

Lake Tahoe
Presidential
Forum

June - July

1997



Progress Report

Federal Actions At Lake Tahoe

May 1999



US Army Corps
of Engineers



Revised 5/99

PROGRESS REPORT

**FEDERAL ACTIONS
AT LAKE TAHOE**

MAY 1999

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LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT

<u>ACRONYM</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMP	Best Management Practice
Coalition	Lake Tahoe Transportation and Water Quality Coalition
CTC	California Tahoe Conservancy
CTS	Coordinated Transit System
DRI	Desert Research Institute
EIP	Environmental Improvement Program
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
LTBEC	Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee
LTBFAC	Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee
LTIMP	Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTBE	Methyl tertiary-butyl ether
NDEP	Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
STPUD	South Tahoe Public Utility District
TCEAN	Tahoe Citizens Environmental Action Network
TREX	Tahoe Regional Executives Committee
TRPA	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
UCD	University of California, Davis
UNR	University of Nevada, Reno
USACE	US Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers
USDOT	US Department of Transportation
USFS	US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
USGS	US Department of Interior, Geological Survey
USPS	US Postal Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report to the President highlights the actions undertaken by the Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Ecosystem since the Presidential Forum at Lake Tahoe in July 1997, through April 1999. The Federal Interagency Partnership includes: US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service; US Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers; US Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management and Geological Survey; US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration; and the US Environmental Protection Agency. Since the Forum, these Federal agencies have initiated all 39 Presidential Commitments to address environmental and economic concerns in the Lake Tahoe Basin, obligating over \$25 million of federal funds. Thirteen of these 39 commitments have been completed. In addition, the Federal Interagency Partnership has entered into many local partnerships, helping to implement planning, research and restoration activities.

The Presidential Commitments address a variety of environmental concerns, most notably the loss of clarity in Lake Tahoe, as well as forest ecosystem health and transportation issues. The types of projects the federal agencies have undertaken include restoration projects; Basin-wide assessments, modeling, and monitoring to enhance decision-making; sewer infrastructure upgrades; forest road obliteration and improvements; forest thinning; prescribed burning; and transportation planning and transit improvements. By enhancing the environment of the Tahoe Basin, these efforts contribute to sustaining the economy of the area, which depends on the Basin's natural beauty and its many recreational opportunities.

The Federal Interagency Partnership has placed a high priority on working in partnerships with the local community to further the goals of the Presidential Forum. The Partnership meets regularly to coordinate federal activities, and in January 1999 began meeting with a newly formed Federal Advisory Committee made up of local stakeholders. The Partnership has also continued and improved relationships with the Washoe Tribe, fostering greater understanding of the Tribe's unique position and issues, and providing the Tribe greater access to culturally important areas of the Lake.

In looking to the future, the Federal Interagency Partnership has identified activities to be undertaken in Fiscal Year 1999, including actions needed to prevent further decline in Lake clarity. The Partnership will be working with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and other agencies to implement TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program, the 10-year plan of action for environmental improvement in the Basin.

The Federal Interagency Partnership has made a substantial contribution to improving the environment and economy of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Building on the existing partnerships will assure that the Lake Tahoe Basin remains a model of cooperation, where all interests work together to protect one of the world's most unique and splendid ecosystems.

I. INTRODUCTION



Spoooner Summit—now the route of US Highway 50. The end of the 8.75 mile railroad from Glenbrook and the beginning of the water flume to Carson City. (1878)

A. BACKGROUND

Among the largest high-alpine lakes in the world, the great natural beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin attracts millions of visitors each year. This has led to an economy that is entirely dependent on preserving that beauty in order to remain viable. Yet, development and tourism seriously threaten the Lake and surrounding ecosystem, and could destroy the economic value of the resource.

Significant settlement of the area dates from the discovery of the Comstock silver mines in Virginia City, 24 miles to the east of the Lake in 1859. Several decades of intense resource extraction followed. The mines had neither timber nor water, and Lake Tahoe seemed an unlimited resource for both. Between 1860 and 1930, about two-thirds of the Basin's forest were cut. This denuding of the Basin's forest slopes resulted in substantial sedimentation to the Lake, and is the basis for the composition of trees found in the Basin's forest today.

At the turn of the century, railroads and improved roads made access to Lake Tahoe

possible, and the natural beauty of the Lake, combined with the legalization of gambling in Nevada in 1931, made Lake Tahoe a popular tourist destination. Tourist related growth continued through the 1950s, and accelerated following the 1960 winter Olympics that were held in nearby Squaw Valley.

Throughout this period of growth in the Basin, the conflict between development and preservation grew, resulting in the creation of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) in 1970. Since that time, development at Lake Tahoe has been regulated in an effort to prevent and mitigate environmental damage. Today, formerly conflicting interests work together in partnerships to strengthen the balance between environmental preservation and economic sustainability.

Although government, business, and environmental entities are working together to address environmental concerns in the Basin, the clarity that makes Lake Tahoe famous is still declining at an alarming rate. Scientists have warned that unless this trend is halted over the next decade, the Lake's clarity will be lost, perhaps irreversibly. Additionally, in 1997, 30% of the trees in the Tahoe Basin were dead. Moreover, traffic congestion during peak tourist season causes delays and air quality problems, with a negative impact on the local economy and environment.

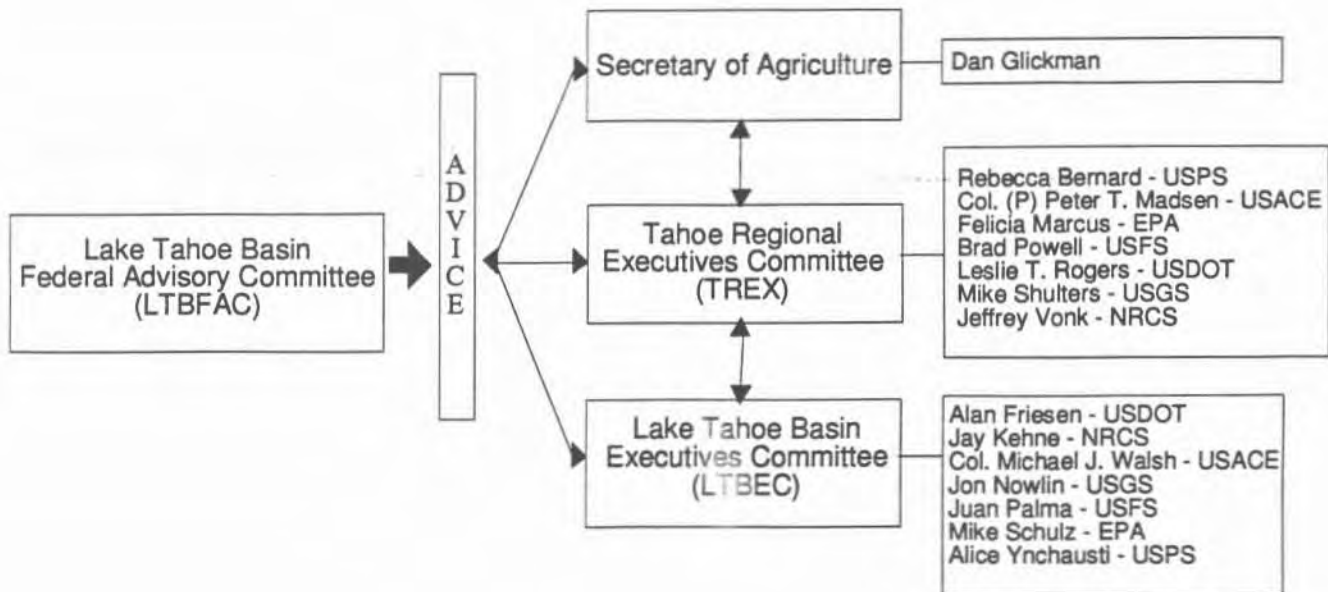
B. PRESIDENTIAL FORUM

President Clinton and Vice President Gore came to Lake Tahoe in July 1997 to recognize the significance of Lake Tahoe and its surroundings as a national environmental resource, and to commend local stakeholders for the innovative partnership of government, business, and environmental interests working together to protect the Tahoe Basin. During this Presidential Forum on Lake Tahoe, the President committed additional federal resources to address concerns related to declining Lake clarity, and to make improvements in transportation, air quality, and forest health. In addition to providing these federal financial resources, the President committed the federal government to develop effective partnerships with the Washoe Tribe and with local and state governments, and to coordinate all federal activities in the Tahoe Basin to achieve greater environmental results.

C. FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

As part of the Presidential Forum on Lake Tahoe, on July 26, 1997, the President issued Executive Order 13057 (Appendix A) directing the federal agencies with responsibilities at Lake Tahoe to form a partnership to achieve the environmental and economic goals identified during the Forum. In the Agreement of Federal Departments and Agencies on Protection of the Environmental and Economic Health of the Lake Tahoe Region (Appendix B), the signatory agencies committed to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Lake Tahoe Region, working together with state, regional, and local governments, the Washoe Tribe, and other stakeholders to implement all the actions directed by the President. Since that time, Regional heads of the federal partnership agencies, known as

Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Interagency Partnership



the Tahoe Regional Executives (TRES), and their staff leads, known as the Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee (LTBEC), have been meeting regularly to implement the Presidential Commitments and to develop strategies to improve partnerships with the local business and environmental community. The structure of the Federal Partnership and its relationship to other organizations is illustrated above.

Also, at the Presidential Forum, the President and Vice President committed the Federal government to carry out 39 specific actions to protect Lake Tahoe, at a cost of \$27 million from Fiscal Year 1997 and 1998 budgets. All these actions, known as the Presidential Commitments, are underway. Thirteen of the 39 have been completed.

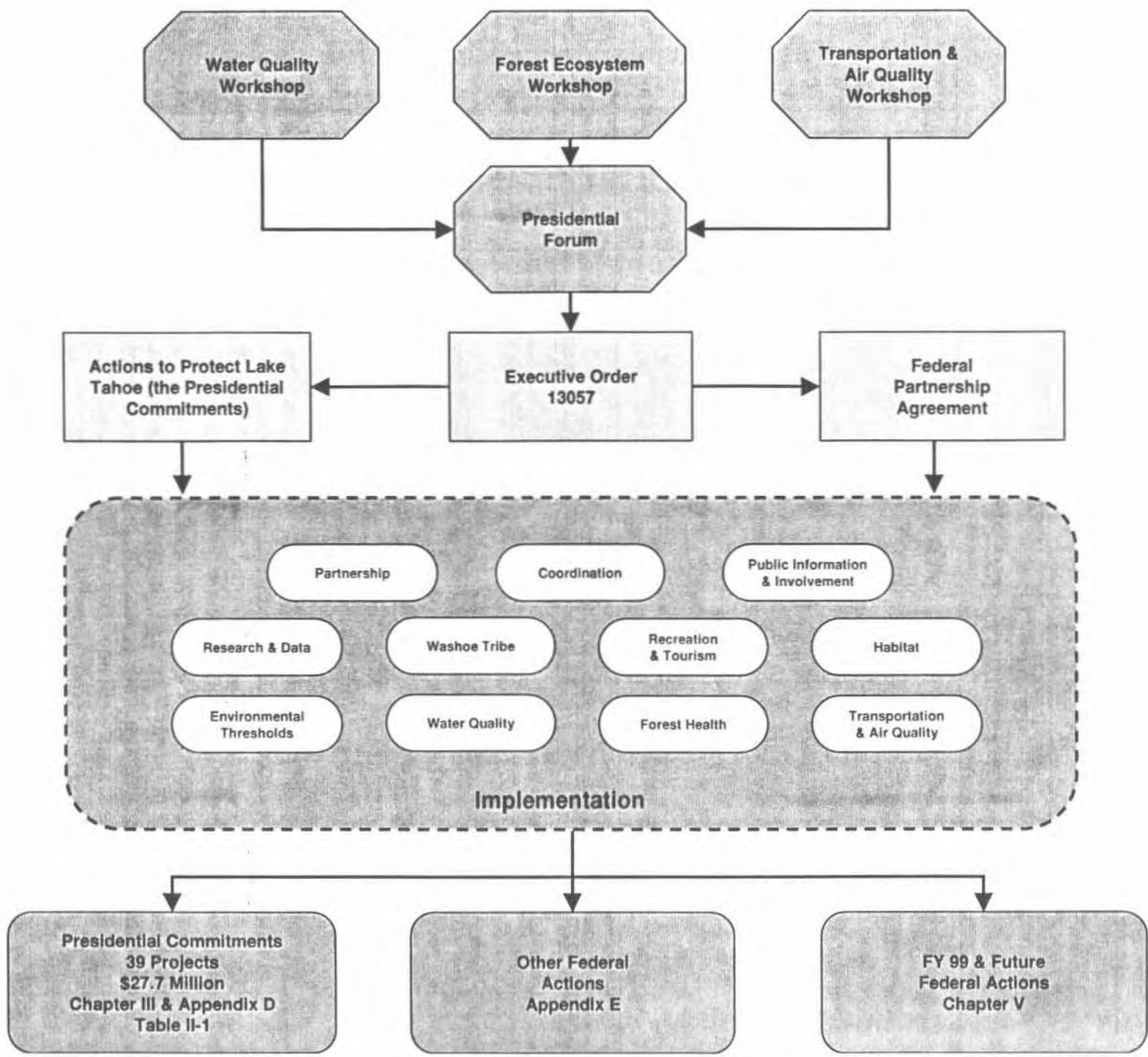
D. REPORT OVERVIEW

This Progress Report highlights the actions of the Federal Partnership that have resulted from the July 1997 Presidential Forum on Lake Tahoe and looks ahead to the activities and partnerships that will continue in the coming year. The status of the Presidential Commitments is updated in Chapter II and is detailed in Appendix D. Summaries of the Basin's major issues in water quality, forest and ecosystem health, and transportation and air quality, along with corresponding activities addressing these concerns, are provided in Chapter III. Chapter IV discusses the many partnerships in the Tahoe Basin, while the future role and the goals of the Federal Partnership are presented in Chapter V.



II. DELIVERING ON THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENTS

The Federal Partnership is responsible for carrying out actions specified in three separate documents - Executive Order 13057, the Federal Partnership Agreement, and the document describing the Presidential Commitments, entitled Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe.



The required actions are summarized below and depicted in Figure II-1. The full documents can be found in Appendices A, B, and C. Both the Executive Order and the Partnership Agreement list 14 areas where federal assistance or participation should be directed to help achieve environmental and economic goals in the Tahoe Basin. As a starting point for federal assistance to the Tahoe Basin, in the Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe, President Clinton and Vice President Gore committed the federal agencies to 39 specific actions, totaling \$27 million in the two years following the Forum.

Executive Order 13057: Federal Actions in the Lake Tahoe Region:

- establishes the Federal Interagency Partnership;
- requires a Memorandum of Agreement with California, Nevada, Washoe Tribe, and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency; and
- sets forth 14 areas of federal assistance including coordination, building partnerships, public involvement, and support for actions for the attainment of TRPA's environmental thresholds and improvement of water quality, forest health, transportation, air quality, habitat, recreation, and tourism.

Agreement of Federal Departments and Agencies on Protection of the Environmental and Economic Health of the Lake Tahoe Region:

- describes 14 areas of federal assistance consistent with Executive Order 13057;
- sets forth operating norms and procedures for the Federal Partnership;
- establishes the Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee;
- requires federal review and comment on TRPAs Environmental Improvement Program for the Lake Tahoe Region; and
- requires submittal of annual reports to the White House.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore: Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe, July 26, 1997 (referred to as the Presidential Commitments):

- A pledge to double the administration's annual investment in the Tahoe Basin for fiscal years 1997 and 1998, and to work with state and local partners to expand the federal government's commitment in succeeding years; and
- lists 39 specific actions (the Presidential Commitments) to improve water quality, forest health, transportation, and partnerships, with a total of \$27 million in additional funding.

The Federal Partnership has delivered on all the promises and commitments from the Presidential Forum, making substantial progress in protecting and preserving the Tahoe Basin environment, as well as enhancing the Basin's economy. The Federal Partnership has initiated all 39 Presidential Commitments with over \$25 million of the \$27 million obligated. A summary of the Presidential Commitments is provided in Table II-1 below.

