Letter I53

From: Alia Selke [aliaselke@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 07, 2013 11:51 PM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Subject: Comments on Draft EIR/EIS for Upper Truckee River/Marsh

April 7, 2013

California Tahoe Conservancy
ATTN: Scott Carroll
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

COMMENTS ON DRAFT EIR/EIS FOR UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER AND MARSH

Dear Mr. Carroll,

I am writing to comment on your Draft EIR/EIS for restoring the Upper Truckee Marsh and River. My specific concerns relate to the accessibility of recreation opportunities for persons with disabilities. Disabled persons deserve access (to the extent that it does not compromise your restoration and environmental goals), and the Americans with Disabilities Act mandates accessibility.

My concern is underscored by the fact that–within the past month, at the same time your agency is asking for comments on a new restoration project at the Marsh–somebody (with little or no public notice or opportunity for public comment) removed the only two parking spaces at the end of Venice Drive (i.e., Cove East trailhead) that were designated for disabled persons. The simple facts are as follows: 1) Persons with disabilities do use and enjoy that trail; and 2) the removal of the two parking spaces for disabled persons will make it difficult (or impossible) for many persons with a variety of disabilities to use that trail during the busy months when parking options along Venice Drive become extremely limited. I53-1

I request that you work to ensure that the disabled parking spaces at the Cove East trailhead are timely replaced, fully restored, and adequately designated. I further request that you plan your new restoration project (and all of its recreation elements) to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Alia Selke

Alia Selke

cc: Disability Rights California (Sacramento)
Disability Rights Advocates (Berkeley)

I53-1 The commenter is concerned about accessibility of recreation opportunities for persons with disabilities, particularly regarding disabled parking spaces at the Cove East trailhead.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, Alternative 3 would provide a pedestrian trail to Cove East Beach that would be ADA-accessible, as would the fishing platform at the restored lagoon. Disabled parking spaces are currently available at the Tahoe Keys Marina.

Letter I54

From: DR. SJOLIN [sjolindds@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2013 11:49 AM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Subject: UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER AND MARCH RESTORATION PROJECT

Hello Scott,

I am writing in reference to the five alternatives being considered. It is my understanding no one alternative will necessarily be adopted in its entirety.

While I agree the "floodplain" of the Truckee River should be modified to utilize the marsh to the fullest extent possible, I do not agree with proposed walkways, pathways, viewing platforms, etc. Those placed in the Taylor Creek area are incredible, BUT -- these changes to the "natural landscape' are not in residential areas.

Without changes to Trout Creek, which frequently reroutes itself, the proposed paved walkways will be underwater for a good portion of the year. The property owners that back to the meadow, specifically on the Al Tahoe side of the meadow, will most certainly have their privacy and tranquility irreparably transformed.

Increased traffic, parking issues, potential for increased vandalism and property crimes are not consistent with homeowners and home values in the effected residential areas adjacent to the Upper Truckee Marsh (UTM). It is implausible additional resources will not be necessary to maintain these proposed alternatives. I am a resident of the Al Tahoe neighborhood. I54-1

I believe we should "ALL" have access to all public areas in California ! I do not believe we should impose unnatural mitigation to these potentially effected residential areas by encouraging increased and potential overuse of the UTM.

The UTM should be left accessible to all that seek to utilize it's bounties, yet, it should not be a destination for those that are unaware of the UTM.

And NO, I am not a NIMBY (not in my backyard).

With all due respect, please do not over think these alternatives.
Often, LESS IS MORE !!!

Regards,

Jack Sjolin DDS
831 Paloma Ave
209-610-6822

I54-1 The commenter's concern about new recreation infrastructure creating increased demand for parking, increased vandalism, and trespassing on private property in the vicinity of the Al Tahoe subdivision is noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate infrastructure on the west side of the marsh and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. The Conservancy would continue to manage and reduce the impacts of recreational use and new trails on the east side while maintaining and expanding on-site signage.

Letter I55

Public Comments on the Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration April 7, 2013

We feel the primary guiding principles for this project should be to restore, maintain, and preserve this fragile wetlands habitat with as little disruption to the existing wetlands as possible. We cannot comment nor give suggestions regarding the restoration of the river, as we have no knowledge of that science. However, as frequent visitors to Cove East, we can comment on the apparent success that wel have observed to date. Now it is possible to walk the dirt trails and witness breeding, resident and migrating birds and several mammal species from a distance as they go about their business of survival. The native plants that were reintroduced seem to have flourished. We can watch Coyote families interacting, Beavers at work, Bald Eagles perched in the lodgepole pines, Peregrine Falcons bathing on the spit, White Pelicans stopping over on their migration to Pyramid Lake, various species of hawks hunting for voles and mice, freshly hatched Sora Rails rushing for cover in the cattails....and on and on. There can be a new discovery every day. Dragonflies, Butterflies, and Insects float over the marsh. Invertebrates in the mud lure Shorebirds and Snipe. Birdsong fills the air in the spring and fish travel up the river and creek in the fall.

