

LAKE TAHOE PRESIDENTIAL FORUM



**ACTIONS TO
PROTECT
LAKE TAHOE**

**STATUS REPORT
MARCH 1998**



**Tahoe Federal Interagency Partnership
Lake Tahoe Basin California/Nevada**

La'ka:ya lew hamogiyu:ya
Liyñil Wašišiw wa'itde'a demlu 'ida mu'cik 'i'is
Hute' lada'ešip duwe'we' hulew,
diñami:miñ huya wa'ah helišgay

*As one we are thinking.
A long time ago, the Washoe People looked for food and medicine on these lands.
All these things we will try to fix together,
so our children can stay here together in the future.*

*A Washoe Blessing
Adele James, Elder
Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum
Forest Ecosystem Workshop
June 30, 1997*

Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe

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Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum Actions to Protect Lake Tahoe

INTRODUCTION

Leading up to their visit to Lake Tahoe in July 1997, President Clinton and Vice President Gore directed federal agencies to convene three public workshops to address ways to protect the extraordinary ecological and recreational resources in the Lake Tahoe region. The three workshops focused on: (1) *Water Quality* - addressing the diminishing water clarity of Lake Tahoe; (2) *Forest Ecosystem Restoration, Recreation, and Tourism* - addressing the restoration and protection of the Lake Tahoe ecosystem and the continued viability of the region's recreational and tourism-based economy; and (3) *Transportation* - addressing the role of transportation in supporting the Lake Tahoe economy while reducing its effects on the environment.

As a result of these workshops, the Administration determined: (1) to reaffirm its role in helping to manage this national treasure by improving coordination among federal agencies and with the public, the states of California and Nevada, the Washoe Tribe, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and other local units of government; and (2) to take meaningful new actions on water quality, transportation, forest management, and recreation and tourism to protect Lake Tahoe's environment and the region's economy and quality of life.

To accomplish these objectives, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13057 on July 26, 1997 (see appendix A) which ordered specific federal actions to be implemented in the Lake Tahoe region. These commitments will be implemented in cooperation with state, tribal, and local governments.

This status report serves as a consolidated reference document for the commitments made by President Clinton and Vice President Gore at the conclusion of the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum. These actions are in addition to the ongoing federal government activities in the Lake Tahoe region and serve to double the federal financial investment for 1997 and 1998. The Administration will work with state and local partners to expand our joint commitments in succeeding years. All work beyond fiscal year 1998 is subject to annual appropriations by Congress.

**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.

**PRESIDENTIAL
COMMITMENT**

**SEE
PAGE #**

Improving Lake Tahoe's Fabled Water Quality.

Wastewater Pipeline	page 1	✓ 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.
WQ Model	page 2	
Threshold Monitoring	page 3	
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Tahoe-Baikal Partnership	page 5	
Hotline	page 6	
Analysis of LTIMP Data	page 7	
Digital Mapping of Basin	page 8	
Sources of Gasoline		
Pollution	page 9	
Restoration of LCT	page 10	
		✓ 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.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|--|
| Road Erosion Control | page 11 | ✓ 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. |
| Stormwater Settling Basin | page 12 | |
| Road Weather Info System | page 13 | |
| Forest Road Decommissioning | page 14 | ✓ 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. |
| WS Restoration on NFS Lands | page 15 | |
| Wetlands Restoration | page 16 | ✓ EPA will provide additional funding to the states for wetland and stream restoration projects to filter out contaminants and improve water quality and habitat. |
| Environmental Restoration Ops | page 17 | ✓ 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. |
| Backyard Conservation | page 18 | ✓ 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. |
| Source Water Protection | page 19 | ✓ 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. |
| Watershed Assessment | page 20 | ✓ The USFS will conduct a \$2.6 million comprehensive watershed assessment in the Lake Tahoe Basin over the next five years. |
| Fire History Research | page 21 | |
| Urban Lots | page 22 | ✓ 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. |
| Prescribed Burning | page 23 | ✓ 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 |
| Mechanical Treatments | page 24 | |

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

natural ecological processes to Tahoe's forests.