The Federal Partnership agencies have engaged in many other activities in addition to the 39 Presidential Commitments. Of particular note is increased federal engagement with state, tribal, and local organizations through participation in groups such as the Upper Truckee Focused Watershed Group, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the

Environmental Improvement Program working groups and implementation team, and others. In keeping with the administration's identification of Lake Tahoe as a priority, individual agencies have redirected staff and funds to support many additional projects and programs related to water quality, forest health, and transportation.

Between the 39 Presidential Commitments and these additional activities, the federal agencies have been involved in all 14 areas specified in Executive Order 13057 and the Partnership Agreement. Federal actions since the Forum are described in Chapters III and IV of this report. These federal actions are further detailed in Appendix D, Presidential Commitments, and Appendix E, Other Federal Actions.

Despite these efforts, more work remains to be done. In the 1996 Threshold Review, the TRPA found that the majority of environmental goals, expressed as threshold indicators, for the Tahoe Basin have not yet been achieved. The Thresholds are the environmental carrying capacities for the Tahoe Region and address nine components of the environment: water quality, soil conservation, air quality, vegetation preservation, wildlife, fisheries, noise, recreation and scenic resources. The Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) was developed in response to this threshold review finding and identifies activities that are intended to achieve the threshold indicators. In carrying out the Presidential Commitments, the federal government contributed almost \$20 million to the EIP and other projects for the attainment and maintenance of the environmental thresholds. Federal "base programs" also contribute to threshold attainment. Environmental improvements resultant from the Presidential Commitments are difficult to quantify at this early stage. However, it is clear that the federal government is pursuing the types of projects that are needed to meet many of the environmental threshold goals. For example, the Stormwater Settling Basin commitment is already reducing the amount of sediment coming into the Lake from one of the highest sediment contributing watersheds in the Basin.

Although the Presidential Commitments provide a good start at addressing the environmental and economic goals identified at the Forum, there is still much that needs to be done to meet the thresholds, most notably stopping the rapid decline of Lake clarity. A number of the Presidential Commitments that are providing assessment and modeling information to help guide future land management activities are still underway and will take several more years to complete. Since the EIP emphasizes a ten-year investment pattern, a continued commitment from local, state and federal entities is critical to meeting this goal.

TABLE II-1. SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PROJECT	AGENCY	FUNDING COMMITMENT	STATUS	EXPENDITURES 1997/1998
1. Wastewater Pipeline	EPA	\$7.15M	Underway	\$7.15M
2. Water Quality Model	EPA	\$619K	Underway	\$619K
3. Real-Time Monitoring	EPA	\$200K	Underway	\$235K*
4. Research Team	EPA	\$0	Ongoing	\$0
5. Tahoe-Baikal Partnership	EPA	\$50K	Done	\$50K
6. Environmental Hotline	EPA	\$0	Ongoing	\$10K*
7. LTIMP Monitoring Review	USGS	\$80K	Underway	\$5K
8. Mapping of Lake Tahoe	USGS	\$100K	Done	\$200K*
9. Sources of Gasoline Pollution	USGS	\$140K	Underway	\$187K
10. Lahontan Cutthroat Trout	USGS	\$40K	Ongoing	\$20K
11. Road Erosion Control	FHWA	\$250K	Done	\$250K
12. Stormwater Basin	EPA	\$50K	Done	\$50K
13. Road Weather System	FHWA	\$75K	Underway	\$75K
14. Forest Roads	USFS	\$1.3M	Done***	\$1.19M**
15. Watershed Restoration	USFS	\$475K	Underway	\$471K
16. Wetlands Restoration	EPA	\$150K	Underway	\$150K
17. Restoration Opportunities	USACE	\$600K	Underway	\$110K
18. Backyard Conservation & Soil Survey	NRCS	\$255K	Underway	\$255K
19. Source Water Program	EPA	\$50K	Underway	\$50K
20. Watershed Assessment	USFS	\$1M	Underway	\$900K
21. Fire History Research	USFS	\$30K	Underway	\$32K*
22. Urban Lots	USFS	\$400K	Done***	\$362K**
23. Prescribed Burning	USFS	\$489K	Done***	\$183K**
24. Mechanical Treatments	USFS	\$2.3M	Done***	\$2M**
25. Land Acquisition	USFS	\$1.3M	Done***	\$277K
26. Forest Health Group	USFS	\$50K	Ongoing	\$31K**
27. Coordinated Transit	FTA & EPA	\$2.5M	Underway	\$2.5M
28. East Shore Shuttle	FHWA & USFS	\$20K	Done	\$20K
29. Transit Center	FTA	\$1M	Underway	\$977K
30. Reno/Tahoe Airport	FAA	\$6M	Underway	\$6M
31. Mail Delivery Upgrade	USPS	\$250K	Underway	\$250K
32. GIS Internet Database	USGS & USFS	\$200K	Done***	\$176K
33. Staff Support	EPA	\$75K	Ongoing	\$75K
34. Washoe Tribe MOU	USFS	\$0	Done	\$0
35. Cave Rock Environmental Analysis	USFS	\$120K	Underway	\$72K
36. Meeks Meadow Use Permit	USFS	\$25K	Done	\$18K**
37. Taylor Creek Permit	USFS	\$150K	Underway	\$108K
38. Watershed Partnership	USACE	\$180K	Underway	\$280K*
39. Water Quality Agreement	EPA	\$0	Ongoing	\$0
COMMITMENT TOTALS				
39 Projects		\$27.7 M		\$25.3M

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 39 Projects Underway or Completed; \$25.3M Spent or Obligated

- * Project funding exceeds commitment;
- ** Project completed at a savings compared to commitment
- *** Project is recurring and will continue in future years, commitment in current year is complete.

Definitions:
 "Underway" = project initiated but not yet completed
 "Done" = project as described in the Presidential Commitments is completed
 "Ongoing" = project established a program that will continue indefinitely

III. PROTECTING LAKE TAHOE

In the year and one-half since the Forum, the Federal Partnership, with state and local stakeholders, has worked to advance progress toward the environmental and economic sustainability goals for the Tahoe Basin. The subsections below, entitled Federal Actions, summarize federal delivery of the 39 Presidential Commitments plus other significant federal actions taken in addition to these Commitments. The subsections entitled Working in Partnership With Tahoe Basin Stakeholders describe the roles of many important stakeholders in the Tahoe Basin and their actions taken alone or in partnership with the federal agencies.

A. IMPROVING LAKE TAHOE'S RENOWNED WATER QUALITY

BACKGROUND

One of the largest, deepest, and clearest lakes in the world, Lake Tahoe is renowned for its beautiful blue color and stunning clarity. As recently as the 1960s, the Lake was so clear that boaters could observe objects in the Lake at depths to 105 feet. Today, the clarity of Lake Tahoe measures just under 70 feet, a 30 foot decline over the last 30 years. Scientists estimate that unless this trend can be reversed in the next ten years, Lake clarity will be lost, perhaps forever.



Mouth of Ward Creek in the flood of January 1997

The decline in water clarity can be attributed to an increase in algal nourishing nutrients and suspended fine soil particles entering the lake. Nutrients, in the form of nitrogen and phosphorous compounds, enter the Lake through soil erosion, runoff from roads and urban areas, and deposition from air pollution. It is believed that phosphorus is now the nutrient controlling algae growth in the Lake. Since phosphorus is bound to soil particles, it can be

controlled by preventing soil erosion and deposition into Lake and tributary waters.

The loss of wetland areas within the Tahoe Basin has destroyed much of the Basin's natural ability to filter out the harmful nutrients and sediments. About 4,400 acres, or 25% of the Basin's wetland acreage, has been disturbed or developed. Protection of the Basin's remaining wetlands and restoration of damaged wetlands (including preservation and enhancements of riparian areas, known as stream environment zones in the Tahoe Basin) is therefore the other crucial measure for protecting the Lake's water quality.

On June 19, 1997, EPA Administrator, Carol Browner, along with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), hosted a public workshop concerning Lake Tahoe's water quality. This workshop, one of three which preceded the President and Vice President's July 1997 visit, included numerous stakeholders and other members of the public concerned with the lake's water quality.

The outcome of that workshop was the recognition that nutrients must be controlled, including air deposition of nutrients to the Lake; that wetlands and stream environment zones play a crucial role in protecting the Lake's water clarity; that some scientific questions remain to be answered pertaining to the Lake's water quality; that partnerships are key; and that time is of the essence in responding to the urgent matter of protecting Lake clarity.

More recently, concerns have arisen regarding other water pollutants in the Basin, including the gasoline additive methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE) and other gasoline byproducts. MTBE, leaking from underground storage tanks, has contaminated or threatened 12 of 34 of the water supply wells operated by the South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD), forcing closure of those 12 wells. In addition, MTBE and other gasoline byproducts are now found throughout Lake Tahoe due to the heavy use of motorized watercraft.

FEDERAL ACTIONS

The Presidential Commitments for Lake Tahoe include projects designed to respond to the needs identified during the June 19, 1997 water quality workshop, including projects to improve scientific understanding of the Lake, enhance decision-making capabilities, and projects that directly restore or protect the Lake's waters and/or tributary streams.

Projects to improve scientific knowledge of Lake Tahoe include the Water Clarity Forecasting Model, the Real-Time Threshold Management Program, and the Tahoe Basin Watershed Assessment. The Water Clarity Forecasting Model will link upland erosion and pollutant transport to impacts on Lake productivity and clarity to predict the magnitude of load reductions needed to achieve environmental thresholds. This Model will be integrated into the Watershed Assessment, which will provide a basin-scale analytical framework to integrate upland, water, air and socio-economic information and modeling to help predict the effects of management actions. Also linked into the Watershed Assessment is the Real-Time Management Program, which is identifying indicators to evaluate the nine environmental thresholds in a real-time manner, helping to decrease the uncertainty associated with management decisions.

Each of these multi-year projects are progressing on schedule, putting in place the tools and knowledge that will help scientists better predict water quality trends, and help decision makers focus capital expenditures on the highest priority programs, projects, and areas. Earlier this year, the US Geological Survey (USGS) completed a detailed map of the floor of Lake Tahoe. This large digital database is now available to research scientists and is proving to be a valuable asset in their understanding of historical trends and the natural mechanisms affecting water quality in the Lake. The USGS is also participating with the University of California, Davis (UCD) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) in a multi-disciplinary study examining the presence and sources of gasoline pollution in the Lake. Results of this work have already been used by TRPA to inform their regulatory decision to restrict the operation of certain motorized watercraft.

While improving scientific knowledge of the Lake, the federal agencies are continuing to restore watersheds and protect the Lake from soil erosion and polluted runoff. Since the Presidential Forum, the US Forest Service (USFS) has spent \$471,000 on the restoration of East Shore Beaches and several tributary streams throughout the Basin. They have also set priorities for and begun design work on retrofitting recreation sites and summer home tracts with the necessary runoff protection measures. The USFS has also reduced sediment loads to the Lake by upgrading or de-commissioning more than 30 miles of forest roads. The Bureau of Land Management, through the land exchange program in southern Nevada, has added several critical properties for public access and for the protection of water quality. The USACE, through their General Investigation and Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration authorities, has worked closely with state and local stakeholders on the Upper Truckee Focused Watershed Group to identify priority restoration needs and set the stage for federally-assisted restoration work. EPA funding has supported construction of a storm water settling basin in the Incline Village area, designed to capture 115 tons of sediment per year that would otherwise flow into Lake Tahoe. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, through their Backyard Conservation Program, has given advice to over 700 homeowners on ways to improve their yards as natural habitat and reduce soil erosion. Finally, the Federal Highway Administration is providing financial support to the Nevada Department of Transportation Master Planning effort for the Tahoe Basin, which is identifying mechanisms and procedures to control runoff from Nevada highways.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TAHOE BASIN STAKEHOLDERS

Numerous governmental, tribal, academic, and private organizations work to protect water quality in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The federal agencies now routinely work in a coordinated, collaborative fashion with state, tribal, and local stakeholders, with the Presidential Commitments being carried out with federal funding and staff supporting locally-led efforts to protect water quality. The TRPA, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) are the leading government agencies involved in water quality planning and regulation in the Tahoe Basin.

In February 1998, TRPA adopted the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) for the Lake Tahoe Region, which catalogues hundreds of capital improvement projects, regulatory programs, and research needed to attain Tahoe's desired measures of environmental quality, termed Environmental Thresholds.

For thousands of years, Lake Tahoe has been central to the culture of the Washoe Tribe. Until the late 1800s, the Tribe actively and successfully managed the wetlands in the Tahoe Basin, using wetland and meadow plants for food and medicine. In fiscal year 1999, the Federal Partnership, through an EPA grant, will help the Washoe Tribe develop, and implement a wetland conservation plan for the Meeks Bay Meadow and the Taylor Creek wetlands at Baldwin Beach. The Tribe will work collaboratively with the USFS and other federal and state agencies to develop and implement the plan which will provide a mechanism to reintroduce Tribal stewardship principles to the protection and restoration of Tahoe's wetlands.



Over the past several years, the States of California and Nevada have made substantial funding contributions for the protection of Tahoe's water quality, including the acquisition of sensitive lands and projects for the prevention and control of soil erosion and polluted runoff. The California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) administers expenditure of \$85 million from a 1986 bond measure, plus \$10 million from a 1996 bond measure. The Nevada Division of State Lands administers expenditure of funds from 1986 and 1996 bond measures totaling \$51 million.

County and City governments and special districts continue to play an important role in planning, funding, and constructing projects for protection of water quality in the Tahoe Basin. Many projects are funded using a combination of federal, state, and local funds. A

typical example is Washoe County, which used federal, state, and local funds to construct the storm water settling basin at Incline Village, mentioned above.

The Lake Tahoe Transportation and Water Quality Coalition, which includes key constituent representatives from the private sector and the environmental community, has played a pivotal role in water quality protection efforts, and is a strong advocate seeking state and federal support for these efforts, including acquisition of environmentally sensitive land. The Tahoe Citizens Environmental Action Network (TCEAN) is a network of local citizens organized to conduct environmental monitoring and restoration projects with the support of numerous state and federal agencies and the University of Nevada, Reno. The Network is a prime example of the high level of public interest and support for environmental protection efforts in the Tahoe Basin.

The UCD, the UNR, and the Desert Research Institute (DRI) are active in supporting scientific research and analysis in the Tahoe Basin. The Tahoe Research Group from UCD continues the long history of research they've been doing in the Tahoe Basin since 1962. UNR has been working with the USFS in conducting the Basin-wide Watershed Assessment which is presently underway. In October 1998, EPA, USGS, USFS, TRPA, UCD, and UNR sponsored the first in a series of research symposiums aimed at fostering coordination and collaboration in scientific research in the Tahoe Basin. A result of the June 1997 water quality workshop, this symposium was attended by more than 200 people from academia, government agencies, and the general public, and demonstrated a keen, broad-based interest in research aimed at protecting Lake Tahoe's water quality.

The Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program (LTIMP), begun in 1979, is a longstanding example of the federal government working in partnership with California, Nevada, and academic institutions. With the leadership of the USGS and the Tahoe Research Group from UCD, and participation by many other state and local agencies, the LTIMP has provided a long term data base documenting the decline in Tahoe's water clarity and information on contributing factors.



Examples of other key partnerships in the Tahoe Basin include the Upper Truckee River Focused Watershed Group, which has culminated in a cost-sharing agreement for the RWQCB and the USACE to work together to assess the Upper Truckee watershed and develop a detailed restoration plan. Another example is the Basin's Water Quality Working Group, comprised of the Federal Partnership agencies, the States of California and Nevada, local governments, the Washoe Tribe, and the Transportation and Water Quality Coalition. This group ensures coordinated effort among the many players involved in protecting Lake Tahoe's water quality, working to set priorities for implementing water quality projects in the Environmental Improvement Program.

SUMMARY

At the July 1997 Presidential Forum, all participants recognized that the trend of declining water quality at Lake Tahoe would not be reversed overnight. In fact, exacerbated by unusually wet weather the past two years, the 30-year trend of declining water clarity has continued at a rate of about one foot per year. However, the Presidential Forum reaffirmed everyone's commitment to keep Tahoe blue. Restoration and protection projects being implemented by federal agencies and local stakeholders are proving successful in returning streams and wetlands to their natural condition, enabling reductions in sediment and nutrients reaching the Lake. In the next two to three years, newly enhanced research efforts and monitoring programs are expected to provide a basis for decision makers to more knowledgeably set priorities and make the most of available funding for restoration and protection projects at Lake Tahoe.

