

Natural Resources & Environment

Facts & Trends

- Lyon County contains two major rivers: the Carson and the Walker Rivers.
- The river valleys are surrounded by mountains and hills that are mostly public lands, such as the Wassuk Range to the east, the Pine Nut Mountains and the Pine Grove Hills.
- Lyon County does not contain threatened and endangered wildlife or plant species, according to Nevada Natural Heritage maps; however, the County contains abundant wildlife important for viewing and/or hunting.
- The County is seeing increased pressure on its water resources as development occurs.



Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

Facts & Trends

- Most of the County's developed parks and playgrounds are in the incorporated cities - Yerington and Fernley.
- Lyon County maintains 12 developed park sites in five communities in the Central part of the County.
- Future parks will be in Dayton and Silver Springs. New parks will be needed to serve new development.
- The County has some trail segments in place (primarily in Central Lyon County) but no overall trails plan or mechanisms in place for buying or building trails.



Issues

What do You Think?
(Please fill in a comment form)

1 Floodplain and Riparian Area Conservation

Lyon County is fortunate to include two major rivers within its boundaries (Carson and Walker Rivers), as well as irrigation canals and ditches. Conserving these waterways and the surrounding floodplains is key for the County and its communities to protect residents and property from flood hazards, as well as retaining the valuable wildlife habitat and natural water filtration associated with riparian areas. Another key issue is the protection of irrigation ditches and canals so that they can continue to serve their important role in agricultural water supply.

2 Domestic Well Water Quantity and Quality

Outside of municipal service areas that are served by central water systems (e.g., Mound House, Dayton, Stagecoach, Silver Springs and Yerington), most all areas of the County rely on individual wells and septic systems. This raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of the County's water resources to meet resident's needs and how to mitigate the impact of septic systems on groundwater quality. The Plan will also need to coordinate with the Nevada Division of Water Resources and Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP).

3 Wildlife Habitat Protection

Residents and visitors alike value the wildlife resources found throughout the County, whether simply for viewing and enjoyment or for hunting. An example of wildlife resources commonly valued by County residents are the wild horses. Recognizing that important wildlife resources and areas have not been identified, the Plan will need to address (a) how to identify important resources, (b) how growth might affect these resources in the County, and (c) whether and how they might be protected for the future.

4 Address Wildfire Interface

Many areas of the County are adjacent to public lands, forest and range areas, and undeveloped lands that are subject to naturally occurring wildfire activity. The Plan will need to address how development occurring in these interface areas can be carefully planned to minimize risks from wildfires.

5 Address Air Quality

Strong winds can pick up dust and wreak havoc on air quality due to land disturbance, playas and development. In arid Lyon County, dust is becoming more of a problem. Along with the new growth of housing and commuters vehicle miles traveled has increased, contributing to potentially diminishing air quality. The plan should address air quality conditions including dust and vehicle emissions.

6 Federal Agency Oversight

Federal agencies manage almost 70 percent of the land in Lyon County (including the Bureau of Land Management (B.L.M.), U.S. Forest Service (U.S.F.S), and Bureau of Reclamation). It will be important for the Plan to address coordination with these agencies, and with their plans and activities that affect Lyon County.

7 Sustainable Water Supply

The County is seeing increased pressure on its water resources as development occurs, water values go up, water rights are lost or their use is changed, and with continuing pressures on water around the west. What are long-term implications of removing water rights from the land? Does it affect the aquifer replenishment? How does it affect agricultural operations and domestic use? This plan should address the issues of water rights reductions, changes in use of water rights, and talking water out of the area.

Issues

What do You Think?
(Please fill in a comment form)

1 Protection and Provision of Recreation Amenities

Lyon County contains a number of outdoor recreation amenities. These include, but are not limited to such areas as the Lahontan Reservoir, Fort Churchill State Historic Park, Dayton State Park, Carson and Walker Rivers, public lands and Wilson Canyon. Many of these are State Recreation Areas. Working with State, federal and other agencies to maintain these amenities and the access to them will be important for the Plan to address.

2 Ability to Meet Future Parks and Recreation Facility Needs

As Lyon County continues to grow over the coming decades, maintaining the quality of life will require additional park facilities, both parks within neighborhoods and larger parks to serve community-wide needs (ball fields, passive parks, etc.). There is a sense in the County that rapidly-growing areas may already be underserved, leading to increased pressure on existing facilities and demand for new facilities in the future. The Plan needs to identify requirements and mechanisms for meeting both current and future recreation demands, and determine how the County will maintain existing facilities as well as meet the needs of the future.

3 Need for a County-Wide Trails System

The County has some elements of a trails system in place primarily in Central Lyon County along the Carson River Corridor. However, it has no overall trails plan nor are mechanisms in place to complete a system. Also, a number of agencies play a role in the provision of trails, locally and regionally, but little coordination has occurred. The Master Plan is an appropriate vehicle to establish the basis for the County's trails efforts and to coordinate those efforts with other agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, and the public to develop a recreational trails system connecting communities and amenities within the County. The effort should consider the complete range of users, including hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use, as well as motorized off-road users.

4 Retention of Public Lands Access

Many areas of the County are bordered by public lands that have been used historically by residents for recreation as well as resource extraction, and/or grazing. As development continues to occur, a number of issues will need to be addressed during the planning process, including appropriate uses on public lands, location of access roads and historic access points, and opportunities for expanded public use for recreation (both motorized and non-motorized). Impacts of grazing activities may also need to be considered.

5 Retention of Open Space, Viewscapes, Hillsides and Foothills

Much of the developing areas of the County are bordered by open views of undeveloped lands, hillsides and foothills that have historically provided a sense of place and beauty for residents. As development continues to occur, the open vistas and lands, both within and adjacent to communities, will diminish. A number of issues will need to be addressed during the planning process, including appropriate amounts and locations of open space, appropriate uses and development controls on hillsides and foothills, and opportunities for retaining viewscapes.

What do You Think?
Please provide comments
today and throughout the
planning process!