- | | | |
|---|---------|---|
| Land Acquisition | page 25 | ✓ 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. |
| Forest Health
Consensus Group | page 26 | ✓ 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. |
| <i>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.</i> | | |
| Coordinated Transit
System | page 27 | ✓ 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. |
| East Shore Beach Shuttle | page 28 | ✓ 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. |
| Transit Center | page 29 | ✓ 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. |
| Reno/Tahoe Airport | page 30 | ✓ 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. |
| Mail Delivery Upgrade | page 31 | ✓ 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.

Executive Order 13057	appendix A	✓ 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.
Internet-Linked Database	page 32	
Technical Staff Support	page 33	
Washoe MOU	page 34	✓ 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.
Cave Rock		
Env. Analysis	page 35	
Mucks Meadow SUP	page 36	✓ 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.
Taylor Creek SUP	page 37	✓ 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."
Watershed Restoration		
Partnership	page 38	✓ Two weeks ago, the Army Corps of Engineers and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency reached a partnership agreement on watershed restoration.
		✓ Earlier this week, California and Nevada announced a cooperative agreement to strengthen their already exemplary relationship on Lake Tahoe, a partnership the Administration supports and applauds.
Water Quality		
Partnership Agreement	page 39	✓ EPA, California, and Nevada are already drafting an agreement to ensure that they coordinate in research and implementation of water quality restoration measures with local partners.
		✓ The agencies are directed to provide the funds necessary for these commitments within the budget targets set in the Bipartisan Budget Agreement.
Memorandum of	appendix B	✓ 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.
Agreement		

PRESIDENTIAL COMMITMENTS

"The President will work with Congress to secure funding for a replacement 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."

Wastewater Pipeline

The President supported and signed into law funding in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Fiscal Year 1998 (FY 98) 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 (STPUD) 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

EPA Region 9 will be responsible for awarding the grant based on an approvable grant application from the STPUD. EPA received public comment on the December 1997 Environmental Assessment and Negative Declaration for the pipeline project and is working with STPUD to respond to comments and prepare the final environmental review documents. EPA expects to receive a grant application from STPUD in early 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$7,150,000 will be awarded by EPA during FY 98.

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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.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$291,730 were awarded by the EPA in FY 97.
\$327,666 will be awarded by the EPA in FY 98.

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Real-Time Threshold Monitoring Program

This monitoring program would 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 page 2) and analytical efforts including geographic information systems (GIS, see page 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

In early 1998, EPA will provide grant funds to TRPA for the implementation of this project. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) will work directly with TRPA to develop the real-time threshold monitoring program. EPA will continue to provide substantial technical assistance to TRPA throughout the project. In December 1997, EPA, TRPA, and USGS agreed that the first year of this project will be devoted to piloting the program for water quality -- one of the nine environmental thresholds for Lake Tahoe. TRPA submitted their grant application to EPA on February 20, 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$100,000 were provided by the EPA in FY 97.
\$100,000 will be provided by the EPA for FY 98.

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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 and TRPA plan to convene the first meeting of federal, state, and local agencies, along with academia, in early 1998. USGS, USDA Forest Service (USFS), US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), UC Davis, University of Nevada-Reno, and EPA are expected to be the key participants in this effort. The team will determine the remaining water quality research needs at Lake Tahoe, including the impacts of deposition of air pollutants on the lake's water quality. The team will also re-evaluate the current Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program (LTIMP). Possible research topics to be discussed include a deep water plants study, shore zone analysis, and the relationship between air transport and controlled burn issues. This work will also be coordinated with the real-time threshold monitoring program (see page 3).

FY 97 - 98 Funding

EPA will provide substantial staff support to accomplish this work.

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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 will administer this project, building upon local efforts in the Tahoe region to foster information exchange and cultural ties between Lake Tahoe and Lake Baikal. EPA received a grant application from TBI in early February 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$50,000 will be provided by the EPA for FY 98.

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Environmental/Recycling Hotline

The national Environmental/Recycling Hotline (phone: "1-800-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. The Tahoe Center for Sustainable Futures (TCSF) serves as the clearinghouse for adding further Tahoe-area environmental information to the Hotline later in 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

The Environmental Hotline operates as a public-private partnership.