B. FOREST AND ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

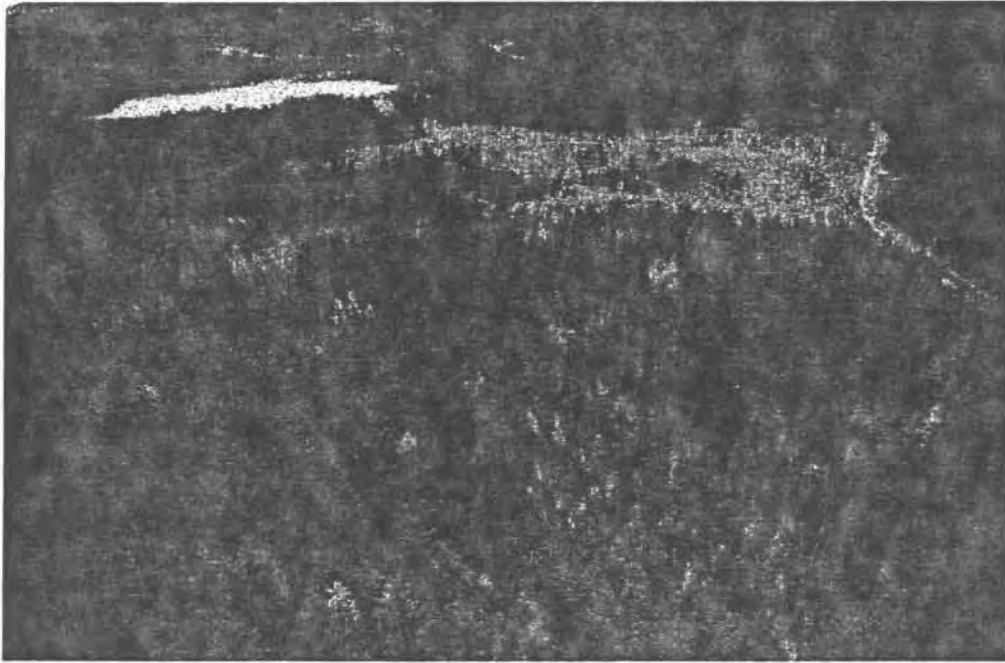
BACKGROUND

Since the 1800s, extensive logging, sheep grazing, and a moist climate cycle have dramatically altered the Lake Tahoe Basin's forest ecosystem. The original Tahoe Basin forest, comprised of sugar pines, Jeffrey pines, incense cedar, and white fir, was replaced with proportionally more opportunistic species such as white fir and lodgepole pine, as well as several brush species. The resulting forest in the Basin has trees that are smaller in diameter and more densely clustered than the former forest. Fir trees in particular are more vulnerable to the effects of drought, nutrient depletion, and competition with other trees. As in many other areas of the West, wildfire suppression has modified forest plant composition and ecosystem processes. Because of these factors, the forest in the Tahoe Basin has suffered a serious bark beetle infestation. The result is that 30% of the trees in the Tahoe Basin are now dead. In fact, some smaller sections of forest, from 10 to 100 acres in size, are composed of 60 to 80% dead or dying trees. These dead and insect-infested trees have dramatically increased the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Uncontrolled wildfire in the Basin would have a devastating impact on Lake Tahoe's residents and visitors, the Basin's environment and economy, and the Lake's water quality.

Land use and management impacts relationships between water, soils, plants, animals, air, and humans, which are all a part of the forest ecosystem. Numerous processes occurring

in Lake Tahoe's forest have been altered by such actions and are in need of restoration, rehabilitation, and maintenance.

On June 30, 1997, the Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, and the Secretary of the US Department of Interior, Bruce Babbitt, hosted a public workshop concerning Forest Ecosystem Restoration. The outcome of this workshop was the recognition that the Tahoe Basin's ecosystem must be restored, the threat of wildfire must be reduced, and this work must incorporate human values to be considered successful.



FEDERAL ACTIONS

At the Presidential Forum, the Forest Service committed to a variety of ecosystem management projects to improve forest health and reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfire by focusing on the removal of dead and dying trees.

Hundreds of acres of dead or diseased trees have been identified for removal or have been removed using methods that include prescribed burning, mechanical treatments, and hand thinning. Resource managers are using state-of-the-art satellite imagery and information from scientific studies to effectively analyze forest resource and fire hazard conditions. Federal, state and local agencies throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin have programs to remove dead and dying trees. These agencies also educate the public regarding the benefits of and methods for clearing brush and dead wood on private property and urban lots. Homeowners are learning how to better protect their property from wildfire, and at the same time enhance the aesthetics and value of their property. Through Tahoe Re-Green, low interest loans are being offered to help private property owners clear their lots. Wood recycling and wood chipping are preferred methods for reducing wildfire fuel, enhancing soil conditions, and improving air quality.

Plants, animals, and soils and the ecosystem processes affecting them are being analyzed in the Watershed Assessment to gain a better understanding of their relationships. This information will be used to adapt future management actions to enhance as many parts of the ecosystem as possible.

Other activities to improve forest health include efforts to control disease and insects, which cause nearly 25 to 30 percent of all tree deaths in the Basin. Federal, state, and local efforts are targeting problems of root disease and bark beetles.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TAHOE BASIN STAKEHOLDERS

The forested land surrounding Lake Tahoe is both publicly and privately owned, and thus the concern about the effects of catastrophic fire unites both public and private interests. Education, encouragement, financial assistance, and land acquisition are some of the tools used to address forest health issues on private lands. Partnerships like the Forest Health Consensus Group, Tahoe Re-Green, and the Urban Interface Working Group work with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), the USFS, the States of California and Nevada, and local Tahoe Basin communities to reduce the fire hazard while improving habitat, scenic values, and watershed functions.

SUMMARY

At the July 1997 Presidential Forum, the poor condition of the forest in the Lake Tahoe Basin was widely recognized as a serious problem that needed to be addressed. The forest ecosystem is vital to the visitor experience at Lake Tahoe, is important to the clarity of Lake Tahoe, and is home to numerous plant and animal species. Additionally, potentially devastating impacts to the environmental and economic interests in the Basin could result from a catastrophic wildfire. Deciding on the best methods to manage the forest for these concerns is a challenge. Three-fourths of the Basin is owned by the USFS, so accomplishing the Presidential Commitments is important in terms of improving the condition of the forest. These efforts also provide examples for others to follow on the remaining lands within the Basin. The federal agencies are working in a variety of partnerships to accomplish Basin-wide objectives for forest health at Lake Tahoe.

C. TRANSPORTATION AND AIR QUALITY

BACKGROUND

Over the past several decades both the resident population and the number of visitors to Lake Tahoe has increased dramatically. This population increase has resulted in a number of infrastructure needs and attendant environmental concerns. Among the most significant of these issues is transportation and the associated air and water quality concerns.

In 1979, the Lake Tahoe Environmental Assessment identified 5 major areas that were causing stress on the Lake Tahoe ecosystem and noted that "perhaps the most volatile

debate centers around the transportation issue." The Assessment goes on to say that "the demand for recreation, housing, and transportation systems exceeds their present capacities" and "the south shore highway and parking systems are jammed." Eighteen years later, one of the top three issues addressed by the Presidential Forum at Lake Tahoe was transportation and air quality in the Tahoe Basin. The Transportation and Air Quality Workshop which preceded the President and Vice President's July 1997 visit, chaired by Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater, identified challenges and opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Basin including:

- visitor access to the Tahoe Basin;
- reducing automobile dependency;
- bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational tourism; and
- environmental impacts of transportation.

The amount of daily traffic volume into the Basin over the next 20 years is expected to double in some areas, adding to the already overburdened road and parking systems. The current volume already has significant impacts on the quality of recreation for visitors, which in turn impacts the economic sustainability of this region as a tourist destination; the quality of life for residents as they spend more time in traffic coming and going to work; air quality and visibility, especially in winter months; and Lake clarity from nutrient loading from in-Basin mobile sources. In addition, there are air quality concerns about transported particulates from outside the Basin, and deposition from non-transportation related activities including wood stove/fireplace wood burning and prescribed burning.

FEDERAL ACTIONS

The Federal Partnership is working with stakeholders to improve public transit systems, address air emissions and road erosion impacts, and to improve public access to lakeshore beaches. Since the Forum, the Federal Partnership has initiated all 5 of the President's transportation commitments.

The federal agencies have taken steps to improve the traffic flow by funding the Coordinated Transit System (CTS) and the 64 Acre Tract at North Shore. CTS merges the multiple public and private transit services currently operating at the South Shore into a centrally operated and dispatched system. This project is underway and, once in operation, will help address traffic congestion and resulting air quality concerns in the South Lake Tahoe area. The 64 Acre Tract, as it's known, is a USFS parcel located in Tahoe City on the North Shore that will be the site for a new intermodal transit center, park and ride spaces, a USFS interpretive center, and parking for recreational uses.

Parking is a problem at many points around the Lake. A study undertaken of the current East Shore Beach Shuttle recommends limiting parking at beaches and trail heads and providing visitor access with an improved shuttle service, suitable for a variety of visitor activities and with links to other bus lines in the Basin. The road erosion and stormwater control planning project, one of the Presidential Commitments, not only addresses erosion

control issues along the east shore of the Lake but will also improve transportation, recreation, and safety issues related to beach access parking.

Many destination visitors get to Lake Tahoe via the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. Shortly after the Forum, construction was underway to repair damage on an Airport runway that resulted from the January 1997 flood when the Airport had to shut down for 36 hours. Reconstruction was completed in December 1997.

To address emissions associated with mail-delivery diesel trucks, the US Postal Service (USPS) purchased three new compressed natural gas vehicles to replace diesel polluting trucks. The USPS has also extended home and clustered mailbox delivery to communities on the west shore of Lake Tahoe, resulting in reduced traffic from individuals driving to the post office on a daily basis.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TAHOE BASIN STAKEHOLDERS

The Federal Highway Administration has been actively involved in several partnerships with state and local agencies, and with other stakeholder groups concerned with improving the economic vitality and the environmental health of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Cooperative efforts include the:

- State Route 28 Scenic Byways Steering Committee, whose primary purpose is to develop a corridor management plan for the East Shore Drive National Scenic Byway;
- Tahoe Basin Interagency Roadway Maintenance and Operations Committee, which addresses aesthetic criteria for road markers, snow removal, and de-icing issues;
- Master Plan Partnership, which, as noted above, is a partnership of 15 federal, state, and local agencies developing and implementing a multi-phased Master Plan to address water quality issues related to roadways by building the necessary erosion control and storm water management facilities. This partnership is an innovative and active approach for addressing a large planning process.

The Lake Tahoe Transportation and Water Quality Coalition (Coalition) is one of the leaders in the Basin in addressing transportation issues in recent years. The Coalition has been working on West Shore transit, parking, bicycle trails, recreation capacity, and was instrumental in the inclusion of the Metropolitan Planning Organization designation as well as other transportation funding in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The Federal Partnership works closely with the Coalition on all of their efforts.

Other local organizations that address transportation and transit issues include the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, which has been designated as the transportation authority in Placer County; the Tahoe City Public Utility District, which has committed significant resources to the development of a bike trail system along the upper west shore of the Lake; the Transportation Management Associations, who work with state and local transportation agencies to improve transportation systems; and the Tahoe Transportation District, which is the implementation arm for transit projects.

As noted above, TEA-21 allowed for the designation of the Lake Tahoe Basin as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This designation provides for more coordinated transportation planning and supporting financial resources. The USFS will work with the MPO on developing a transportation plan for federal lands. In addition, the Federal Partnership has been working with the TRPA, the Coalition, and local governments to develop the structure for the MPO, as well as addressing air quality conformity and other related issues.

Local businesses such as the casinos and ski resorts, as well as local governments, have been providing numerous public transit options for visitors and residents in the Basin. With help from the Federal Partnership, the CTS at South Shore will make public transit more effective in addressing the congestion issues at this part of the Lake. In addition, the USFS has been working with the Coalition and others to develop a parking fee demonstration project which will help with parking management as well as fund other transportation and transit needs in the Basin.

The Federal Partnership has been involved in a number of air quality working groups to address air quality monitoring. A monitoring working group has been developing an air quality monitoring program which will coordinate the individual monitoring efforts by universities and agencies in the basin at consolidated monitoring sites throughout the Basin. These sites will also be updated to measure a wider variety of air pollutants. A portion of the Real Time Management Commitment included funds to improve air quality monitoring in the Basin.

Airborne nutrient deposition impacts on the Lake water quality is one of the larger air quality concerns in the Basin. The TRPA has identified this as a major research and monitoring need. The main contributors of nutrients to the Lake from air sources include pollutants from in-basin mobile sources and transport from out-of-basin sources. In addition, wood burning and increased prescribed burning may also be contributing nutrients to the Lake. The Federal Partnership is working with Basin stakeholders to address these research needs.

The Federal Partnership is also working to improve agency and public notification of prescribed burning activities in the Basin and are encouraging earlier coordination between the management and regulatory agencies involved in prescribed burning activities. Finally, as the MPO commences its activities, air quality conformity requirements related to transportation planning and projects will be addressed through a stakeholder group including certain federal agencies.

SUMMARY

At the July 1997 Presidential Forum, the transportation issues confronting the Lake Tahoe Basin were recognized as both an economic and environmental concern. The Federal Partnership is working closely with Basin stakeholders to address transportation issues in the local context, providing resources to stimulate transit projects and environmental

planning activities. The MPO designation will add to the ability of the Tahoe Basin to address these issues in the long-term. Ultimately, the solution to the transportation issues in the Tahoe Basin requires the cooperative effort of all levels of government, the private sector, and, most importantly, the individual residents of and visitors to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

IV. PARTNERSHIPS

The Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum demonstrated that a healthy environment and a robust economy are inseparable in the preservation and protection of a precious natural resource. The Forum was also a celebration of the remarkable partnerships that have formed at Lake Tahoe to accomplish these goals. Representatives from federal, state, and local agencies, together with the Washoe Tribe, colleges and universities, environmental action groups, businesses, and individual people have all recognized the common ground they share, the larger goal of protecting Lake Tahoe.

To promote greater collaboration among the federal agencies, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13057 entitled "Federal Actions in Lake Tahoe" (Appendix A). The Executive Order calls for coordination among the federal agencies and between the federal government and Tahoe Basin stakeholders through establishment of the Federal Partnership. On October 29, 1997, Secretary of Agriculture Glickman signed the Agreement of Federal Departments on Protection of the Environmental and Economic Health of the Lake Tahoe Region, the formal agreement to establish the partnership among the federal agencies operating in the Lake Tahoe region (see Appendix B). The Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Ecosystem includes: the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service; the US Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers; the US Department of Interior, Geological Survey; the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration; and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

The Federal Partnership operates on two levels: The Regional Executive Committee (TRES), composed of regional federal managers of the participating agencies; and the Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee (LTBEC), which is the operational arm of the Partnership. Since the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum, TRES has met semi-annually and LTBEC has met quarterly to implement Executive Order 13057 and the Federal Partnership Agreement. The focus of these meetings has been to help individual agencies overcome obstacles, monitor progress on the Presidential Commitments, and to meet with the public concerning federal activities and a variety of other issues facing the Tahoe Basin.

The Partnership is working closely with the newly formed Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee, comprised of individuals with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, all concerned with the environmental and economic health of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In December 1998, Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, established this committee of 19 people under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Lake Tahoe Basin

Federal Advisory Committee (LTBFAC) will advise the TREX on the implementation of appropriate federal programs for the Lake Tahoe Region, including ways to achieve the goals of the Environmental Improvement Program. The first meeting of the LTBFAC was held on January 28, 1999.

The Federal Partnership was charged with carrying out specific commitments from the Presidential Forum, as well as the general direction to coordinate among the federal agencies and to work with the States of California and Nevada, the Washoe Tribe, and local governments and stakeholders. The Presidential Commitments specified eight activities under the heading "Working in Partnership".

Among these eight commitments, there is a special emphasis on improving the federal government's working relationship with the Washoe Tribe, and expanding the Tribe's access and use of their ancestral lands on the shores of Lake Tahoe. The Forest Service has entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Washoe Tribe for Meeks Meadow and is completing an environmental analysis for the issuance of long-term special use permits in the Taylor Creek area which will allow the Tribe to engage in traditional activities at Lake Tahoe.

