



**TULARE BASIN WILDLIFE PARTNERS**  
Creating Opportunities for Nature and People



*“Water links us to our neighbor in a way more profound and complex than any other.” - John Thorson*

# Annual Report for 2014-2015

# 2014-2015 Accomplishments and Activities

## 1. Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative (TBWI)

In May of 2011, the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners received a three-year grant for \$300,000 from the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Statewide Watershed Program (previously, the CALFED Bay-Delta Watershed Program) to advance sustainable watershed-based integrated resource management. TBWP launched the Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative (TBWI), with a goal to create a healthy regional watershed with ecologically functional waterways, wetlands, and uplands that provide abundant clean water for both people and wildlife.

In May of 2014, TBWP received a 6-month extension of the DOC grant to focus on regional drought response efforts. **The final report to the Department of Conservation can be accessed [here](#), and the 14 quarterly reports can be accessed [here](#).** TBWP continues to advance the work of the TBWI, through other partnerships, namely Southern California Edison.

Some of TBWI's accomplishments include:

- » Leveraged \$906,440 in new funds over the 3½ year grant period.
- » Developed a Scope of Work (SOW) for the proposed Liberty Ranch Climate Adaptation Project and submitted it to DWR.
- » Engaged the Kern County Semitropic Water Storage District (SWSD) in a project on a 400-acre SWSD groundwater storage parcel with alkali scrub habitat restoration/San Joaquin Valley kit fox habitat enhancement potential.
- » Launched the Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Workgroup a multi-agency, intra-regional and inter-jurisdictional collaboration.
- » Assisted with the review of drought-related projects in preparation for submission for DWR Drought Implementation grant program through the IRWMs this summer.
- » Launched the Rural Communities Resource Center (RCRC), an online tool that features news, grant opportunities, events, resources and other information for small, rural, and disadvantaged communities in the Tulare Basin.



## 2. Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Workgroup (WCW)

TBWP launched the Tulare Basin Watershed Connections Workgroup in 2014 as an evolution of its decade-running Tulare Lake Basin Working Group. Both groups work off a collaborative model that brings together agencies, non-profits, and stakeholders for intra-regional and inter-jurisdictional collaboration. Whereas the predecessor group focused on enhancing wildlife habitat, the new WCW group has a more holistic approach to problem-solving on a watershed level, connecting upper and lower watershed planning. Michelle Selmon, DWR Climate Change Specialist, is serving as the group's coordinator. **[Click here to learn more.](#)**

**Watershed Connections Workgroup has a mission to:**

*Advance collaborative watershed planning and resource management in Tulare Basin based on sound science and mutually identified needs for regional economic and ecological sustainability.*

# 2014-2015 Accomplishments and Activities, cont.

## 3. Rural Communities

TBWP continues to engage youth and families in underserved, rural communities to raise awareness about native habitat and wildlife in the Tulare Basin watershed. The Wildlife Partners participated in the coordination of several events in Alpaugh and Allensworth during 2014 and 2015, including the annual Summer Night Lights events, Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park's rededication, and Allensworth's annual Juneteenth celebration. TBWP also co-hosted a Community Nature Fiesta with BLM-Atwell to celebrate their respective anniversaries (ten and fifteen years). The event convened families to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the Tulare Lake Basin, strengthened ties between the two communities, and recognized the service of outstanding environmental leaders in the region.

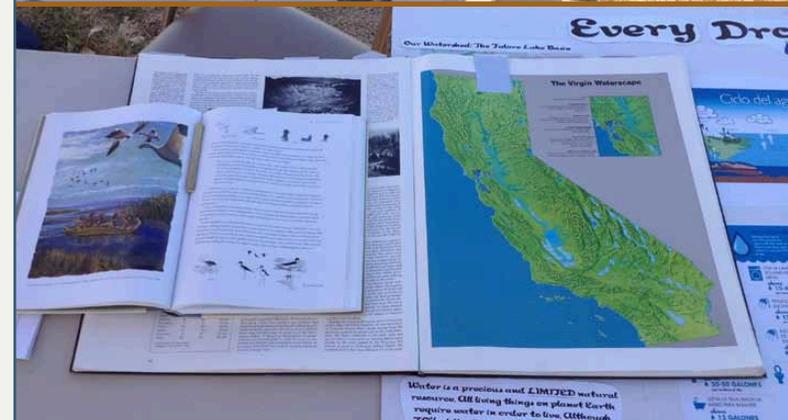
The Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative's Rural Communities Resource Center (RCRC) continues to offer Valley organizations, agencies, and communities an online resource to stay current on water-related news specific to Tulare Basin's underserved, rural communities. The RCRC also keeps an updated list of grant opportunities to fund solutions addressing specific needs of our underserved, rural communities. [Visit the RCRC.](#)

## 4. Land Use and Natural Resource Integration

In 2014, TBWP/TBWI launched the Land Use and Natural Resource Integration (LUNRI) program – funded by the Central Valley Community Foundation (formerly the Fresno Regional Foundation). LUNRI was designed to provide county planners and decision-makers with guidelines to make sustainable, long-term land use choices that strike a balance between growth and protecting the natural resources upon which we all depend. The project focused on natural resource conservation and restoration in the non-urban areas of the Tulare Basin in Fresno, Tulare, and Kings Counties.

