, SWD-Quarry-Atrium LLC was served on January 26, 2026, but before they could serve Silver Wing Development, their attorney reached out to them and said they will waive formal service. This is a document they prepare and file where they agree they are aware of the lawsuit and receive a copy of the complaint, by doing this they received an automatic extension to file an answer, and their answer is due March 24th. SWD -Quarry-Atrium LLC, which is the corporate owner of the land, but not the developer and owner of the apartment complex, their answer was due this past Monday on President's Day and they received an automatic extension to Tuesday to file their

answer. On Tuesday, their lawyer called and said they wanted an extension also and he thinks they can file within four or five days. They agreed to the extension of March 3rd for them. For the Council's information, extensions to file answers to the complaint or anything else is routinely provided to each other and doesn't have any effect on the lawsuit. Once they file, it will either be an answer or a motion to dismiss but they won't know until they file it. That will be an update on his next report.

Mr. Mixson said he has been asking the Nevada Department of Protection for a status of the administration action against the City of Sparks for Sparks failure to notify anyone about the sewage discharge, but they haven't been responsive so far this year, which is interesting because they were very responsive on this issue until recently but they will keep trying to get a response. Sparks is fighting, saying they don't think they had an obligation to notify anybody.

FERNLEY AND STIX 9TH CIRCUIT APPEAL OF TRUCKEE CANAL REPAIR (XM) EIS. The Nine Circuit is still trying to schedule oral arguments and every day they propose dates to the attorneys, either the Department of Justice (DOJ) or David Stix who has not been available on the proposed dates, so they keep pushing the date out. His guess is the Ninth Circuit is getting tired of trying to work with the lawyers to set a date and they will just pick one of their own and tell everyone they must be there. It's looking like it may be early Summer, May or June. This is the appeal of the lining project, but the canal is already lined, and he doesn't understand why this case is still alive but that's Fernley.

RECOUPMENT CASE. Mr. Mixson reported the previous month that TCID had filed another recoupment repayment request for a one-month canal shutdown when they did some maintenance in November and December 2025. They have not been able to sit down with the DOJ and BOR yet to discuss those repayment requests but it's on the agenda for the coming month. There will be more activity in the recruitment case over the course of the year because they now have two or three outstanding requests by TCID for repayment. Those eventually will have to go to the court for resolutions.

2. Stetson Engineers Inc. Allan Richards, Stetson Engineers Inc.

Mr. Richard's report covers the month of January 2026 but in the interest of time, he will focus his report on providing an update on CEMEX's work repairing the west wall of the Paiute Pit Lake A and provide a brief on hydrology in this recent storm event.

CEMEX. Mr. Richards provided a map of the northern part of Lake A showing the above ground and below water topography. The design plan for the underwater rock placement on the west wall of the Lake will include about 231,000 cubic yards of rock in total for the design plan. In the most recent bathymetric survey or underwater survey they conducted, it shows the progress of their work so far, placing rock on and in the water along the west wall. As of February 2nd, when they started pushing rock into the lake to create a slope which doesn't meet the three to one grade because they are allowing it to settle naturally. There is a conveyor which is about one hundred feet out into the lake and will have to be filed with the conveyor which they just set up and started using a week ago. They have quite a bit of rock to place out on the lake to achieve the underwater three to one slope moving further south. They have placed a little over two-thirds of that total volume of rock to date and now they are at a point where they need to use the floating conveyor system to get the rock out to where the underwater toe of the three to one slope starts. A

picture of the floating pontoon conveyor belt was shown to the Council depicting how the rock is conveyed out to the middle of the lake and dropped into the water. CEMEX is making good progress, he remembers when they first started talking about this process, they said it would take them three to five years to be finished but he thinks they might be finished in the middle of this year with the northern part of Lake A. They made faster progress than they were anticipating.

Mr. Richards moved on to hydrology, according to the Mount Rose snow report, they've had between 25 and 30 inches of snowfall over the past 24-hour period, which is a good snowfall for Mount Rose and the Nevada side of the Sierras. There are two more ranges of precipitation forecasted in the next six days for the Reno area. The cumulative precipitation for this water year through February 18th is 110% of median. The snow water equivalent is 75% which means the snowfall is more or less average, but the water content of that snowpack is only 75%. Typically, the snow water equivalent within the snow is lower with colder powdery type snowfall events. So, the snowpack is above average, and the snow water equivalent within that snowpack is below average. It was 75% in the Truckee River at Nixon, about 185 cubic feet per second. Stampede Reservoir is about 177,000-acre feet, which is about 80% of capacity. Capacity is 226,500-acre feet, so Stampede Reservoir is at about 80% capacity and filling at a rate of about 300-acre feet per day currently.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Tribal Council, Councilmember Cortez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Dunn. Votes taken were all in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Submitted by,



Brenda A. Henry
Tribal Council Secretary

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing minutes were adopted by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council, governing body of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, at a meeting duly held on the 20th day of May 2026, having eight (8) members present, constituting a quorum, by the vote of seven (7) FOR and zero (0) OPPOSED, with zero (0) ABSTENTIONS.

Minutes attested and concurred by: 
Steven Wadsworth, Tribal Chairman
Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council

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