We all know that the human impact has created extensive irreversible damage to this wetland habitat. If there was an abundance of wetlands in the Tahoe Basin, it might make sense to take a percentage of the area and put in boardwalks and signage as an educational effort to teach about the importance of conserving wetlands, but Tahoe doesn't 'have that luxury anymore. The remaining area is too small to welcome more human access and impact. Although there has been substantial progress in curbing the behavior of people who visit this area, there remains an attitude that this area is their "personal" dog park, beach, lake shore. Cove East is a beautiful place for locals and visitors to enjoy. The present paths on the west side out to the lake and back are adequate to give visitors access to the views and nature watching without stressing the wildlife and disturbing the marsh. I55-1

Increasing and facilitating access into and around the Upper Truckee Marsh may lead to increasing the stress on this environment and it's wild inhabitants. This is not an isolated river and marsh that might survive an occasional visit by someone such as a photographer moving quietly in a canoe; this marsh is located near a large housing project and a busy tourist town full of visitors that are eager to experience adventure in a natural and pleasing setting. Visitors on watercraft, paddle boards and kayaks, folks on bicycles, runners, large groups of bird watchers, fishermen, dog walkers, beach goers...etc, could end up "loving to death" this fragile place.

Therefore, we do not support adding boardwalks, creating circle trails, expanding bicycle trails, building bridges over the lagoon, or putting in a connection along the beach between the two sides. A connecting trail along the beach, as proposed in alternative #1 could spell the end of this habitat for wildlife. A circular walk at Cove East could draw many more people and put them right out at the mouth of the river, a very sensitive area for the wildlife. This is where the hawks and eagles hunt, where the ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds collect. Migrant birds feed in the willows at the edge of the lake. Owls sleep in the lodgepoles during the day and come out to hunt at night.

The mouth of the river and beach is where even the best intentioned dog walker can't resist letting their pet off leash to play in the lake. I have observed beach goers walk right through the endangered plant area and fishermen leave their trash and nylon line. *Do we need more people passing through here?* There are many other opportunities for recreation elsewhere in the Tahoe Basin. Can't we leave this one piece of fragile wetlands alone? I55-1 cont.

Placing a boardwalk along the east side of the marsh could also be problematic. Trout Creek passes very close to the edge of the marsh and we have observed and heard several breeding birds close by in this area, for example: Pied-billed Grebes, Sora Rails, Ducks, Marsh Wrens.

Another concern is a fear that if more trails are put in...then the California Tahoe Conservancy might cut down more trees that may seem to pose a hazard to the pedestrians, altering the landscape in a manner that would take years to restore. The trees that edge this marsh are very important to the wildlife. It's counterproductive to take trees down so people can walk more closely to the marsh to observe "nature!" I55-2

We're concerned that increasing human access to Cove East could result in the heavy use we witness at Pope Marsh, along the road that divides the marsh and the beach. The road into Pope Beach is easier to navigate than Cove East is now, with its flat macadam roadway. Bikers, families with carriages, runners and dog walkers enjoy this as a favorite walk. Unfortunately, a good percentage of the dog walkers along the Pope Beach roadway do not pick up after their animals and do not leash them. The marsh is full of breeding birds. The owners let their dogs run in and out of the marsh. The road is covered with dog feces. I fear that if the Conservancy makes Cove East more accessible and more inviting, we may end up with another Pope Beach situation. A Sand Hill Crane alighted at Pope Marsh on March 24' 2013. Someone's big dog could have harassed this rare visitor and sent it away. We want our marshes to be welcoming for returning creatures that may have frequented the marshes in the basin long before the Tahoe Keys were developed. I55-3

I am concerned about more Kayaks, paddle boards, and watercraft entering the river at Cove East. The SUP business has become a very popular tourist activity in Tahoe and the Upper Truckee Marsh is one of the first points of interest for people to explore after renting their SUPs. An increased presence of people moving through the marsh standing upright and talking loudly....certainly has the potential for increasing stress for the wildlife. I55-4

Therefore, I would not support Alternatives #1, 2, and 3. Possibly #4 might be acceptable.

First and foremost, the North Upper Truckee Marsh is a Wetland to be preserved in as natural a state as possible for wildlife. All other issues are secondary. We commend the California Tahoe Conservancy for the work that has been done so far and support the efforts directed at restoring the river's natural flow. I55-5

Sue and Phil Stevenson

2073 Kickapoo St.

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

I55-1 The commenter's opposition to additional access to the marsh, including Cove East Beach, and recreation infrastructure and concern about off-leash dogs is noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate infrastructure on the west side of the marsh and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. The Preferred Alternative has been selected to meet the project objectives, including the objective to provide public access, access to vistas, and environmental education at the Lower West Side and Cove East Beach consistent with all other objectives. Under the Preferred Alternative, the existing trail providing public access to Cove East Beach would be partially rerouted along the restored wetlands, lagoons, and dunes while still maintaining access to the shore of Lake Tahoe. The rerouted trail would be consistent with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. No additional trails or bicycle paths would be constructed on the east side of the Upper Truckee River.

See Section 3.1.4, "Management," in Chapter 3, "Master Responses," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a discussion of trash pickup, police protection, and other public services in the study area.

