

Nature Conservancy's purchase may ease drought worries

By Lenita Powers, Reno Gazette-Journal

The purchase announced Tuesday of thousands of acres around Independence Lake by The Nature Conservancy will protect a critical source of water for Reno and Sparks in times of drought, a member of organization said.

The Nature Conservancy's \$15 million purchase of 2,325 acres of forest land in the Sierra Nevada from NV Energy also will preserve one of the only two lakes in the world with indigenous populations of the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, said Chris Fichtel, Independence Lake project manger for The Nature Conservancy.

"It's a beautiful lake and, obviously, this will prevent development that could negatively affect water quality and could impact the native fish that live in the lake and the public's ability to enjoy the property," he said.

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