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Analysis of 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 appropriations require matching funds from local partners to secure the funds needed to adequately analyze and evaluate the data generated by this program over the past 15 years. Discussions with potential funding partners have been initiated with other state and local agencies and universities.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$80,000 (in addition to \$503,000 in USGS/TRPA cooperative base funding) in FY 98.
USGS appropriations require matching contributions from partners.

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Digital Mapping of the Lake Basin

The current maps of the bottom of Lake Tahoe (bathymetry) are based on data collected in the late 1920'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 is seeking funding partners for this effort with other federal, state, and local agencies.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$100,000 in FY 98

USGS appropriations require matching contributions from partners.

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"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."

Sources of Gasoline Pollution

Initial studies by the University of Nevada in the summer of 1997 have demonstrated the presence of Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether and other gasoline by-products 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 be able to document the distribution of gasoline byproducts in runoff from this winter's El Nino storms is considered important.

Status

TRPA has used the results of the preliminary reconnaissance surveys conducted in July-August 1997 by the USGS, UC Davis, and University of Nevada-Reno as the basis for a ban on all 2-cycle engines in water craft on Lake Tahoe. This ban would be effective in 1999. USGS is continuing negotiations with the TRPA, EPA, and others to find cooperative funding to start a multi-season occurrence survey for gasoline byproducts in the lake and tributaries.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$140,000 in FY 98.

USGS appropriations require matching contributions from partners.

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*“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.**”*

Restoration of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT)

Prior to the 1900's, LCT were a spectacular gamefish common throughout the Truckee River system from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake. By the late 1940's 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

Discussions with California and Nevada agencies have resulted in a re-scoping of this effort. Negotiations with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) for funding continue.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$40,000 (in addition to \$90,000 in USGS/USFWS base funding) in FY 98.
USGS appropriations require matching contributions from partners.

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"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 to reduce wintertime application of sand, salt, and de-icing chemicals, some of which enter the lake and harm water quality."

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. EPA will provide an additional \$50,000 for the Incline Village stormwater settling basin (see page 12) in FY 98.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$250,000 were provided by the FHWA in FY 97.

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"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 to reduce wintertime application of sand, salt, and de-icing chemicals, some of which enter the lake and harm water quality."

Stormwater Settling Basin

EPA will help fund a stormwater settling basin project in Incline Village, NV. Settling basins are designed to retain and provide settling and filtration of polluted runoff from storms. Runoff from Ski Way and land adjacent to the road contributes some of the worst loadings of nutrients and sediments to Lake Tahoe. The project will capture erosive stormwater runoff and convey it to sediment detention basins on nearby public lands.

Status

Washoe County and the State of Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of State Lands will implement this project. The EPA grant will be awarded to the Division of State Lands following submittal of a complete grant application, expected in March 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$50,000 will be provided by the EPA for FY 98.

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"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 to reduce wintertime application of sand, salt, and de-icing chemicals, some of which enter the lake and harm water quality."

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 are being provided by FHWA for FY 98.

For more information

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"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 unused roads and returning the 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."

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 funding for this work, subject to appropriations, is \$1,300,000 annually beginning in FY 98 (this is in addition to \$334,000 in FY 98 already committed to this purpose). Emphasis in FY 98 and FY 99 will be on completion of project planning and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Project accomplishments over the first two years will be in the North Shore and Heavenly Valley, where planning has already been completed.

Status

Treatment areas for the FY 98 program have been identified and a plan has been created to accomplish tasks in support of the FY 99 program of work. Approximately \$30,000 was expended in FY 97 base funding to purchase and install gates for road closures at sensitive areas. \$5,000 in FY 98 funds had been spent through December 31, 1997 on planning costs.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$1,300,000 (plus \$334,000 in base funds) are intended to be awarded by the Forest Service in FY 98.

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"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 unused roads and returning the 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."

