

SECTION H

Copies of Written Comments



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Sierra District Resource Services
Cyndie Walck
PO Box 16
Tahoe City, CA. 96145
cwalck@parks.ca.gov

RECEIVED

APR 10 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Jacqui Grandfield
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 3rd Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

I am writing to provide brief comments on the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project.

I am the engineering geologist/fluvial geomorphologist with California State Parks. I support the idea of restoring the marsh and geomorphic function of the Upper Truckee at the mouth at Lake Tahoe. From a brief review of the alternatives, I think alternative 3, the Middle Marsh Corridor, would yield the greatest results for river function and habitat improvement. Prior to human disturbance, the river probably was a distributary multi-thread system. This is the only alternative that mimics that condition. Construction of a single thread channel or an inset floodplain would not restore geomorphic function or allow the floodwaters extended time and area on the floodplain. By creating a more natural multi-channel marsh configuration you will have the greatest benefits to both water quality and habitat.

A couple of the alternatives also call for narrowing the mouth. A question that I did not see addressed is how the historic mouth and barrier bars would have functioned. Would the channel have closed in low flow years and breached in high spring flows? I am sure the native fish would have been adapted to the natural variability, but how that system functioned should be investigated.

Sincerely,

Cyndie Walck



City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2007

CA TAHOE CO

March 19, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/EIS for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, South Lake Tahoe, California

Dear Mrs. Grandfield:

Thank you for the opportunity for the City of South Lake Tahoe to further comment on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this project. The City has one additional comment:

There are a number of on-going projects along the river being completed by a number of different organizations. The City of South Lake Tahoe wants to ensure responsibility of reviewing the cumulative effects of all projects on the river in the City of South Lake Tahoe is delegated. For instance, there are several over-bank projects. Has determination been made as to what type of event is required to allow over-banking occurrences at all locations and/or achievable? It would seem that river modeling based upon all new projects would be appropriate for this particular project as it is at the bottom of the watershed.

Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on the NOP and the City looks forward to working with you. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (530) 542-6035.

Sincerely,

John Greenhut
Director of Public Works

c: Hilary Hodges, Planning Manager

h:\data-a-d\etc\utr marsh comment 3-19-07.doc

RECEIVED

APR 2 - 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

March 15, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Dear Ms. Grandfield,

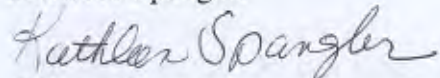
We received a copy of the public announcement regarding the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project today and reviewed the 4 alternative proposals. Of most interest to us was the Study Area map. We are property owners abutting your two lots at the east end of Lily Avenue. Although you don't specifically mention those lots in any of your proposals, we noticed that the map includes them in the study area.

Last summer, we were talking to one of the prior owners of those two lots, a member of the Harootunian family. She mentioned that her family sold the lots to the Conservancy with the stipulation that no development of any kind is done on the property and that it be maintained as open space. She had also heard last year from talking to one of your planners that he had proposed that those two lots be developed as parking for visitors to the Marsh area.

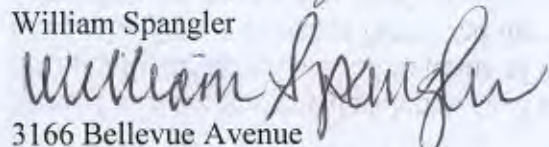
Please be aware that any development of that kind at that location would be detrimental, not only to our neighborhood in terms of vehicle, foot traffic and littering, but to us personally from a nuisance factor and the ruination of the open land and native plants that exist on the property. My wife's family has owned the property surrounding your 2 above-mentioned lots since 1876 and since we acquired the property from my wife's mother's estate a few years ago, we have tried to maintain the open space of the area and having your two, what we thought were undevelopable lots, adjacent to our property would assure open space and native plants for the entire corner of the block. It would be a travesty to have that forever-vacant property turned into a public nuisance, just for the sake of making a few parking spaces for the Marsh visitors.

Be advised that we, as well as any neighbors that we can enlist, will vigorously oppose any efforts to convert your undeveloped lots in our neighborhood to a parking lot, and the traffic and disturbances that go along with it.

Kathleen Spangler



William Spangler



3166 Bellevue Avenue
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

RECEIVED

MAR 27 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

March 25, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe CA 96150

Mike Elam
Associate Environmental Planner
PO Box 5310
Stateline NV 89449

Subject: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

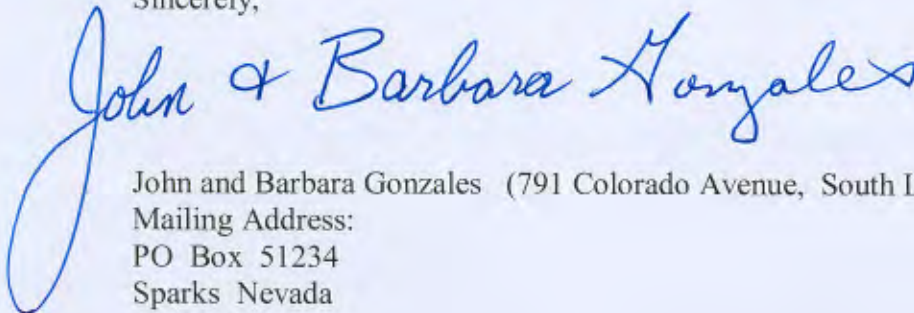
As property owners within 300 feet of the study area boundary for the above named project, we are very concerned with any proposal that could affect the flood level water elevation of the Upper Truckee River near Colorado Avenue in the City South Lake Tahoe. The chosen alternative to the River and Marsh Restoration Project must be selected based on the safety of people and property adjacent to the project boundaries.

Over the past 31 years of property ownership on Colorado Avenue adjacent to the Upper Truckee River Meadow Area, we have experienced the devastating effects of flooding from the River. You have an opportunity to decrease the potential flooding of homes along Colorado Avenue by designing and constructing the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project to lower the flood water elevation in that stretch of the River and Meadow.

We emphatically request that the project considered for the Upper Truckee River and Meadow area near our home on Colorado Avenue include the primary goal to reduce the flooding affects on homes and the danger to human life. Life safety and protection of property need to be the foremost requirement to be accomplished for this project.

Thank you for allowing us to comment.

Sincerely,



John and Barbara Gonzales (791 Colorado Avenue, South Lake Tahoe, California)
Mailing Address:
PO Box 51234
Sparks Nevada
89435-1234

775-626-0250
gengm@charter.net



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT
DIRECTOR

Notice of Preparation

March 20, 2007

RECEIVED

MAR 26 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

To: Reviewing Agencies
Re: Upper Triuckee River & Marsh Restoration Project
SCH# 2007032099

Attached for your review and comment is the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Upper Triuckee River & Marsh Restoration Project draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Responsible agencies must transmit their comments on the scope and content of the NOP, focusing on specific information related to their own statutory responsibility, within 30 days of receipt of the NOP from the Lead Agency. This is a courtesy notice provided by the State Clearinghouse with a reminder for you to comment in a timely manner. We encourage other agencies to also respond to this notice and express their concerns early in the environmental review process.


Please direct your comments to:

Jacqui Grandfield
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

with a copy to the State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research. Please refer to the SCH number noted above in all correspondence concerning this project.

If you have any questions about the environmental document review process, please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613.

Sincerely,


Scott Morgan
Senior Planner, State Clearinghouse

Attachments
cc: Lead Agency

California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third St.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
ATTN: Jacqui Grandfield

April 26, 2007

RECEIVED

APR 30 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Re: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration
Project.

Dear Jacqui:

Thank you for hosting our “Thirty Three concerned neighbors” last evening at your office. The information provided cleared up a number of items, but at the same time underscored the urgency to express our concerns with regard to “the meadow” and your scoping process. I have had extensive conversations prior to our meeting and several since, and the concerns I’m identifying here are common concerns and wishes that we would like you and your agency to strongly consider in your final decision-making.

