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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Conservancy and CCC Team with Kiwanis on Community Firewood Program**

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**SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, California – October 19, 2013** – At 9am on a beautiful Saturday morning, the roar of chainsaws cut through the quiet autumn morning. More than 45 California Conservation Corps (CCC) Corpsmembers bucked and split wood on Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) property. A byproduct of the adjacent Upper Truckee River Restoration Project, the wood would later be collected by Kiwanis volunteers and distributed to elderly and disabled locals.

John Martinez, Director of the CCC Tahoe Center, supervised the Corpsmembers, working alongside them to reach the goal of 10-15 split cords. “Hard work is what we do,” he declared, “Everyone here is volunteering their time. I offered this project as a way to give back to their community.”

On Saturday, hundreds of Corpsmembers participated in service projects around the State for their 2013 Volunteer Day. The Tahoe Center collaborated with the Conservancy and Kiwanis to provide wood to those who need it most.

The CCC is a State agency that provides training and employment for men and women ages 18-25 on natural resource projects. Sweaty and smiling, Corpsmember Veronica Rico said, “It’s important for young people to make a difference in their community. It’s good for neighbors to see young people hard at work as a team, on a Saturday, instead of sleeping in.”

The wood was generated by the U.S. Forest Service Upper Truckee River Reach 5 Restoration Project, which is establishing a new, healthy stream channel on the river. The Upper Truckee River contributes over 30% of the sediment load to Lake Tahoe. This four-year project includes Conservancy property. The Conservancy took the lead on salvaging the extra wood.

Offering free wood to the community is nothing new to the Conservancy. As a major landowner in the Basin, the Conservancy treats about 100 acres by hand per year. Usable wood generated by these treatments is bucked into rounds for public collection by permit holders. Free Community Firewood Program permits can be picked up at the Conservancy office at 1061 Third Street. Permits are valid for up to two cords of wood. Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the

program distributes almost 400 permits annually.

“We see today as a win-win for the community and the environment” said Milan Yeates of the Conservancy, who oversees the Community Firewood Program. “We’re fortunate to work with the CCC throughout the season. The hard work demonstrated today is their standard.”

In the next few weeks volunteers from the Kiwanis Club of Tahoe Sierra will deliver the split wood to elderly and disabled individuals who rely on wood-burning heat to warm their homes in the sometimes harsh Tahoe winter.

“Our aim is community service,” said Richard Dart, president of the Kiwanis Club of Tahoe Sierra. “Due to the generosity of our volunteers, the CCC and the Conservancy, we’re able to assist our neighbors who might otherwise be forgotten.”

The club is currently organizing distribution. Elderly or disabled individuals who are interested in the wood may contact Richard Dart at (530) 543-0805.

For more information, please contact Victoria Ortiz, Conservancy Communications Liaison, at (530) 543-6063.

Established in 1984, the mission of the Conservancy is to lead California’s efforts to restore and enhance the extraordinary natural and recreational resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin.