APPENDIX B

Scoping Report

Scoping Summary Report for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement

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1.0 Project Summary

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) are pursuing a proposed restoration project along the reach of the Upper Truckee River that extends from U.S. 50 north to Lake Tahoe, including the adjacent meadow and wetland (Appendix Section B, Exhibits 1 and 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. The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is identified in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) as a project that is necessary to restore and maintain environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin (EIP Project # 560). EIP projects are designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources.

Purpose and Need

The need for the project originates from the environmental degradation that the Upper Truckee River has historically experienced as a result of human alterations to the river and watershed. The purpose of the proposed action is to restore natural geomorphic processes and ecological functions in this lowest reach of the Upper Truckee River and the surrounding marsh to improve ecological values of the restoration area and help reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity.

Project Objectives

The following basic objectives of the project were developed for the proposed action to meet the purpose and need:

- Objective 1: Restore natural and self-sustaining river and floodplain processes and functions.
- Objective 2: Protect, enhance, and restore naturally functioning habitats.
- Objective 3: Restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat quality.
- Objective 4: Improve water quality through enhancement of natural physical and biological processes.
- Objective 5: Protect and, where feasible, expand Tahoe yellow cress populations.

- Objective 6: Provide public access, access to vistas, and environmental education at the Lower West Side and Cove East Beach.
- Objective 7: Avoid increasing flood hazards on adjacent private property.
- Objective 8: Design with sensitivity to the site's historical and cultural heritage.
- Objective 9: Design the wetland/urban interface to help provide habitat value and water quality benefits.
- Objective 10: Implement a public health and safety program, including mosquito monitoring and control.

2.0 Summary of Alternatives

An extensive evaluation and restoration planning process has been conducted to identify potentially feasible approaches for restoration of the river and marsh. As a result of that process, the following five alternatives, including four action alternatives and a No-Project/No-Action Alternative, will be evaluated in the project's environmental document. The five alternatives are being evaluated in a joint Environment Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS/EIS) that complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) ordinances. The alternatives are described and illustrated in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the environmental document (see Appendix Section B). The five alternatives are described below.

- Alternative 1. Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 2. New Channel – West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 3. Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 4. Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 5. No Project/No Action

These alternatives are named for their approach to restoration of the Upper Truckee River, and the associated level of recreation infrastructure. None of the alternatives are designated as preferred at this time; rather, the lead agencies will identify a preferred alternative after taking into consideration public comment on this joint draft environmental impact report, environmental impact statement, and environmental impact statement (DEIR/DEIS/DEIS). The preferred alternative may be one of the five alternatives or a different combination of components from these concept plans, but within the general scope of the range of alternatives. Thus, at this stage of project planning, there is no necessary connection between the recreation and public access approaches included in a particular alternative and the river restoration strategy of that alternative.

In the EIR/EIS/EIS, each alternative will be evaluated at an equal level of detail. (Please refer to the NOP in Appendix Section B for further information about the alternatives.)

3.0 Scoping Process

3.1 General Description and Purpose of Scoping

Scoping is an initial and critically important component of the environmental review process. Scoping is intended to assist in identifying the final range of actions, alternatives, environmental resources, environmental issues, and mitigation measures that will be analyzed in an environmental document. The scoping process helps focus the environmental analysis on critical issues and eliminate from detailed study those issues that are not critical to the decision at hand.

Scoping is conducted as part of compliance with CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA Code of Ordinances. Scoping can be conducted in various forms and may involve numerous participants, but generally involves the solicitation of input from the public and interested agencies to determine the scope, focus, and contents of an environmental document.

3.1.1 CEQA Requirements

Scoping is a less formalized process under CEQA than under NEPA, but is encouraged in the statute and State CEQA Guidelines. Scoping is recognized as a means to help identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, methods of assessment, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth in an EIR, and eliminates from detailed study those issues that are found not to be significant. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and resolve the concerns of interested federal, state, and local agencies; the proponent of the action; and other interested persons, including project opponents.

Tools used to determine the scope of an EIR include early public and inter-agency consultation, the NOP of an EIR, and scoping meetings with agencies and the public. Of these tools, only the NOP is a mandatory requirement under CEQA for the preparation of an EIR. Issuance of the NOP, similar to the Notice of Intent (NOI) under NEPA, serves as the trigger for soliciting comments on the proposed project. Scoping typically ends at the conclusion of a specified public comment period, which is 30 days long for the CEQA process, although public involvement continues throughout the project review and approval effort.

A scoping meeting is required if a project qualifies as being of statewide, regional, or areawide significance, in compliance with Section 21083.9 of the statute. The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project qualifies for this requirement. Notice of this scoping meeting is required to include specified recipients, including responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and members of the public who have requested notification. General public notice of a scoping meeting is discretionary under CEQA; however, many lead agencies do conduct

public scoping meetings to obtain input about the scope and content of an EIR, when they conduct the scoping meeting required by Section 21083.9 of CEQA. The scoping meetings held for this project complied with these CEQA requirements.

3.1.2 NEPA Requirements

NEPA requires a formal scoping process for the preparation of an EIS. Under NEPA, scoping is the process by which a lead agency for EIS preparation solicits input on the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed in the EIS and the methods by which they will be evaluated. NEPA specifically requires the lead agency to consult with federal agencies having jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise on the proposed action and/or alternatives and to solicit information from the public during EIS preparation.

Section 1501.7 of the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations require the lead agency's scoping process to:

- invite affected federal, state, and local agencies, Indian tribes, project proponents, and other interested persons to participate in the EIS process;
- determine the potential significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS;
- identify and eliminate issues determined to be insignificant or addressed in other documents;
- allocate assignments among the lead agency and any cooperating agencies regarding preparation of the EIS, including impact analysis and identification of mitigation measures;
- identify related environmental documents being prepared
- identify other environmental review and consultation requirements; and
- indicate the timing of the preparation of the environmental document and the lead agency's tentative planning and decision-making schedule.

Scoping should occur as early as possible after the lead agency decides to prepare an EIS. The NEPA lead agency is required to publish a NOI in the Federal Register announcing its intent to prepare an EIS. Although not specifically required by NEPA, the lead agency may also hold scoping meetings. Scoping must occur after the NOI is issued, but may occur earlier, as long as appropriate public notice is provided and enough project information is available to allow the public and relevant agencies to participate effectively.

While publication of the NOI serves as the trigger for starting the scoping process, there is no equivalent activity to mark its conclusion until public release of the Draft EIS. To encourage submission of comments and information early in the environmental review process, NEPA lead agency often identifies a date by which

scoping comments should be received. For the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, the NOI identified October 31, 2006 as the date by which scoping comments were requested to be received. The scoping period was later extended to April 30, 2007 (see Appendix Section B). Often, the NEPA lead agency prepares a scoping report to summarize the issues raised during the scoping process and to publicize any decisions that have been made during the scoping process. This report can serve as closure to the scoping process and an assurance that the NEPA lead agency will consider comments received during that process.

3.1.3 TRPA Requirements

TRPA is required to consult with and obtain the comments of any Federal, State or local agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to environmental impacts associated with the project. While TRPA rules and ordinances do not require the release of an NOP or mandate conducting formal public scoping meetings, TRPA typically releases an NOP early in the environmental review process and holds scoping meetings before the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) and Governing Board (GB) to provide opportunity for APC and GB members, agencies, and member of the public to provide input on the project.

3.2 Public Outreach Efforts for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

Several outreach efforts have been undertaken to inform stakeholders about the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, including public meetings during early study phases and development of the project alternatives, as well as the scoping process. The environmental document scoping process supplements this early public input process. The public comment time period of the scoping process has been from the release of the initial scoping-related public notice (NOP release on October 5, 2006) to the conclusion of the last scoping public comment period on April 30, 2007. The outreach efforts made to encourage public and agency input during this scoping period are described below.

3.2.1 Informational Notices

Notice of Intent

Reclamation published the NOI in the Federal Register on October 19, 2006. The NOI provides a summary of the proposed project and project background, describes the proposed alternatives, presents information on the scoping meetings, provides Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA contacts. Information about how to obtain copies of the NOI was made available to scoping meeting attendees, and an electronic version of the document was posted on the project website (see below). The NOI, as published in the Federal Register, is included as Appendix Section A.