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. 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

The Forest Service expended \$152,000 in FY 97 base funds to accomplish 40 acres in restoration (including road obliteration), revegetation, and stream channel stabilization. An additional 52 acres of restoration were accomplished with funding contributed by others, including the Heavenly Ski Area. Three Project Work Plans, the development of a restoration strategy, and work on two contracts for watershed surveys were accomplished in the first quarter of FY 98.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$475,000 (in addition to \$145,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"EPA will provide additional funding to the states for wetland and stream restoration projects to filter out contaminants and improve water quality and habitat."

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 received a grant application and work plan from TRPA in November 1997 and is now processing the grant award. TRPA's work plan calls for a start date of April 1998 and completion of the project in 1999.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$150,000 will be awarded by the EPA, matched by \$50,000 in TRPA funds in FY 98.

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“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.”

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 1986. An analysis demonstrating federal interest in ecosystem restoration in the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek Watersheds was completed and approved in July 1997. A project-specific study for Trout Creek under Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 is currently being conducted. This may lead to construction of a restoration project if a justified project is identified and a non-federal agency agrees to share in the cost of the project.

Status

While the reconnaissance study completed in 1997 demonstrated that there is a federal interest in ecosystem restoration on the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek, it was decided in consultation with TFPA and others that rather than initiating a feasibility study that ultimately would go to Congress for authorization, it would be quicker and more economical to move forward using the new authority provided by Section 206, at least on Trout Creek. How to proceed with the Upper Truckee River is still under consideration.

The Section 206 study for Trout Creek was initiated in early December 1997. Work now underway will determine the basic scope, outputs, and cost of a restoration project for Trout Creek, and will be reported in the Preliminary Restoration Plan in March 1998. Once this conceptual report is approved, work will begin on the detailed feasibility report, the Ecosystem Restoration Report, scheduled to be completed in December 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$600,000 available in FY 98.

For More Information

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"The USDA National Resources 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."

Backyard Conservation Initiative

The USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will form a partnership with the local Resource Conservation Districts and other organizations to deliver to Tahoe home owners 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 has formed a technical advisory committee (TAC) made up of local, state, and regional agencies to provide coordination and guidance to this effort. The first meeting of the TAC was held and current program activities, available resources, and needs, program goals, and strategies were identified by the 24 attendees.

Development of technical and program fact sheets in Spanish and English is currently underway. Direct field assistance to homeowners on site will begin May 1, 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$255,000 (in addition to \$170,000 in previously committed funds) in FY 98.

For More Information

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“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.”

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 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

EPA received TRPA's project work plan and grant application in January 1998. EPA is processing the application and expects to award the grant in March.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$50,000 was allocated by EPA in FY 97 and remains available.

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"The USFS will conduct a \$2.6 million comprehensive watershed assessment in the Lake Tahoe Basin over the next five years."

Watershed Assessment

This work will create three interactive products: the Watershed Assessment, a management plan, and a monitoring plan. The purpose of the assessment is to integrate available data regarding the physical, biological, and socio-cultural components of the Lake Tahoe Basin ecosystem.

This work will be integrated with activities of other agencies such as TRPA, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and ongoing work being done for the Sierran Provinces Monitoring Strategy by the USFS.

Status

A partial ecosystem assessment of the west shore of the Lake Tahoe Basin was accomplished during FY 97 with existing funds. \$10,000 has so far been expended in FY 98 funding for the preparation of a scope of work, contracts, team selection, initial scoping of Basin issues with external stockholders, and for a compilation of relevant spatial and aspatial (GIS) data.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$1,000,000 (in addition to \$286,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"The USFS will conduct a \$2.6 million comprehensive watershed assessment in the Lake Tahoe Basin over the next five years."

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 will use established research and study prioritization processes to expand on recent research from the east shore of Lake Tahoe. This research will provide reference variability information to support both the watershed assessment and mechanical treatment commitments. This work is also covered under the White House Statement: "USFS will use prescribed fire and other means to reduce fuels on approximately 3,000 acres of open forest land each year. About 1,000 acres will be burned per year. These steps will help return natural ecological processes to Tahoe's forests."

Status

The final report on the completed study was submitted in January 1998. Plans for field work this summer are being finalized.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$30,000 in FY 98.

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“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.”