There is a long history of local participation in environmental protection and restoration at Lake Tahoe. The federal government is a part of that history. In keeping with the local spirit of participation and the themes of the Presidential Forum, the federal agencies are working closely with a host of partners to save the tremendous natural resources of Lake Tahoe for future generations.

V. FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

A. FUTURE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

The Federal Interagency Partnership expects to continue to operate much as the Partnership has operated since the Forum. The Tahoe Regional Executives Committee has recommended that the Partnership Chair remain with the Secretary of Agriculture. Juan Palma, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor, will continue serving as the chair of the Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee. Specifically, the Partnership anticipates the following activities:

1. Coordinate activities among the federal agencies and Tahoe Basin stakeholders:
 - Hold regular meetings of the Federal Interagency Partnership;
 - Meet with and consider advice from the Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee;
 - Actively participate or support other coordinating groups such as the Metropolitan Planning Organization; and
 - Engage in collaborative decision making processes on a variety of programs and projects.

2. Support implementation of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP):
 - Participate on the EIP Integration Team to form consensus on priority projects and implementation strategies;
 - Participate on EIP Working Groups such as the Forest Health Consensus Group, Water Quality Working Group, and Research Coordinating Team; and
 - Prepare coordinated federal agency budget requests consistent with agreed upon EIP priorities.

3. Continue implementation of multi-year programs and projects initiated by the Presidential Commitments (see also Section B., Federal Actions in 1999, below):
 - Continue building the base of scientific knowledge with projects such as the Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program, Watershed Assessment, and the Water Quality Model;
 - Work with stakeholders to interpret findings of scientific studies, and adapt management plans and budget priorities accordingly; and
 - Continue capital improvement projects such as the CTS, Upper Truckee River restoration efforts, and the STPUD wastewater pipeline replacement.

4. Enhance opportunities for community outreach and involvement:
 - Continue coordination of the science symposiums begun in October 1998;
 - Form a subcommittee of the Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee to address public and media outreach;
 - Continue to invite the public to attend meetings of the Federal Partnership and the Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee; and
 - Continue to support the provision of information to the public via the Tahoe Basin web site (<http://blt.wr.usgs.gov>) and the US Environmental Hotline (Internet: <http://www.1800cleanup.org> or phone: 1-800-CLEANUP).

B. FEDERAL ACTIONS IN 1999

Since the Presidential Forum in 1997, the federal government has successfully delivered on the President's promise to double funding for Tahoe by investing \$25.3 million above the base level in fiscal years 1997 and 1998. In fiscal year 1999, federal funding at Lake Tahoe will continue at an expanded level with approximately \$26 million in federal funding above base levels planned for the Basin (\$ estimates to the nearest thousand):

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service:

Water Quality Projects -	\$1,577,000
Forest Health Projects -	2,087,000
Cave Rock Environmental Analysis -	54,000
Land Acquisition -	3,000,000

Natural Resources Conservation Service:	
Backyard Conservation Initiative -	30,000
Soil Survey Update -	225,000
US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	
Army Corps of Engineers:	
Tahoe General Investigation Reconnaissance (FY 98 carryover to FY 99) -	38,000
Tahoe Basin Feasibility – Upper Truckee River (FY 99 Work Allowance -	25,000
Blackwood Creek 208 (FY 99 Work Scheduled) -	299,000
Ward Creek 208 (FY 99 Work Scheduled) -	100,000
Upper Truckee 206 (FY 99 Work Scheduled) -	580,000
Federal Interagency Partnership – GI Coordination Account	160,000
Flood Plain Management (Incline Village Study) -	15,000
US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	
Bureau of Reclamation:	
Trout Creek Restoration -	500,000
US Geological Survey:	
Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program (LTIMP)	593,000
Review historical LTIMP data	235,000
Survey gasoline contamination in basin	103,000
GIS Internet data base	50,000
Restoration of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout	20,000
US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	
North Tahoe Transit Center (64 Acre Tract) -	\$ 500,000
Erosion Control/Stormwater Management (SR28) -	7,500,000
Erosion Control/Stormwater Management (US 50) -	5,000,000
Parking (provides congestion management/erosion control) -	400,000
Weather Monitoring (provides pollutant runoff control) -	65,000
US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY	
Continuation of Water Quality Model (Presidential Commitment) -	261,000
Staff Assignment to Lake Tahoe -	100,000
Clean Water Action Plan Grants -	425,000**
Water Pollution Control Grant -	100,000**
STPUD Wastewater Pipeline Grant -	2,500,000
MTBE Technical Assistance -	40,000
Wetlands Restoration Grant -	96,000
FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP TOTAL	\$26,678,000

US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management:
Nevada Land Exchange Program

\$ 54,100,000***

* \$100,000 contingent on signing a cost-sharing agreement with a non-federal sponsor.

** Estimated grant amounts. Actual grant amounts will be dependent on outcome of statewide competition for grant funds.

***This amount was contributed by the Bureau of Land Management through land exchanges in Nevada benefiting Lake Tahoe.

APPENDICES

PROGRESS REPORT

FEDERAL ACTIONS AT LAKE TAHOE

JULY 1997 to MAY 1998

APPENDIX A: Executive Order 13057, Federal Actions in the Lake Tahoe Region

APPENDIX B: Agreement of the Federal Interagency Partnership on The Lake Tahoe Ecosystem

APPENDIX C: White House Statement on Lake Tahoe, July 26, 1997

APPENDIX D: Presidential Commitments Accomplishment Summary

APPENDIX E: Other Federal Actions, July 1997 - December 1998

APPENDIX A

Executive Order 13057, Federal Actions in the Lake Tahoe Region



THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 26, 1997

EXECUTIVE ORDER

FEDERAL ACTIONS IN THE LAKE TAHOE REGION

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to ensure that Federal agency actions protect the extraordinary natural, recreational, and ecological resources in the Lake Tahoe Region ("Region") (as defined by Public Law 91-148), an area of national concern, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Tahoe Federal Interagency Partnership.

1-101. The Federal agencies and departments having principal management or jurisdictional authorities in the Lake Tahoe Region are directed to establish a Federal Interagency Partnership on Lake Tahoe Ecosystem ("Partnership").

1-102. Members of the Partnership shall include the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Transportation, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of the Army, and the heads of any other Federal agencies operating in the Region that choose to participate. Representation on the Partnership may be delegated. The Partnership shall be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture for the first year after its establishment. The Chair of the Partnership shall thereafter be rotated among the members on an annual basis.

1-103. The Partnership will:

(a) facilitate coordination of Federal programs, projects, and activities within the Lake Tahoe Region and promotion of consistent policies and strategies to address the Region's environmental and economic concerns;

(b) encourage Federal agencies within the Region to coordinate and share resources and data, avoid unnecessary duplication of Federal efforts, and eliminate inefficiencies in Federal action to the greatest extent feasible;

(c) ensure that Federal agencies closely coordinate with the States of California and Nevada and appropriate tribal or local government entities to facilitate the achievement of desired terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem conditions and the enhancement of recreation, tourism, and other economic opportunities within the Region;

(d) support appropriate regional programs and studies needed to attain environmental threshold standards for water quality, transportation, air quality, vegetation, soils (stream environment zone restoration), wildlife habitat, fish habitat, scenic resources, recreation, and noise;

(e) encourage the development of appropriate public, private, and tribal partnerships for the restoration and management of Lake Tahoe ecosystem and the health of the local economy;

(f) support appropriate actions to improve the water quality of Lake Tahoe through all appropriate means, including restoration of

shorelines, streams, riparian zones, wetlands, and other parts of the watershed; management of uses of the lake; and control of airborne and other sources of contaminants;

(g) encourage the development of appropriate vegetative management actions necessary to attain a healthy Lake Tahoe ecosystem, including a program of revegetation, road maintenance, obliteration, and promotion of forest health;

(h) support appropriate regional transportation and air quality goals, programs, and studies for the Region;

(i) support appropriate fisheries and wildlife habitat restoration programs for the Region, including programs for endangered species and uncommon species;

(j) facilitate coordination of research and monitoring activities for purposes of developing a common natural resources data base and geographic information system capability, in cooperation with appropriate regional and local colleges and universities;

(k) support development of and communication about appropriate recreation plans and programs, appropriate scenic quality improvement

programs, and recognition for traditional Washoe tribal uses;

(l) support regional partnership efforts to inform the public of the values of managing the Lake Tahoe Region to achieve environmental and economic goals;

(m) explore opportunities for public involvement in achieving its activities; and

(n) explore opportunities for assisting regional governments in their efforts.

1-104. The Partnership will report back to the President in 90 days on the implementation of the terms of this order.

Sec. 2. Memorandum of Agreement.

2-201. The Partnership shall negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement with the States of California and Nevada, the Washoe Tribal Government, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and interested local governments.

2-202. The Memorandum of Agreement shall be designed to facilitate coordination among the parties to the Agreement, and shall document

areas of mutual interest and concern and opportunities for cooperation, support, or assistance.

Sec. 3. General Provisions.

3-301. The Chair of the Partnership shall advise the President on the implementation of this order. The Chair may recommend other administrative actions that may be taken to improve the coordination of agency actions and decisions whenever such coordination would protect and enhance the Region's natural, ecological, and economic values.

3-302. Nothing in this order shall be construed to limit, delay, or prohibit any agency action that is essential for the protection of public health or safety, for national security, or for the maintenance or rehabilitation of environmental quality within the Region.

3-303. Nothing in this order is intended to create, and this order does not create, any right to administrative or judicial review, or any other right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,

July 26, 1997.

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APPENDIX B

Agreement of the Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Ecosystem



AGREEMENT OF FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES ON
PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ECONOMIC HEALTH OF
THE LAKE TAHOE REGION

WHEREAS, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13057, "Federal Actions in the Lake Tahoe Region," on July 26, 1997, directing the Federal departments and agencies having principal management or jurisdictional authorities in the Lake Tahoe Region to establish a Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Ecosystem to ensure that Federal agency actions are coordinated and operate to protect the extraordinary natural, recreational, and ecological resources in the Lake Tahoe Region and the economies that depend on them;

WHEREAS, Congress recognized in 1969 in Public Law 91-148, 83 Stat. 360, and then in 1980 in Public Law 96-551, 94 Stat. 3233, that there were special conditions and circumstances in the Lake Tahoe Region and that the waters and other resources of the Lake Tahoe Region were threatened with deterioration or degeneration, which required the establishment of an area-wide planning agency to maintain an equilibrium between the region's natural endowment and its human-made environment;

WHEREAS, Congress further recognized in 1980 in Public Law 96-586, 94 Stat. 3381, that the unique character of the Lake Tahoe Basin was of national significance and that special provisions were needed to be implemented to protect the environmental quality of the Lake Tahoe Basin;

WHEREAS, Lake Tahoe is a national treasure and a resource of worldwide significance;

WHEREAS, the people in the Lake Tahoe Region know that their successful economic future relies on the health of the environment; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, the Army, the Interior, and Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognize this interdependence of economic and environmental sustainability in the Lake Tahoe Region;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the undersigned Secretaries and Administrator of the participating Federal departments and agencies, commit ourselves to enhancing the environmental and economic health of the Lake Tahoe Region and further commit ourselves to working together and with the State, regional, and local governments and with the Washoe Tribe and other parties to achieve the actions directed by the President's Executive Order of July 26, 1997. Specifically, we agree to:

Partnerships: (1) work with the States of California and Nevada, the Washoe Tribe, and appropriate local government entities to achieve desired environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin, and to enhance recreation, tourism, and other economic opportunities within the Region. These partnership

efforts are further defined in a multi-agency Memorandum of Agreement for the Lake Tahoe Region.

(2) encourage development of partnerships among governmental agencies and the private sector to augment the efforts undertaken by individual entities for the restoration and management of the Lake Tahoe ecosystem and the health of the local economy.

Coordination: (3) coordinate Federal programs, projects, and activities within the Lake Tahoe Basin, and to use consistent policies and strategies among all Federal agencies to address the Region's environmental and economic concerns.

(4) encourage Federal agencies within the Region to coordinate and share resource data, to avoid duplication of Federal efforts, and to eliminate inefficiencies in Federal actions to the greatest extent feasible.

Environmental Thresholds: (5) support and participate in programs and studies needed to identify and attain environmental thresholds for water quality, transportation, air quality, vegetation, soils, stream environment and restoration, wildlife habitat, fish habitat, scenic resources, recreation, and noise.

Clean Water: (6) support and participate in actions necessary to improve the water quality of Lake Tahoe through all appropriate means, including restoration and maintenance of shorelines, streams environment zones, and watersheds; protection of Lake designated uses; and control of airborne and other contaminants.

Forest Health: (7) support and participate in development of vegetative management actions necessary to attain a healthy Lake Tahoe Region, including a program of revegetation, road maintenance and obliteration, insect and disease management, and promotion of forest ecosystem health.

Transportation: (8) support and participate in programs and studies necessary to achieve transportation and air quality goals for the Lake Tahoe Region.

Habitat: (9) support and participate in fisheries and wildlife habitat restoration programs necessary to achieve habitat goals for the Lake Tahoe Region, including programs for threatened, uncommon, and endangered species.

Recreation & Tourism: (10) support and participate in development of and communication about recreational plans and programs, scenic quality improvement programs, and tourism opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Region.

- Washoe Tribe:** (11) support recognition for traditional and customary Washoe Tribal uses of, and for access to, Lake Tahoe.
- Research and Data Management:** (12) foster coordination of necessary scientific research and monitoring activities in the Lake Tahoe Region, and development of a common natural resource data base, including Geographic Information System (GIS) capability, in cooperation with regional and local colleges and universities.
- Public Involvement:** (13) support and participate in regional efforts to inform the public of the values of managing the Lake Tahoe Region to achieve environmental and economic goals, and to inform the public about what individuals, both resident and tourist, can do to contribute to successful achievement of these goals.
- (14) convene and facilitate public forums to provide opportunities for public involvement in solutions to the issues in the Lake Tahoe Region.

In order to establish the necessary coordinating mechanism to effectuate these goals, and to implement the Executive Order, the signatory Federal departments and agencies hereby establish this Federal Interagency Partnership. For the first year after its establishment, the Federal Interagency Partnership will be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture. The Chair will be rotated among the members on an annual basis as determined by the Partnership.

The Secretaries and Administrator or their representatives shall meet at least annually to discuss progress on implementation of this agreement and to take such additional actions as may be necessary. The regional executives representing the Federal departments and agencies shall meet twice a year to discuss progress of implementing this agreement and to take such additional actions as may be necessary. These regional executives shall be representatives from the following Federal departments and agencies: U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other Federal departments and agencies as deemed appropriate by the Federal Interagency Partnership.

The Partnership shall be supported by a Tahoe Basin Executive Committee comprised of local managers of the Federal departments and agencies responsible for implementing the terms of this agreement. The Tahoe Basin Executive Committee shall:

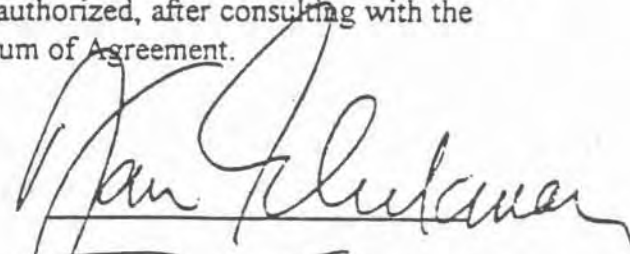
- (a) meet at least on a quarterly basis.
- (b) cooperate with the Lake Tahoe Basin Advisory Committee, an advisory committee, consisting of non-Federal representatives, to be established by USDA under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which shall be used to advise them on implementing the terms of this Agreement and on other matters raised by the Committee.


- (c) notify the public of the meetings of the Tahoe Basin Executive Committee and of the twice-a-year regional executive meetings, each of which shall be open to the public.
- (d) By December 1, 1998, review and comment on the draft Environmental Improvement Program prepared by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and integrate appropriate Federal programs and funds to help achieve the goals of the Environmental Improvement Program.
- (e) be represented by the Chair of the Partnership in the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Environmental Improvement Program Partnership.

The Forest Supervisor of the USDA Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit shall serve as the Chair of the Lake Tahoe Basin Executive Committee and shall provide the necessary staff support to the Tahoe Basin Executive Committee. The Tahoe Basin Management Unit shall also be responsible for arranging the regional executive meetings and for maintaining the Partnership's official records.