Notice of Preparation

The Conservancy and TRPA filed the NOP with the California and Nevada State Clearinghouses and released it publicly on October 4, 2006. The NOP identified November 2, 2006 as the closing date for submitting scoping comments. A continuation was filed on March 13, 2007, to extend the closing date for scoping comments to April 30, 2007. The NOP provides notice of the scoping meetings, presents an overview of the proposed project and alternatives, statement of the purpose of and need and objectives for the project, summarizes the proposed alternatives, lists the issues anticipated to be addressed in the EIR/EIS/EIS, and provides contact information. In addition to State Clearinghouse distribution to potentially interested state agencies in both California and Nevada, copies of the NOP were mailed to property owners (within 300 feet of the study area boundaries) and other parties known to have an interest in the restoration project. The NOP is included in Appendix Section B.

Upper Truckee Update

The Conservancy has distributed three editions of a newsletter for the project, *The Upper Truckee Update*. To-date, project newsletters have included information about the project's history and background, project objectives, and the proposed alternatives and an overview of the alternatives development process. The newsletters also described the environmental review process, solicited for public input and noticed the two public scoping meetings that were held in the afternoon and evening of October 24, 2006.

The first and second editions were mailed to property owners near the study area, agencies, organizations and the general public in October 2002 and October 2006, respectively. The second edition was also made available at the public scoping meetings, the Conservancy office's front desk, and Upper Truckee Marsh public access points. The third edition has been made available at the Conservancy's front desk and Upper Truckee Marsh public access points. All newsletters are available on the project website (see below) and are included in Appendix Section C.

Newspaper Advertisement

The Conservancy placed a newspaper advertisement in the *Tahoe Daily Tribune*, the primary newspaper in the area of the restoration project on October 20, 2006. The advertisement announced the lead agencies' intention to prepare an EIR/EIS/EIS, the places and times of the scoping meetings and the TRPA GB Meeting, Conservancy and TRPA contact information, and the availability of information on the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration website. Appendix Section D contains a copy of this notice.

Website

During the scoping process, the Conservancy maintained a project website for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project (which was at http://www.uppertruckeemarsh.com) that contained project history and background, information about the study area, project objectives, alternatives descriptions, project schedule, contact information, and an electronic submittal

form for the public to request being added to the project's mailing list. Scoping meeting information was posted on the website on October 4, 2006, the day on which the NOP was published.

3.2.2 Scoping Meetings

Two public scoping meetings were held in the afternoon and evening of October 24, 2006 to provide opportunities for interested parties to learn about the proposed project and alternatives and to provide input regarding the alternatives and scope of the environmental document. The project was also presented as an information item to TRPA's APC and GB at the October 11 and October 25, 2006 meetings. In addition to receiving comments from APC and GB members, the public was also asked to provide input on the project at these two meetings.

During the October 24 public scoping meetings, comment cards[1] were made available to participants, and maps describing the alternatives were displayed and discussed. Each meeting included a presentation describing the project background and objectives, the proposed alternatives, the environmental review process and tentative schedule, the project website URL, and public participation opportunities. Scoping and TRPA meeting locations, dates, and times were as follows in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1
Location, Date, and Time of Public Meetings

Place	Address	Date	Time
North Tahoe Conference Center, TRPA Advisory Planning Commission (APC) Meeting	8318 North Tahoe Boulevard, Kings Beach, CA 96143	Wednesday, October 11, 2006	Beginning at 9:30 a.m.
Inn By The Lake, Public Scoping Meeting	3300 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150	Tuesday, October 24, 2006	12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Inn By The Lake, Public Scoping Meeting	3300 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150	Tuesday, October 24, 2006	6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
TRPA, Governing Board (GB) Meeting	128 Market Street, Stateline, NV 89449	Wednesday, October 25, 2006	Beginning at 9:30 a.m.

A copy of the presentation from the October 24, 2006 scoping meetings is included in Appendix Section E.

3.2.3 Scoping Report

This scoping report was created to outline the process and outcome of the scoping meetings and other activities. Specifically, this report includes an overview of

[1] Comment cards were intended to be used to submit written comments at the meetings. They were also pre-addressed for submittal via U.S. mail.

scoping requirements; a list of documents/products generated for project outreach; a summary of comments made during the scoping process, both written and verbal; and an appendix that includes hard copies of all written comments, summaries of the scoping meetings, and other project-related print materials used to inform interested parties about the alternatives proposed for this project and the EIR/EIS/EIS.

4.0 Scoping Comments

4.1 Introduction

Written comments were received, as well as comments presented orally at the scoping meetings. Notes were taken during the scoping meetings to record questions and answers and the attendees' comments. Appendix Section F contains a summary of oral comments, and questions and answers from the TRPA APC and GB meetings held in October 2006. Appendix Section G includes meeting attendee sign-in sheets, and provides a summary of oral comments, and questions and answers from the October 24, 2006 public scoping meetings. Written comments received are presented in Appendix Section H. All comments, both written and oral, that are relevant to the contents of the EIR/EIS/EIS and the environmental review process are summarized in Table 4-1, "Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping."

Table 4-1
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project EIR/EIS/EIS:
Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping Period

Environmental Issue	EIR/EIS/EIS Section(s) Addressing Comment[1]
General Comments	
High water flows and erosion along Trout Creek were observed. What are the plans for restoration of Trout Creek?	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
How does the upstream condition of the river affect the project site?	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe how the project will affect the meadow south of the U.S. 50 bridge?	Biological Resources, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Does the U.S. 50 bridge cause problems upstream?	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
How far upstream is the river incised?	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe management policy in regards to dogs allowed in the marsh area.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
Address potential fire hazards associated with changes in vegetation and fire management.	3.7 Human Health/Risk of Upset
How and when was the public given notice about the project? Was sufficient notice given? How is this evaluated?	Scoping Report
Describe how Pope Marsh relates to the Upper Truckee meadow/marsh.	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
The environmental document should include information regarding construction methodologies, special equipment, temporary best management practices, design considerations, dewatering concerns, and other details to demonstrate that the project can be constructed without discharging sediment or other pollutants to the Upper Truckee River.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Consider delaying implementation of recreational improvements until their impact can be determined.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
Alternatives	
Filling in the old channel and building a new channel of the appropriate size and design was suggested.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Describe how/if the alternatives were informed by consideration of upstream disturbance?	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB) encourages potential for building an alternative into this project that would help Pope Marsh.	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need

Table 4-1
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project EIR/EIS/EIS:
Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping Period

Environmental Issue	EIR/EIS/EIS Section(s) Addressing Comment[1]
Describe which alternatives raise the bed of the river.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
LRWQCB supports relocating corporation yard. The Conservancy is encouraged to work with TKPOA to find a new location for the corporation yard.	Chapter 2 Description of Alternatives
What is the sailing lagoon's function now? What kinds of changes does this project propose? What is its recent dredging history?	Chapter 2 Description of Alternatives, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality, 3.13 Recreation
Biological Resources	
Evaluate methods that could encourage wildlife habitat restoration.	3.4 Biological Resources: Vegetation and Wildlife
Protect the Tahoe Yellow Cress by a fence, but allow public viewing of the plant.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.4 Biological Resources: Vegetation and Wildlife
LRWQB requests that the EIS analyze the amount of disturbance required to implement each alternative. Make sure the disturbance does not outweigh the gain.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives; 3.6 Geology and Soils, Mineral Resources, and Land Capability and Coverage
Evaluate bald eagle thresholds as they relate to this project.	3.4 Biological Resources: Vegetation and Wildlife
Flooding	
Potential for flood hazard is an important issue for the City of South Lake Tahoe. Each of the alternatives should include the high water lines for flood analysis.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding
Will filling the existing channel result in increased flooding in adjacent neighborhoods?	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding
If filling the existing channel would result in increased flooding in adjacent neighborhoods, consider set-back levees.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.7 Human Health/Risk of Upset, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Is there something in the modeling that says the flooding will not get any worse? Examine the creek that comes into the river from the side, near Colorado Court, in evaluating the flooding hazard.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding
Hydrology, Geomorphology and Water Quality	
Describe where the water from the incised channel upstream would break out of the channel for flooding the meadow.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe how the sinuosity of the river will change.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe the property the Conservancy owns and whether the Conservancy would acquire new property in areas where the meadow would flood often.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives

Table 4-1
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project EIR/EIS/EIS:
Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping Period

Environmental Issue	EIR/EIS/EIS Section(s) Addressing Comment[1]
Include a detailed analysis of potential short-term and construction-related water quality impacts and discuss mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to less–than-significant levels.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
The environmental document should quantify and describe, in some detail, impacts/changes during construction. For instance, the document should include the project's impact on turbidity; a model of existing deposition, and an estimate of deposition change due to the project.	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe which alternative would have the most immediate and maximum affect on improving water quality. Describe and compare how each alternative would affect water quality. Will each alternative have the same impact?	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Consider inclusion of CONCEPT modeling when evaluating existing conditions and project impacts.	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Analyze total sediment and nutrient loads resulting from implementation of each alternative. Compare these loads to the existing total sediment and nutrient loads and to the total sediment and nutrient loads under the No Project Alternative.	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
If possible, the environmental document should include a numeric estimate of pollutant loading (sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus) from construction, and compare the short-term impacts with expected long-term load reductions.	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Will the channel gully widen? Where will this happen?	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Evaluate major hydraulic constrictions (i.e., highway bridges) to evaluate the potential for modification to allow more flood flows.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Discuss the potential for each alternative to improve water quality, including reducing total suspended sediment and nutrient concentrations.	3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Analyze both the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek within and above this project for channel incision.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Investigate the energy of flows up and down the river to assess the potential for upstream and downstream impacts.	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.9 Geomorphology and Water Quality
Describe the feasibility of reconnecting a water supply to Pope Marsh.	Chapter 1 Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need, Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Noise	
The environmental document needs to include a detailed noise analysis.	3.11 Noise

Table 4-1
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project EIR/EIS/EIS:
Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping Period

Environmental Issue	EIR/EIS/EIS Section(s) Addressing Comment[1]
Recreation/Public Access	
Posting signs at the access points of the marsh property was suggested.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Laying walkways in the meadow would increase recreation access to the detriment of the marsh ecosystem.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.4 Biological Resources: Vegetation and Wildlife, 3.13 Recreation
Maintain natural conditions in the center and restrict public use to the edges.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
How will the recreation facilities and site maintenance be maintained? Who will be responsible?	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.12 Public Services
How will more frequent flooding of the meadow affect recreation? (Consider how accessible the meadow will be once it is flooding more frequently).	3.8 Hydrology and Flooding, 3.13 Recreation
City of South Lake Tahoe (SLT) Parks and Recreation Commission recommends that the Conservancy build a boardwalk between Cove East and Lily Street off of Lakeview Avenue. The Commission requests that this boardwalk allow for limited access to Barton Beach, but prevent access to the meadow.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Increase the amount of raised trails proposed for the project site.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Address the impacts associated with cross-county skiing.	3.13 Recreation
Include an educational component in the recreational improvements for the project.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Willow and lodgepole Pine have already begun to reestablish on the project site since cattle grazing was eliminated. These trees (especially willow) are very dense in spots and could limit access to the site.	3.4 Biological Resources: Vegetation and Wildlife, 3.13 Recreation
Part of Trout Creek Meadow should be put aside for human and dog access.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
City of SLT requests that recreation be made available to people on both sides of the river.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
Keep recreational trails on the perimeter, and away from the channel and wetlands.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives, 3.13 Recreation
Traffic	
The environmental document needs to provide a detailed analysis of traffic impacts, including existing and forecast traffic volumes and levels of service for all public streets and intersections that may be affected. The analysis should address construction/short-term traffic impacts and long-term impacts. The analysis should also address parking impacts.	3.16 Transportation, Parking, and Circulation

Table 4-1
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project EIR/EIS/EIS:
Environmental Issues Raised During Scoping Period

Environmental Issue	EIR/EIS/EIS Section(s) Addressing Comment[1]
Identify potential impacts to bicycle, pedestrian and transit circulation.	3.16 Transportation, Parking, and Circulation; 3.13 Recreation
Address infrastructure and maintenance requirements.	3.16 Transportation, Parking, and Circulation
Cumulative	
Will the project have any direct or indirect impacts on future upstream restoration projects?	3.18 Cumulative Impacts
Will upstream projects have adverse impacts on this project?	3.18 Cumulative Impacts
Consider this project's impacts in the context of other restoration projects within the Upper Truckee River watershed.	3.18 Cumulative Impacts

Notes:
[1] Sections identified are preliminary.

APPENDIX OF PROJECT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

Section A Notice of Intent

Section B Notice of Preparation and Comment Period Continuation

Section C Upper Truckee Updates

Section D Newspaper Advertisement and Public Notice of Scoping Meetings

Section E Scoping Meeting Presentation

Section F Scoping Meeting Notes

Section G Copies of Written Comments

SECTION A

Notice of Intent

to eligible producing states and coastal political subdivisions (CPSs) through a grant program. The funds allocated to each state are based on the proportion of qualified OCS revenues offshore the individual state to total qualified OCS revenues from all states. In order to receive funds, the states submit CIAP narratives detailing how the funds will be expended. Alabama, Alaska, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas are the only eligible states under EPAct. Counties, parishes, or equivalent units of government within those states lying all or in part within the coastal zone, as defined by section 304(1) of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) 1972, as amended, are the coastal political subdivisions eligible for CIAP funding, a total of 67 local jurisdictions.

To approve a plan, legislation requires that the Secretary of the Interior must be able to determine that the funds will be used in accordance with EPAct criteria and that projects will use the funds according to the EPAct. To confirm appropriate use of funds, MMS requires affirmation of grantees meeting Federal, state, and local laws and adequate project descriptions. To accomplish this, MMS is providing in its CIAP Environmental Assessment a suggested narrative format to be followed by each applicant for a CIAP grant. This narrative will assist MMS in its review of applications to determine that adequate and appropriate measures were taken to meet the laws that affect the proposed coastal projects. This narrative will be submitted electronically as part of the grant application. At that time, applicants will be obliged to fill out several OMB-approved standard forms as well. Most of the eligible states and CPSs, as experienced grant applicants, will be familiar with this narrative request.

This information collection request (ICR) addresses the narrative portion only of the MMS CIAP grant program.

Frequency: On occasion.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: Approximately 73 total respondents. This includes 6 states and 67 boroughs, parishes, etc.

Estimated Reporting and Recordkeeping ''Hour'' Burden: The estimated annual ''hour'' burden for this information collection is a total of 12,600 hours. In calculating the burdens, we assumed that respondents perform certain requirements in the normal course of their activities. We consider these to be usual and customary and took that into account in estimating the burden. There are approximately six states and 67 parishes, boroughs, counties, etc. Submissions are generally on an occasion basis. The estimated annual ''hour'' burden for this information collection is a total of 12,600 hours. We expect each project narrative will take 42 hours to complete. We anticipate an average of 300 projects per year. Based on a cost factor of $50 per hour, we estimate the total annual cost to industry is $630,000 (42 hrs × 300 projects = 12,600 hrs × $50 per hour = $630,000).

Estimated Reporting and Recordkeeping ''Non-Hour Cost'' Burden: We have identified no paperwork ''non-hour cost'' burdens associated with the collection of information.

Public Disclosure Statement: The PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) provides that an agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Until OMB approves a collection of information, you are not obligated to respond.

Comments: Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) requires each agency ''* * * to provide notice * * * and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information * * *'' Agencies must specifically solicit comments to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

To comply with the public consultation process according to section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*), we published a **Federal Register** notice (71 FR 29666, May 23, 2006) outlining the collection of information and announcing that we would submit this ICR to OMB for approval. The notice provided the required 60-day comment period. We have received no comments in response to this effort.

If you wish to comment in response to this notice, you may send your comments to the offices listed under the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. OMB has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the information collection but may respond after 30 days.

Therefore, to ensure maximum consideration, OMB should receive public comments by November 20, 2006.

Public Comment Procedures: MMS's practice is to make comments, including names and addresses of respondents, available for public review. If you wish your name and/or address to be withheld, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. MMS will honor the request to the extent allowable by the law; however, anonymous comments will not be considered. There may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by the law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. In addition, you must present a rationale for withholding this information. This rationale must demonstrate that disclosure ''would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy.'' Unsupported assertions will not meet this burden. In the absence of exceptional, documentable circumstances, this information will be released. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

MMS Information Collection Clearance Officer: Arlene Bajusz (202) 208–7744.

Dated: August 2, 2006.

E.P. Danenberger,

Chief, Office of Offshore Regulatory Programs.

[FR Doc. E6–17514 Filed 10–18–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–MR–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project, El Dorado County, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/ environmental impact statement/ environmental impact report (EIS/EIS/ EIR) and notice of scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Department of the Interior, Bureau of

Reclamation (Reclamation), the TRPA, and the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), intend to prepare a joint EIS/EIS/EIR. The EIS/EIS/EIR would evaluate a joint Reclamation and TRPA restoration project along the reach of the Upper Truckee River that extends from U.S. Highway 50 north to Lake Tahoe and its adjacent wetland. The purpose of the proposed action is to restore natural geomorphic processes and ecological functions in this lowest reach of the Upper Truckee River and the surrounding marsh to improve ecological values of the study area and help reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity.

The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is identified in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) as a project that is necessary to restore and maintain environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin. EIP projects are designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources.

Two public scoping meetings will be held to solicit comments from interested parties to assist in determining the scope of the environmental analysis, including the alternatives to be addressed, and to identify the significant environmental issues related to the proposed action.

DATES: The public scoping meeting dates are:

- Tuesday, October 24, 2006, 12 to 2 p.m., South Lake Tahoe, California.
- Tuesday, October 24, 2006, 6 to 8 p.m., South Lake Tahoe, California.

In addition, the proposed project will be an agenda item at a TRPA Governing Board Meeting on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 in Stateline, Nevada (see agenda item at *http://www.trpa.org/default.aspx?tabid=258).*

All comments are requested to be received by October 31, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Scoping meetings will be held at the Inn By The Lake, Sierra Nevada Room, 3300 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

The TRPA meeting will be held at the TRPA Governing Board Rooms, 128 Market Street, Stateline, NV 89449.

Written comments on the scope of the environmental document, alternatives, and impacts to be considered should be sent to Ms. Jacqui Grandfield, Natural Resources Program Manager, California Tahoe Conservancy, 1061 Third Street, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

If you would like to be included on the EIS/EIS/EIR mailing list, please contact Ms. Grandfield by e-mail at *upper_truckee_marsh.tahoecons.ca.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Myrnie Mayville, Environmental Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E–2606, Sacramento, CA, 95825–1898, (916) 978–5037, *mmayville@mp.usbr.gov*; Ms. Jacqui Grandfield at the above address or (530) 542–5580, *upper_truckee_marsh@tahoecons.ca.gov* or Mr. Mike Elam, Associate Environmental Planner, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, P.O. Box 5310, Stateline, NV, 89448 or (775) 588–4547 ext. 308, MElam@trpa.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Upper Truckee River has been substantially altered by land practices during the past 150 years. Throughout its watershed, the river has experienced ecosystem degradation typical of what has occurred elsewhere in the Basin. The river has been modified from its original conditions by human activities, such as logging; livestock grazing; roads; golf courses; an airport; and residential, commercial and industrial developments. These conditions have resulted in increased sediment and nutrient loads discharging into Lake Tahoe from the river, which contribute to the declining clarity of the lake. Human influences have also resulted in reduced habitat quality for plant, wildlife, and fish species in the watershed. Restoration of natural processes and ecological functions of the river is an important part of the response to the decline in lake clarity.

Restoration planning for the marsh began in the early 1990s with studies conducted by the University of California. In 1995, the Conservancy commissioned a restoration planning and design study, which identified a tentatively preferred river restoration concept 2 years later. However, it was determined that river restoration required use of the entire Upper Truckee Marsh and, at that time the east side of the marsh was not owned by the Conservancy; therefore, this tentatively selected concept could not be pursued. In 1998, the Conservancy began planning and design of an initial phase of wetland restoration on a 23-acre portion of a study area located on the east side of the Upper Truckee River near Lake Tahoe. This is an area, called the Lower West Side Wetland Restoration Project (LWS), where the marsh had been previously filled during the construction of the adjacent Tahoe Keys. After careful investigations, planning, and design; extensive environmental review; and community outreach, the Conservancy approved restoration of 12 acres of wetland through fill removal as the LWS Project in 2001. Construction commenced in the summer of 2001 and was completed in the summer of 2003. In 2000, the Conservancy purchased 311 acres of land in the center of the marsh from a private party, bringing nearly the entire Truckee Marsh into public ownership. Currently, the majority of the study area is owned by the Conservancy, including the marsh and meadows surrounding the lower reach of Trout Creek. Restoration concepts encompassing the whole marsh and the lower reach of the river could be developed after the acquisition. As part of this process, the Conservancy has also conducted public access and recreation use management planning for the river, marsh, and beach.

Initially, the Conservancy defined project objectives and desired outcomes to direct the restoration planning process. A comprehensive evaluation and documentation of the existing natural processes and functions in the study area were conducted to begin the alternatives planning process. This evaluation enabled the identification of potential restoration opportunities and constraints. Armed with detailed information about the river and marsh processes and ecological functions, the Conservancy hosted a design charrette (*i.e.*, interactive workshop) for agencies and other stakeholders to identify the spectrum of potentially feasible restoration ideas to be considered in the development of concept plan alternatives. Four alternative concept plans, all developed to be potentially feasible, were formulated to represent a reasonable range of restoration approaches. The four concepts generated by this extensive process are four action alternatives being evaluated in the EIS/EIS/EIR. A preferred alternative will be identified after public review of the alternatives and public comments are received on the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

To date, key stages of the Upper Truckee River and Wetland Restoration project have included the following:

- Evaluating existing natural processes and functions of the Upper Truckee River and marsh in 2000 and 2001.
- Establishing project objectives and desired outcomes in 2002, and updating them in 2005.
- Defining restoration opportunities and constraints in 2002 and 2003.
- Conducting a restoration design charrette in 2003 to receive input from stakeholders on project priorities, concerns and constraints, and design ideas.

• Conducting hydraulic modeling studies to support the development and evaluation of project alternatives.
• Initial development and comparative evaluation of four conceptual restoration alternatives in 2004 and 2005.
• Regulatory agency review of alternative concepts for key issues and regulatory requirements in 2005.
• Further refinement and evaluation of the alternatives, and preparation of a Concept Plan Report (July 2006).

Project Objectives

The following objectives were developed for the proposed action:
• Objective 1. Restore natural and self-sustaining river and floodplain processes and functions.
• Objective 2. Protect, enhance, and restore naturally functioning habitats.
• Objective 3. Restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat quality.
• Objective 4. Improve water quality through enhancement of natural physical and biological processes.
• Objective 5. Protect and, where feasible, expand Tahoe yellow cress populations.
• Objective 6. Provide public access, access to vistas, and environmental education at the Lower West Side and Cove East Beach.
• Objective 7. Avoid increasing flood hazard on adjacent private property.
• Objective 8. Design with sensitivity to the site's history and cultural heritage.
• Objective 9. Design the wetland/urban interface to help provide habitat value and water quality benefits.
• Objective 10. Implement a public health and safety program, including mosquito monitoring and control.

The following alternatives will be considered at an equal level of detail in the EIS/EIS/EIR:
• Alternative 1, Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure);
• Alternative 2, New Channel—West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure);
• Alternative 3, Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure);
• Alternative 4, Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure); and
• Alternative 5, No Project/No Action.

Alternative 1 would include raising and reconfiguring a portion of the main channel, reconfiguring two sections of split channel, reducing the capacity of the river mouth, changing the hydrologic connectivity of the sailing lagoon, constructing a river corridor barrier to reduce wildlife disturbance, restoring sand dunes at Cove East, re-routing an existing recreational trail, and developing several new recreational components (i.e., full- and self-service visitor centers, pedestrian and bicycle trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms), an interpretive program, and signage.

Alternative 2 would include excavation of a new channel and fill of a portion of the existing channel, constructing a new river mouth, changing the hydrologic connectivity of the sailing lagoon, constructing a river corridor barrier to reduce wildlife disturbance, and restoring sand dunes at Cove East, re-routing an existing recreational trail, constructing observation platforms, and developing an interpretive program and signage.

Alternative 3 would include excavation of a new channel and fill of a portion of the existing channel, reducing the capacity of the river mouth, changing the hydrologic connectivity of the sailing lagoon, re-routing an existing recreational trail, developing several new recreational components (*i.e.*, self-service visitor center, pedestrian and bicycle trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms), and an interpretive program and signage.

Alternative 4 would include excavation of portions of the meadow surface along the corridor of the existing channel to create an inset floodplain, reducing the capacity of the river mouth, constructing a river corridor barrier to reduce wildlife disturbance, (*i.e.*, self-service visitor center, pedestrian and bicycle trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms), and an interpretive program and signage.

Under Alternative 5, existing conditions on the project site would be projected into the future.

Potential Federal involvement may include the approval of the proposed action and partial funding of the river restoration component of the proposed action. The EIS will be combined with an EIR prepared by the Conservancy pursuant to the CEQA and an EIS prepared by the TRPA pursuant to its Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances.

Additional Information

The environmental review will be conducted pursuant to NEPA, CEQA, TRPA's Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances, the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts, and other applicable laws, to analyze the potential environmental impacts of implementing a range of feasible alternatives. Public input on the range of alternatives proposed for detailed consideration will be sought through the public scoping process.

The EIS/EIS/EIR will assess potential impacts to any Indian Trust Assets or environmental justice issues. There are no known Indian Trust Assets or environmental justice issues associated with the proposed action. Input about concerns or issues related to Indian Trust Assets are requested from potentially affected federally recognized Indian Tribes and individual Indians.