I55-2 The commenter's concern about the removal of trees for new trails and the affects wildlife is noted.

The impact associated with the removal of trees is discussed in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," of the 2013 Draft EIR/EIS/EIS. Environmental Commitment 5, "Prepare and Implement Effective Construction Site Management Plans to Minimize Risks of Water Quality Degradation and Impacts to Vegetation," includes tree protection measures. In addition, see response to Comment I38-1 for further discussion of impacts on wildlife.

I55-3 The commenter's concern about the effects of off-leash dogs on the marsh and their effects on wildlife is noted.

See Section 3.1.4, "Management," in Chapter 3, "Master Responses," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a discussion of animal control services.

I55-4 The commenter's opposition to Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 and support of Alternative 4 are noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. Alternative 3 is the recommended restoration approach under the Preferred Alternative. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation and restoration components of the Preferred Alternative. This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

I55-5 The commenter supports preservation of the Upper Truckee Marsh for wildlife and supports the Conservancy's current efforts to restore the river's natural flow.

This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

Letter I56

RECEIVED
CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

California Tahoe Conservancy
ATTN: Scott Carroll
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Subject: Comments on Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project (Project)

Note: Withhold my home address from public disclosure to the extent allowed by law

I am a resident and/or property owner in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision. I believe the Project planning and its environmental impact report (Report) do not adequately address the following possible real impacts to me and my neighborhood:

1. Construction noise in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: this is a quiet residential neighborhood. Use of California Avenue as a haul route, and CTC neighborhood lots for the California Avenue Staging site, will generate abnormal and unacceptable local noise preventing my reasonable use and enjoyment of my home and property. The Report implies this noise could occur at any time, or continuously, from 8 AM to 6:30 PM, daily, for four years. Nevertheless, the Report assesses the short-term noise impact, for all project alternatives, as Less Than Significant, No Mitigation Needed. This finding defies common sense for significant residential impact, and the locations cited in Appendix J of the Report that were analyzed for noise impact do not include any streets in the vicinity of California Avenue or its proposed staging site. I strongly disagree with this finding for this neighborhood and consider the noise impact analysis for this neighborhood inadequate since it does not include any nearby locations.
2. Traffic in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: California Avenue, designated as the only haul route in this subdivision, is one of its narrowest streets. California Avenue is heavily used by residents, people walking their children and pets, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The street is too narrow for large vehicles to pass each other or turn around, or even for normal vehicles to navigate without evasive maneuvers. When cars are parked along it, it is effectively single lane. Yet the Report assesses the short-term potential for conflict between construction traffic, local traffic, pedestrians, and bicycles as Less Than Significant, No Mitigation Needed. For this neighborhood, I strongly disagree with this finding and consider the analysis it is based on to be inadequate. The finding defies common sense, does not seem to address the residential nature of the neighborhood, and the traffic impact assessment discussions in the Report cite only the Al Tahoe, Hidden Woods, and Tahoe Keys Neighborhoods, but not this neighborhood. I56-1
3. Disruption of established neighborhood values in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: the proposed California Ave Staging site makes use of small undeveloped residential lots acquired by the CTC because of, and to prevent damage to, their environmental sensitivity. The neighborhood had a reasonable expectation that they would never be used by the CTC as a construction site for staging heavy equipment and fill materials. The aesthetic fundamental nature of the neighborhood would be devastated for four years by this use. This impact is not recognized or assessed in the Report. I strongly object to use of the subject CTC lots by the Project for this or other construction purposes.

1

4. Neighborhood safety in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: construction activity on the subject CTC lots in conjunction with neighborhood children playing near their homes creates a safety hazard that does not appear to be identified or analyzed in the Report. I strongly object to unnecessary multi-year heavy construction in the neighborhood and feel that the Report has not adequately assessed the impact to the safety of neighborhood children. *Will a four year old neighborhood child not be able to play catch outside his or her home in the summer until he or she is 8?*
5. Increased Flood Risk in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: The models cited in the Report predict no increased residential flood risk as a result of the Project. If the models prove incorrect, no assessment has been included of how expensive the damages to property owners would be or whether the lead Agencies would be responsible, and have the funds, to financially compensate the property owners
6. Neighborhood notification in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: even though my neighborhood is potentially highly impacted by Project construction, I was not directly notified of the Report or public comment period. Even if agency outreach and notification satisfied the letter of the law, it certainly did not satisfy the spirit of notifying impacted parties so they could comment. Few of my neighbors are aware of the possible impacts even now, and there has been little public response to the few recent outreach meetings. I feel the notification process has been inadequate and ineffective, at least near the potential California Ave Staging site.

I56-1 cont.

I believe these and other potential impacts to my neighborhood are excessive, unnecessary, and unacceptable. Therefore, I respectfully request that the preferred alternative and final plans, include the features below. If this isn't done, I respectfully request that additional impact analyses and public comment be undertaken to address the inadequacies cited above from these features.

1. No use of the CTC lots designated as California Ave Staging for any Project construction activities. It is not necessary for either environmental or practical reasons. The CTC has other alternatives that do not require disrupting this, or other, residential neighborhoods.
2. No use of California Ave as a haul route for Project construction activities.
3. No use of any streets or parcels in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision as Project haul routes or staging sites.
4. Locating internal haul routes for river work on the east side of the river to the maximum extent possible to minimize impact to close-by residential neighborhoods which are primarily on the west side of the river.
5. Posting a bond or securing insurance to compensate property owners for damages and loss of property value, if the Project increases residential flood risk and the FEMA 100-year floodplain.

Respectfully submitted,

Name: Bart Sullivan Date: 4/7/13

Address: P.O. Box 9651
SO. LAKE TAHOE, CA 96158

2

I56-1 The commenter has concerns about construction activities resulting in increased noise, traffic, disruption of established neighborhood values, neighborhood safety, and increased flood risk in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision. The commenter states that individual residents in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision were not directly notified of public outreach.

See response to Comment Letter I8 for a discussion regarding these concerns.

Letter I57

From: Jeannine Tinsley [jobjungle@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 6:08 PM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Subject: Upper Truckee river and Marsh Restoration Project

Hello Mr. Carroll,

I live on the meadow at 886 Rubicon Trail, S. Lake Tahoe CA 96150. There are many issues which should be addressed before moving forward on the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project.

1. People constantly park in front of the Access Gate at the end of Rubicon Trail and block possible Conservancy, and/or Emergency Police or Fire access should it be necessary.

2. People join at the end of the bike trail on Rubicon and in the Meadow to smoke and it is a high fire hazard to the conservancy and surrounding residential and business neighborhood.

3. Expanding public accessibility via bike and walking trails is the worst idea if indeed the goal is to keep Tahoe Blue, keep trash and pollution down (due to how many people use the trail to walk dogs, most of which let their dogs go to the bathroom without cleaning it up (even during the no walking times posted), and drop litter, cigarette butts and generally loiter. There has been a recent rash of criminal activity near or on the bike trails or meadow....expanding the bike trail is just going to add an element of ruin to the area. I57-1

4. The accumulated pine needles and pine cones are a high fire hazard missed by last years' clean up crew right outside our property and out neighbors and I emailed for them to finish, but on one ever came back to clean up the debris.... I am afraid a smoker will accidentally light a fire and the whole neighborhood will be at high risk!

5. People sneak and camp out there in the conservancy area sometimes....again a fire, and pollution hazard.

6. There are no Poop Scoop bags to encourage dog walkers to dispose of their dog feces properly in the trash can only located at the opening to the meadow.

My advice is to clean up the general area, and post signs like at the end of San Francisco Street on the other side of the meadow which say " No Smoking, no overnight camping" and " Emergency Parking only, do not block gate!"

The extension of the bike path is an invitation to further pollute the Creeks and increase the crime and public accessibility which is a mistake for Keep Tahoe Blue....

Thank you for taking all of this feedback into consideration.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best Regards,
Jeannine Tinsley
886 Rubicon Trail
S. Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 600-0712
jobjungle@msn.com

I57-1 The commenter's concern about dogs, littering, and public safety in the study area is noted.

See Section 3.1.4, "Management," in Chapter 3, "Master Responses," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a discussion of trash pickup and police protection services in the study area.

Letter I58

California Tahoe Conservancy
ATTN: Scott Carroll
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

4/7/2013

Re: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

To whom it may concern:

As a resident of 2260 Dover Drive in Tahoe Keys for over 35 years, I take great interest in the proposals offered up as the 'Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project'. You see, for all of the time that my family has lived at this address, we have dealt with the TKPOA Maintenance Yard, which is accessed through Dover Drive. For all of these years, the operators of this yard have ignored Codes and Regulations of Lahontan, TRPA, and the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District on a daily basis. For all of these years, the TKPOA has been allowed to contribute gross amounts of silt directly into the 10-year flood plain that surrounds the Maintenance Yard by all of these local agencies.
Only last year was one agency (the El Dorado AQMD) worthy of their public responsibility: They finally notified the TKPOA that they were in violation of AQMD requirements as to dust production in an environmentally sensitive area. Since that time the TKPOA has taken minimal efforts to comply with AQMD requirements (they place gravel on the road every few months). Every year the TKPOA hires a new 'crew' and every year the problem of speeding and silt production on this access road becomes very, very real to us. I58-1
However, this winter highlighted the real issues with this maintenance yard, and its location right in the middle of the proposed 'Restoration Project'. The TKPOA repeatedly plowed snow from the gravel surface of the access road, an activity that is specifically forbidden by TKPOA regulations, we have video evidence of this repeated violation. In order to plow this road, it MUST be fully paved and equipped with approved drainage and BMP equipment. Ms. Jessica Schwing of the TRPA was the source of this information. This activity has happened every year that we have lived at 2260 Dover Dr., and the total amount of silt pumped into the Truckee River marsh location from the maintenance yard property is vast. The TKPOA also maintains huge piles of milfoil weed (pulled from TKPOA lagoons) in this yard, which they constantly process to somewhere else in fully loaded, double-length truck and trailer rigs that regularly traverse the access road.