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 2h 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

A total of 119 urban lots (44 acres) have been hand treated by regional “hotshot” 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, Nevada side). The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) is currently preparing 75 subdivision lots 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.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$400,000 (in addition to \$300,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"USFS will use prescribed fire and other means to reduce fuels on approximately 3,000 acres of open forest land each year. About 1,000 acres will be burned per year. These steps will help return natural ecological processes to Tahoe's forests."

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. FY 98 funding needs include \$150,000 for planning on 250 acres for which additional inventory and analysis may be needed to accomplish burning in FY 99.

Status

The goal of the Prescribed Burn Commitments for FY 98 is to treat 1000 acres of National Forest land through controlled burning. More than 800 acres have been burned to date, taking advantage of an especially favorable fall burning season.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$489,500 (in addition to \$305,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"USFS will use prescribed fire and other means to reduce fuels on approximately 3,000 acres of open forest land each year. About 1,000 acres will be burned per year. These steps will help return natural ecological processes to Tahoe's forests."

Mechanical Treatments

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 in FY 98 includes some inventory and planning costs for projects to be implemented FY 98 and beyond.

Status

Ninety-one acres have been completed. One hundred-forty acres are under contract. Contracts are nearly ready for advertisement on 1483 acres. NEPA analysis is complete and ready for decision on 100 acres.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$2,324,200 (in addition to \$260,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"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."

Land Acquisition

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

Status

Options to acquire eight parcels with a total value of \$263,250 are awaiting funding. Two other parcels, valued at \$750,000, are being processed for acquisition. Two hundred and fifty potential sellers were contacted in preparation for the FY 98 acquisition program. Eighty-seven parcels, totaling approximately 430 acres, have been included in the program from these contacts.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$1,150,000 for land acquisition, including case processing, has been appropriated for FY 98.*

\$1,300,000 for land acquisition, including case processing, is being requested as part of the Title V Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisition projects for FY 98.

* For purposes of the appropriations process, each unit of the NFS begins with a base program of zero. Funding for the LTBMU over FYs 97 and 98 has averaged \$950,000.

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"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."

Forest Health Consensus Group (FHCG)

USFS 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 and 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. USFS will encourage the States of California and Nevada to provide similar funding for such purposes.

Status

John Swanson, LTBMU Fire and Vegetation Officer, will serve as the regular USFS 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.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$50,000 in FY 98.

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"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."

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

Negotiations among local transit providers have been completed and will be formalized in early 1998. Start-up will require approximately one year from these approvals.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$1,250,000 were awarded by the EPA to TRPA in FY 97.

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

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"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."

East Shore Beach Shuttle

The East Shore Beach Shuttle began service July 12, 1997 and continued throughout 1997 summer weekends. An effort by the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) to replace beachgoers' current 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 is scheduled to be completed by March 2, 1998. The results will be used to refine the beach shuttle for service during the summer of 1998.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$20,000 were provided by FHWA in FY 97.

For more information

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"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."

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

Design work for the transit center is proceeding. A schedule for final construction depends upon completing the funding package.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$1,000,000 from the FTA in FY 98.

A second budget earmark will be needed to obtain additional funds.

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"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."

Reno/Tahoe Airport Repair

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

Water runoff from last winter's 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, which began almost immediately after the Vice President's announcement, was completed in December 1997.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$6,000,000 were provided by the FAA in FY 97.

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"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."

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

Three CNG vehicles have been purchased and are currently being stored in Reno. A local gas vendor is being sought who will retrofit their company's fittings to be compatible with these vehicles. Projected start up date is February - March 1998. The USPS has initiated home delivery on the west shore, but has temporarily stopped this service due to snow conditions.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$250,000 in FY 98.

For More Information

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"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."

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 progress to date includes project management, coordination, hardware and software development, and product evaluation. A technical lead for the GIS Presidential commitment has been identified, a file server dedicated to the Lake Tahoe Internet-linked database is on-line, and a prototype homepage for has been developed. 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. Forest Service progress to date includes coordination, a needs assessment, data development, and training. Data development and training is utilizing national and regional applications and standards.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$50,000 from the USGS and \$150,000 from the USFS in FY 98.