Our practice is to make comments, including names, home addresses, home phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish us to consider withholding this information you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. In addition, you must present a rationale for withholding this information. This rationale must demonstrate that disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Unsupported assertions will not meet this burden. In the absence of exceptional, documentable circumstances, this information will be released. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Robert Eckart,

Acting Regional Environmental Officer, Mid-Pacific Region.

[FR Doc. E6–17427 Filed 10–18–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–MN–P

INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

[Inv. No. 337-TA–585]

In the Matter of Certain Engines, Components Thereof, and Products Containing the Same; Notice of Investigation

AGENCY: U.S. International Trade Commission.

ACTION: Institution of investigation pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 1337.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a complaint was filed with the U.S. International Trade Commission on September 19, 2006, under section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, 19 U.S.C. 1337, on behalf of American Honda Motor Company, Incorporated of Torrance, California. A supplement to the complaint was filed on October 10,

SECTION B

Notice of Preparation and Comment Period Continuation

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY
P.O. Box 5310
128 Market Street
Stateline, Nevada 89449-5310
Phone: (775) 588-4547
Fax: (775) 588-4527
Email: trpa@trpa.org www.trpa.org

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY
Arnold Schwarzenegger, *Governor*
CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 542-5580
(530) 542-5591 (fax)

This notice is being issued jointly by the State of California and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and meets CEQA and TRPA noticing requirements for a Notice of Preparation.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: California State Clearinghouse
Nevada State Clearinghouse
Cooperating Agencies
Responsible and Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations
Affected Property Owners (within 300 feet of the study area boundaries)

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.**

Lead Agencies:

State of California
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Contact: Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant, Wildlife Program
Phone: (530) 542-5580
Fax: (530) 542-5591
Email: jgrandfield@tahoecons.ca.gov

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898
Contact: Myrnie Mayville, NEPA Coordinator
Phone: (916) 978-5037
Fax: (916) 978-5055
Email: mmayville@mp.usbr.gov

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89448
Contact: Mike Elam, Associate Environmental Planner
Phone: (775) 588-4547 ext.308 Fax: (775) 588-4527
Email: MElam@trpa.org

Project Title: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

Project Location: The Upper Truckee River drains the largest watershed in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Upper Truckee Marsh is located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe where the river enters the lake. The study area for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is generally bounded by U.S. Highway 50 (U.S. 50) and the Highland Woods neighborhood on the south, the Al Tahoe neighborhood on the east, and Tahoe Islands/Sky Meadows

and Tahoe Keys neighborhoods on the west (Exhibit 1). The study area is approximately 592 acres, and includes parcels owned by the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), other public agencies, and private landowners (Exhibit 2). It includes the downstream reaches of Trout Creek and the Upper Truckee River, adjacent wetland and uplands habitats, and the Lower West Side (LWS) Wetlands Restoration Project site (located in the northwest portion of the study area, just east of the Tahoe Keys Marina).

The Conservancy, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) are preparing a joint EIR/EIS/EIS for the Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration Project (project). This joint document will serve as an EIR prepared by the Conservancy pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); an EIS prepared by Reclamation pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing NEPA; and an EIS prepared by TRPA pursuant to its Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. This notice meets the CEQA and TRPA noticing requirements for a Notice of Preparation (NOP). Reclamation has prepared a separate notice that meets NEPA requirements for a Notice of Intent (NOI) for publication in the *Federal Register*.

We would like to know the views of interested persons, organizations, and agencies as to the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the EIR/EIS/EIS. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed alternatives. The project description, location, alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS, and potential environmental effects of the proposed alternatives (to the extent known) are contained in this NOP.

In compliance with the time limits mandated by State law and TRPA, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than **November 2, 2006**. Please send your written responses to:

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

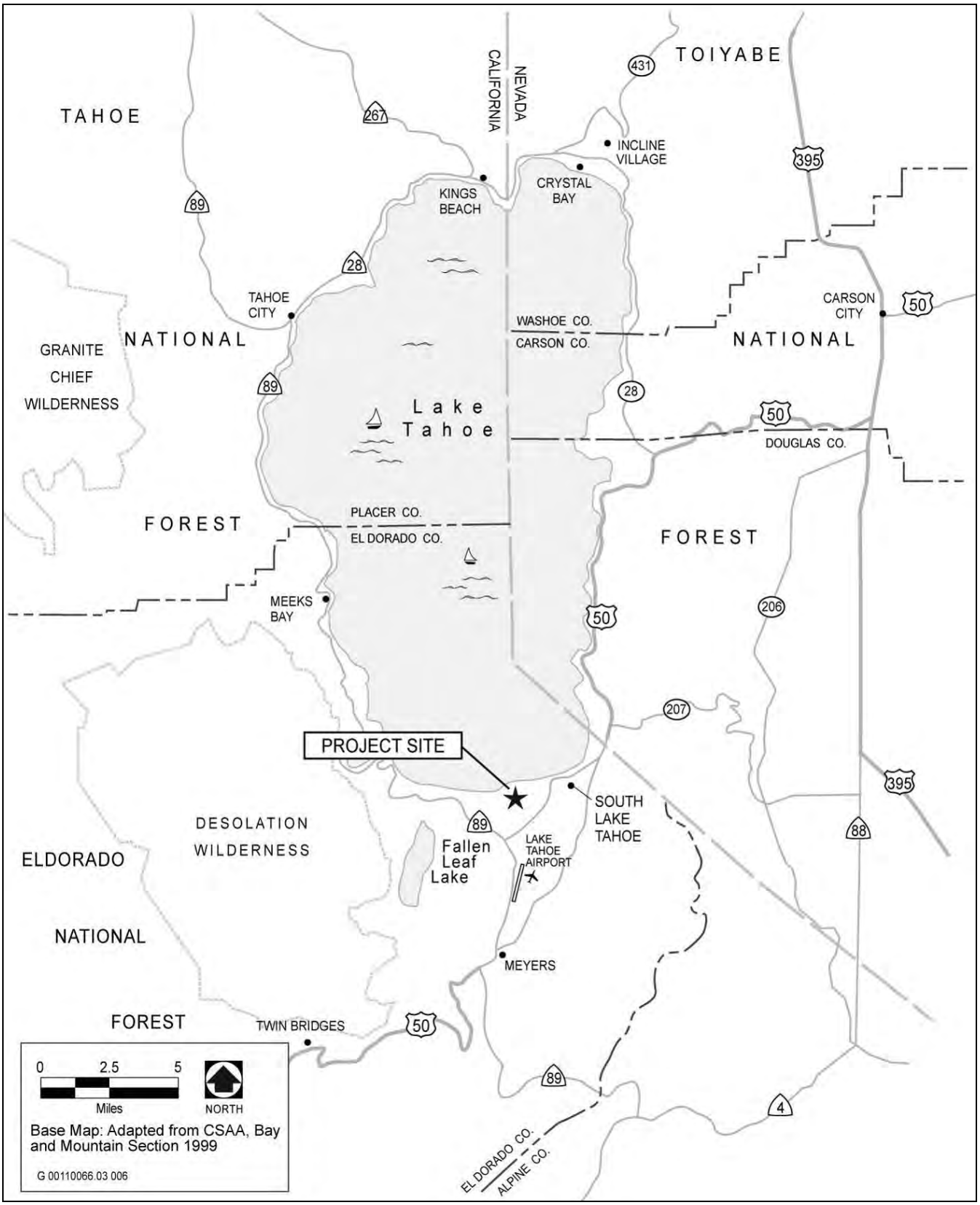
OR

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Mike Elam, Associate Environmental Planner
P. O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

