To: andrew_lingenfelter@heller.senate.gov[andrew_lingenfelter@heller.senate.gov]; Ashley Jonkey (ashley_jonkey@heller.senate.gov)[ashley_jonkey@heller.senate.gov]; jack_finn@heller.senate.gov[jack_finn@heller.senate.gov]; (jeremy_harrell@heller.senate.gov)[jeremy_harrell@heller.senate.gov]; Sarah Paul (sarah_paul@heller.senate.gov)[sarah_paul@heller.senate.gov]; Stephen Sifuentes (Stephen_sifuentes@heller.senate.gov)[Stephen_sifuentes@heller.senate.gov]; alexander_mcdonough@reid.senate.gov[alexander_mcdonough@reid.senate.gov]; jason_unger@reid.senate.gov[jason_unger@reid.senate.gov]; kristen_orthman@reid.senate.gov[kristen_orthman@reid.senate.gov]; lucas_ingvoldstad@reid.senate.gov[lucas_ingvoldstad@reid.senate.gov]; mary_conelly@reid.senate.gov[mary_conelly@reid.senate.gov]; ryan_mulvenon@reid.senate.gov[ryan_mulvenon@reid.senate.gov]; sara_moffat@reid.senate.gov[sara_moffat@reid.senate.gov]; Shannon Raborn (shannon_raborn@reid.senate.gov)[shannon_raborn@reid.senate.gov]; yolanda_garcia-banuelos@reid.senate.gov[yolanda_garcia-banuelos@reid.senate.gov]; Jacob Fullmer (jacob.fullmer@mail.house.gov)[jacob.fullmer@mail.house.gov]; Kent Alexander (Kent.Alexander@mail.house.gov)[Kent.Alexander@mail.house.gov]; Kyle Lykins (kyle.lykins@mail.house.gov)[kyle.lykins@mail.house.gov]; Robert Yavor (robert.yavor@mail.house.gov)[robert.yavor@mail.house.gov]; Sonia Joya (sonia.joya@mail.house.gov)[sonia.joya@mail.house.gov]
Cc: PerezSullivan, Margot[PerezSullivan.Margot@epa.gov]; Angeles, Danielle[Angeles.Danielle@epa.gov]; Louis, Gail[Louis.Gail@epa.gov]; Keener, Bill[Keener.Bill@epa.gov]; Amato, Paul[Amato.Paul@epa.gov]; Wampler, David[Wampler.David@epa.gov]; Engelman, Alexa[ENGELMAN.ALEXA@EPA.GOV]; Kaiser, Sven-Erik[Kaiser.Sven-Erik@epa.gov]
From: Maier, Brent
Sent: Wed 3/2/2016 6:14:16 PM
Subject: U.S. EPA Press Release: Walker River Paiutes to develop tribal water quality standards

Dear Colleagues:

The following press release is being issued today by the EPA Region IX press office. If you have questions or need any additional information, please give me a call.

Regards,

Brent Maier

Congressional Liaison
Telephone: 415.947.4256

EPA Environmental News

For Immediate Release: March 2, 2016

Media Contact: Margot Perez-Sullivan, 415-947-4149, perez-sullivan.margot@epa.gov

Walker River Paiutes to develop tribal water quality standards

Tribe receives "Treatment in a similar manner as a State" from EPA

SAN FRANCISCO – Today, the U.S. EPA announced the approval of the Walker River Paiute Tribe's application for "Treatment in a similar manner as a State" under Sections 303 and 401 of the Clean Water Act. Jared Blumenfeld, EPA's Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest, presented the signed Certificate of Achievement in a meeting with the Tribal Chairman, Bobby Sanchez, at the Walker River Paiute Tribe Administration Building in Shurz, Nev.

"I am pleased to announce that the Walker River Paiute's will now exercise their own authority under the Clean Water Act," said Mr. Blumenfeld, EPA's Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. "The waters on this land are integral to the tribe's health and culture."

The EPA's decision promotes tribal self-government, empowering the Tribe to develop water quality standards and to issue water quality certifications of federal actions on their lands in order to protect Tribal waters, which include the Walker River, Weber Reservoir and the confluence with Walker Lake. Walker River will be the second tribe in Nevada to gain this authority.

The Walker River Paiute Tribe can now develop and submit to EPA water quality standards for their waters within the Tribe's reservation, similar to the process used by States. After the tribe develops and EPA approves the standards, the Walker Paiute Tribe will administer surface water quality standards, building upon existing successful environmental programs run by the Walker River Environmental Department.

The Walker River Paiute Reservation is located within three counties in rural

Midwestern Nevada about 100 miles southeast of Reno. The land base consists of about 325,000 acres in a river valley, mostly used for grazing and ranching. The Reservation encompasses a high desert land base and is surrounded by mountains, desert lakes, and wetlands.

For more information on "Treatment in a similar manner as a State," and for a list of tribes with the same designation, please visit: http://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/epa-approvals-tribal-water-quality-standards

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Brent Maier

Congressional Liaison

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX

75 Hawthorne St. (OPA-3)

San Francisco, CA 94105

Ph: 415.947.4256