For More Information

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*"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."*

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

EPA is seeking candidates for this assignment, which will begin in early 1998. EPA anticipates continuing its support for this position in future years.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$75,000 will be provided by the EPA for FY 98.

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"The United States, through the 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."

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).

FY 97 - 98 Funding

No costs are involved in the signing of this MOU.

For More Information

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"The United States, through the 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."

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

Progress to date sets the groundwork for the future collaborative and planning efforts. The Forest Service and the Washoe Tribe have met several times. A Forest Service interdisciplinary team has been formed, including representatives from three national forests. A series of public forums is continuing. The first forum, held January 22, 1998, attracted 75 participants. Future forums are planned for March 1998. The temporary closure prohibiting placement of new climbing bolts or other defacement of Cave Rock has been continued for 1998, and there has been extensive media coverage of the closure and forums. The project mailing list has been developed. Approximately \$15,000 of FY 98 funds have been expended to date.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$120,000 in FY 98.

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“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.”

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

The LTBMU issued a ‘study’ permit on October 29, 1997 to formalize the USFS and Washoe Tribe’s intent on this commitment. A planner was hired to focus on this as well as the Taylor Creek SUP (see page 37). Several meetings have been held with the Washoe Tribe and the TRPA to give clear definition the Washoe proposals. This is necessary for the LTBMU to make an informed NEPA decision prior to issuing a long term land use decision. FY 98 expenditures to date are estimated at \$1,000.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$25,000 (plus \$2,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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"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'."

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.

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.

A two phased approach will be used to achieve this Presidential commitment. First, a SUP was issued on October 29, 1997 for study and research. Second, an environmental document supporting issuance of a longer term permit will be prepared in FY 98. This long term permit would be issued by 1999 with full NEPA documentation and analysis (estimated cost of \$150,000 in FY 98).

Status

The LTBMU issued a 'study' permit on October 29, 1997 to formalize the USFS and Washoe Tribe's intent on this Presidential commitment. A planner has been hired to focus on this as well as the Meek's Meadow SUP (see page 36). LTBMU has had several meetings with the Washoe Tribe and the TRPA to give clear definition to the Washoe proposals for the Washoe Cultural Center and Lake Access at Taylor Creek. An extensive but dated Planning Record has been reviewed and a schedule of tasks and dates have been drafted. LTBMU is contracting with a Transportation Planning Consultant for traffic impact analysis and to make mitigation recommendations for three alternative cultural center sites at Taylor creek. All of this is necessary for the LTBMU to make an informed NEPA decision prior to issuing a long term decision. Approximately \$6,000 in FY 98 funds have been expended to date.

FY 97 - 98 Funding

\$150,000 (plus \$2,000 in USDA base funding) in FY 98.

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

Watershed Restoration Partnership

The Corps and the TRPA agreed to act in partnership toward (1) the initiation and completion of a cost-shared Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek Watersheds Feasibility Report and (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, see page 17).

In the spirit of the partnership agreement, the Corps will initiate another reconnaissance study to look at more of the Lake Tahoe Basin. This expansion of the reconnaissance-level investigation will include consideration of Third, Incline, and Edgewood Creeks, and possibly other areas.

Another authority that the Corps will use is Section 208 of the Flood Control Act of 1954. Under this authority and in cooperation with TRPA and other local interests, the Corps will initiate 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.

Status

The reconnaissance study to identify the federal interest in other environmental restoration opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Basin was initiated in January 1998. The study is scheduled for completion in September 1998.

Work on the Planning and Design Analyses (PDAs) for the Section 208 studies on Blackwood and Ward Creeks was initiated in January 1998. Completion is scheduled for December 1998. If one or both of these PDAs shows that there is an economically viable, environmentally acceptable, and technically feasible project, construction could start in mid-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

\$180,000 in FY 98.

For More Information

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"EPA, California, and Nevada are already drafting an agreement to ensure that they coordinate in research and implementation of water quality restoration measures with local partners."

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

A draft Lake Tahoe Water Quality Partnership Agreement has been prepared. EPA is continuing discussions with California and Nevada on modifications to this draft agreement. EPA is coordinating with and has provided technical assistance to TRPA on the BMP retrofit program. The California Department of Forestry is implementing the Tahoe Re-Green Program.