The Chair of the Partnership shall continually advise the President on the implementation of Executive Order 13057. This will take the form of an annual report to the President on the progress in the implementation of this agreement. The first report will be issued on or before September 30, 1998. The Chair of the Partnership is authorized, after consulting with the Partnership, to sign the Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement.

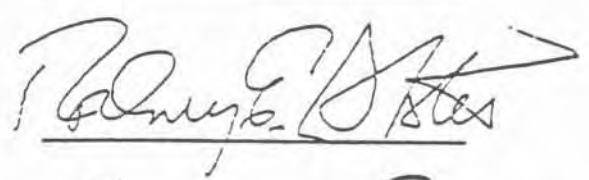
Secretary of Agriculture



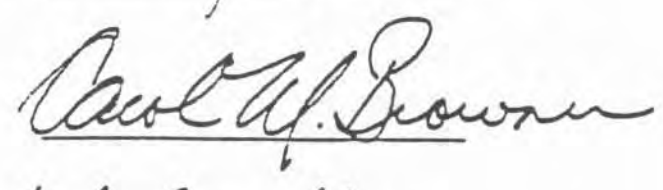


Secretary of the Interior

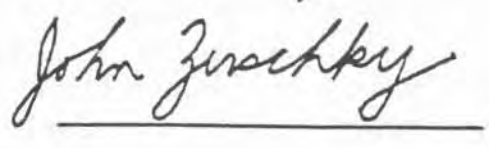
Secretary of Transportation



Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency

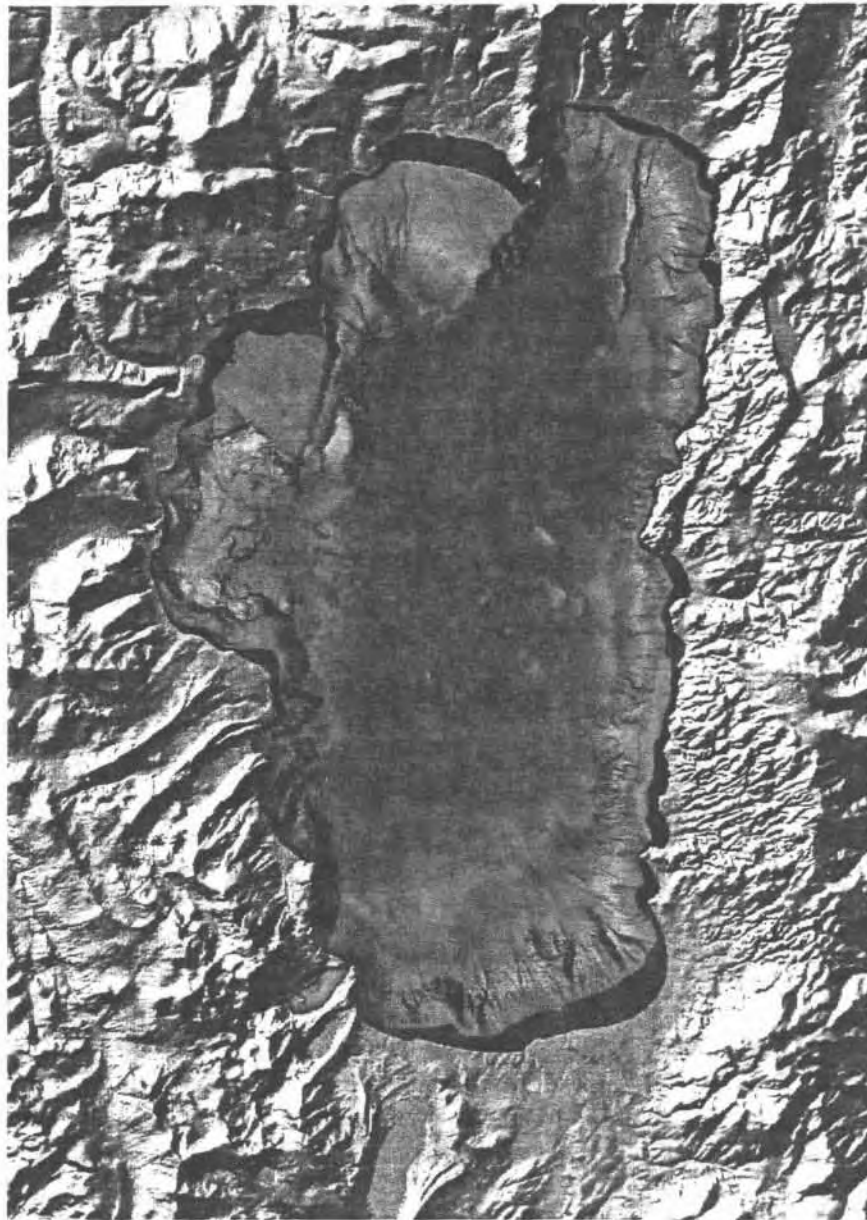


Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)



APPENDIX C

White House Statement on Lake Tahoe, July 26, 1997



**President Clinton and Vice President Gore:
Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe
July 26, 1997**

"Our land of new promise will be a nation that meets its obligations...a nation that fortifies the world's most productive economy even as it protects the great natural bounty of our water, air, and majestic land.

President Clinton
Second Inaugural Address,
January 20, 1997

Over the past two months, the Clinton Administration has sought to highlight the progress made in Lake Tahoe and to reaffirm our commitment to its protection. The Administration convened three workshops leading up to today's Presidential Forum--on water quality, forest restoration, recreation and tourism; and transportation.

The Administration heard two clear messages at the workshops: First, the Administration should reaffirm its role in helping to manage this national treasure by improving coordination among federal agencies and with California, Nevada, the Washoe Tribe, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, other local units of government; this cooperation should be guided by the people in the region. Second, the Administration should take meaningful new actions on water quality, transportation, forest management, and recreation and tourism to protect Lake Tahoe's environment, and with it the area's economy and quality of life.

Today, the President directed his Administration to begin acting on those recommendations. Over the past five years, federal agencies have committed an average of \$12 million a year in the Lake Tahoe basin. The Administration is committing to double its annual investment in the basin for the next two years and will work with state and local partners to expand our joint commitment in succeeding years. Specifically, the Administration will take the following actions:

- 1. *Protecting Lake Tahoe--and the Local Economy.*** *The Administration is taking significant new actions to help Lake Tahoe's environment and economy.*

Improving Lake Tahoe's Fabled Water Quality.

- ✓ The President will work with Congress to secure funding for a new pipeline to carry wastewater out of the Tahoe basin. The Administration supports this effort aimed at preventing a catastrophic spill of wastewater into the lake by replacing the deteriorating wastewater pipeline at South Lake Tahoe.
- ✓ In an expansion of the University of California at Davis' long history of scientific leadership at Lake Tahoe, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will award the University an \$880,000 grant for new computer modeling tools to accurately predict the benefits of different water quality improvement projects. Additional grants and technical assistance will go to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) for developing a continuous monitoring data for use in the model. These actions together will allow planners to prioritize and evaluate the effectiveness of water quality improvement projects. In addition, the

Administration is providing new resources for a number of other actions to improve scientific and public understanding of Lake Tahoe's complex environment, including new support for monitoring, research and public education.

- ✓ The Department of Transportation (DOT) will boost funding and EPA will provide technical support for the master plan to upgrade paved roads in the basin to improve erosion control and stormwater management. DOT will also fund a new joint California/Nevada plan to utilize an advanced weather information system to reduce wintertime application of sand, salt, de-icing chemicals, some of which enter the lake and harm water quality.
- ✓ The USDA Forest Service (USFS) will significantly increase its work to obliterate old logging roads, eliminating 29 miles per year and, in 10 years, completely eliminating the unused roads and returning that land to its natural condition. Many such roads were built at the turn of the century to provide timber for the Comstock silver mines. Now unused, these roads shed sediment into streams and diminish the lake's fabled water quality.
- ✓ EPA will provide additional funding to the states for wetland and stream restoration projects to filter out contaminants and improve water quality and habitat.
- ✓ The Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the local community, is completing a federally-funded Tahoe Basin study to focus on water quality, wetlands habitat, and other environmental restoration opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Basin.
- ✓ The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide technical expertise to implement a backyard conservation initiative for individual homeowners who ask for assistance with nutrient and water management of their landscape. NRCS will also provide technical assistance to individuals in local communities with erosion and sediment control efforts on private land.
- ✓ Because Lake Tahoe is a source of drinking water for the basin, EPA will provide new funding under the Safe Drinking Water Act to TRPA to ensure protection of public health.
- ✓ The USFS will conduct a \$2.6 million comprehensive watershed assessment in the Lake Tahoe Basin over the next five years.

Guarding Against Catastrophic Wildfire. *The Administration is acting to restore the forest and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.*

- ✓ Over the next five years, USFS will spend \$2 million to clear brush and dead wood from more than 3,500 federally owned lots interspersed with private commercial and residential lots in the Tahoe basin. This action will protect private property from forest fires and help the environment.
- ✓ USFS will use prescribed fire and other means to reduce fuels on approximately 3,000 acres of open forest lands each year. About 1,000 acres will be burned per year. These steps will help return natural ecological processes to Tahoe's forests.

- ✓ USFS will continue efforts to acquire environmentally sensitive and valuable parcels of land in the Lake Tahoe Basin through various authorities including the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Burton-Santini Act. These purchases, all done on the basis of willing seller/willing buyer, will help reduce development pressures in the Tahoe basin and ensure that special places are protected forever. USDA will commit \$1 million of new funds annually in addition to the \$1 million currently being provided.
- ✓ The President will support the Lake Tahoe Basin Forest Health Consensus Group's efforts to shape, monitor and update a comprehensive and widely supported forest management strategy for the Tahoe basin, and ask that recommendations of the Group be forwarded to the Administration for changes in law or policy needed to support that strategy.

Improved Transportation. The Administration is taking action to improve transportation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. These measures will reduce congestion and cut transportation-related pollution of the air and water.

- ✓ At the south end of the lake, EPA and Department of Transportation will award funds to implement the Coordinated Transit System (CTS). This CTS will coordinate and combine operation of mass transit vehicles owned by various public and private entities serving visitors at Lake Tahoe.
- ✓ On the east side, DOT and USDA Forest Service will evaluate a new shuttle service for Lake Tahoe beachgoers. The East Shore Beach Shuttle, which began July 12, is designed to address erosion, congestion and safety hazards along SR 28.
- ✓ On the north shore, the Administration supports attempts to provide \$1.5 million in DOT funding and USFS will provide up to 60 acres of land for a transit center to reduce traffic congestion and pollution.
- ✓ As the Vice President announced yesterday, DOT will provide \$6 million to fund work at Reno/Tahoe International Airport to repair the cross-wind runway damaged during the recent winter floods. This will ensure that this critical gateway is open for travelers heading to Lake Tahoe.
- ✓ The United States Postal Service will help Lake Tahoe and its residents by extending home and clustered box mail service to communities on the west shore of Lake Tahoe and by replacing its current antiquated fleet of diesel-powered trucks with cleaner burning compressed natural gas vehicles. These actions will reduce local vehicle traffic and air pollution. The Postal Service, which is an independent agency, is taking these important steps after listening to comments during Forum-related workshops this summer.

2. *Working in Partnership. The Administration is expanding and strengthening coordination among its own agencies and with California, Nevada, TRPA, and the Washoe Tribe.*

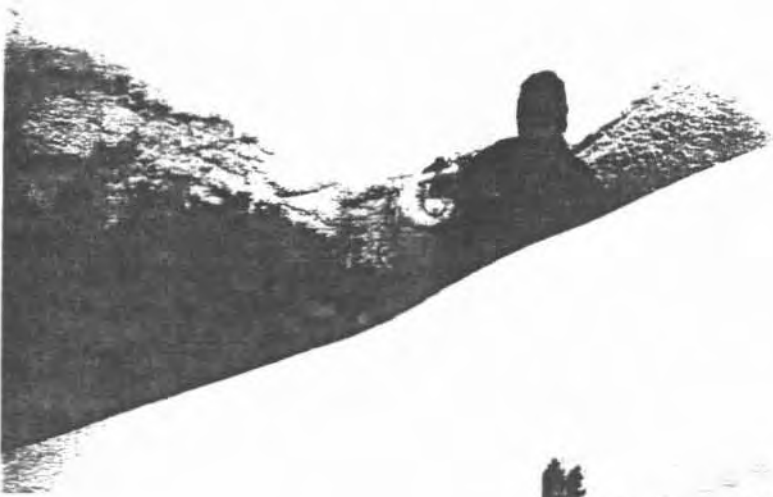
- ✓ The President is signing an executive order directing federal agencies to establish a formal interagency partnership charged with assuring coordination and efficient management of federal programs, projects, and activities within Lake Tahoe. This will include the development of a linked database sponsored by the US Geological Survey. The partnership will also be directed to take a range of steps to ensure close coordination with state, local and tribal governments--and more input from local citizens. This will not be a top-down federal mandate on the states or TRPA, but a pledge to collaborate and share resources for the greatest possible benefit to Lake Tahoe.
- ✓ The United States, through USFS, and the Washoe Tribe are entering into a government-to-government agreement to promote a stronger working relationship on issues affecting the Washoe Tribe in the Lake Tahoe Basin.
- ✓ USFS and the Washoe Tribe will enter into a special use agreement to use an approximately 350 acre meadow for the care and harvesting of plants for traditional purposes.
- ✓ USFS and the Washoe Tribe will enter into a special use permit for 12 to 15 acres to begin the process of establishing a Washoe Cultural Center. The agreement will include provisions for an additional parcel of land that will ensure tribal members' access to the water's edge for the first time in more than 100 years. This return to the water's edge is central to the Washoe's cultural identity; in Washoe, the word (DaOwAga) that translates approximately into Tahoe means "edge of the lake."

Two weeks ago, the Army Corps of Engineers and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency reached a partnership agreement on watershed the Bipartisan Budget Agreement.

The President is directing his cabinet to make every effort to ensure that all necessary agreements are in place not later than 90 days after the event.

APPENDIX D

Presidential Commitments Accomplishment Summary



**PRESIDENTIAL COMMITMENTS
ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARY
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1. Wastewater Pipeline

The President supported and signed into law funding in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Fiscal Year 1998 budget to partially fund a new pipeline to pump wastewater effluent out of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The new pipeline will replace the existing South Tahoe Public Utility District 27-mile wastewater effluent export pressure pipeline. The current pipeline is aging, has experienced repeated breaks and spills, and needs to be replaced. The pipeline conveys treated wastewater out of the Basin into Alpine County, California for re-use by ranchers and others.

Status

On July 16, 1998, EPA awarded the \$7.15 million special appropriation grant for the STPUD pipeline project. In response to a request from the District, on November 20, 1998, EPA approved the use of grant funds for pre-award costs incurred since October 1, 1997 (the date of appropriation), plus related planning and design costs incurred prior to that date. In March 1999, STPUD received an initial payment of \$5.4 million for their work performed under this grant.

In FY 99, Congress and the President provided an additional \$2.5M to replace the pipeline. The \$9.65 million in federal funds will help the District to completely replace or repair the pipeline within the Tahoe Basin.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$7,150,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

2. Water Quality Forecasting Model

The grant to the University of California at Davis (UC Davis) will establish a predictive model to assist in forecasting water quality benefits to be obtained from proposed water quality improvement projects at Lake Tahoe, including analysis of which types of projects in which locations yield greatest benefit. The model will consist of a series of sub-components that would define the relationships between (1) land use and sediment/nutrient loading to the lake, (2) sediment/nutrient loading and algae growth, and (3) algae growth and sediment (silt) loading and water clarity. By mathematically linking these variables, water clarity will be described in terms of nutrient loading from both the surrounding watershed and the atmosphere. The model will be used both for diagnosing lake problems and evaluating alternative solutions. The model will provide a scientific basis for deciding which types of projects at which locations in the Basin will yield the most significant benefits to lake water quality.

Status

EPA awarded an \$880,000 water quality modeling grant to the Tahoe Research Group at UC Davis to be distributed over three years. On November 19, 1997, the first portion the grant was distributed. The researchers initiated work on the project

in January 1998. The second increment was distributed on April 7, 1998. In January 1999, using FY 1999 funds, EPA made the third and final distribution of grant funds to TRG. This model is one of several models which are being developed as part of the Basin-wide Watershed Assessment (see Commitment # 20).