Let me start first and foremost with our extreme concerns regarding the possibilities of erecting your “observation platforms” on the east side of the meadow. As you heard from most everyone at our meeting, we do not want nor does the logistics allow for the parking and increase traffic ensured by your building these platforms. Rather, we suggest, if such “platforms” must be installed, please consider putting them where the people already are or where the increased parking and foot traffic will not impact our homes and roadways. Consider please installing your “platforms” in the Highland Woods area approximately where you have designated as one of your “viewpoints” on your Alternative 3 Plan. That area was historically used as a staging area for the cattle and ranching activities and should provide ample parking and should minimize the number of problems associated with your plans. Our other suggestion for the “platforms” would be near the lake and also on your Alternative 3 Plan by Cove East view point and possibly closer to the marina parking area. We really do not want the problems associated

with no parking availability on the east side of the meadow. Since we already know that "no parking" signs are not heeded nor enforced, (i.e. Lilly Ave).

Please consider posting all entrances to the meadow on the east side, San Francisco, Lilly, Lake View, Oakland, no parking- no motorized vehicles- no unleashed dogs.

We feel the Alternative 3 Plan allows the river to seek it's own course and would probably lead to a more natural barrier from both the Keys side (West) and our side (East). The natural flow of the river should make this alternative the most natural, least intrusive and best means to help keep the meadow at a maximum natural and wildlife restoration.

We do not think any form of bike trail or enhanced foot trail would benefit the natural restoration, but would surely increase the negative impact in our neighborhood. Finally we do applaud your mission to restore the wildlife and efficiency of the meadow and river system, but please keep in mind how your final plans and improvements will impact our lives and enjoyment of our homes.

Yours truly,

Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Blaney

Mr. & Mrs. Ty & Bobbie Baldwin

Donald R. & Robin Shaw

Kenneth C. Smith MW

Don & Anita Bruce

Barbara J. Harokuman

RECEIVED

APR 30 2007

April 26, 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third St.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Re: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

Dear Jacqui,

We are thirty-five year homeowners living at the corner of San Francisco Ave. and Argonaut Ave. We support the projects plan to restore natural and self-sustaining river and floodplain process to help reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity.

However, we object to the section of the plans that state that numerous public viewing and observation platforms (4 or 5) will be placed along the eastern perimeter of Barton Meadow. The added foot traffic that has occurred since the acquisition of this meadow property by the Conservancy in 2000 has already created neighborhood parking problems which will be exacerbated by the addition of observation platforms.

We live in a quiet neighborhood with narrow streets. In addition to creating more parking problems, the influx of tourists into the neighborhood and meadow will increase trash and pollution problems along the streets leading to public access areas. How will the human waste issue be solved? We do not want to look out our windows at "port-a-potties"!

Since the acquisition of Barton Meadow by the Conservancy, there is little or no supervision or controls on the meadow's use. There is now a huge fire hazard with piles of slash and fallen trees creating a ladder effect. Since there are no smoking controls, we have observed many smokers entering or "lighting up" after entering the meadow. We now check the area after they leave and have put out small fires.

The Conservancy, Reclamation and TRPA stated in the Summary, p. 2 "The primary purpose of the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is to restore natural geomorphic processes and ecological functions along this reach of river." Dogs and bicycles do nothing to aid or enhance restoration. The marsh area on the eastern perimeter is the largest area of this kind in the Basin. It provides a natural nesting area for wildlife. This wildlife environment should be protected!

SUGGESTIONS

- 1. Contain Public Access to West Cove**
 - **Parking available**
 - **This area is already acknowledge as public access area**
 - **Keep viewing areas on West side only – Better protection for wildlife**
- 2. Discourage/NO traffic in Meadow Cove East**
- 3. NO bicycles/ wheeled vehicles**
- 4. NO Dogs**
- 5. Signs: Ex: “Nesting area”, “Wildlife Protection Area”**
- 6. Create a public bicycle and dog (poop) park elsewhere/ possibly former Sunrise Stables Property**
- 7. No Smoking enforcement**

Thank you for considering these issues. We urge you to protect this beautiful resource.

Sincerely,

A. Eugene Rasmussen
Ann Rasmussen

RECEIVED

APR 30 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

To Whom It May Concern:

4/26/07

I received your announcement about the alternative proposals about the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, and I would like to comment on it.

I am a homeowner in South Lake Tahoe, owning a home on the meadow that borders the river. I actually live here year-round, and have observed the meadow and the river through all its seasons.

It is my opinion that alternative 5 is the best alternative: leave our meadow and our river be!

In the time of the spring run-off, the meadow is already flooded for weeks to months, often to the back of our fence. Rarely, in recent years, it has flooded to the level that water ends up in our garage. There is no plan offered that would change what the river already does naturally. And the other 4 options have the potential to significantly and negatively impact not only the neighboring home owners, but the ecological balance of the meadow itself.

Reconstructing the river will not significantly affect the water clarity of our Lake. From the research I have done, much of the sediment that ends up affecting the edge of the Lake actually comes from ground water runoff. There is no science backing up the theory that any of the first 4 proposals put forth will change that. But, the destructive effect it could have on the river, the meadows and existing flood plains (please see the photos I have included that are representative of what happens on the meadow every year that there is significant snowfall), as well as the abundant wild life is a real risk.

On our meadow I have seen bald eagles hunting the river in spring, osprey doing the same along with a snowy white tern, and great blue heron. There are doves, owls, ducks, geese, quail, and a huge variety of birds that all share the habitat. There are bears, beavers, frogs, coyote, and a multitude of other small animals living in the meadow. There are two varieties of fish in the river: the rainbow trout and the brown trout. There used to be kokanee in the fall, but the project at Cove East disrupted their spawning pathways.

I am fearful of the destruction that re-routing the river would bring to this delicate balance of nature. And yes, I fear that you would increase the flooding in the streets around the meadow. (Which would, by the way, increase the runoff of sediment into the Lake.)

Please, tread carefully in considering the alternatives for this area. Don't let money speak louder than reason.

Sincerely,

Maria A. Pielact
775 Colorado Avenue, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150



RECEIVED

APR 26 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Terri Thomas

P.O.Box 14472 ■ South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151-4472 ■ 530.541.2543 ■ e-mail: htayurt@yahoo.com

"4 Year Renter/Resident at 3043 Argonaut Avenue - Adj. to the Upper Truckee Wetlands"

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program - California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third St.
South Lake Tahoe, Calif 96150

April 25, 2007

Dear Jacqui -

Thank you so much for providing the opportunity to hear what you, Rick and our other neighbors think about the proposed future of the beautiful meadow we all share. I love the amazing view every morning and the sounds of the coyotes & frogs at night. I was glad to hear that other people seem to appreciate it as much as I do. This meadow and wetlands is a very unique and precious.

I like dogs, but am not a dog owner and I too, yell at ignorant people to put their dogs on a leash to keep them from chasing the geese, ducks and other wildlife in this very sensitive area as well pick up bags of trash they so inconsiderately leave behind. I do not think that most of these people are locals but visitors from the urban areas or big cities. I can testify that only 30-40% obey the "Leash Law" and all the others let their dogs run free to chase birds and poop & pee wherever. Very few actually pick up the poop that their dogs leave on or near the trail. Nice effort on the providing the bags, but it's not working. **Please consider a "NO Dogs" rule in this "Wildlife Sensitive" area.**

The fact that the meadow is public land does not give every person the right to use & abuse it. Yes, open recreation and accessibility is important for public land but not at the expense of destroying a sensitive wildlife and environmentally sensitive area! **Please save it!!!!** We need to think about the future of the Lake Tahoe Basin. What we do today will determine the outcome of what it will look like 20,30 and even 100 years from now. And we now know from experience, how important it is to save our wetlands for the clarity and health of the lake. And isn't that one of the main purposes of a "Conservancy"? The number one priority for this meadow should be restoration & preservation. **Please do NOT build "viewing stands" or boardwalks on the east side of the meadow** as proposed in Alternatives 1-4. "If you build it, THEY WILL COME!" Yes, we can (and do) share the meadow - but I think there must be better alternatives than what has been presented to us. As an alternative, why not expand and develop the area on the west side next to Tahoe Keys as proposed ... or look at expanding the Mackinaw area for development and parking? Our quiet little street does not need to be a parking lot for teenage beach parties & dog parks. Argonaut Avenue or El Dorado does not have the parking spaces, sanitary facilities, trash removal & other amenities to accommodate a "public" wildlife viewing area. Let's try to keep it simple and private the way it is so that only people who appreciate it & value it are those who use it. **Educational signs about "No disturbing the Wildlife", No Dogs, No Bikes** seems much more realistic than building "Wildlife Viewing Stands".

Please consider these alternatives in your future plans for the Upper Truckee Marsh.

