

East Fork Fire Protection District

OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

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Massive Effort to Clear Virginia/Rocky Diversion Last Week

Minden – The East Fork Fire Protection District serving in its last month as Douglas County Emergency Management, coordinated an all-out effort with the Virginia Allerman Ditch Company to clear debris at the Virginia/Rocky Diversion. The Douglas County Sheriffs' Office, Douglas County Search and Rescue, Washoe County HASTY Team, Tahoe/Douglas EOD Team, Mountain West Construction, Connelly Crane, and Carson Valley Golf Course all worked with East Fork Fire to clear the majority of a massive debris pile at the Virginia/Rock Diversion that if left untouched could have created some serious flood conditions in several locations, given the high flows of the East Fork of the Carson. Opening as much of the Diversion as possible allowed for more water to move through and downstream.



The very high-risk operation also entailed the use of explosive charges to clear debris. Personnel and equipment were used to mechanically remove massive amounts of debris that had collect with the rise in the river. As the trees were removed, East Fork's Fuels and Fire personnel used chain saws to cut the trees into smaller pieces. One tree removed weighed in excess of 12,000 pounds and was 40 feet long.



The Virginia Rocky Diversion is a key diversion point on the East Fork or the Carson River. Water overflowing the Virginia Diversion has for the past week threatened Carson Valley Medical Center and the Assisted Living Centers near Mueller Park Way. Earlier in the week, one of the main water control gates at the site failed, requiring the ditch company to lower in a large trench plate over the diversion to control the flow.

The Tahoe Douglas EOD personnel and Douglas County Search and Rescue used a boat to deliver the EOD personnel to the debris pile and allowed that boat to serve as a platform to set the explosive charges.

The EOD team did several calculations to determine the impacts of the blast and to define the areas which would be affected. A reverse 911 was issued and Douglas Deputies went door to door to in the immediate area. There were no collateral damages after the blast. The Washoe County HASTY team assisted DCSAR's operation with rescue swimmers and additional personnel.



The Cottonwood Diversion structure was monitored every two hours to ensure that debris remove upstream was not impacting that diversion structure. The diversion structures are key pieces of the irrigation infrastructure for the agricultural interests in the valley.

The Nevada Department of Transportation and the State Division of Emergency Management were advised to monitor the Lutheran Bridget and the Highway 88 Bridge for potential debris accumulations. While some debris remains, the work performed last week opened up a significant part of the river channel and so far has prevented the river from backing up at that location.

The effort at the Virginia/Rocky Diversion was a successful mitigation measure and effort, stated, District Fire Chief Tod Carlini. *“A very strong effort was put forth by all parties and especially the personnel from Connelly Crane and Mountain West Construction. They came into the effort with a can-do attitude from the very beginning”* Carlini also offered high praise and thanks to Carson Valley Golf Course owner, Tom Brooks for his total cooperation with the effort and to the

Virginia Allerman Ditch Company Board Members and their Manager Gary Aiazza. Carlini emphasizes the important contributions made by the agricultural interests in the valley and towards flood mitigation.

By Sunday afternoon, water was still moving strong and hard through the areas cleared at the division. Some flooding continued to persist over Mottsville Lane and at Willow Bend off Genoa Lane. Afternoon cloud cover help cool things down and screened the sun from the snow pack. Personnel continue to monitor the various flood prone areas in the county, including Southern Douglas County, where a flash flood alert was issued on Friday afternoon.