FY 97 & 98 Funding
\$619,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

3. Real-Time Threshold Monitoring Program

This monitoring program will actively monitor the status of the nine environmental thresholds at Lake Tahoe, including air and water quality, providing real-time information on the status of each threshold. This information, in combination with a predictive model (the Water Quality Forecasting Model, see Commitment # 2) and analytical efforts including geographic information systems (GIS, see Commitment # 32), will enable effective targeting of available funding to projects and sites that would yield the most water quality improvement. Over a period of five years, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) will acquire the equipment, data, procedures, and labor necessary to sustain this continuous evaluation process.

Status

Funding in the amount of \$235,000 has been provided, which includes an additional \$35,000 beyond the original commitment of \$200,000. The TRPA has contracted the United States Geological Survey to develop the real-time threshold monitoring program. EPA will continue to provide substantial technical assistance to TRPA throughout the project. The pilot for the program is focussing on the economic effects to landowners from TRPA's impervious surface policy. This policy was implemented to improve stream water quality within the Tahoe Basin. The study area is the Upper Truckee River Watershed, the largest in the Tahoe Basin.

FY 97 & 98 Funding
\$235,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

4. Multi-Agency Water Quality Research Team

EPA and TRPA, along with the states of California and Nevada, will call together a collaborative multi-agency team (federal, state, local) to coordinate implementation of various initiatives, research, and pollution control projects at Lake Tahoe. The team will cooperate on current and future research needed to understand in-basin and out-of-basin impacts on Lake Tahoe's water quality, and to formulate ways to complete this research.

Status

EPA, TRPA, USGS, USFS along with the Universities of California and Nevada convened the first research symposium of federal, state, and local agencies, along with academia and the public, in October, 1998. This two-day conference brought over 200 participants to the Basin to discuss the status of research in the basin and to begin a dialogue between researchers, agency practitioners and the public on future research priorities for the Basin. The second symposium in the series was held in February 1999, further advancing work to identify research priorities and dialog on applying science to decisions in the Basin. There will be several future workshops to further define research needs and to form a research team to assist the agencies in developing a long-term research agenda for the Basin. TRPA has also pulled together the administrative heads of the university and agency research institutions to develop an MOU for research collaboration and coordination in the Basin.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

EPA and TRPA provided substantial staff support to accomplish this work. In addition, EPA, TRPA, USGS, USFS, UNR and UC Davis provided financial support to cover the symposium expenses.

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

5. Lake Tahoe-Lake Baikal Partnership

EPA will provide funding to support the Tahoe-Baikal Institute (TBI), a non-profit organization, in its scientific, educational, and informational work at Lake Tahoe and at Lake Baikal in Siberia. The grant will enable TBI to sponsor an Environmental Policy Makers Exchange in which high level government officials from the United States and Russia will meet and discuss issues related to the protection and preservation of Lake Tahoe and Lake Baikal.

Due to its unique and irreplaceable natural beauty, Lake Baikal has been the focus of recent attention from the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission (co-chaired by Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin) and its Environment Committee, chaired by EPA Administrator Browner. The TBI was established to help preserve the two lakes and other significant and threatened natural areas around the world, through environmental education programs and international exchanges of students, scholars, and practitioners in science, policy, and other fields.

Status

With grant funding from EPA's Office of International Activities, the TBI is administering this project, building upon local efforts in the Tahoe region to foster information exchange and cultural ties between Lake Tahoe and Lake Baikal. The exchange occurred during the summer, 1998, with both Russian and U.S. policy makers traveling to the Lake Tahoe and Baikal. A much greater understanding of the political, legal and technical aspects of environmental protection of these lakes was gained by all participants.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$50,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

6. Environmental/Recycling Hotline

The national Environmental/Recycling Hotline (phone: A1-800-CLEANUP and Internet site location: <http://www.1800cleanup.org>) has established a Lake Tahoe site demonstration. The national Hotline provides the public with toll-free, zip-code-specific environmental and recycling information. In addition to the information customarily available on the Hotline, the Lake Tahoe demonstration provides bi-lingual local transit information.

Status

The Lake Tahoe demonstration of the Environmental Hotline has been established and is currently running as a limited access pilot. A grant was provided by the EPA to the Tahoe Center for Sustainable Futures (TCSF) which serves as the clearinghouse for adding Tahoe-area environmental information to the Hotline.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$10,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

7. Analysis of Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program (LTIMP) Monitoring Data

Additional scientific data and research are required to support the Lake Tahoe models, watershed assessments, and erosion control. Through its cooperative programs, the USGS will support such data collection and analysis by matching funding with partners. Projects such as those listed below and on the following three pages will supplement the substantial existing annual investment by USGS and TRPA in LTIMP.

As part of the LTIMP, USGS measures stream flow and water quality at 32 sites in 14 watersheds and ground water levels and quality at 32 wells in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Data from the LTIMP are invaluable to establish long-term trends in stream and lake quality and will be essential to support the watershed assessment, source water protection, environmental restoration, and development of models.

Status

USGS and the Tahoe Research Group of UC Davis (TRG) signed a cooperative agreement in April, 1999 to begin this important study.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$5,000

For more information, contact Jon O. Nowlin at the U.S. Geological Survey.

8. Digital Mapping of the Lake Basin

The maps of the bottom of Lake Tahoe (bathymetry) have been based on data collected in the late 1920's, supplemented by some university research work in the 1970's. USGS will use state-of-the-art high-resolution imaging and computer tools to produce a very precise 3-dimensional digital map of the bottom surface of the lake.

Such a map can be used to observe, monitor, and model both natural and human influences on sedimentation processes and rates and will be essential information to support the lake clarity models.

Status

USGS scientists completed high-resolution digital mapping of the bottom of Lake Tahoe in August 1998. The data was made available to the public in September on the Internet through the Lake Tahoe Data Clearinghouse (<http://blt.wr.usgs.gov>). By October 1998 the new data was being used by other scientists to extend geologic and structural maps of the basin into the subsurface of Lake Tahoe. In addition, commercial enterprises are making plans to use the colorful 3-dimensional images of the Lake's bottom to market the recreational and tourist values of the basin. Widespread distribution of the Lake Tahoe images by national and international media have raised public awareness of the significant federal-local partnership to accomplish environmental improvement in the Lake Tahoe basin.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$200,000

For more information, contact Michael V. Shulters at the U.S. Geological Survey.

9. Sources of Gasoline Pollution

Initial studies by the UNR, UCD, and USGS in the summer of 1997 have demonstrated the presence of Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE) and other gasoline byproducts in the waters of Lake Tahoe and other nearby lakes impacted by recreational watercraft. Concurrent sampling and state-of-the-art low level analyses by the USGS have shown these products to exist in the lake to depths of at least 100 feet. USGS will conduct a detailed survey of organic contaminants in the lake and tributary streams and ground water. The results of this comprehensive survey will be valuable to the formulation of water quality protection strategies to protect aquatic life in the lake and streams and drinking water supplies. Beginning this work in time to document the distribution of gasoline by-products in runoff from the 1998-99 winter's El Nino storms is considered important.

Status

USGS in cooperation with TRPA, has sampled water bodies throughout the Basin to determine the occurrence of hydrocarbons, fuel additives and combustion byproducts typically associated with internal combustion engines. This occurrence survey also includes sampling for organic compounds such as polyaromatic hydrocarbons and pesticides that could effect the lake ecology but have potential sources in addition to or other than internal combustion engines. Samples from six tributary streams and three other lakes in the basin during the spring 1998 runoff found the presence of one or more gasoline constituents in all lakes where motorized watercraft were present. In contrast, no such compounds were found in Upper Angora Lake where no motorized watercraft are used. Of the tributary streams sampled, only one (Incline Creek) was found to have detectable concentrations of such compounds (Benzene, at a very low concentration). The absence of target compounds in lakes with no motorized watercraft, and the correlation between the level of watercraft activity and observed concentrations of these compounds in this study and companion investigations by UCD and UNR suggest their sources to be from uses on the Lake and in the basin rather than from atmospheric sources external to the Basin. Sampling continued through the fall and winter of 1998 and a summary report will be published in 1999. Results of this study and the companion projects by UCD and UNR are being used proactively by TRPA and other agencies to evaluate potential effects of the ban on 2-cycle carbureted watercraft in the Basin proposed for June 1999.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$286,000 (\$174k FY98, \$112 FY99k, \$112k FY99 shared equally by USGS and TRPA)

For more information, contact Jon O. Nowlin at the U.S. Geological Survey.

10. Restoration of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout

Prior to the 1900s, Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT) were a spectacular game fish common throughout the Truckee River system from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake. By the late 1940s, they were no longer naturally sustained anywhere in the Truckee basin. Re-establishment of a viable population of LCT within the Lake Tahoe Basin will return a fish important to both the Washoe and Pyramid Lake Tribes and will re-introduce a world class fishery to the Lake Tahoe and its tributaries. The USGS will investigate the factors allowing the LCT to successfully survive in Independence Lake and assess the feasibility of re-establishment of the LCT in Lake Tahoe.

Status

USGS scientists are providing technical consultation to California, Nevada, and other federal agencies on the potential for re-establishing a lake strain of LCT that would winter in Lake Tahoe and spawn in the tributary streams in the basin. Current USGS research continues to focus on environmental factors affecting the sustainability of LCT in Independence Lake as a model for potential re-establishment of LCT in Lake Tahoe.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$20,000

For more information, contact Gary Scoppettone at the U.S. Geological Survey.

11. Road Erosion Control & Stormwater Management

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has provided the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) an additional \$250,000 for preliminary engineering to develop a master plan for erosion control and stormwater management for Nevada roads within the Lake Tahoe Basin. These funds are in addition to \$1 million for the master plan previously received from FHWA. The EPA will provide technical assistance in the form of guidance on Best Management Practices (BMPs) and control measures for the reduction of pollutants in roadway runoff.

Status

FHWA funding was allocated to NDOT on July 31, 1997. This authorization by the FHWA to proceed provided \$50,000 for the Lake Tahoe Master Plan and \$200,000 for the final design of the water quality project on State Route 28. NDOT expects to complete its master plan by mid 1999..

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$250,000

For more information, contact Alan Friesen at the Federal Highway Administration.

12. Stormwater Settling Basin

EPA will help fund a stormwater settling basin project in Incline Village, NV. The project will capture stormwater runoff from the road and adjacent land and convey it to a sediment detention basin on public land for settling prior to discharge into Incline Creek. Washoe County is the lead organization implementing this project. The project is funded as follows: federal funds - \$50,000, state funds - \$350,000, local funds - \$50,000.

Status

EPA awarded the grant to the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State lands on June 22, 1998. The project began on May 1 and the settling basin was completed by July. The projected amount of sediment that will be captured through the settling basin and road improvements is 115 tons/year. Virtually all of this sediment previously flowed into Lake Tahoe each year. This has been a cooperative project with the NRCS, USGS, the local resource conservation district, and state and county governments.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$50,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

13. Road Weather Information System (RWIS)

NDOT has installed weather stations in the basin which provide early warning of changing conditions. This Road Weather Information System enables NDOT to provide early warning for travelers and road maintenance crews, allowing for more timely application of salt, sand and other de-icing chemicals. This has substantially reduced the amount of such applications and their resultant runoff into Lake Tahoe. FHWA is providing \$75,000 to help expand the system basin-wide, which would establish weather stations for the first time in California.

Status

Design of the weather stations is completed. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has proposed to use the remaining funds to construct two weather stations.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$75,000

For more information, contact Alan Friesen at the Federal Highway Administration.

14. Forest Road Decommissioning and Improvement

The goal of the USFS is to reduce the entire backlog of road closures (116 miles) and improvements (168 miles) needed to meet water quality standards and convert one third of closed roads to trails over 10 years. The emphasis in FY 1999 is to complete the Access and Travel Management (A&TM) plan for the Basin and continue the upgrade and decommissioning work identified in the North Shore and East Shore plans. Project planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies for upgrade and decommissioning work throughout the Basin in FY 2000 will also begin in FY 1999.

Status

In FY 1998, 23 miles of system roads were upgraded to meet BMP standards and 8 miles of roads were decommissioned. The total cost of this work was approximately \$830,000. In FY 1998 work on the A&TM plan began.

The risk assessment for FS roads has been completed. A Needs Assessment for FS administrative needs and public access needs is complete. Public meetings were held in December 1998, and March 1999 to review the Needs and Risk Assessments. Public comments from those meetings were incorporated into a proposal. The A&TM is expected to be completed this year providing an important tool in prioritizing upgrade and decommissioning work in years to come.

In FY 1999, approximately 20 miles of roads will be upgraded to meet BMP standards at a cost estimated at \$800,000. Another 10 miles of roads will be decommissioned at a cost of approximately \$100,000.

Funding for FY 99 is \$1,002,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$1,190,000

For more information, contact Colin West at the USDA Forest Service.

15. Watershed Restoration on National Forest System (NFS) Lands

The Forest Service will provide planning and environmental documentation for all current restoration needs on NFS lands within the Lake Tahoe Basin. A portion of this commitment consists of retrofitting facilities located on NFS Lands with Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion control. Implementation of these projects would be accomplished in part by federal funds and in part through cooperative agreements with state and other federal agencies. Projects are currently identified

in the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Needs Inventory database and concurrently in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) document.

Status

Watershed improvement needs inventories were reviewed and updated on Trout, Cold, Saxon, Heavenly Valley, Burke, Tallac, Taylor, Meeks, and Big Meadow Creeks and on a portion of the Upper Truckee River through Christmas Valley. Public comments on the Taylor Creek Restoration Project are underway. Field reviews have been conducted with local agencies, environmental groups and the Washoe tribe. Watershed and fisheries habitat restoration feasibility studies were conducted in the Blackwood Creek and Ward Creek watersheds. These studies will be used to design and implement restoration and habitat improvement measures beginning in FY 99. An investigation into the physical and biological processes affecting Pope Marsh was completed. This investigation will be used to help determine the desired condition and management options for the marsh.

Restoration work was implemented on .75 miles of stream channel and 45 acres of riparian area. The stream channel work included willow planting on the Upper Truckee River through Meiss Meadow and repair of a headcut on Big Meadow Creek. The riparian work entailed rebuilding trails and stream crossings in Meiss Meadow to eliminate soil disturbance and erosion.

The Forest brought in an engineer to begin facilities BMP retrofits. She and the Interdisciplinary Team, consisting of Forest personnel as well as honorary members from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board-Lahontan Region, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, assigned to this task determined the accomplishment priority and designed a format

to document and implement these retrofit projects. Funding for FY 99 is \$383,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding
\$471,000

For more information, contact Chris Knopp at the USDA Forest Service.

16. Wetlands Restoration Projects

EPA will provide funding for projects to improve the health of wetlands in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The project, to be implemented by TRPA, will enhance their system for classifying Stream Environment Zones (wetlands), add a system for classifying meadows, establish criteria for design of wetlands restoration projects, and evaluate the capabilities of wetlands in the Lake Tahoe Basin to treat urban stormwater runoff without impairing the existing biological integrity of the wetlands.

Status

EPA awarded a grant to TRPA on June 5, 1998. TRPA has modified their workplan to re-orient the sampling towards evaluation of SEZ restoration needs and to develop a watershed level approach to the evaluation of those needs.

FY 97 & 98 Funding
\$150,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

17. Environmental Restoration Opportunities

The Corps undertook a federally-funded reconnaissance study pursuant to the procedures prescribed by Section 905 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. This contained an analysis demonstrating federal interest in ecosystem restoration in the Upper Truckee River (including Trout Creek) and was completed and approved in July 1997. The reconnaissance study considered environmental problems and potential improvement plans, primarily identified by local interests. After continued coordination with local authorities, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) has indicated a willingness to be the primary non-Federal sponsor for the feasibility-level study to investigate environmental problems and potential implementation plans for the Upper Truckee River Watershed in detail.

As a separate effort, a project-specific study for the Upper Truckee River under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 is currently being conducted. The first part in this process has been accomplished: (1) a conceptual project to restore wetlands and riparian habitat has been developed; (2) a potential non-Federal sponsor (the City of South Lake Tahoe) has been identified; and (3) national interest in undertaking the restoration work has been established. (This study originally was planned to evaluate the potential for restoration along Trout Creek, but later was revised at the request of the City of South Lake Tahoe to

evaluate a portion of the Upper Truckee River adjacent to the Lake Tahoe Airport.)