Some other things to consider...

- **No Smoking or campfires** - the threat of wildfire in the open grasses and fallen trees on the edges of the meadow is concerning to some of us.

- **No Mtn Bikes or Motorized Vehicles** - the dirt path seems to be just fine but the impact of bikes is becoming more obvious. If someone is there to view the wildlife and appreciate the beauty of the meadow - they can't do it traveling 5-10 miles peddling a bike , Let's keep the bike path where it is - 1-5 blocks next to Hwy 50 on a safe path allowing access from one part of town to another without having to risk their life on the Highway with all of the high speed traffic. The City of South Lake really needs to deal with this.

- There also needs to be some **enforcement of these rules**. Unfortunately there will always be people who will ignore any and all rules. But some type of patrols, "citizen arrest" , neighborhood patrol or something? will have to be done for a while until people become educated and understand why this meadow and the wildlife is worth saving. We love telling people that they'd better put their dog on a leash because there's a pack of coyotes just around the corner waiting to attack. (They still just don't get it! They think the meadow is a dog run and nothing more & the coyotes should be shot! - Ha!) **Information signs & maps** directing people to other places more appropriate to let their dogs run free in the woods, party beaches, picnic areas, Reagan, Pope, or The "new improved Barton Beach" areas would be helpful suggestions for the general public. Some out-of-town people don't realize how many public beaches are on the south shore. In fact, we direct a lot of people over to the Camp Richardson & Pope Beach area who get lost in our neighborhood trying to find a beach or river to hang out at for the afternoon.

In conclusion - I'd like to see the simple dirt path and minimal access points left the way they are now, nothing more needs to be built on the northeast side of the meadow. Keep it simple. I like the idea of expanding the already existing public access with a **full-service Visitor center next to the Tahoe Keys Marina** as a vision for the future growth, "Wildlife viewing" and enjoyment of Barton Beach with ample parking & amenities.

And whatever **restoration to the river, wetlands and meadow** from years of abuse from the cows and Tahoe Keys water diversions, etc. that needs to happen would be welcomed and this should be your main focus. And the sooner the better. Mother Nature does have amazing ways of healing itself. **Please help restore & preserve the meadow and it's wildlife** by eliminating dogs and abuse by their disrespectful humans. I know this will be a huge challenge but feel that something has to be done soon in order to save it - and that is part of your job.

I am thankful that you & others are trying to restore it and protect it for the future.

I am also willing to do whatever I can do to help - please keep us informed.

Sincerely -



Terri Thomas

3043 Argonaut Ave.

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

htayurt@yahoo.com

530-541-2543

RECEIVED

APR 27 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

4/25/07

State of California
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Attn: Jacqui Grandfield
Re: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

As a property owner at 3037, 3041 and 3043 Argonaut Ave. I am writing to express some concerns regarding proposals for the future restoration project of the meadow adjacent to my home.

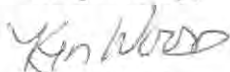
I fully support all the Conservancy's efforts to correct the damage done to the meadow and to restore the Truckee River to its' original state. I understand its' importance as a filtration system for the Lake. I care about the wildlife that live there and I support efforts to keep dogs on a leash and the need to educate the public.

I do not support plans to build wooden walkways and viewing platforms along the eastern side of the meadow. The neighborhood that borders this part of the meadow has narrow streets, many intersections that are already dangerous and many people live along that side of the meadow. The boardwalks and platforms will only attract more people to this area. Alternatives 1-4 all include proposals for these structures and this is not a well thought out plan. The residents of this area will be impacted to a point it will change the quality of life and it will especially not be safe for the children that are growing up here.

I propose that the viewing platforms be placed in areas where people do not reside and where there could be parking areas, garbage cans and even bathrooms.

Please listen to the residents.

Respectfully,



Ken Wood
Vicki Price



RECEIVED

APR 26 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

April 19, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Re: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project / Affected Property Owner

Dear Jacqui Grandfield,

For over twenty-five years we have owned a condo along the channel of the marina. I have personally walked the path to the Cove East Beach many times every year. Of course I have an opinion on the project.

Please do not cut off sailing lagoon. It would be a navigation hazard. Whenever there is a backup of boats or a boat under emergency tow other boats use the lagoon as a safety retreat. This area can be useful for education and handicapped access to the water without disturbing the river.

Please do not construct structures (bathrooms) in the beach area or along the path. From a view perspective from the people who will use the paths and those of us who look onto those areas, please leave the landscape as it is. Have the bathrooms as part of the visitors' center near the street.

With the above considered, I recommend "Alternative 4".

My family and I have enjoyed the improvements made in the Cove East Beach Area and we look forward to your planned improvements. Maintaining a natural look to the overall area will lead to better enjoyment by all that use and over look its' facilities.

Sincerely,



Brian Marcotte
336 Ali Wai Way #245
South Lake Tahoe, CA
Mailing
1623 Graff Avenue
San Leandro, CA 94577

RECEIVED

APR 25 2007

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

April 23, 07

Ms. Jacqui Grandfield:

this letter is in reply to "Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project".

I spent 3 yrs. with the City of San Mateo, 30 yrs with the City of San Jose where I retired as senior construction inspector. Much of my experience was with major parks development.

I see Alternative 5, "no project".

A good amount of increased sediment is caused by sanding of roadway during snow season.

A filtration cloth should be wrapped at all catch basins and cleaned every other month. A record of action should be public record.

In 1950 there was no "Black Sand" in Kings Beach, I know because I was there.

Elimination of all combustion engines on the waters of Lake Tahoe must become law.

I know this will never happen because of power boat associations, & petroleum lobbies.

Cordially

Wayne Wenger

Jacqui Grandfield

From: Ty N Baldwin [sltbjty@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2007 3:58 PM
To: Jacqui Grandfield
Subject: Meadow adjacent to the Al Tahoe community

To the configuration members of the Barton Meadow plan:

Jacqui Grandfield
Norma Santiago
Katy Lovell

For almost a century the residents of Al Tahoe have used a system of informal trails along the boarder that generally follows the Eldorado and Argonaut Streets. These trails currently blend in with the edge habitat of the meadow.

Now the California Conservancy wants to stop all foot traffic along these trails and put in intermittent viewing platforms that will become an attractive nuisance that will attract undesirable auto traffic to the neighborhood streets and subsequent parking on very narrow streets. Viewing platforms will attract beer parties, invite kids to climb on them, and block off access to the informal trail systems.

If the goal is to keep people and their dogs out of the more sensitive areas then put in a Forest Service type fence on the meadow side of these trails. This fence would be 4 feet high and constructed of rustic wood with an open wire mesh, see through barrier, that would stop foot and dog traffic. The fence would not be straight but rather meandering approximately 50 feet on the meadow side of the trails. The leash law has not worked but a fence would.

We strongly object to the very formal and restrictive platforms and doing away with the century old informal trail systems. Attendance of meetings, have shown us that the Conservancy wants the entire meadow for wild life, but we urge you to save some of it for these grand fathered in, self maintained hiking trails that surround Al Tahoe.

Arthur (Ty) N. Baldwin
and
Barbara J. Baldwin

Tel # 503-307-8981
e-mail sltbjty@juno.com



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150
(530) 542-5400 • Fax (530) 544-2271
www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

November 2, 2006

Jacqui Grandfield
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIR/EIS) FOR THE UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER AND MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT

California Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region (Water Board) staff have reviewed the subject document. The California Tahoe Conservancy proposes to restore portions of the Upper Truckee River near its mouth at Lake Tahoe to improve natural geomorphic processes and floodplain function.

The Regional Board is a responsible agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for this plan. We have reviewed all information submitted with regards to water quality and have the following comments:

Water Quality Impact - Construction

The EIR/EIS must include a detailed analysis of potential short term water quality impacts associated with each of the five alternatives. Specifically, the document must describe construction related water quality issues and discuss proposed mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels.

The EIR/EIS should also include information regarding construction methodologies, special equipment, temporary best management practices, design considerations, dewatering concerns, and other details to demonstrate the project can be constructed without discharging sediment or other pollutants to the Upper Truckee River. If your analysis concludes temporary construction activities will violate water quality objectives and standards contained in the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb6/BPlan/BPlan_Index.htm), then the EIR/EIS must include a statement of overriding consideration that weighs the long term water quality effects against short term construction impacts. If possible, the EIR/EIS should include a numeric estimate of pollutant loading (sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus) expected from construction and compare the short term impacts with expected long-term load reductions.