My question to all involved in this project is this: While you are 'restoring' this area to whatever state you intend, do you also intend to continue to allow this gross pollution to exist in the middle of your 'pristine restoration'?

It's far beyond the time when the agencies endowed by the public trust with authority over this area should turn away from the hypocrisy of the past 40 years. It is time for you to stop giving 'lip service' to plastic, fake environmentalism, recognize the elephant in the room, and shut down the TKPOA Maintenance Yard for good. If you go forward with a plan that allows this yard to continue operation in the middle of your 'Restoration Project', you are worse than simply ineffectual: you are betraying the public trust you have been entrusted with. I58-1 cont.

Sincerely-

David Triano
2260 Dover Dr.
South Lake Tahoe, CA
96150
530-318-5872

I58-1 The commenter's support for removal of the TKPOA maintenance yard as part of the restoration is noted.

See response to Comment I18-2 for further discussion of the TKPOA Corporation Yard and road restoration.

Letter I59

From: Bonnie Turnbull [brownbul@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2013 8:28 AM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Cc: Bonnie Turnbull
Subject: Comments on Upper Truckee Marsh

Scott, thank you for listening to my thoughts at the open house. You probably got lots of suggestions that day so I wanted to remind you of some points I had made.

I cannot comment knowledgeably on the science behind any of the restoration work, so perhaps these comments should be instead forwarded to someone in charge of the public engagement with this effort.

I59-1

1. Consider opening up the marsh to unleashed dog access when the meadow is under snow cover. The geese and coyotes seem to fend for themselves quite well.

2. Keep peripheral connections in mind. This marsh is part of a complex network of access for the adjacent neighborhoods.

Bike advocates, including myself, would love a crossing to connect the neighborhood to the Keys. A poor compromise would be to better connect Oakland Ave to the bike path behind Meeks. Perhaps a route could be constructed that would keep bikers off the sensitive shore areas but still connect to Tahoe Island.

Our family, for example, also travels the pathways to get to the college/ball fields. It's relatively safe for my daughter--better than dealing with traffic crossings at times. We go from Bellevue along meadow pathways south to connect to the bike path behind Meeks and then duck under hwy 50. This route could be encouraged for dog walkers since the property on the south side of the highway has no leash concerns that I am aware of. I would love for this section to have a boardwalk, too. Admittedly, people take to the road on this section because it is so often wet. But it is one of the reason dog walkers always go toward the shore.

I59-2

(And on that note, so many people walk dogs behind the post office, that it might be good to post information/poop bags to keep this section of Trout Creek as clean as possible. I know this is not your land, and that the college is strapped for funds.)

People will continue to walk to the shore. In alt 2,3, and 4, you don't tell them what to do next to minimize impact.

3. I would be happy to be designated somehow a "steward of the meadow". In fact, I have spent hours with my daughter picking up litter, cutting down invasive woolly mullein seed heads, and encouraging people to respect the signage (a thankless job). Perhaps you can develop an official program and get some neighborhood buy-in.

I59-3

4. More engaging educational signs might encourage people to better love and care for the cress patches. Right now, they simply look prohibitive and people sure hate more regulation.

I59-4

Thanks for getting this information to the right place.

Sincerely,
Bonnie Turnbull

I59-1 The commenter's suggestion for opening the marsh to dogs during winter is noted.

This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

I59-2 The commenter's opposition to Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 is noted. The commenter's support for bicycle connectivity between the neighborhood and the Tahoe Keys is noted.

The Preferred Alternative does not include construction of new bicycle trails. As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation components of the Preferred Alternative.

I59-3 The commenter's support of an official stewardship program to pick up litter and encourage respect for signage is noted.

See Section 3.1.4, "Management," in Chapter 3, "Master Responses," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a discussion of services in the study area.

I59-4 The commenter's support for educational signs is noted.

The Preferred Alternative would include development of an interpretive program and installation of additional signage that would include educational information. The Preferred Alternative also would include an interpretive kiosk that would provide information to support visitor education and interpretation of the ecological values of the Upper Truckee Marsh.

Letter I60

RECEIVED
CA TAHOE CONSERVANCY

California Tahoe Conservancy
ATTN: Scott Carroll
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Subject: Comments on Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project (Project)

Note: Withhold my home address from public disclosure to the extent allowed by law

I am a resident and/or property owner in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision. I believe the Project planning and its environmental impact report (Report) do not adequately address the following possible real impacts to me and my neighborhood:

1. Construction noise in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: this is a quiet residential neighborhood. Use of California Avenue as a haul route, and CTC neighborhood lots for the California Avenue Staging site, will generate abnormal and unacceptable local noise preventing my reasonable use and enjoyment of my home and property. The Report implies this noise could occur at any time, or continuously, from 8 AM to 6:30 PM, daily, for four years. Nevertheless, the Report assesses the short-term noise impact, for all project alternatives, as Less Than Significant, No Mitigation Needed. This finding defies common sense for significant residential impact, and the locations cited in Appendix J of the Report that were analyzed for noise impact do not include any streets in the vicinity of California Avenue or its proposed staging site. I strongly disagree with this finding for this neighborhood and consider the noise impact analysis for this neighborhood inadequate since it does not include any nearby locations.
2. Traffic in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: California Avenue, designated as the only haul route in this subdivision, is one of its narrowest streets. California Avenue is heavily used by residents, people walking their children and pets, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The street is too narrow for large vehicles to pass each other or turn around, or even for normal vehicles to navigate without evasive maneuvers. When cars are parked along it, it is effectively single lane. Yet the Report assesses the short-term potential for conflict between construction traffic, local traffic, pedestrians, and bicycles as Less Than Significant, No Mitigation Needed. For this neighborhood, I strongly disagree with this finding and consider the analysis it is based on to be inadequate. The finding defies common sense, does not seem to address the residential nature of the neighborhood, and the traffic impact assessment discussions in the Report cite only the Al Tahoe, Hidden Woods, and Tahoe Keys Neighborhoods, but not this neighborhood. I60-1
3. Disruption of established neighborhood values in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: the proposed California Ave Staging site makes use of small undeveloped residential lots acquired by the CTC because of, and to prevent damage to, their environmental sensitivity. The neighborhood had a reasonable expectation that they would never be used by the CTC as a construction site for staging heavy equipment and fill materials. The aesthetic fundamental nature of the neighborhood would be devastated for four years by this use. This impact is not recognized or assessed in the Report. I strongly object to use of the subject CTC lots by the Project for this or other construction purposes.

4. Neighborhood safety in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: construction activity on the subject CTC lots in conjunction with neighborhood children playing near their homes creates a safety hazard that does not appear to be identified or analyzed in the Report. I strongly object to unnecessary multi-year heavy construction in the neighborhood and feel that the Report has not adequately assessed the impact to the safety of neighborhood children. *Will a four year old neighborhood child not be able to play catch outside his or her home in the summer until he or she is 8?*
5. Increased Flood Risk in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: The models cited in the Report predict no increased residential flood risk as a result of the Project. If the models prove incorrect, no assessment has been included of how expensive the damages to property owners would be or whether the lead Agencies would be responsible, and have the funds, to financially compensate the property owners
6. Neighborhood notification in Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision: even though my neighborhood is potentially highly impacted by Project construction, I was not directly notified of the Report or public comment period. Even if agency outreach and notification satisfied the letter of the law, it certainly did not satisfy the spirit of notifying impacted parties so they could comment. Few of my neighbors are aware of the possible impacts even now, and there has been little public response to the few recent outreach meetings. I feel the notification process has been inadequate and ineffective, at least near the potential California Ave Staging site.

I60-1 cont.

I believe these and other potential impacts to my neighborhood are excessive, unnecessary, and unacceptable. Therefore, I respectfully request that the preferred alternative and final plans, include the features below. If this isn't done, I respectfully request that additional impact analyses and public comment be undertaken to address the inadequacies cited above from these features.

1. No use of the CTC lots designated as California Ave Staging for any Project construction activities. It is not necessary for either environmental or practical reasons. The CTC has other alternatives that do not require disrupting this, or other, residential neighborhoods.
2. No use of California Ave as a haul route for Project construction activities.
3. No use of any streets or parcels in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision as Project haul routes or staging sites.
4. Locating internal haul routes for river work on the east side of the river to the maximum extent possible to minimize impact to close-by residential neighborhoods which are primarily on the west side of the river.
5. Posting a bond or securing insurance to compensate property owners for damages and loss of property value, if the Project increases residential flood risk and the FEMA 100-year floodplain.

Respectfully submitted,

Name: Edward Verhagen

EDWARD VERHAGEN

Date: 4/7/2013

Address:

Shelly Verhagen

2

I60-1 The commenter has concerns about construction activities resulting in increased noise, traffic, disruption of established neighborhood values, neighborhood safety, and increased flood risk in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision. The commenter states that individual residents in the Tahoe Island Park 4 subdivision were not directly notified of public outreach.

See response to Comment Letter I8 for a discussion regarding these concerns.

Letter I61

From: Kathy Kohberger [kohkoh@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2013 9:47 AM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Cc: Charles Ward
Subject: Fw: Truckee Marsh Restoration Alternative #1

Mr. Carroll:

We have carefully reviewed the various options for the marsh restoration and find the best to be Alternative #1.

We have a home and two units at 693 Modesto Avenue [Al Tahoe neighborhood] that overlook the marsh. During the last few years we have spent many hours in the accessible portion of marsh and have extensive knowledge of the current conditions.

We feel Alternative #1 best addresses the most issues and is the most comprehensive solution for recreation and conservation. The other alternatives are not even close. I61-1

Our second choice would be alternative #5, which is to maintain the status quo. This alternative would only be satisfactory until Alternative #1 could be implemented.

If you have questions, please advise. Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles Ward and Kathy Kohberger

Copy Delivered by Hand or U.S. Mail

I61-1 The commenters' support for Alternative 1 as their first preference and for Alternative 5 as their second choice (until Alternative 1 could be implemented) is noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. Alternative 3 is the recommended restoration approach under the Preferred Alternative. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation and restoration components of the Preferred Alternative.

