

California Tahoe Conservancy
Agenda Item 7b
April 30, 2015

**TAHOE SIERRA INTEGRATED REGIONAL
WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Summary: Staff recommends the adoption of the Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the corresponding Memorandum of Understanding.

Location: The affected region encompasses the portions of El Dorado County, Placer County, Alpine County, Nevada County, and Sierra County in the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Carson River Watershed, the Truckee River Watershed and the Little Truckee River Watershed (Attachment 1).

Fiscal Summary: Incidental staff costs

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 15-04-03 (Attachment 2).

Background

In 2002, the Integrated Regional Water Management Act (IRWMA) amended the California Water Code (CWC) to encourage local agencies to cooperatively manage local and imported water supplies in order to improve the quality, quantity, and reliability of water supply. The passage of Proposition 50 in November 2002, Propositions 84 and 1E in November 2006, and Proposition 1 in November 2014 provided grant funding for projects included in an adopted Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP). The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) currently administers this grant program and establishes standards that IRWMPs must meet in order to receive implementation grants.

In July 2010, the Conservancy Board adopted the 2007 Tahoe Sierra IRWMP and its corresponding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In November 2012, the Tahoe Sierra IRWMP received a grant award of \$557,000 to update their plan to current DWR standards. The Tahoe Sierra Partnership hired Kennedy-Jenks Consultants to assist with the development of the updated IRWMP. The Tahoe Sierra IRWMP was submitted to DWR in July 2014 and was approved in September 2014.

The Tahoe Sierra IRWMP, MOU, and additional information about the partnership can be found at: <http://tahoesierrairwm.com/>. The IRWMP and the MOU (Appendix 1-A) are on Attachment 3.

Conservancy staff have been active participants in the Tahoe Sierra IRWM since 2008 and were members of the planning subcommittee that led the development of the updated IRWMP with the consultant. The Tahoe Sierra IRWM consists of approximately 28 partners, including the City of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County, Placer County, South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD), Washoe Tribe, Truckee River Watershed Council and the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, among others. STPUD has provided the leadership position for the agency since 2010 and coordinates meetings, disseminates information, and organizes the Tahoe Sierra efforts.

The Tahoe Sierra IRWMP contains a list of projects, which are amended on a two-year cycle. Projects included in the plan are evaluated and prioritized by the partnership. As grant guidelines and solicitations are made available, the formal partners decide, through consensus, which projects are most appropriate for inclusion in a specific grant application by the Tahoe Sierra Group. In addition to grant opportunities through DWR, there are other state grant programs that either require a project to be included in an IRWMP or award bonus points if a project is in an IRWMP. This demonstrates the importance of the IRWMP within the state.

Project Description

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the 2014 Tahoe Sierra IRWMP and direct the Conservancy's Executive Director to sign the MOU. This will continue the Conservancy's role as a formal partner in the Tahoe Sierra IRWMP and allow the Conservancy's projects to be included in the plan. Currently, the Conservancy has two projects in the plan. As a formal partner, the Conservancy may potentially secure future grant funds for its own projects, as well as continue to support the efforts of our partners to also potentially secure funding through other statewide grant programs.

Project Implementation

The Conservancy's Executive Director will sign the MOU and Conservancy staff will actively participate in the Tahoe Sierra IRWMP. If a Conservancy project receives funding through an IRWMP grant, staff will seek Board authorization for any actions requiring such approval.

Project Evaluation

As stated above, staff believes that formal participation in the Tahoe Sierra IRWM partnership is important for the Conservancy and its role in the Basin. Staff recommends that the Conservancy be involved with a larger group of regional partners committed to comprehensive water resource management and working collaboratively in that management. In addition, there is a possibility that funding from other sources may become available for Conservancy and Basin projects through formal participation in the Tahoe Sierra IRWM Group.

Not only are the IRWM efforts consistent with the Conservancy's mission, many Conservancy projects fit within the objectives of the Tahoe Sierra IRWMP (such as ecosystem restoration). In accordance with the Tahoe Sierra IRWMP, only projects of entities who have formally adopted and signed the MOU may be included in the plan and eligible for IRWMP grant funds. New parties may adopt the MOU at any time and become a formal partner, and as stated above, the project list is amended bi-annually.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

Government Code section 66907.9 authorizes the Conservancy to initiate, negotiate, and participate in agreements for the management of land under its ownership and control with local agencies, State agencies, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, individuals, corporate entities and partnerships.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary of Resources to have no significant effect on the environment. Staff evaluated this IRWMP and MOU adoption and found it to be exempt under CEQA. This project qualifies for a statutory exemption under section 15262 (feasibility and planning studies). A Notice of Exemption (NOE) has been drafted for the project (Attachment 4). If the Board approves the adoption, staff will file the Notice of Exemption (NOE) with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

If a Conservancy project receives funding pursuant to the IRWMP, implementation of the project will be subject to separate CEQA review. Staff will evaluate each IRWMP project prior to implementation to determine the proper CEQA action required and bring them to the Board, as necessary.