California Environmental Protection Agency

Water Quality Impact – Long Term

One of the stated project goals is to improve water quality through enhancement of natural physical and biological processes. The EIR/EIS must discuss the potential for the proposed alternatives to achieve this goal. Consideration should be given to each alternative's ability to reduce total suspended sediment and nutrient concentrations. If possible, the EIR/EIS should include a quantitative pollutant load reduction estimate for each of the evaluated alternatives and compare the estimate with loading estimates from existing conditions. In general, the draft EIR/EIS must include adequate information to identify which alternative has the greatest water quality benefit.

The document should also consider the river restoration project in the context of other stream restoration work in the Upper Truckee watershed. Specifically, the EIR/EIS should evaluate how this project might be impacted by sediment load reductions from other proposed projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation. If you have any questions or comments regarding this matter please contact me at (530) 542-5439 or Doug Smith, Tahoe TMDL Unit Chief, at (530) 542-5453.

Robert Larsen
Environmental Scientist

cc: Mike Elam, TRPA
Myrnie Mayville, US Bureau of Reclamation

BL/didT:/UTR.marsh.ceqacomment.doc

RECEIVED April 16, 2007

APR 17 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

Dear Ms. Grandfield:

I am writing in regard to the proposed project for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration. I am all for improving the quality of water flowing into Lake Tahoe. In my opinion a big step towards this goal was accomplished when the Barton Meadow was purchased by the Conservancy, and the cows removed from summer grazing. However, the plans to include new visitor center(s), parking lot(s), boardwalks, and view platforms are NOT a good idea, especially on the east side of Barton Meadow. Adding these improvements will only increase the traffic, noise, trash, and other undesirable elements in an otherwise quiet and peaceful residential area. As a resident who lives near the meadow in the Al Tahoe subdivision I do not want these changes to occur. And I do not think the promise of more "patrols" or limiting access entry points to the east side will keep these undesirable elements from increasing with the construction of the boardwalks and viewing platforms.

Perhaps the Conservancy would be better served to first address issues of concern that already exist before they make changes that will create new problems. Some examples include but are not limited to:

- *the existence of private footbridge(s) spanning a public waterway (Trout Creek) in such a manner as to prevent the public from using the creek safely in that area (eg. kayaking);

- *inconsistent enforcement of the policies regarding dogs in the Barton Meadow (on leash, and dog feces picked up);

- *failure by the Conservancy to purchase a lot right above Trout Creek (corner of Oakland and El Dorado Avenues) that the city has now allowed home construction without the proper "right-of-way" clearance;

- *questionable construction of a car wash at the south end of Barton Meadow and the potential for ground water contamination from the oil, gas, and other auto wastes being washed off;

- *proposed, (and initially approved), destruction of "old growth" trees in order to build more chair lifts at Heavenly;

- *ill conceived plans for redevelopment in the 'Y' area by outside parties with little regard for the efforts made by the local community team, nor much of a vested interest other than to put money into their own pockets at the expense of many who choose to live in this beautiful mountain setting.

The intentions of many of the agencies created to preserve and protect the uniqueness that is Lake Tahoe are good; **however**, the practical application of these intentions leaves a lot to be desired!! I can't help but feel frustration as those with money seem to benefit the most from changes taking place here on the south shore while destroying that which attracted many of us to live here in the first place. . . . a small, quiet mountain community where the mountains, forests, and lake **are** the focus.

As a watchdog whose function is to protect the unique environment that is the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Tahoe Conservancy should focus on improving the quality of water flowing into Lake Tahoe; not building visitor center(s), parking lots, boardwalks or viewpoints that will increase not only public usage, but all of the undesirable elements that come with it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brenda Wyneken".

Brenda Wyneken



City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2007

CA TAHOE CI

March 19, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/EIS for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, South Lake Tahoe, California

Dear Mrs. Grandfield:

Thank you for the opportunity for the City of South Lake Tahoe to further comment on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this project. The City has one additional comment:

There are a number of on-going projects along the river being completed by a number of different organizations. The City of South Lake Tahoe wants to ensure responsibility of reviewing the cumulative effects of all projects on the river in the City of South Lake Tahoe is delegated. For instance, there are several over-bank projects. Has determination been made as to what type of event is required to allow over-banking occurrences at all locations and/or achievable? It would seem that river modeling based upon all new projects would be appropriate for this particular project as it is at the bottom of the watershed.

Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on the NOP and the City looks forward to working with you. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (530) 542-6035.

Sincerely,

John Greenhut
Director of Public Works

c: Hilary Hodges, Planning Manager

h:\data-a-d\ctc\utr marsh comment 3-19-07.doc



P.O. Box 18956
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151
530-541-2193

April 29, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Dear Ms. Grandfield,

Let me begin by apologizing for the tardiness of this letter. Having never received the document for the "Public Announcement, Comment Period Continuation for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project" I only just learned of the Conservancy intentions yesterday.

It is with dismay that I review the document to discover the proposal to restrict access to the area commonly referred to as "Meeks Meadow". As a homeowner in the neighborhood it has been an area of delight to walk in and enjoy not only the vistas but the wildlife that reside there. Additionally, it has been an area where I have frequented with friends and their canine companions. I have encountered many second homeowners and visitors to the Tahoe Basin also with their dogs in this area. Since the placement of bags and garbage cans close to the entrances, I have noted that 90 % of the dog owners are diligent about the removal of their dog's waste.

My disapproval is not restricted to the infringement on the enjoyment of the meadow but also on the impact that such restriction will have on our property values. "Location, location, location." There's a reason that phrase evolved. With the dropping housing values, removal of free access to the meadow will further impact the desirability of these neighborhoods.

Additionally, no consideration has been given to the human-animal bond that will be disrupted. It is now an accepted and well documented fact that the relationship an individual has with his dog will help lower blood pressure, stabilize mood swings and encourage a healthier lifestyle, to name a few.

And lifestyle is what it is all about in South Lake Tahoe. As more locals leave the area due to financial reasons the few remaining locals will soon be encouraged to leave for



P.O. Box 18956
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151
530-541-2193

lifestyle reasons. If we can't continue to enjoy the environment that we all admire then why suffer lower pay, exorbitant gas prices, and high rental/housing prices if we are forced to *drive* to an area in order to continue to enjoy our environment with our companions? There is no need to mention how much of an impact that additional driving to get the nearest forestry area in order to walk with our dogs, will affect the environment.

Disappointingly, there is never any mention or proposal of a dog friendly area to be developed. I'm in full support of preservation of the lake and its environs, but as we continue to allow the unrestricted hordes of tourists, their cars and their boats to flock to the lake (because we need the income) then we should also consider that they do continue to bring their dogs and will desire a place to walk with them. As a local veterinarian I am frequently asked by visitors where one can take their dog off-leash. My response, inevitably, is "no where legally." Why is Tahoe so far behind the larger cities in understanding the need to establish areas where dogs can exercise off-leash? If excrement is the primary reason that dogs are proposed to be restricted from the area, then I would expect that the Conservancy has contacted the Department of Fish and Game so that they may soon begin shooting all the coyotes in the area (for they are legion).

I would like to see in the proposal a happy medium that would set aside some of the less soil sensitive area where individuals and their canine companions could go unfettered. An entrance fee or annual use fee could be established to help fund the area's maintenance.

Complete disregard for the local enjoyment, participation and financial impact of such restriction would be a grave decision and only hasten the inevitable the ghost town of South Lake Tahoe.

Unless, of course, that is your ultimate intent.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kelly Doria, DVM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Doria, DVM". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Cc: Taylor Flynn, Tahoe Mountain News; Kathee Lovell, City Council; California Veterinary Medical Association.

April 25, 2007

State of California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Contact: Jacqui Grandfield

Dear Ms. Grandfield:

We recently attended the Conservancy meeting on April 24 and it was suggested we write a letter to express our concerns over the Upper Truckee Marsh Project. We as neighbors bordering the edge of this meadow am deeply concerned, namely over the portion of the project that includes the installation of "view points" for a number of reasons, as follows:

1. The lack of planning for parking of the public to access these view points will lead to:
 - a. An increase in traffic which already is a problem. I *constantly* see people speeding down El Dorado Avenue putting not only us in danger, but our pets and the children playing in front of our other neighbors homes at unnecessary risk.
 - b. The lack of safety of strangers parking in front of our homes, watching our routines and possibly scoping out our home, property, possessions, or one of us. I am *extremely* uneasy about the times I would be home alone when my husband is at work, knowing there are strangers observing my routines.