This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

Letter I62

From: Hydroman [hydroman455@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 9:38 PM
To: Stewart, Penny@Tahoe
Cc: Russell Wigart; Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Subject: Re: 2 things

I survived and was not drowned in a scour hole.. Actually it went pretty well. Having Jeremy involved really helps bring a technical perspective from the academic end. I hope he can stay involved in these discussions and would love his input and contributions on future efforts.
Thanks so much for your efforts and the discussions..
That said, below are some comments I drafted a couple weeks ago. They are very general...

I sent a message early last week that bounced back to me regarding comments on the Upper Truckee Marsh Project that is currently under development by the CTC. In speaking with Penny Stewart late last week she stated that public comments will still be considered, therefore I am submitting some very brief comments with regard to this project.

The Upper Truckee Marsh restoration project is perhaps the most important project in the Tahoe Basin. Connecting the largest tributary and River system with its floodplain at the Delta will help to mitigate some of the disturbance created as part of the Tahoe Keys development. I admire the CTC for taking on this project. Previous research by Stubblefield et al has shown that this reach is responsible for much of the lack of function and degradation in the watershed. The cannelization of the Upper Truckee River next to the Keys has not only increased sediment transport through this reach but exacerbated this through disconnection of the Marsh and Delta.

That said, I have the following comments and opinions… I62-1

1.) The CTC has my support of Alternative 3. This in my opinion appears to be the best suited means to restore and reconnect the river with its floodplain. This alternative allows the river to be introduced into a large section of the Upper Truckee Marsh with the least amount of disturbance. Although inevitably this project will require some level of disturbance, it is my opinion (Based on work by Kondolf (Berkeley), Doyle (Duke) and Wilcox (Johns Hopkins)) among many others, that the least amount of disturbance the better. Floodplain grading should be minimized as much as possible along with the use of heavy equipment. The Marsh adjacent to and North of Highland Woods has had little disturbance and historic meanders still exist.
Introducing the UTR into this portion of the Marsh will allow the river to adjust naturally with little intervention. There is no restoration feasible that can mitigate the development of the Tahoe Keys however Alternative 3 appears to be the best low impact option. Trout Creek adjacent to the Upper Truckee River has gone through some dynamic changes in the last several years. The exemplary water quality of Trout Creek and the long term inundation of water in the meadow system are a testament of the benefits that these meadow systems, especially in the backwater system of a Delta such as the Truckee Marsh, treat water.

2.) I am not in support of any recreation advances within this Marsh. Funneling people into sensitive areas (especially restored ones) does not seem to be in the best interest of conservation or Water Quality. My opinion is that public access should be limited in this area and not encouraged. An elevated Boardwalk will create restrictions at the Mouth of this dynamic channel. Any form of recreation or conveyance of the public in this meadow system does not have my support. This meadow will be backwatered during times of high lake level or peak discharge, so increasing public recreation in this area not only increases the potential for disturbance but can also take away the dynamic capacity of the river. Sensitive species such as the Tahoe Yellow Cress are present so any increase of recreation will just put more pressure and stress on an already stressed and sensitive system. There are plenty of trail networks that can be upgraded on the Venice Drive, Tahoe Keys and Springwood area that can convey the public around this sensitive and historically disturbed meadow system. Increasing public recreation into this meadow system is in my opinion a "BAD IDEA". It has enough pressure already from Kayakers, Fisherman and off trail Nature Explorers. I am in support of the wildlife viewing areas as described in the Alternative 3 plan view. Incorporating these into the surrounding trail network give the public a place to view the beauty and surrounding nature without having to be directly recreating on it. I62-2

3. Large investments were made in Lower Westside and near Cove East perhaps having an overflow channel in this section could create more available floodplain treatment and sediment storage capacity. Since majority of the flow will be introduced into the Marsh to the East (alt 3), there will be less flow and therefore less velocity capable of creating channel forming bank erosion through this canaled section. I62-3
Perhaps we can talk more about this at another time...

4.) What is the point of Bank protection in the Marsh? Is there erosion prevalent? I62-4
Thanks

Russ Wigart

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 18, 2013, at 5:45 PM, "Stewart, Penny@Tahoe"
<Penny.Stewart@tahoe.ca.gov> wrote:
Russ -

I62-1 The commenter's support for Alternative 3 is noted.

Alternative 3 is the recommended restoration approach under the Preferred Alternative. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting restoration components of the Preferred Alternative. This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

I62-2 The commenter's opposition to additional recreation advances or any form of recreation or conveyance within the meadow is noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation components of the Preferred Alternative. This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

I62-3 The commenter suggests an overflow channel to potentially create more available floodplain treatment and sediment storage capacity in the Lower West Side and near Cove East Beach.

This comment does not raise issues regarding the adequacy, accuracy, or completeness of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

I62-4 The commenter inquires about the purpose of bank protection in the marsh and asks whether bank erosion is prevalent. However, the comment is not specific about the location(s) or alternatives about which the commenter is concerned.