Through the LUNRI effort, the Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners (TBWP) developed seven land use recommendations and guidelines: 1) Protect and conserve prime farmland, 2) Protect ecologically sensitive areas that provide groundwater recharge, storm water management, habitat, and recreation, 3) Protect watershed function and linkages between the mountains, foothills and valley floor, 4) Protect local groundwater, 5) Engage in regional resource management and planning efforts, 6) Provide incentives for the protection/conservation of sensitive species habitat on public and private land, 7) Develop a tool to inform development through early engagement rather than wait for a CEQA document that approves projects "after-the-fact."

[Click here to learn more.](#)



# 2014-2015 Accomplishments and Activities, cont.

## 5. Climate Adaptation Project List

The Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners has developed a list of recommended project concepts for implementation over the next ten to twenty years based on input from the Tulare (Lake) Basin Working Group, the four conservation plans, the Water Report, findings from the Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan 2006 Update, and the Tulare Basin Watershed Initiative (TBWI).

In September of 2015, the Wildlife Partners released a project list that advances its highest recommendations for projects addressing climate change adaptation needs in the Tulare Basin watershed. These project concepts are suitable for funding and implementation through a wide array of federal, state and private sources.

Criteria used to select the proposed projects include: wildlife value, water management, connectivity, availability of funding, and the availability of willing landowners, and of course, a strong climate change adaptation strategy. Projects are grouped by watershed and include a brief description of the project, watershed benefits, estimated funding needs, and partners.

[Click here to view project list.](#)

## 6. One Watershed

In 2015, TBWP launched a project to educate and advocate for resource sustainability in the Tulare Basin watershed. To that end, we received a grant from the Central Valley Community Foundation (formerly the Fresno Regional Foundation) to write eight articles focused on different topics clearly united by a watershed theme. We named the series, "One Watershed," with a mission to raise awareness about the Tulare Lake Watershed and its unique attributes, challenges, and opportunities.



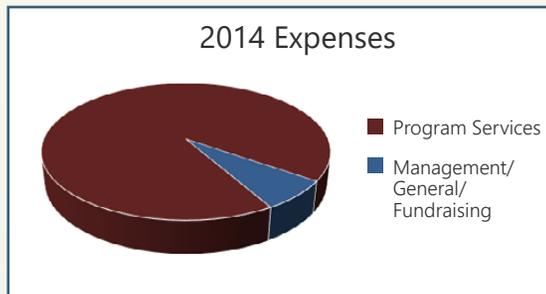
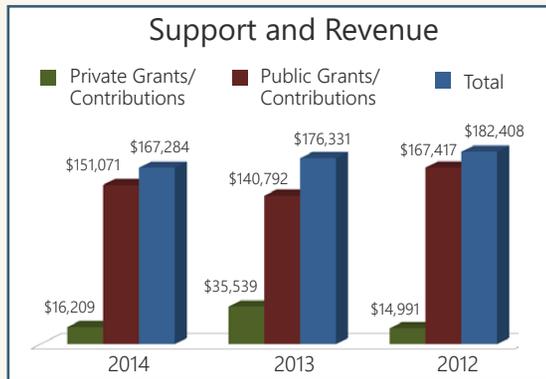
***From the snowy peaks to the valley floor, we are one watershed.***

Article topics included – OW#1: Watershed 101, OW#2: Making Sense of Water, OW#3: Groundwater Management, OW#4: Native Lands, OW#5: Climate Impacts on Drought and Fire, OW#6: Forest Health and Its Impacts Downstream, OW#7: History of Floods, in the Context of El Niño, OW#8: Water and Environmental Justice in the Tulare Basin.

[Click here to read articles from the One Watershed series.](#)



# 2014-2015 Financial Statement



Assets	2014	2013	2012
Cash	\$31,510	\$44,417	\$37,849
Accounts Receivable	\$31,250	\$35,409	\$32,032
Other Assets	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$62,760</b>	<b>\$79,826</b>	<b>\$69,881</b>
Liabilities	2014	2013	2012
Accounts Payable & Accrued	\$26,450	\$30,705	\$30,002
Notes Payable	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$26,450</b>	<b>\$30,705</b>	<b>\$30,002</b>
Net Assets	2014	2013	2012
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$36,310</b>	<b>\$49,121</b>	<b>\$39,879</b>

TBWP is deeply grateful for the investment the following individuals, organizations, and companies made to land and water conservation, restoration, and education projects in the Tulare Basin. Contributors in 2014 and 2015 include:

**Federal and State Agency Grants & Cooperative Agreements**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Atwell Island Program, Bakersfield Office  
CA Department of Conservation Watershed Program

**Foundation Support**

Central Valley Community Foundation (formerly Fresno Regional Foundation)

**Corporate Contributions**

Southern California Edison/Edison International  
Pacific Gas and Electric Company

**Individual Donors**

Anonymous Central California Combined Federal Campaign donors  
Anonymous Kings-Tulare Combined Federal Campaign donors  
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