Status

The Corps is working with the Board to develop a scope of work for the Upper Truckee River Watershed feasibility phase. The Upper Truckee River Section 206 preliminary plan was approved in Washington in September 1998. Work on the next phase, the detailed Ecosystem Restoration Report, began in September and is scheduled to be completed in August 1999.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

Reconnaissance \$100,000

Section 206 \$10,000

For more information, contact Phillip Brozek at the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

18. Backyard Conservation Initiative & Soil Survey

The USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will form a partnership with the local Resource Conservation Districts and other organizations to deliver to Tahoe homeowners an integrated program of information, education and technical assistance. NRCS will update the Lake Tahoe Basin Soil Survey on private lands in cooperation with local governments at Lake Tahoe and provide information in electronic format for use in GIS analysis.

Status

The NRCS provided technical expertise to implement the backyard conservation program and technical assistance regarding erosion and sediment control on private land. The Tahoe Resource Conservation District hired a Backyard Conservation Program Coordinator in June 1998 to provide assistance to households and communities. Backyard conservation brochures were mailed to approximately 16,000 property owners with their utility bills. NRCS is using computer software to customize property drawings for homeowners. A soil scientist and a GIS specialist are working to update and computerize the 1971 soil survey. Staffing levels will be increased to map soils during the field season of 1999.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$255,000 (in addition to \$85,000 in previously committed funds) in FY 98

For more information, contact Jay Kehne at the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

19. Source Water Protection Program

EPA will provide funding to TRPA to assist with coordination of interagency planning activities for EPA's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAP) for the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Tahoe pilot program will seek to define and overcome obstacles to interstate coordination of source water assessment and protection efforts. This initiative will be an early and important test of the means that may be necessary for other communities that face similar multi-jurisdictional issues to address

in implementing source water assessment and protection programs.

Under the 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, each state is required to assess the source water areas of all its public water systems in order to determine susceptibility to contamination. This funding is intended to stimulate a cooperative, bi-state effort as a pilot project, to encourage states across the country to undertake interstate source water assessments of valuable drinking water sources. Part of this effort will include establishing a work group that will include California, Nevada, TRPA, USFS, and EPA.

Status

TRPA has held a number of SWAP steering committee meetings over the course of the past year. The steering committee, which includes representatives from the states, local government, and utility districts, is developing an action plan that will improve coordination of the state SWAP processes and includes a source identification process for the basin, public outreach and identification of protection measures. This group is also coordinating with the South Tahoe Public Utility District on the development of a groundwater management plan for South Lake Tahoe.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$50,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

20. Watershed Assessment

This work is still in progress and will result in the creation of two interactive products: an assessment of the Lake Tahoe Basin ecosystem, and a monitoring plan. The purpose of this assessment is to integrate available data regarding the physical, biological, and socio-cultural components of the Lake Tahoe Basin ecosystem. This work is being developed in coordination with a wide variety of stakeholders in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Status

A 16 person team of scientists and managers from the US Forest Service, TRPA, University of Nevada Reno, and University of California Davis is in place and actively working on the Watershed Assessment. In October of 1998, an interim status report was produced and distributed for comment among a variety of stakeholders in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The DRAFT Watershed Assessment and Monitoring Plan is scheduled to be completed by the Science Team in May. This draft will then be made available for selected peer and stakeholder review, with the goal of completing the final product by the second anniversary of the Presidential Summit in July, 1999. Funding for FY 99 is \$286,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$900,000

For more information, contact Chris Knopp at the USDA Forest Service.

21. Fire History

The USFS desires to establish baseline information on natural fire history and vegetation conditions in the Lake Tahoe Basin. This work complements and will be accomplished together with the watershed assessment. The Forest Service entered into a Participating Agreement with Pennsylvania State University that uses established research and study prioritization processes to expand and extend Dr. Taylor's earlier work on the east shore of Lake Tahoe. This research will provide reference variability information to support both the watershed assessment and mechanical treatment commitments.

Status

The study being conducted by Pennsylvania State University is underway. Fire scar samples have been collected and are being analyzed at the Penn State laboratory. During FY 99, Dr. Taylor will continue to reconstruct aboriginal era forest structure, composition and fire history on the west shore of Lake Tahoe. Additionally, Dr. Taylor will produce an interactive display (CD ROM) based on previously collected forest composition data which will help the public visualize Lake Tahoe forest ecosystems. Funding for FY 99 is \$66,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$32,000

For more information, contact Mark Johnson at the USDA Forest Service.

22. Urban Lots

The goals of the Administration are to implement an urban lot management program of \$700,000 per year over the next five years. This goal is subject to annual appropriations. Through Section 2(h) of the Burton-Santini Act, Congress has authorized up to 5% of the amount appropriated for land acquisitions (\$94,602,500 through FY 97) to be appropriated for management of the lands acquired. These management funds are apart and separate from the acquisition funds.

Status

The Presidential Commitments program allowed 231 urban lots (79 acres) and 21 acres of National Forest Lands adjacent to urban lots to be treated by regional hotshot, smokejumper, and contract crews within the priority treatment areas of Rubicon and Glenridge subdivisions (west shore), North Upper Truckee subdivision (south shore), and Roundhill (east shore). The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) awarded a 75 lot service contract in the Meyers area (south shore) for treatment under a service contract. The work accomplished by the hotshot crews is valued at approximately \$200,000.

Forest base funding allowed 151 urban lots (53 acres) and 53.5 acres of National Forest System Lands near homes to be treated by contracts with Nevada Division of Forestry Inmate Crews and the California Conservation Corps. Work was completed

in the lower Kingsbury, Roundhill and North Upper Truckee priority areas. Funding for FY 99 is \$210,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$362,000

For more information, contact Dave Marlow at the USDA Forest Service.

23. Prescribed Burning

Prescribed burning will include treatment of slash from mechanical activities and natural fuel accumulations. All prescribed fire use, including pile burning where necessary to facilitate the introduction of prescribed underburning, will be considered. Annual acreage accomplishments will vary somewhat, but the annual accomplishment, averaged over five years will be about 1,000 acres per year.

Status

Funding for FY 98 resulted in the prescribed burning of over 820 acres and the planning of over 1000 acres for future prescribed burning. FY 99 prescribed burning is complete on 752 acres and preparations for spring prescribed burning of 377 acres is underway. Funding for FY 99 is \$424,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$183,000

For more information, contact Mark Johnson at the USDA Forest Service.

24. Mechanical Treatments

The USFS will use mechanical treatments on approximately 2,000 acres annually to reduce fuel loadings, improve forest health and prepare forest lands for prescribed burning. Funding for FY 98 included some money for project inventory and planning for FY 99. Funding for inventory and planning of projects to be implemented in FY 2000 and beyond were received in FY99.

Status

Contracts were awarded for 2,000 acres of mechanical treatment. During FY 98, 1,600 acres were completed and the remaining 400 acres are under contract. Approximately 2,400 acres of mechanical treatment is planned for FY 1999. Mechanical treatment on 863 of the 2,400 acres planned for FY 1999 is already complete. Funding for FY 99 is \$1,316,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$2,000,000

For more information, contact Chris Knopp at the USDA Forest Service.

25. Land Acquisition

The LTBMU Lands Department will continue its ongoing program of purchasing environmentally sensitive properties from willing sellers.

Status

The LTBMU purchased 4 parcels with a total value of \$136,000 in anticipation of the release of the Presidential Commitment of \$1,000,000 in LWCF Title V dollars . Those dollars were not released by Congress in FY 98 as expected. Forest base funding allowed LTBMU to purchase 9 parcels with a total value of \$169,250.

The Forest is nearing completion of the acquisition of 203 acres from Sierra Pacific Industries. Deeds on 183 acres have been recorded. The remaining 20 acres will be recorded shortly. The value is \$855,000. Acquisition on two other key parcels (Roberts, 15 acres, \$390,000 and Wunchell, 361 acres, \$485,000) are nearing completion. Work is progressing on approximately 15 other offers with an approximate value of \$1,400,000.

Appraisals are being ordered on five other properties with an estimated value of \$3,000,000. Negotiations continue with several other property owners with properties containing significant resource values.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$277,000

For more information, contact Dave Marlow at the USDA Forest Service.

26. Forest Health Consensus Group (FHCG)

USDA Forest Service will support the FHCG's efforts to shape, monitor, and update a comprehensive forest management strategy integrated with other ecosystem restoration efforts such as the watershed assessment, prescribed burning and fire history Presidential Commitments. The FHCG has identified map and database updates, development of a potential natural vegetation model, and a late successional forests enhancement program as needed to effectively develop a Lake Tahoe Basin forest management strategy. The USFS will provide staff to help complete these items in close coordination with the FHCG and recommend changes in law or policy to support the strategy. USDA Forest Service will encourage the States of California and Nevada to provide similar funding for such purposes.

Status

Ed Gee, LTBMU Deputy Forest Supervisor, will serve as the regular USDA Forest Service representative. LTBMU will continue to provide leadership and organization to the Lake Tahoe Unified Steering Group for Forest Assessment and Protection. The FHCG is currently working on methods to increase the amount of late successional and old-growth forests. The FHCG is defining the Desired Future Condition for urban intermix, interface and general forest. Management strategies and demonstration sites for urban areas are being recommended in addition to an ongoing system for monitoring and evaluating the condition of forest ecosystems, long

term effectiveness of management strategies and adapting those to new information. A USDA Forest Service ecologist is currently working on an old growth study which will be integrated with data collected by the Watershed Assessment Team. Funding for FY 99 is \$10,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$31,000

For more information, contact Ed Gee at the USDA Forest Service.

27. Coordinated Transit System (CTS)

The CTS will merge public and private transit services into a centrally operated and dispatched system for efficient passenger movement in the bi-state south shore area.

Passengers will access the system via touch screen kiosks in retail and tourist areas, or by voicemail accessible from bus stops or private residences. The computerized system will then dispatch a roving fleet vehicle, and notify the passenger of a pick-up time. The project will ensure coordination of the multiple public transit systems for south shore residents and tourists and will lessen reliance on automobiles by providing door-to-door public transportation. A successful CTS will reduce congestion, improve air quality, and reduce urban runoff impacts to Lake Tahoe.

Status

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is coordinating this project. TRPA reached agreement with local transit providers and participating casinos on the Participation Agreement and CTS Operating Plan. The contract for the system integration has been awarded. The CTS is anticipated to be fully operational by the end of 1999.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$1,250,000 was provided by the EPA in FY 97.

\$1,250,000 was provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in FY 98.

For more information, contact Mr. Leslie Rogers at the Federal Transit Administration or Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

28. East Shore Beach Shuttle

The East Shore Beach Shuttle began service July 12, 1997 and continued throughout 1997 summer weekends. As an effort by the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) to replace beach-goers unsafe and destructive practice of parking automobiles along State Route (SR) 28, the shuttle transports passengers from designated parking lots to transit stops at approved beach trails. The service represents a cooperative effort among many local and Federal agencies including the USFS, which upgraded beach trails and re-vegetated informal pathways, and NDOT, which developed transit stops along SR 28.

On July 31, 1997, FHWA awarded NDOT funds to evaluate TTD's beach shuttle: the system performance, its environmental effects, and the feasibility of expansion.

Status

The evaluation has been completed. There was no shuttle in 1998. Shuttle service may resume in 1999, however it is currently uncertain.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$20,000

For more information, contact Alan Friesen at the Federal Highway Administration or Colin West at the USDA Forest Service.

29. Transit Center

To be located on USDA Forest Service property in Tahoe City, the center will provide a focal point for public transportation on the north shore. In addition to serving Tahoe residents, the center will include a park-and-ride lot with amenities and information to provide visitors a convenient opportunity to transfer from their automobiles to local transit service. Placer County (California) and the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association will each contribute \$150,000 toward the center. The Forest Service will provide the site free of charge. Any FTA funding for this proposed transit center is subject to enactment of the multi-year surface transportation reauthorization legislation currently pending before Congress.

Status

The Environmental Assessment has been completed and pre-decisional public comments are being reviewed. Design work has begun. The FY 99 earmark will provide remaining funding for design and construction.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$1,000,000

For more information, contact Colin West at the USDA Forest Service or Mr. Leslie Rogers at the Federal Transit Administration.

30. Reno/Tahoe Airport Repair

The Reno/Tahoe International Airport provides the major gateway for national and international visitors to the lake.

In the winter of 1996/97, water runoff from record setting snowfalls in the Sierra Nevada mountains caused major flooding in the Reno area. Covered by water, mud and debris, the airport closed for 36 hours on January 2-3, 1997. Runway 7/25, the airport's primary runway for aircraft takeoffs and landings during significant crosswind weather conditions, was extensively damaged. Saturation caused Runway 7/25 to fail where it intersects with the two parallel taxiways for Runway 16/34. The USDOT Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provided the funds to rebuild this important facility.

Status

Reconstruction began almost immediately after the Vice President's announcement, and will continue through 2000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$6,000,000

For more information, contact William Withycombe at the Federal Aviation Administration.

31. Mail Delivery Upgrade

The United States Postal Service (USPS) will help Lake Tahoe and its residents by extending home and clustered box mail service to communities on the west shore of Lake Tahoe and by replacing its current antiquated fleet of diesel-powered trucks with cleaner burning compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles. These actions will reduce local vehicle traffic and air pollution. The Postal Service, which is an independent agency, is taking these important steps after listening to comments during Forum-related workshops this summer.

Status

The US Postal Service is preparing environmental documentation for the construction of a new postal facility in Tahoe City. This facility will help to determine the type of delivery to be implemented. In addition, three new compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles have replaced diesel trucks.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$250,000

For more information, contact Rebecca Bernard at the United States Postal Service.

32. Geographic Information System (GIS) Internet-Linked Database

To facilitate coordination of research, monitoring, and environmental management activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and to ensure the widest possible access to data and information resulting from such activities, the USGS will lead a multi-agency team to review and adopt, as appropriate, standards and protocols for spatial data and other data used in a GIS that supports improvement of the Basin's health.

The USGS will lead in the establishment of a multi-agency clearing house for GIS and other data and assist in linking individual agency databases through a world-wide web site on the Internet. Technical assistance will be provided to other agencies in GIS and data-management technology through partnerships. These advancements in information management will ensure that scientists, resource managers, and other interested parties will have quick and easy access to Lake Tahoe related data and information. As part of the multi-agency effort, the Forest Service will participate with the USGS, TRPA, and others in developing the interlinked database.

Status

USGS has established the Lake Tahoe Data Clearinghouse (<http://tahoe.usgs.gov>) on the Internet to provide a virtual library of digital information and data for the Basin. Progress to date includes project management, coordination, hardware and software development, and product evaluation. The Clearinghouse is maintained by USGS on a file server dedicated to the Lake Tahoe on-line data, and the web pages serving the data to the public have been developed and modified based on feedback from users. The USGS sponsored a forum in December 1997 to bring together representatives from Federal, state, county, and local agencies and the university community to collaborate in this effort and evaluate progress made to date. Presentations on the Clearinghouse were made at the interagency Lake Tahoe Research Symposium in October 1998. Currently the Lake Tahoe Data Clearinghouse contains nearly a gigabyte of spatial data, including the images and maps created by the bathymetric mapping project. In keeping with the design of the Clearinghouse to act as a virtual library by indexing, rather than physically storing data and information from other agencies, this web site provides links to databases and information sites maintained by the other agencies working in the Lake Tahoe partnership. USGS continues to proactively seek feedback from both the scientific community and the public on information-transfer needs that can be served by this interagency on-line Clearinghouse.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$50,000 from the USGS and \$126,000 from the USFS

For more information, contact Dale Boland at the U.S. Geological Survey.

33. Technical Staff Support

EPA will place a full-time federal employee at TRPA's offices to coordinate overall EPA efforts in the Basin, including the provision of technical support. This work will include coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, provision of project management support for the development and implementation of the real-time threshold monitoring program, analysis of existing water quality data, coordination of water quality research, and support for data management activities.

Status

Jane Freeman from EPA Region 9 Water Division was selected for the place-based assignment and began work in the Basin on June 8, 1998.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$75,000

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

34. Washoe Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)

An MOU was signed between the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and the LTBMU, formalizing a government-to-government relationship. The Washoe and the Forest Service agreed to coordinate activities on relevant resource management programs. To this end, both parties will provide mutual access to unique historical, cultural, natural, and technological information, equipment, and personnel.