As a side note it deeply disturbs me that 4 out of the 5 options considered for this project include these view points when obviously there has been a lack of planning for where the public would park.

2. The greater risk of fire danger.

The type of people these view points would attract are those I see frequenting areas like Regan Beach or El Dorado Beach who enjoy drinking their beers and smoking pot or cigarettes. This once again brings up the safety issues. Another question is what about restroom facilities?

3. As in the aforementioned of point #2, I am also concerned about having a noise problem.

The view points will definitely increase the number of partiers to this area. Does the S. Lake Tahoe Police Dept. need to be troubled more by answering calls regarding noise disturbances when they should be focused on more important public needs?

4. Trespassing. This is probably my greatest concern.....having people find a way to the meadow regardless of installed view points. Our home does not have a fence between us and our neighbors nor does it have a gate between the house nor a gate from the meadow to our yard. Not only would this be a problem in not reaching your objective to protect the marsh, but on your part to carelessly disregard the people who live on this meadow by allowing the public to trespass. Would this mean that we would have to face the hardship of paying out a few thousand dollars to build a fence so we would be protected. Not that this would guarantee the public wouldn't trespass anyhow, but what if they got injured climbing our fence, we would be sued? It was stated at the meeting, that the Conservancy workers who have dealt with the public on this meadow have had beer bottles thrown at them and have experienced fear by trying to control the public and how difficult it was for "you" to have the SLTPD come to your rescue (and it was also mentioned that the police never showed up for you anyhow.). Do you think we as neighbors want to deal with that?

We understand and applaud your efforts to protect this meadow. I can safely say, we as neighbors love this meadow and each have our own special connection to protecting it. But I think these view points would only increase the public use of this beautiful asset and make it more difficult on the Conservancy to try and enforce the inability of the public to access it, make more work for the Police Dept. having to answer calls of trespassing, noise control, safety, parking....., and to us as neighbors to our safety and peace of mind.

I have enclosed a map of the project (I do not necessarily have any favor towards this alternative) but used it primarily as a means to draw on, with specific interest towards protecting the east side of the meadow from public abuse.


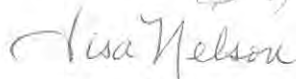
Lastly, some bullet points to consider:

- The Cove East/Venice Drive area is an excellent area to consider due to the already present facilities available to the public (parking, restrooms facilities...etc.)
- Redirecting the bike path to follow Hwy. 50 (on Harrison Street) so visitors to the area are not aware of the meadow.
- A possible viewpoint off the bike path behind Meek's, only accessible by bike. (see map)
- Redirecting a portion of the river and/or creek to create a more marshy type environment to the meadow, unappealing to walk on, or through. (see map)
- Removing the foot bridge near Belleview Avenue to inhibit people from walking through the meadow between Springwood Tract and Al Tahoe tract. (see map)
- Install signs requiring people to not ride bikes, not smoke, and keep pets leashed. AND ENFORCE THIS! This could be a great way to increase revenue for the Conservancy too!
- Plant low growing brush along portion of meadow (see map).

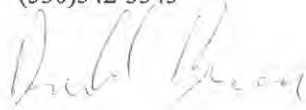
I know we would love to be involved in answering any questions about the drawings and definitely want to be involved in the conservancy's decision making of this project.

Thank you for taking the time to hear our concern's. We do appreciate the time and effort you have put into the project thus far.

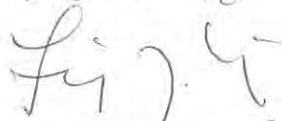
Sincerely,

Lisa and Andrew Nelson
644 El Dorado Avenue
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530)542-3343



Daniel W. Kikkert



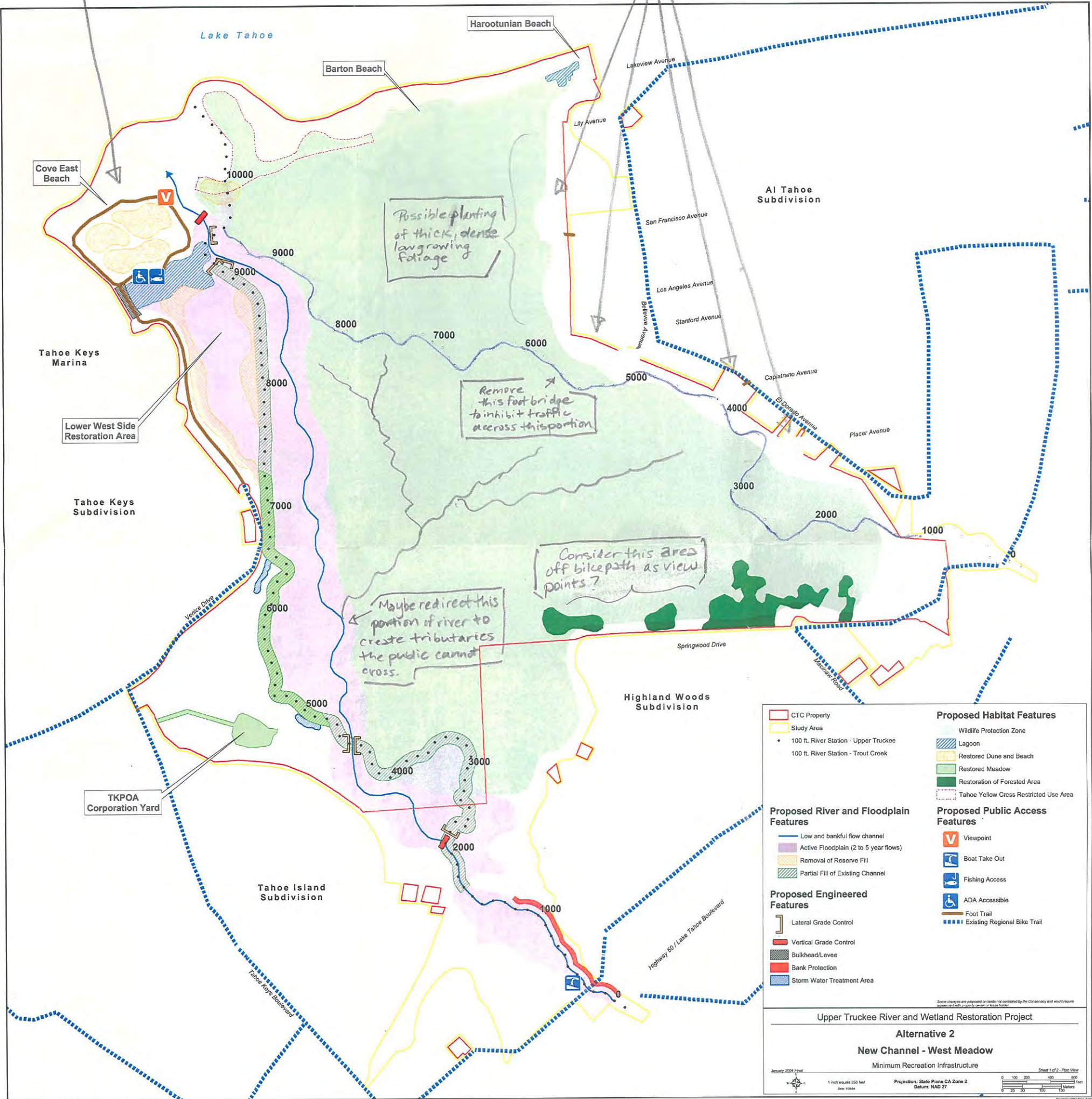
Linda J. Martinez



Robert Andelmay

Seriously consider this area for public access with parking and restroom facilities.

Remove all viewpoints



Possible planting of thick, dense lowgrowing foliage

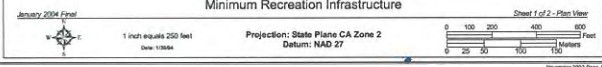
Remove this foot bridge to inhibit traffic across this portion

Consider this area off bikepath as viewpoints?