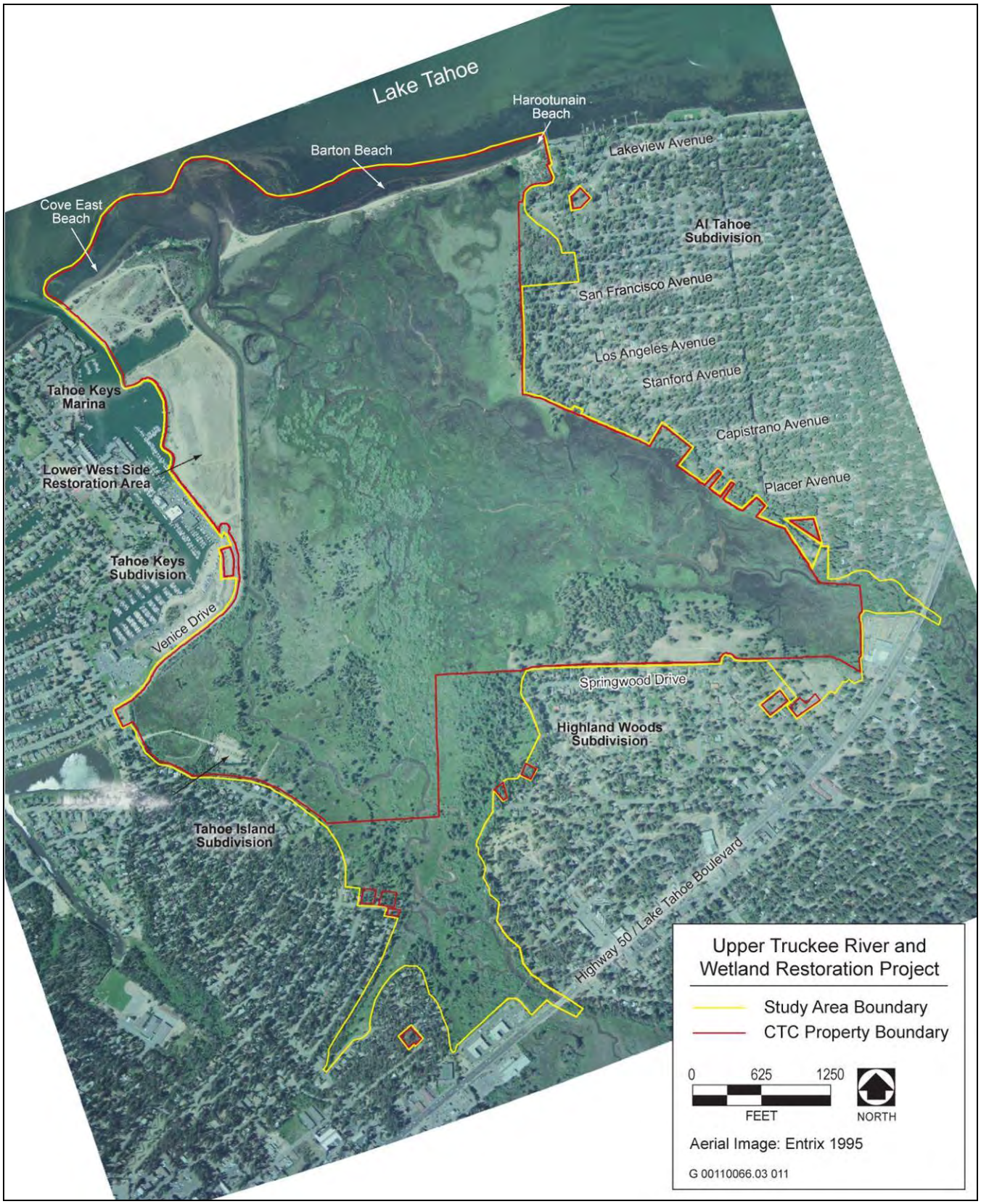
Responses should include the name of a contact person at your agency or organization.

SUMMARY

The Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA are pursuing a restoration project along the reach of the Upper Truckee River that extends from U.S. 50 north to Lake Tahoe, including the adjacent meadow and wetland. The primary purpose of the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is to restore natural geomorphic



Regional Location **Exhibit 1**



Study Area Map **Exhibit 2**

processes and ecological functions along this reach of river. The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is identified in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) as a project that is necessary to restore and maintain environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin. EIP projects are designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources.

An extensive evaluation and restoration planning process has been conducted to identify potentially feasible approaches for restoration of the river and marsh. As a result of that process, the following five alternatives, including four action alternatives and a No Project/No Action Alternative, are intended to be evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS.

- Alternative 1. Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 2. New Channel – West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 3. Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 4. Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 5. No Project/No Action

These alternatives are named for their approach to restoration of the Upper Truckee River, and the associated level of recreation infrastructure, and are described in more detail below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

The Upper Truckee River has been substantially altered by land practices during the past 150 years. Throughout its watershed, the river has experienced ecosystem degradation typical of what has occurred elsewhere in the Basin. The river has been modified from its original conditions by human activities, such as logging; livestock grazing; roads; golf courses; an airport; and residential, commercial and industrial developments. These conditions have resulted in increased sediment and nutrient loads discharging into Lake Tahoe from the river, which contribute to the declining clarity of the lake. Human influences have also resulted in reduced habitat quality for plant, wildlife, and fish species in the watershed. Restoration of natural processes and ecological functions of the river is an important part of the response to the decline in lake clarity.

Restoration planning for the marsh began in the early 1990's with studies conducted by the University of California. In 1995, the Conservancy commissioned a restoration planning and design study, which identified a tentatively preferred river restoration concept two years later. However, it was determined that river restoration required use of the entire Upper Truckee Marsh, and at that time the east side of the marsh was not owned by the Conservancy; therefore, this tentatively selected concept could not be pursued. In 1998, the Conservancy began planning and design of an initial phase of wetland restoration on a 23-acre portion of a study area located on the

east side of the Upper Truckee River near Lake Tahoe (Exhibit 2). This is an area, called the Lower West Side Wetland Restoration Project (LWS), where the marsh had been previously filled during the construction of the adjacent Tahoe Keys. After careful investigations, planning, and design; extensive environmental review; and community outreach, the Conservancy approved restoration of 12 acres of wetland through fill removal as the LWS Project in 2001. Construction commenced in the summer of 2001 and was completed in the summer of 2003.

In 2000, the Conservancy purchased 311 acres of land in the center of the marsh from a private party, bringing nearly the entire Truckee Marsh into public ownership. Currently, the majority of the study area is owned by the Conservancy, including the marsh and meadows surrounding the lower reach of Trout Creek. Restoration concepts encompassing the whole marsh and the lower reach of the river could be developed after the acquisition. As part of this process, the Conservancy has also conducted public access and recreation use management planning for the river, marsh, and beach.

Initially, the Conservancy defined project objectives and desired outcomes to direct the restoration planning process. A comprehensive evaluation and documentation of the existing natural processes and functions in the study area were conducted to begin the alternatives planning process. This evaluation enabled the identification of potential restoration opportunities and constraints. Armed with detailed information about the river and marsh processes and ecological functions, the Conservancy hosted a design charrette (i.e., interactive workshop) for agencies and other stakeholders to identify the spectrum of potentially feasible restoration ideas to be considered in the development of concept plan alternatives. Four alternative concept plans, all developed to be potentially feasible, were formulated to represent a reasonable range of restoration approaches. The four concepts generated by this extensive process became the four action alternatives being evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS. A preferred alternative will be identified after public review of the four alternatives and public comments are received on the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

To date, key stages of the Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration project have included the following:

- Evaluating existing natural processes and functions of the Upper Truckee River and marsh in 2000 and 2001
- Establishing project objectives and desired outcomes in 2002, and updating them in 2005.
- Defining restoration opportunities and constraints in 2002 and 2003
- Conducting a restoration design charette in 2003 to receive input from stakeholders on project priorities, concerns and constraints, and design ideas.
- Conducting hydraulic modeling studies to support the development and evaluation of project alternatives.

- Initial development and comparative evaluation of four conceptual restoration alternatives in 2004 and 2005.
- Regulatory agency review of alternative concepts for key issues and regulatory requirements in 2005.
- Further refinement and evaluation of the alternatives, and preparation of a Concept Plan Report (July 2006).

PURPOSE AND NEED

The need for the project originates from the environmental degradation that the Upper Truckee River has historically experienced as a result of human alterations to the river and watershed. The purpose of the proposed action is to restore natural geomorphic processes and ecological functions in this lowest reach of the Upper Truckee River and the surrounding marsh to improve ecological values of the study area and help reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following basic objectives of the project were developed for the proposed action to meet the purpose and need:

Objective 1. Restore natural and self-sustaining river and floodplain processes and functions

Objective 2. Protect, enhance, and restore naturally functioning habitats

Objective 3. Restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat quality

Objective 4. Improve water quality through enhancement of natural physical and biological processes

Objective 5. Protect and, where feasible, expand Tahoe yellow cress populations

Objective 6. Provide public access, access to vistas, and environmental education at the Lower West Side and Cove East Beach

Objective 7. Avoid increasing flood hazard on adjacent private property

Objective 8. Design with sensitivity to the site's history and cultural heritage

Objective 9. Design the wetland/urban interface to help provide habitat value and water quality benefits

Objective 10. Implement a public health and safety program, including mosquito monitoring and control

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Four "action" alternatives, and the No Project/No Action Alternative, will be evaluated at an equal level of detail in the EIR/EIS/EIS. The four action alternatives are illustrated in Exhibits 3 through 6 and are described below. It is important to note that 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.

All four action alternatives include a recreation and public access component. These ideas are expressed at three levels of development intensity with respect to recreation-related infrastructure ("maximum", "minimum", and "moderate"). At this point in project planning, there is no necessary connection between the recreation and public access approach included in a particular alternative and the river restoration strategy of that alternative. 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.

ALTERNATIVE 1. CHANNEL AGGRADATION AND NARROWING (MAXIMUM RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

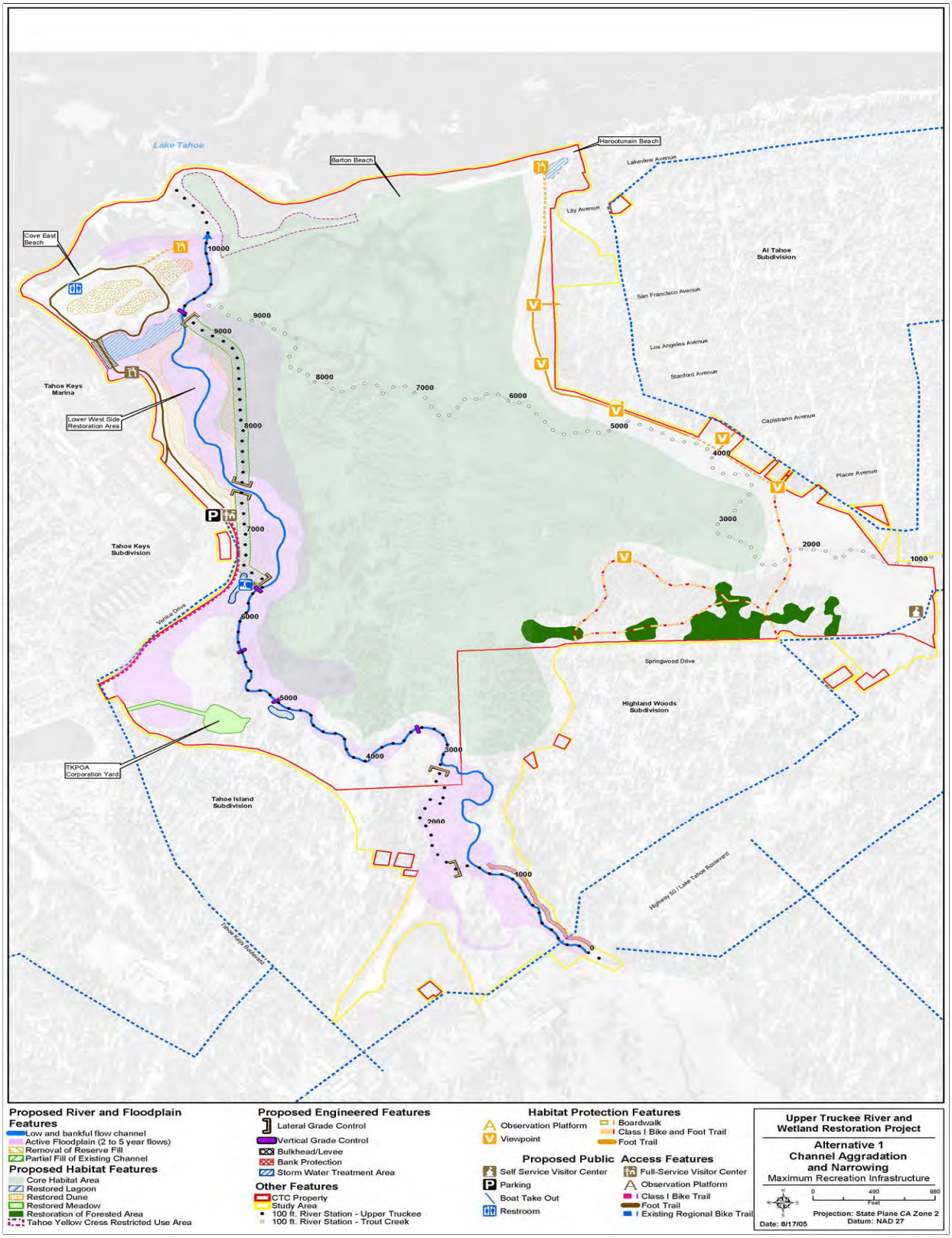
Key elements specific to Alternative 1 include:

- Raising the bed elevation of the existing channel closer to the existing meadow surface as a means of re-establishing an active floodplain, which would be achieved by placing a series of structures in the channel designed to alter hydraulics and intentionally cause sediment aggradation of the bed. Local cut and fill would be used to narrow the channel. Bar development in the aggrading channel would also contribute to channel narrowing.

- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel excavated through the LWS.

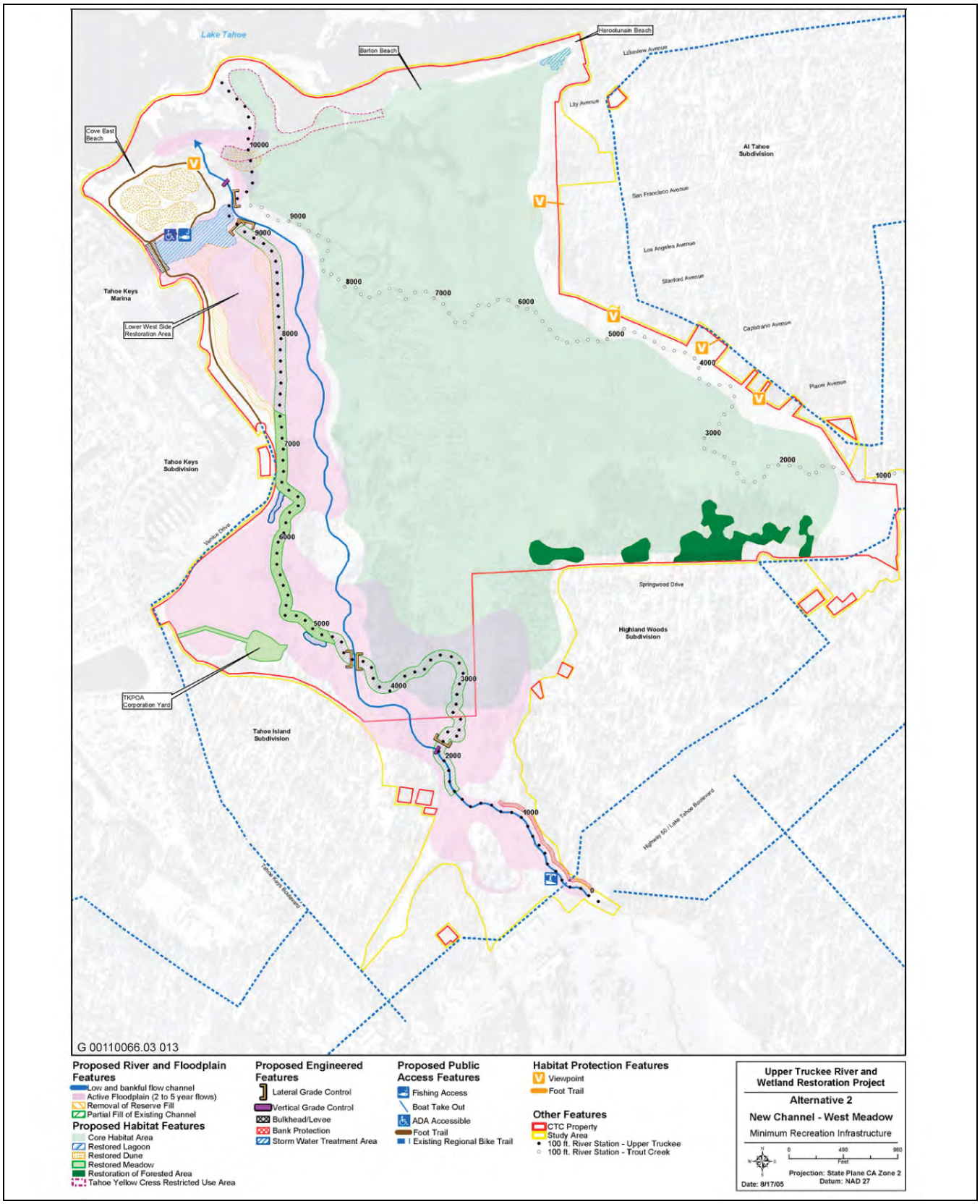
- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing it with local cut and fill and/or placement of bioengineered structures to encourage sediment deposition.