A discussion of bank erosion under existing conditions is provided in Section 3.8, "Geomorphology and Water Quality," of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS. There is accelerated bank erosion along much of the Project reach of the Upper Truckee River. Under the Preferred Alternative, restoration measures on State land would reconnect the active low-flow channel with the marsh floodplain surface via a geomorphically sized pilot channel. Abandoned channel sections that now experience bank erosion would be filled or partially filled and reshaped to be restored meadow areas functioning as vegetated swales. The project does not propose any bank protection measures along the existing channel or at the LWS downstream of the pilot channel because the low-flow river would be relocated to the middle of the marsh and be of appropriate dimensions and connected to the floodplain and have lower banks. Existing eroding banks along the river on private land between the pilot channel and U.S. 50 would benefit from the floodplain lowering, revegetation, and secondary channel reactivation. The only areas proposed to specifically have bank protection under the Preferred Alternative are in the lower reach of Trout Creek (to ensure that any additional flows through this segment of the creek would not result in bed and/or bank erosion) and at the actively eroding east (right) hillslope downstream of the U.S. 50 bridge. Bank stabilization and protection in this vicinity would address erosion of private lands and property loss, as well as reduce local sources of sediment directly to the river and the lake.

Letter I63

From: Brenda Wyneken [brndakn@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Carroll, Scott@Tahoe
Subject: Upper Truckee Marsh proposal

Dear Sir:

I am writing in response to the restoration project proposal for the Upper Truckee Marsh. As a long-time resident in the Al Tahoe are, I fully support the need to restore water quality and wildlife habitat in the Upper Truckee Marsh from past mismanagement such as clear-cutting, grazing, and the development of the Tahoe Keys. However, I have major concerns about the four alternatives being discussed, most notably the desire to increase public access on the east side of the marsh/meadow. Ever since a two-foot wide footbridge, believed to unsanctioned, was built across Trout Creek at the end of Oakland Avenue, our neighborhood has seen a sharp rise in litter, human defecation, vagrants, vandalism, and burglaries. The four alternatives, which propose new bike paths, trails, viewpoints, and kiosks, will only exacerbate these problems. Furthermore, with the restorations completed among the upper reaches of Trout Creek between Pioneer Trail and the community college, the eastern side of the Upper Truckee Marsh now remains wet and boggy well into the summer months; increasing public access here does not make sense under these circumstances because improving access points will only promote more damge to the wet ecosystem. Finally, it is my opinion that there exist enough viewpoints overlooking the meadow if one walks along El Dorado Avenue or down to the southern end of Bellevue Avenue. There are also a number of access points to Lake Tahoe via the Cove East trail, Regan Beach, and El Dorado Beach, now know as Lakeview Commons. I63-1

The Tahoe Conservancy has the duty to restore and protect the Upper Truckee Marsh and Lake Tahoe. Increasing public access to the marsh/meadow is in direct opposition to your stated goals for this project: ". . . to restore the river's natural cleansing function and subsequently increase habitat quality for plant, wildlife, and fish species." If you really want to restore the Upper Truckee Marsh to its original purpose as a natural filter for waters entering Lake Tahoe, do NOT approve the increased public access on the east side as proposed in the four alternatives.

Sincerely,

Brenda Wyneken
Al Tahoe resident

I63-1 The commenter states support for restoration of water quality and wildlife habitat in the marsh, but opposes any increase in recreational facilities or opportunities within the meadow.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. Alternative 3 is the recommended restoration approach under the Preferred Alternative. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation and restoration components of the Preferred Alternative.

Letter I64

From: info@tahoe.ca.gov [mailto:info@tahoe.ca.gov]
Sent: Saturday, May 11, 2013 3:01 PM
To: ctran@sdbxstudio.com; TAHOE Info
Subject: CTC - Contact

Contact Form:

Name: Victoria Archibald
Email: vicandbales@yahoo.com
Phone: 530-544-1596

Comments
We were not advised of the closing date for voting as to the use of Upper Truckee Marsh Area, either by USPS or email. My husband and I would like to express our concern for the wildlife in this meadow and feel that a bike trail or excessive recreational use would upset the natural balance of the meadow. We would like to strongly express our desire for Alternative #2, as that seems to have the least human impact on the natural balance of this area. We strongly feel some areas should be left for Lake Tahoe's wildlife as there are plenty of areas for people. Further expanding human impact on this area would only do more harm than good for this meadow. I64-1

Sincerely
Donald Archibald Victoria Archibald
P.O. Box 14194
South Lake Tahoe, Ca.
96150

I64-1 The commenters' concern about noticing and public outreach is noted. The commenters' support for Alternative 2 is also noted.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Final EIR/EIS/EIS, the Preferred Alternative is proposing moderate recreation on the west side of the marsh, similar to existing conditions, and no additional recreation access on the marsh's east side. Alternative 3 is the recommended restoration approach under the Preferred Alternative. See Section 2.1, "Selecting a Preferred Alternative," of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS for a description of the approach to selecting recreation and restoration components of the Preferred Alternative.

See responses to Comments AO2-4 and I8-6 for a discussion of the project's history, planning context, and public outreach.

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