Maybe redirect this portion of river to create tributaries the public cannot cross.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTC Property Study Area 100 ft. River Station - Upper Truckee 100 ft. River Station - Trout Creek | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife Protection Zone Lagoon Restored Dune and Beach Restored Meadow Restoration of Forested Area Tahoe Yellow Cross Restricted Use Area |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low and bankful flow channel Active Floodplain (2 to 5 year flows) Removal of Reserve Fill Partial Fill of Existing Channel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewpoint Boat Take Out Fishing Access ADA Accessible Foot Trail Existing Regional Bike Trail |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lateral Grade Control Vertical Grade Control Bulkhead/Levee Bank Protection Storm Water Treatment Area | |

Upper Truckee River and Wetland Restoration Project
Alternative 2
New Channel - West Meadow
 Minimum Recreation Infrastructure



April 30, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Dear Ms. Grandfield,

You are receiving this letter today, simply because we were not informed of this issue by our neighbors until late Saturday.

It is with great sadness to have learned of your plans in the document that you supposedly sent out to everybody in the AI Tahoe neighborhood. After struggling through reading the "legalese" contained in the document, what I was able to decipher is your plan to dismantle our neighborhood.

One of the main reasons we became homeowners in this neighborhood was access to the meadow—which up until your involvement was one of South Lake Tahoe's best kept secrets. This meadow has been an area in this neighborhood where neighbors commune with their small children and pets in the summer, and cross country ski with their families in the winter. One of the biggest complaints about the City of South Lake Tahoe is that it lacks a sense of community. But for our neighborhood, areas like "Meeks" meadow IS where we commune. By turning this meadow into a highly restrictive area—which can only be enjoyed if your rules are followed—you are:

- negatively affecting AI Tahoe's strong sense of community
- encouraging tourists—who would never know this spot existed—to visit the area and bring more emissions and garbage to this neighborhood
- negatively affecting the neighborhood's property value
- severely impacting the Tahoe lifestyle that those of us have grown to love
- forcing locals to DRIVE to other areas where they can walk their dogs, thus adding emissions to the basin—does this make sense?

We have attended your meetings in the past. We have suggested a clean-up day using volunteers from the neighborhood, an annual usage fee to help maintain the meadow, along with recognizing a closed area for the highly sensitive regions of this meadow. As a homeowner in this neighborhood we have volunteered to assist you with the caretaking of this meadow. All of our suggestions have fallen upon deaf ears.

We would like to see a happy medium in your proposal. You could set aside some of the less soil sensitive areas where individuals and their dogs and children could enjoy the meadow. We have no issues with a fee for a yearly permit that would fund the area's maintenance.

They seem to be able to manage such areas in large cities with less available acreage such as Oakland and San Francisco with great success. Why is it that we cannot achieve this in South Lake Tahoe?

Your organization seems to have a complete disregard for our neighborhoods, our community, our lifestyle, and the local economy. We are willing to work with you. Please work with us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Adam Spindler

Dear Jacqui,

In the spirit of the mission of the Conservancy, to protect the natural environment, to preserve wildlife habitat, yet also provide public access, I have some thoughts on the proposed plans for the Upper Truckee Marsh Project.

Although I live on the East side of the Marsh (El Dorado-Argonaut side), I have walked the entire meadow perimeter. I walked with your present plan proposals in hand, viewing and imagining the different options, from various vantage points.

I offer my compliments to the work you have done in Cove East, off the Keys. You have done well, and I'm sure Key's residents consider you a "good neighbor". Cove East is unique, in that it does not abut residential areas, and it has parking facilities. I did not see much trash, dog waste, or evidence of human caused damage on your improvements, a sign that your improvements are respected by the public. The improved path in the Cove East area is attractive, functional, and defines where visitors may walk. This area needs to be outfitted with bathroom facilities, but actually, is quite nice even now.

The same cannot be said of the other side of the Meadow, the East Perimeter, (along El Dorado and Argonaut Avenues). In this other area, due to the lack of enforcement, unleashed dogs, primarily from local residential areas, regularly harass wildlife. Trash is fairly minimal, with your trash containers, although in summer they often overflow. People who frequent this side of the meadow have no place to park, they have no bathroom facilities, but thankfully, are mostly local residents on foot.

I believe it would further your goals, and also help East Perimeter residents who abut that side of the meadow, if the Conservancy were to improve the path on the East side of the Meadow, to a state similar to that of Cove East. The improved path would define where people may walk, it would be less subject to flooding, yet still provide viewing access to the Meadow, where people will walk no matter what you do. As shown by the low level impact on the Cove East side, an improved path demonstrates to visitors, that someone is trying to both provide access, and to protect. It flows over into their behaviors in a positive manner.

It is my opinion that adding visitors to this East Perimeter of the meadow, by providing viewing platforms, or any other encouragement, would only increase the existing parking problem, and increase the number of people displaying "bad behaviors" such as unleashed dogs, alcohol, and lack of respect for wildlife. Therefore, I am against any viewing platforms on the East Perimeter of the meadow. Keep the major access and viewing in the Cove East area, where the residential area is separate, where there is parking, and where bathroom facilities can be added, or add them in another area without these issues.

If additional public access is needed, have you considered the area off of Macinaw Rd, where the old "take out" for cattle was? This area could support parking, public restrooms, and a view platform. It is along the existing bike path, and could be located out of sight from existing residences, which I think is important. .

Another thought is that I see no reason to allow bikes on the meadow pathways. The meadow area is not a good place to mountain bike, bikes and people on the same trail is not desirable, and the trails are short enough that people can easily walk them. I would be in favor of having bike racks placed at access points where bicyclists could lock and leave their bikes, then walk the meadow. An avid biker myself, I know the meadow area does not provide quality biking, so "what's the point" of allowing bikes on these trails?

A last thought on one of the proposed plans, involves the staffed interpretive center at Cove East. Mention is made that a concessionaire could fund the site. I believe that this could be helpful, as people tend to follow rules better when authority figures are in the area, but I would be against any concessionaire which would increase trash on the meadow. Perhaps a concessionaire who both sold and rented binoculars would be a better choice (Nikon, Minolta, Celestron, Swarovski, Steiner). Maybe the Sierra Club, or the League to Save Lake Tahoe, might want a presence there! Use your imagination!

Lastly, if I had to choose, I would say that Alternative #3 would be my preferred choice, if the above issues are addressed, as it seems to be the best hydrologic solution to my under-trained understanding of hydrology, and will offer wildlife the least human intrusion balanced by public access.

Thank you for convening the meeting the other night, and offering to listen to our concerns and ideas.

Sincerely,



Greg Bergner

April 30, 2007

Jean Bergner
PO Box 18548
3061 Argonaut Avenue
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151

California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

ATTN: Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant, Wildlife

RE: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a property owner living on the eastern boundary of the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project. I attended the neighborhood meeting on April 24, 2007 at the California Tahoe Conservancy offices and wish to summarize my concerns regarding the Alternatives dealing with the eastern boundary of the project.

First of all I would like to thank Jacqui Grandfield and Rick Robinson for meeting with the property owners on El Dorado and Argonaut Avenues and allowing us to express our concerns, frustrations, and complaints. I am asking that the following issues be addressed before the Conservancy proceeds with any plans for a trail or view points on the eastern edge of the meadow.

Parking: Parking is already a problem in the AI Tahoe area because of the many rental units without adequate parking. The City of South Lake Tahoe has done no road repair, BMPs or curb and gutter work in this neighborhood. The streets are narrow and do not allow for two cars to pass with a car parked on just one side, let alone both. Since there are no curbs, the temptation to park on private yards is great, compacting the area even more. This problem would only increase if more people were invited to "view points". Another parking solution must be found.

Trash: Presently there are several trash barrels and "doggie do" bags along the trail. These do not always prevent people from littering, however. They also attract unwanted guests if not emptied frequently. Trash can be deadly for birds and wildlife. Trash must be removed frequently.

Noise: Many of our properties are immediately adjacent to the existing trail. Even a small group can be disruptive to privacy and visa versa, a neighborhood party disturbs the tranquility of the meadow also. I would suggest moving the trail away from private property as far as possible.

Dog control: Short of prohibiting dogs there is no good answer to the problem of irresponsible dog owners. Personally, I would like to see dogs banned from any meadow trail. There is no reason to tempt dogs and owners to misbehave in a wildlife habitat. Even with fences, mounds and water swales, dogs will jump and swim across to chase wildlife. In winter, no amount of barrier will keep people or pets from entering the interior of the meadow. Maybe the Conservancy can use some of its other properties to create an off-leash area for Tahoe canines. Please consider prohibiting dogs from the meadow trail.