Status

The MOU between the USFS and the Washoe Tribe was signed on July 25, 1997, by Juan M. Palma (LTBMU Forest Supervisor) and Brian Wallace (Chairman, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California). The signing was witnessed by Vice President Gore; Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman; Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt; and Katie McGintey of the Council on Environmental Quality.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

No costs were involved in signing of this MOU.

For more information, contact Robert McDowell at the USDA Forest Service.

35. Cave Rock Environmental Analysis

The USFS will conduct an environmental analysis concerning management of Cave Rock and assist the TRPA and the Washoe Tribe in long range planning for the area.

Status

The Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places and Nevada's State Historic Preservation Officer concurred in October with the Forest Service's determination of Cave Rock's eligibility to the National Register. It is eligible as a Traditional Cultural Property, a Historic Transportation District and an Archaeological Site. Interagency coordination is continuing.

The Forest Supervisor released of the Cave Rock proposed action, which began the formal planning process required under the National Environmental Policy Act, in January 1999. The public comment period ended on March 1, 1999. The Draft Environmental Assessment is expected to be released in June, 1999. A Closure Order prohibiting damage and defacement of Cave Rock has been authorized through 1999. Funding for FY 99 is \$54,000.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$72,000

For more information, contact Robert McDowell at the USDA Forest Service.

36. Meeks Meadow Special Use Permit

The Washoe people wish to revitalize heritage and cultural knowledge, including the care and harvest of traditional plants. The Washoe desire an established area to gather plants, reinforce tradition, and educate their youth and the general public about

tribal traditions. Meeks Creek Meadow is a contained landscape where important traditional plants grow and are accessible to Tribal elders.

USFS will enable the Washoe Tribe to manage the 350 acre meadow for the care and harvesting of plants for traditional purposes. The area is accessible by foot along a dirt road which is closed to vehicle use by a locked gate. This route is a major trailhead into the Desolation Wilderness Area and will remain accessible to public foot traffic.

A two phased approach will be used to achieve this Presidential commitment. First, a special use permit (SUP) for study and research was signed on October 29, 1997. It will expire in 2002. Second, an environmental document supporting issuance of a longer term action will be prepared in FY 98. This long term action would be in place by the end of FY 98 with full NEPA documentation and analysis (estimated cost of \$25,000 in FY 98).

Status

On July 18, 1998, a Memorandum of understanding between the Washoe Tribe and the Forest Service was signed. The MOU establishes a close partnership bringing both parties close together to wisely manage the resources of Meeks Meadow. This MOU serves in lieu of the longer term action described above.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

\$18,000

For more information, contact Robert McDowell at the USDA Forest Service.

37. Taylor Creek Special Use Permit

The Washoe people wish to revitalize their heritage and culture, including the establishment of a Washoe Cultural Center. Further, the Washoe wish to regain access to the shore of Lake Tahoe.

The USFS will issue a long term permit to provide the Washoe Tribe with a site on which to place a cultural center to educate their youth and the general public, and to ensure tribal members' access to the water's edge. The parcel of land on which the Cultural Center and other interpretive elements will be located is along Taylor Creek near State Highway 89. Access to the shore of Lake Tahoe would be granted across from the cultural center and north of State Highway 89.

Status

A two-phased approach was used to achieve this Presidential Commitment. First, a special use permit was issued on October 29, 1997 for study and research. Second, an environmental document supporting issuance of a long term permit for a Washoe Cultural Center was prepared in FY 98. This longer term permit will be issued in 1999 with full NEPA documentation and analysis.

The environmental assessment to support the issuance of a long-term permit was

completed and made available for public comment. Responses to public comments are currently underway and are being incorporated into a Final Decision Document. Lake access continues to be defined jointly with the Tribe.

A Cooperative Agreement was established on 2/26/99 to identify specific riparian and wetland areas in Taylor Creek and Meeks Bay to study and implement environmental restoration work.

FY 97 & 98 Funding
\$108,000

For more information, contact Robert McDowell at the USDA Forest Service.

38. Watershed Restoration Partnership

The Corps and the TRPA agreed to act in partnership toward (1) the initiation and completion of a cost-shared comprehensive watershed study for the Upper Truckee River (including Trout Creek) (2) the use of Corps authorities for any additional opportunities for environmental restoration throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin Watershed.

The partnership agreement was signed as the reconnaissance study of the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek Watersheds drew to a close. The next stage of study on these watersheds is addressed in another commitment (Environmental Restoration Opportunities).

In the spirit of the partnership agreement, the Corps is conducting another reconnaissance study that looks further in the Tahoe Basin for potential projects that could restore the health of the watershed. Coordination in the basin indicated that additional study in California watersheds was not currently feasible due to limited non-Federal funds. The expansion of the reconnaissance-level investigation primarily focuses on the Nevada watersheds and coordination has been ongoing with the Nevada Department of Transportation, Douglas and Washoe Counties in the Nevada portion of the basin, and with the numerous Public Utility Districts around the lake.

As a separate effort, the Corps has been utilizing Section 208 of the Flood Control Act of 1954. Under this authority and in cooperation with the TRPA and other local interests, the Corps has initiated studies, one on Blackwood Creek and one on Ward Creek, to determine if there are opportunities to remove sediment and debris accumulated in the storms of December 1996 and January 1997.

As a member of the Federal Partnership, the Corps participated in a number of related efforts that help to maintain Federal focus on the Tahoe Basin.

Status

The reconnaissance study to identify the federal interest in other environmental restoration opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Basin was initiated in January 1998 and completed in September. The Corps will continue to work with local agencies in the

hopes of proceeding into a cost-shared comprehensive feasibility study of the Nevada watersheds. The Incline Village General Improvement District and the Edgewood Creek General Improvement District have indicated a willingness to conduct restoration studies on those watersheds under the Corps Section 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration program that was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. The Nevada Department of Transportation has also expressed interest in further study.

Work on the Planning and Design Analyses (PDA's) for the Section 208 studies on Blackwood and Ward Creeks was initiated in January 1998. Completion is scheduled for June 1999. If one or both of these PDAs shows that there is an economically viable, environmentally acceptable, and technically feasible project, construction could start in late summer 1999. Congress has authorized the Corps to spend up to an additional \$920,000 for implementation, which will require cost sharing agreements with an appropriate non-Federal sponsor.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

Reconnaissance \$100,000

Blackwood and Ward Creek evaluations \$80,000

Federal Partnership Activities \$100,000

For more information, contact Phillip Brozek at the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

39. Lake Tahoe Water Quality Partnership Agreement with California and Nevada

The Presidential Forum has provided the federal government with the opportunity to renew our commitment, along with our state program partners, to restore and protect Lake Tahoe. EPA is identifying specific opportunities to join with state and local governments, the private sector and citizens to invest in the Basin's future. As a result, EPA, California and Nevada have begun discussions regarding the most effective use of resources in order to implement the President's commitments. These discussions have included California Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Resources, and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Under the Clean Water Act, EPA provides grants and other resources to California and Nevada for individual programs and a number of projects in the Tahoe Basin. The states implement these on-going programs and projects under delegation of authority provided by EPA. Currently EPA-funded Tahoe projects include Angora Creek watershed improvement and Third Creek watershed restoration projects. EPA also provides funds to capitalize the State Revolving Funds (SRFs) in California and Nevada. For example, \$8 million of SRF-related funds are being used to implement the Lake Tahoe BMPs retrofit program and the Tahoe Re-Green Program. Tahoe Re-Green enables low-interest loans to be made available to private landowners to assist with reducing fuel accumulation in the forest, thus abating the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

Status

Just prior to the Presidential Forum, EPA initiated discussion with California and Nevada to renew the joint commitments for the restoration and protection of Lake Tahoe. Although a draft Agreement has been prepared, the necessity for such a document has been overtaken by recent events, therefore the States and EPA will continue the partnership that has exemplified their efforts to date without a specific agreement. In addition, the presence of an EPA position in the basin has improved coordination between EPA and the states on water quality issues.

FY 97 & 98 Funding

As part of its continuing support for on-going state environmental programs, EPA has allocated almost \$350 million to California and Nevada in EPA's FY 97 and FY 98 budgets for Clean Water Act grants to states under Sections 106 and 319, as well as wastewater and drinking water state revolving loan funds. Recognizing Lake Tahoe as an environmental priority, California and Nevada have historically, and are expected to continue to, spend significant EPA funds on projects and programs in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

For more information, contact Jane Freeman at the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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APPENDIX E

OTHER FEDERAL ACTIONS, JULY, 1997 – MAY 1999



APPENDIX E: OTHER FEDERAL ACTIONS, JULY, 1997 - DECEMBER 1998

Since the Presidential Forum, the Federal Interagency Partnership agencies have pursued dozens of programs and projects in the Tahoe Basin in addition to the 39 Presidential Commitments (Appendix D). These additional federal activities are listed below.

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Base Program - The USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) continued to receive \$6 million for its base program operations. This base program is in addition to the Presidential Commitments. The LTBMU achieved the following actions with base program funding:

- supported recreation activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin;
- supported fire suppression efforts;
- monitored and restored fish and riparian habitat;
- began surveying and upgrading existing Forest Service facilities for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- supported administrative functions; and
- administered over 800 Special Use permits.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Nevada's Tahoe Bond Act - NRCS participates on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Tahoe Bond Act which has been, or will be, used to fund numerous runoff control and restoration projects in the Basin including Third Creek, Ski Way project, Kingsbury erosion control, and Cave Rock revegetation.

EIP Projects - NRCS has provided technical and engineering assistance on numerous EIP projects in the basin including Trout Creek restoration, Cold Creek restoration, and the Bijou Golf Course/X-Country Ski improvements.

Grazing BMPs - NRCS serves on the Technical Advisory Committee working on updating the Grazing BMPs for the Basin (another EIP project). NRCS has also worked with a landowner to implement a grazing plan for 312 acres along the Upper Truckee River.

US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Army Corps of Engineers

Upper Truckee River Watershed Feasibility Study - An expedited reconnaissance study was completed in July 1997 which focused on the Upper Truckee River watershed, the largest sub-watershed in the Tahoe Basin. Environmental problems and potential

improvement plans, primarily identified by local interests, were considered in the study. The RWQCB has indicated a willingness to be the primary non-Federal sponsor. We are working with the RWQCB to develop a Project Study Plan for the feasibility phase.

Supplemental Tahoe Basin Reconnaissance Study - In September 1998, the USACE Sacramento District completed a reconnaissance study and analysis of environmental restoration opportunities in the remainder of the Basin (exclusive of the Upper Truckee River watershed). The study evaluated opportunities for the USACE to pursue restoration work with the Nevada Department of Transportation, Douglas and Washoe Counties in the Nevada portion of the basin, and with the numerous Public Utility Districts around the lake.

Upper Truckee River Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project - Operating under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, the USACE worked with the City of South Lake Tahoe to develop a scope and schedule for a wetland and stream restoration project in the Upper Truckee River Watershed. The next steps, an Ecosystem Restoration Report (ERR) and Plans and Specifications, are scheduled to be completed by June 2000 to allow construction to begin during the summer of 2000.

Ward and Blackwood Creeks Snagging and Clearing Projects - Pursuant to Section 208 of the Flood Control Act of 1954, the USACE is analyzing the feasibility of removing debris deposited in Ward and Blackwood Creeks during the January 1997 flood. If feasible projects and non-Federal sponsors are identified, construction would occur during the summer of 1999.

US DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Lahontan Cutthroat Trout - The US Fish and Wildlife Service has provided funding for the research being conducted by the USGS on the environmental factors affecting the sustainability of Lahontan cutthroat trout in Independence Lake. A total of \$270,000 has been expended for this valuable research that is entering its third year.

Technical Assistance - The Service serves on a variety of working groups in the Tahoe Basin, including the Biological Advisory Group and the Forest Health Consensus Group. The Service has also provided technical assistance on a number of projects in the Tahoe Basin, including the Whittel Estate land exchange, prescribed burning, the Washoe Tribe Cultural Center, wetlands restoration projects, and the USFS Watershed Assessment.

Geological Survey

Working Groups - The US Geological Survey serves on, and brings its technical expertise, to nearly a dozen working groups in the Tahoe Basin including the Upper Truckee River Watershed Focus Group, the Water Quality Working group, the Trout Creek Advisory Group, and the Lake Tahoe Biological Advisory Group.

Base Program - The USGS continues to provide about \$300 annually to the Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program (LTIMP) to monitor inflow of water, sediment, and nutrients to the lake. TRPA matches the USGS funding, USGS conducts the tributary and ground-water monitoring, and TRG provides limnological and atmospheric monitoring, laboratory services, and other scientific support to the LTIMP.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Land Exchange - The Bureau of Land Management in Nevada has been working in cooperation with the Forest Service to acquire sensitive lands in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

In addition to meeting the Presidential Commitments, the USDOT completed several significant projects in FY 1997 and FY 1998 to protect Lake Tahoe's environment, the region's economy, and the overall quality of life in the Tahoe Basin including:

Scenic Enhancement - On SR 28 at Memorial Point Lookout, within Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park; Preliminary Engineering and construction of observation areas, walkways, parking, and drainage control to prevent erosion and collect sediment from runoff. (\$725,000)

Recreation - Construct 1.3 miles of pedestrian paths along Tahoe Blvd (SR 28) and 1.5 miles of bike lanes on both sides of Northwood Blvd and College Drive. (\$672,000)

Water Quality - On Tahoe Drive (SR 28) in Crystal Bay from Reservoir Drive to the California State Line; preliminary engineering, right-of-way and construct landscaping, beautification and erosion control. (\$900,000)

Roadway & Water Quality - On Upper and Lower Kingsbury (SR 207) from SR 207/US 50 to Market Street and SR 207/US 50 to Kahle Drive; paving, storm drains, sediment collection, slope stabilization and pedestrian improvements. (\$455,711)

Water Quality - US 50 at Edgewood Creek; Construct retaining, headwall at culvert inlet and complete other drainage improvements to reduce erosion potential of roadway embankments washed out during the 1996 floods. (\$315,875)

Water Quality - At US 50/Lake Parkway Loop; Casino core urban runoff project to improve the existing storm drain system and detention ponds including installing sand-oil separators and sediment basins. (\$1,300,000)

US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Nonpoint Source Control Grants - Annually, EPA provides over \$3 million in Clean Water Act Section 319 grants to California and Nevada for projects that control nonpoint sources of water pollution. Since the Forum, about \$500,000 of these grant funds have been directed to projects in the Tahoe Basin. Specific projects included: 1) restoration of 35 acres of wetlands and formation of a streamside environment zone mitigation banking program in the Third Creek watershed; 2) support of the BMP retrofit program which encourages private landowners and commercial businesses to implement erosion control projects on their property; 3) the Eurasian Water Millfoil management project which aims to control the spread of this introduced species into other areas of Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River; and 4) demonstration of self sustaining revegetation approaches.

MTBE Technical Assistance - In response to the contamination of almost a third of the South Lake Tahoe drinking water supply from methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE), EPA provided technical assistance to the STPUD and RWQCB. A team of EPA experts has been reviewing clean up and monitoring plans at gasoline spill sites and is providing expertise on state-of-the art clean up techniques.

MULTIPLE FEDERAL AGENCIES

Since the Forum, there have been several projects where two or more of the Partnership agencies are actively participating and/or providing financial support. Some of these activities are listed below.

BMP Retrofit Project - EPA, NRCS, California, and Nevada support TRPA in this program which provides technical advice and financial assistance to homeowners for the installation of erosion control and prevention measures.

Tahoe Re-Green - Federally supported State Revolving Fund loans are available to Tahoe landowners to reduce brush and trees that pose a risk of wildfire.

Tahoe Citizens Environmental Action Network - Federal and state agencies have joined the Washoe Tribe and local colleges to promote citizen involvement in monitoring and restoration activities.

Upper Truckee River Focused Watershed Group - The watershed group was formed to coordinate and focus the activities of the various agencies, groups, and residents in a concerted effort to improve water quality in the largest watershed in the Tahoe Basin. The group is developing an Action Plan that will coordinate ongoing restoration, monitoring and public outreach activities and identify further funding opportunities. By focussing their efforts in one watershed, the group hopes to take what they learn in the Upper Truckee and apply this knowledge to the remaining 62 watersheds in the Basin.