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.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13057: FEDERAL ACTIONS IN THE LAKE TAHOE REGION

APPENDIX B

A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FEDERAL INTERAGENCY
PARTNERSHIP ON THE LAKE TAHOE ECOSYSTEM, THE STATES OF CALIFORNIA
AND NEVADA, THE WASHOE TRIBE OF CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA,
AND THE TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY: FEDERAL TWO-YEAR FUNDING COMMITMENTS

Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum
Appendix C - Summary: Federal Two-Year Funding Commitments

Page	Presidential Commitment	FY 97	FY 98	TOTAL
1	Wastewater Pipeline	\$0	\$7,150,000	\$7,150,000
2	Water Quality Forecasting Model	\$291,730	\$327,666	\$619,396
3	Real-Time Threshold Monitoring Program	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000
4	Multi-Agency Water Quality Research Team	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	Lake Tahoe-Lake Baikal Partnership	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
6	Environmental/Recycling Hotline	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	Analysis of LTIMP Monitoring Data	\$0	\$80,000	\$80,000
8	Digital Mapping of the Lake Basin	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
9	Source of Gasoline Pollution	\$0	\$140,000	\$140,000
10	Restoration of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT)	\$0	\$40,000	\$40,000
11	Road Erosion Control & Stormwater Mgmt.	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
12	Stormwater Settling Basin	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
13	Road Weather Information System (RWIS)	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000
14	Forest Road Decommissioning and Improvement	\$0	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
15	Watershed Restoration on NFS Lands	\$0	\$475,000	\$475,000
16	Wetlands Restoration Projects	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
17	Environmental Restoration Opportunities	\$0	\$600,000	\$600,000
18	Backyard Conservation Initiative	\$0	\$255,000	\$255,000
19	Source Water Protection Program	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
20	Watershed Assessment	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
21	Fire History Research	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
22	Urban Lots	\$0	\$400,000	\$400,000
23	Prescribed Burning	\$0	\$489,500	\$489,500
24	Mechanical Treatments	\$0	\$2,324,200	\$2,324,200
25	Land Acquisition	\$0	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
26	Forest Health Consensus Group (FHCG)	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
27	Coordinated Transit System (CTS)	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$2,500,000
28	East Shore Beach Shuttle	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000
29	Transit Center	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
30	Reno/Tahoe Airport Runway Repair	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$6,000,000
31	Mail Delivery Upgrade	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000
32	GIS Internet-Linked Database	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000
33	Technical Staff Support	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000
34	Washoe Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	\$0	\$0	\$0
35	Cave Rock Environmental Analysis	\$0	\$120,000	\$120,000
36	Meeks Meadow Special Use Permit	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
37	Taylor Creek Special Use Permit	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
38	Watershed Restoration Partnership	\$0	\$180,000	\$180,000
39	Water Quality Partnership Agreement	\$0	\$0	\$0
	TOTALS	\$7,961,730	\$19,736,366	\$27,698,096

LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
BMP	Best Management Practice
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
Corps	Army Corps of Engineers
CTS	Coordinated Transit System
EIP	TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	USDOT Federal Aviation Administration
FHCG	Lake Tahoe Basin Forest Health Consensus Group
FHWA	USDOT Federal Highway Administration
FTA	USDOT Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information System
LCT	Lahontan Cutthroat Trout
LTBMU	Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
LTIMP	Lake Tahoe Interagency Monitoring Program
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDOT	Nevada Department of Transportation
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFS	National Forest System
NRCS	USDA National Resources Conservation Service
PDA	Planning and Design Analysis
RWIS	Road Weather Information System
SR	State Route
SRF	State Revolving Funds
STPUD	South Tahoe Public Utility District
SUP	Special Use Permit
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TBI	Tahoe-Baikal Institute
TCSF	Tahoe Center for Sustainable Futures
TRPA	Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
TTD	Tahoe Transportation District
UC Davis	University of California - Davis
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USDOT	US Department of Transportation
USFS	USDA Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
USPS	US Postal Service