Enforcement: This is a huge issue which needs to be addressed. If the Conservancy is protecting this property and sharing it with the public, it needs to protect it from the public also. Money needs to be set aside for law enforcement. Each agency seems to be pointing its finger at the other and saying that enforcement is someone else's responsibility. If you can't police it, then you are not protecting it. You can call it "education" if you like, but someone with authority needs to be patrolling the area on a regular basis. Jacqui, I appreciate the efforts you have made on our behalf, but it's not enough.

Access: Access needs to be limited to minimize the impact on private homes. Please select a location, or locations that allow for parking, trash barrels, restrooms and signage. The end of Macinaw Road has been suggested as a possibility. Foot trails from the end of San Francisco, Bellevue and Capistrano will allow for local neighborhood access, but parking there should not be allowed.

Beach Access: Denying access to "Harootunian Beach" would be a disaster. People will climb fences, ford streams and wade through marshes to get to the beach. Visitors and residents should be able to walk to and along the beach. Some of the best bird viewing is from the end of the meadow along the beach. Fencing off the Tahoe yellow cress with informative signage should protect the more fragile areas.

Bicycles: How wide do you intend to make this trail? For pedestrians and bicyclists both to use the trail, it would have to be prohibitively wide. Bikes off-trail tear up the meadow grasses. This is not an appropriate mountain bike area. I would suggest bike racks in strategic locations and **no bikes** allowed on the footpath.

Restrooms: No one wants a porta-potty in his backyard. Restrooms should be located in the parking area away from private residences.

Maintenance: What will happen after a hard winter, a flood, vandalism? Does the Conservancy have money set aside to keep a trail, boardwalk, fencing, signage, and landscaping in good repair? Please address these issues.

Management: If the Conservancy decides for Alternative 5 (Do nothing) on the eastern side of the project, does that mean that we are left to our own devices? Will the area be ignored as far as management to maintain the status quo? I tend to agree with Jacqui (contrary to most property owners), that improvement to the trail would create a pleasant setting, add value to our location, possibly encourage more public pride and care, and protect the wildlife that inhabits interior of the meadow. However, the tone of this recreation area should be low key—bird watching,

walking, viewing wildlife, photography—not active like biking, running dogs, playing games. This is a meadow, not a park.

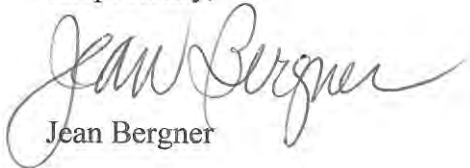
Emotional issues: Many of the property owners have lived on this meadow for over 20 years. They consider it their meadow. I know this is unrealistic, but you must respect their feelings. One simple thing that I believe you can do, is take all the “V”s (viewpoints/viewing platforms) off your maps. Upgrade the footpath, but do not create areas for people to congregate. Let the visitors decide where they want to stop and look around. Do not create artificial viewpoints.

The real issue is that the property owners feel any development of a trail or viewing system would make bad matters worse. The present violations by the “public” include; trespassing and parking on private property, disobeying leash and dog clean-up laws, drinking alcohol unlawfully, littering, building illegal fires on the beach, harassing the wildlife and disrespect for authority. If these problems could be improved and no new ones created, I think you would have support from every property owner. The problem is that most are skeptical at best that any improvement will come with more development.

Proposal—Alternative 6: I would like to see a solution that included an upgraded simple footpath along the eastern edge and lake end of the meadow with pedestrian-only access from the ends of spur streets. Another area, with parking, restrooms, trash barrels, bike racks and signage could be accessed by car from a parking lot at the end of Macinaw Road. From this area visitors could access the bike trail or a short walking trail loop to the meadow with viewpoints. View points should be marked on the Lower West Side Restoration Area and along the bike path near Macinaw. No viewpoints or platforms should be built or noted along the eastern boundary.

Thank you for taking our concerns seriously and considering other alternatives. We hope you will continue to include the property owners in any decisions that are made.

Respectfully,



Jean Bergner

April 30, 2007

Jacqui Grandfield
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 third Street
S. Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Submitted by e-mail: jgrandfield@tahoecons.ca.gov

Mike Elam
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
PO box 5310
Stateline, Nevada 89448
Submitted by e-mail MElam@trpa.org

Myrnie Mayville, NEPA Coordinator
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way Room E-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825
Submitted by e-mail: mmayville@mp.usbr.gov

RE: NOP FOR UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER AND MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT

The summary of this project (p2-3) states the relationship of the project to the TRPA-Compact mandated Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities, noting it as a project “designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe’s unique and valued resources.” In light of the size and intent of this project, it would behoove the agencies to take credit for their vision and to describe the summary of the project as the largest restoration effort on the greatest degraded watershed in the Tahoe basin.

Many of the ideas suggested in this document for restoration of the marsh and meadow are exciting and offer interesting restoration possibilities. The final project could be the showpiece of Tahoe restoration potentials.

PROBLEM WITH ALTERNATIVE DESCRIPTIONS RE SCOPING

Given that the project’s most important result will be a significant restoration in a very damaged meadow/marsh system, it is quite strange that the project titles include references to potential levels of recreation that may also be a part of the project. In fact, in conversations with Tahoe Conservancy staff, and the document itself, the recreation proposals seem to be separate considerations and not related to the level of restoration outcomes expected.

It appears as if the restoration scoping and the recreation scoping are two separate entities. But then, the alternatives are apparently only loosely defined, and are not real alternatives, as the document notes “many of the individual components in each

alternative are modular and could be transferred to other alternatives, or recombined after environmental review to formulate different variations of the alternatives.” (p.7).

Envisioning what the final EIS/EIS/EIR environmental analysis will look like and how it will inform the reader and select the best possible restoration “modules” is not described in this scoping notice. The mind boggles.

However, the description implies that the final environmental documents will be a laundry list of mix and match concepts. Describing the restoration and threshold benefits of each element or mix of the elements of the alternatives will be a new challenge to the idea of Alternatives.

ARE RESTORATION AND RECREATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) COMPATIBLE?

Further, the NOP states “the level of public access and recreational facilities included in the alternative selected for implementation would need to be compatible with that alternative’s river and marsh restoration strategy.”

If the public’s restoration money is to be spent wisely, the EIR/S/S must state that the level of public access and recreational facilities included in the alternative selected for implementation will not be just compatible with the final alternative, but must be selected AFTER the river and marsh restoration strategy is selected, in order to not influence this critical decision as to which restoration alternative, or mix and match of restoration “modules” will best restore the river and the marsh.

In order to produce a comprehensible Draft EIR/S/S, it will be very important that the impacts and the benefits of each of the various mixed alternatives focus on water quality, soils, and vegetation as the key aspects that will drive the analysis of the environmental benefits to help attain the mandated thresholds.

Further, it will be very important for the document to describe how the laundry list of recreation projects directly benefit the environmental threshold standards, due to direct benefits and not by avoidance of damage.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Ten objectives are described in order to cover almost every conceivable consideration. Interestingly, as we know in the Tahoe Basin, water quality is the single most recognizable environmental concern, and the greatest public concern, but in this set of objectives water quality gets short shrift, falling below even public access and flood hazards on private property. Fortunately water quality ranked above mosquito control.

Given the vast amounts of public monies spent on restoring water quality, and given the intent of the project to benefit water quality through the restoration of natural processes and functions, the Project Objectives must be re-ordered to reflect the proven interests of the taxpayers in first restoring water quality at Lake Tahoe.

CHERRY-PICKING THE BEST ELEMENTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

In the spirit of the mix and match “modules”, I have pointed out those elements that appear to best achieve maximum restoration of the water table, wetter meadow and extended marsh in the full project. As an adjacent landowner of the area since 1971, I have seen significant changes to the river system over time, none of them good, as the river has downcut and adjacent areas dry out faster in the summer.