List of Attachments:

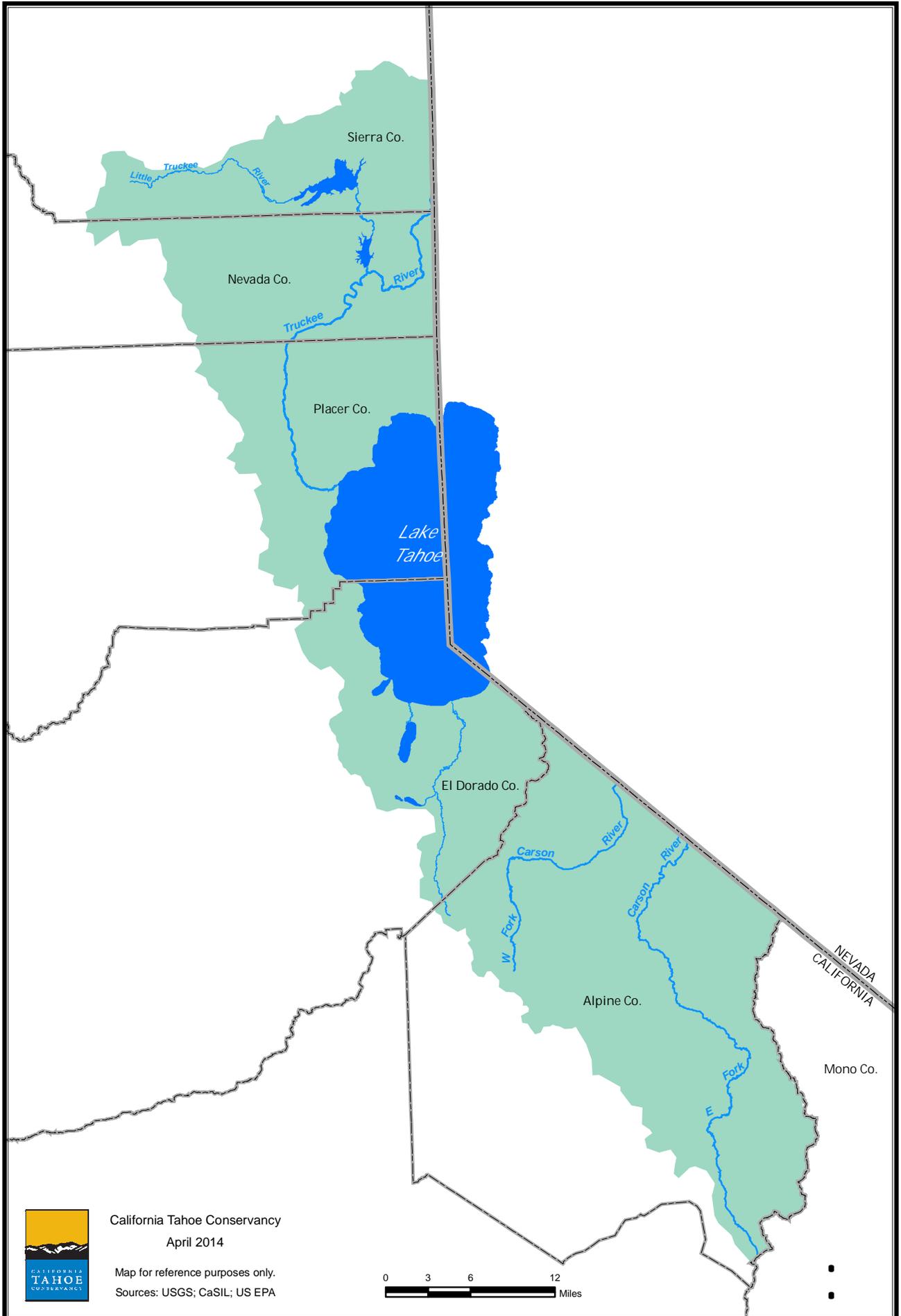
- Attachment 1 – Tahoe Sierra IRWM boundary
- Attachment 2 – Resolution 15-04-03
- Attachment 3 – Tahoe Sierra IRWMP (on attached CD)
- Attachment 4 – Conservancy Notice of Exemption

Conservancy Staff Contact:

Penny Stewart

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ATTACHMENT 1
Tahoe Sierra IRWM Boundary



California Tahoe Conservancy
April 2014
Map for reference purposes only.
Sources: USGS; CaSIL; US EPA

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Miles

NEVADA
CALIFORNIA

Mono Co.

ATTACHMENT 2

California Tahoe Conservancy

Resolution

15-04-03

Adopted: April 30, 2015

**TAHOE SIERRA INTEGRATED REGIONAL
WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Staff recommends that the California Tahoe Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Government Code section 66907.9

"The California Tahoe Conservancy hereby adopts the Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the corresponding Memorandum of Understanding and authorizes staff to take all other necessary steps consistent with the accompanying staff recommendation."

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution duly and regularly adopted by the California Tahoe Conservancy at a meeting thereof held on the 30th day of April, 2015.

In WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 30th day of April, 2015.

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT 3

**TAHOE SIERRA INTEGRATED REGIONAL
WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

2014 Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional
Water Management Plan

On attached CD

ATTACHMENT 4

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 -10th Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Project Title:

Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Project Location – Specific:

Portion of El Dorado County, Placer County, Nevada County, Sierra County, and Alpine County that fall within the Lake Tahoe watershed, the Truckee River watershed, the Little Truckee River watershed, and the Carson River watershed.

Project Location – City:

Unincorporated areas and incorporated areas

Project Location – County:

El Dorado County, Placer County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Adoption of the Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan which identifies goals and objectives for water and water resource related management within the Carson River, Truckee River and the Lake Tahoe Basin watersheds.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy Board meeting of April 30, 2015, Agenda Item 7b)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

California Tahoe Conservancy

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial (Sec. 15073)
 Declared Emergency (Sec. 15071 (a))
 Emergency Project (Sec. 15071 (b) and (c))
 Statutory Exemption, section 15262 (planning and feasibility studies)

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

Action involves adoption of a plan which identifies potential projects, programs and policies for possible future actions.

Contact Person

Penny Stewart

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(530) 543-6013

Date Received for Filing:

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