PRIORITIES FOR MAXIMUM RESTORATION OF NATURAL PROCESSES

1. (from Alt 3) Creating a new bankfull capacity pilot channel to connect the river with the existing network of small channels in the middle of the marsh and meadow and re-establish an active floodplain on the existing meadow surface. Single best idea of the whole project! This effort will re-wet much of the meadow. The meadow is laced with small channels – the increased distribution of water will likely expand the present marsh into areas that once were mostly wet all summer in previous decades.
2. (from Alt 1). Reconfiguring two sections of split channel from RS500 to RS2600. In 1971, the river was almost equally split at RS500 into two channels and then further into four channels in regular spring runoff. At the site of the sewer standpipe below the Hwy 50 bridge, debris began to collect and reduce the flow to the western channels. Annual clean-ups kept it open until 1986, when the two floods of February and March dumped so much debris that the flow was significantly restricted. Following years closed the runoff further. And then the STPUD built a dirt road, with an undersized culvert, in the Sky Meadows access to their leaking sewer clean-outs and that restricted the former river channel down to a small drain. Without the regular beaver channeling that has kept some water flowing into and through the remnant bend of the former channel, it would have dried up.
3. (from Alt 1) Reconfiguring back to the (post-hwy bridge construction) conditions, combined with the structures to encourage sediment deposition would provide a vast improvement to this part of the meadow, which has dried out significantly in the past approximately 15 years. Restoring the east branch to a lower total volume of flow would result in less erosion of the steep east bank.
4. (from Alt 1 and others) Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the UTR. The reference to decreasing its depth vs. leaving as is is not described. Clearly the decision should be made as to which idea is best for the marsh and the water quality of the lake. If the lagoon is left at its current depth, without some circulation in the lagoon, and given the groundwater exchange with the

marina, the sailing lagoon could present the nightmare of creating an algae breeding pond – all ready to overflow in high runoff events. Filling in the lagoon to match the current overflow areas would provide for both overflow and marsh restoration. The environmental document must carefully evaluate the potential water quality impacts and benefits of the alternatives to utilization of the lagoon.

5. (from Alt 2 and others) Constructing a new river mouth, etc. appears to be a very good idea. I look forward to reading the environmental analysis of this module.
6. The spur trail and boardwalk to an observation platform at the mouth of the river is an excellent idea, providing it does not interfere with restoration options.
7. Removing fill behind Harootunian Beach and restoring the marsh. Appears to be an excellent place for re-creation and enhancement of the backshore marsh in that area.

CONCERNS ABOUT SOME ELEMENTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES.

8. The proposal to construct a Class I bike trail (10 feet of paved surface ((AASHTO STANDARDS)) on the beach and bridge over the U. Truckee River, as disclosed at the UTRWAG in April) has not been included in this NOP, although it is a significant addition to the recreation “module”. This idea must be analyzed carefully for impacts on the scenic standards for the lakeshore and for impacts to dynamic beach movement, as well as its PAOT-increasing impacts.
9. The current Cove East trail has the benefit of walking between the restored marsh and the sailing lagoon once it curves away from the marina, giving the public a more natural experience. Consideration could be given to retaining the trail where it is and piping into and out of a restored marsh on the site of the sailing lagoon. The alternative of rerouting the trail all along the marina to the beach, leaves the public access much more of an urban experience, and removes much of the focus of the current trail on the natural characteristics of the marsh.
10. (a) Alt 1 describes a full-service visitor and interpretive center on the “high-capability land” at Venice Drive. While the land has been declared to be man-modified (duh), it is hardly “high-capability”. The retention pond, which is now on site but used for past dredging projects, is no place to build a visitor center or parking lot. The EIR/S/S must evaluate alternate dredging disposal areas for the next dredging project for the marina if the existing site

is converted to buildings and parking lot. Cumulative impacts are created when significant changes are permitted without full analysis.

(b) Not only is the parking on Venice already at a premium on summer weekends, the increase in traffic to a Full-Service Visitor Center is the exact wrong impact on a fragile area, man-modified or not. The city's parking problems on Venice eventually will have to be reduced by paid parking and enforcement, plus transit options. The provision for more parking in this area is the exact opposite of the recommendations of the Pathway 2007 Forum to get people out of their cars. The P-7 planning effort will be undercut by a new parking lot for more cars and more vehicle trips and more traffic. With zero PAOTs available for this PAS, it is unclear why a new facility is being proposed in an area already overcrowded.

(c) The EIR/S/S must analyze the impacts of more coverage, more gas, oil and coolant dripped into the sand (or onto pavements and then into the sand) to mingle with the groundwater at this site.

(d) The provision for a small self-service visitor center north of the cul-de-sac should be analyzed for its potential to draw more visitors and the resultant parking and traffic problems. An accompanying parking lot raises the same questions as discussed above.

11. The suggestion of additional high flow conveyance under US 50 should be analyzed carefully. The bridge and the highway fill currently act as a metering device which has prevented a greater amount of flooding of adjacent residences north of Hwy 50. Increasing the flows, particularly at times of high lake levels, will increase the level of flooding of residences. The EIR/S/S must review previous flood events in comparison to lake levels to analyze what impacts would occur from higher flows north of Hwy 50 if the current flood flow metering process is reduced in effectiveness.
12. Limiting use trails in the meadow may provide some protection of restoration. However, historic use trails do not currently show damage. Since the residential areas around the meadow are essentially built out, no increase in use should be expected. The EIR/S/S must analyze the current quality of the use trails.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

13. Wildlife protection. The restoration of the marsh and meadow will improve wildlife habitat. However, dogs and cats will continue to harass wildlife without a significant education and enforcement program. The EIR/S/S must discuss the need for such a beefed-up program and how it will be implemented.

14. Public access and recreation: These impacts must be carefully analyzed. There is a tendency in the Tahoe Basin to treat recreation as if it has few environmental impacts and those that do happen are okay, because its recreation. One suggestion that must be very carefully scrutinized is the boat take-out on the river, to accommodate the boaters that float down the river in the spring. Bank trampling and erosion are ongoing issues, as well as vegetation trampling. Alternatives to river take out, and specific decisions about the take-out sites must analyze the sites selected for their impacts on the restoration projects first, not the convenience for the boaters.
15. PAOTs! All recreation ideas must be evaluated for their potential to increase PAOTs. The NOP notes that the EIR/S/S will evaluate the changes to existing recreation areas and uses, and the change to the TRPA PAOT allocations in the project area. However the NOP does not note what the current allocations are. Please note that the current outdoor recreation allocation of PAOTs for these two Plan Area Statements is zero. It is zero in both PAS, for summer, for winter, and for overnight. That's ZERO.
16. The document notes that it will evaluate river crossings. This is presumably an oblique way to refer to the bike trail bridge at the mouth of the river, or worse, through the marsh, as revealed at the UTRWAG meeting, but not in this NOP. The potential environmental and scenic impacts must be very carefully evaluated of potential river crossings and how they will impact the marsh and meadow restoration. If potential restoration would be limited or reduced due to accomodating crossings, which do not currently exist, the EIR/S/S must disclose those impacts on the restoration project.
17. The NOP states that "long-term traffic generated by the recreational components will also be discussed." It will be more useful to analyze and quantify the traffic in light of the need to reduce private use of the automobile, as recommended in TRPA documents.
18. The NOP mentions construction and operational noise impacts, but not noise impacts from illegal use by snowmobiles, motorcycles, scooters and quad runners. Adding recreation and viewing sites will have the unintended consequences of increasing such illegal use. The final EIR/S/S must propose methods that the Conservancy will use to enforce motorized restrictions to protect the restoration work.
19. Cumulative Effects. The NOP suggests that the cumulative effects of the five UTR restoration projects and other non-river projects planned upstream of the marsh restoration will be evaluated. It is not clear that this EIR/S/S will be THE cumulative effects analysis for all of those projects, or just a superficial review of the potential cumulative effects. The level of analysis must be

clarified soon. Clearly none of these projects can move forward without a completed comprehensive cumulative effects analysis for all of them.

20. The NOP also notes that cumulative effects will be evaluated along with the Pathway 2007 recommendations and the TMDL. Now there is a challenge. Most of the P-7 recommendations are vague, consisting of visions and desired conditions. The TMDL will not be very useful, as it will only be basin-wide. The TMDL has recently been described as moving from the unattainable to the unmeasurable. Care should be taken to consider that it will actually be a useful tool to evaluate cumulative effects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, please let me know. I can be reached by phone at 541-5752 or e-mail at laurel@watershednetwork.org

Laurel Ames
PO Box 7443
S. Lake Tahoe, CA 96158