- Reconfiguring two sections of split channel from River Station (RS) 500 to RS 2,600. The low flow channel would continue to flow through the east branch of the split channel from RS 500 to RS 1,400, but unlike existing conditions, would continue in the second east branch channel from RS 1,400 to RS 2,600. The west branches of the split channels would reduce the flow volume and hydraulic stress in the east low-flow channel by conveying a portion of the high flow.



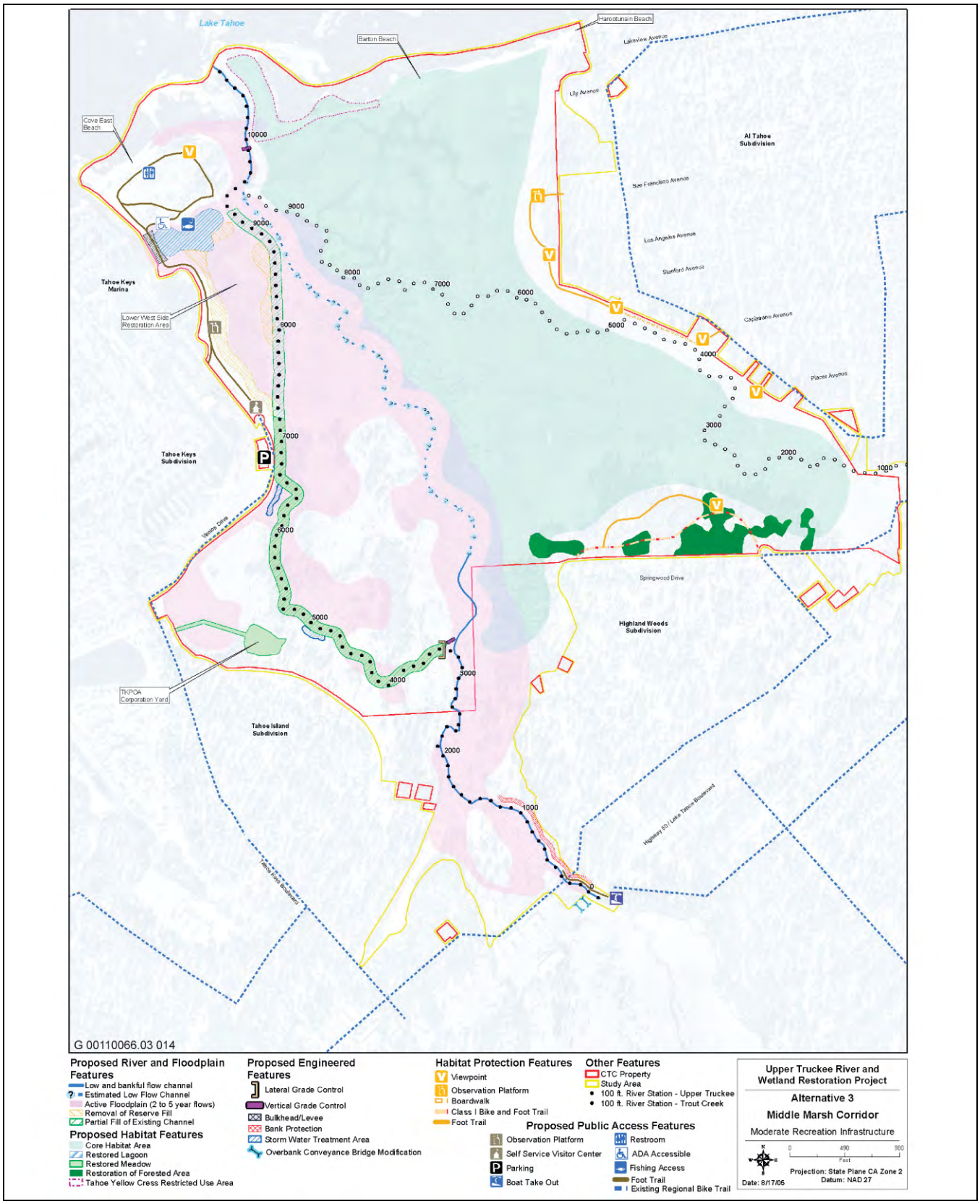
Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 1. Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure) Exhibit 3



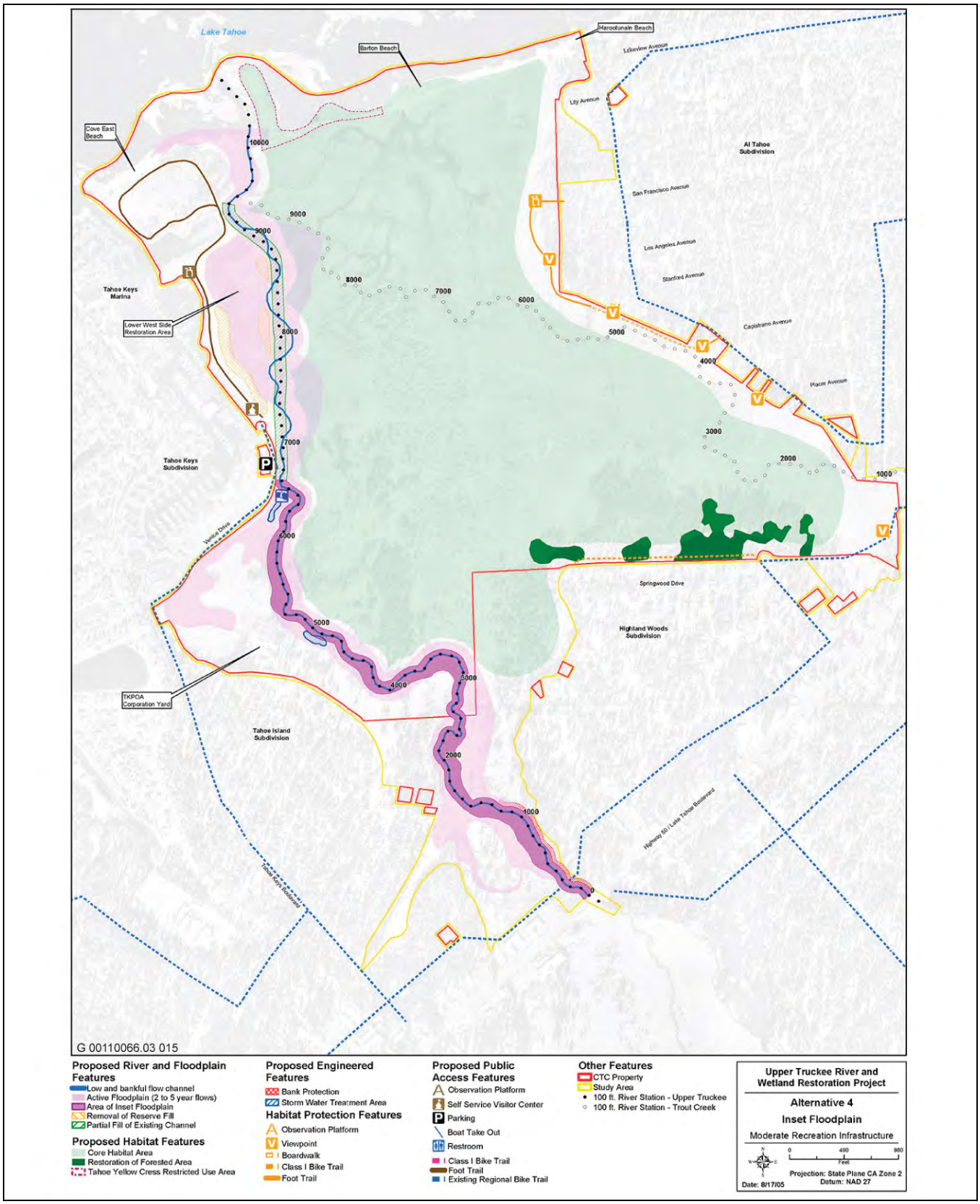
Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 2. New Channel – West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 4**



Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 3. Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 5**



Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 4. Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 6**

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. The lagoon would be constructed just west of the Upper Truckee River. At flow events greater than bankfull, water would overtop the river's banks and begin to flow into the lagoon. Local cut and fill would be used to re-contour the topography of the lagoon and decrease its depth.

- Constructing a full-service visitor and interpretive center on a Conservancy-owned parcel on high capability land near the end of Venice Drive and a small self-service visitor and interpretive center along the existing bike trail near Trout Creek Bridge. The full-service facility would be fully staffed and would likely require a concessionaire to support its maintenance costs. It could have office space included, for instance, for the Conservancy or an appropriate non-profit entity to rent. The full-service facility would contain public restrooms. A new parking lot would be located adjacent to the full-service visitor and interpretive center near the end of Venice Drive.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed due to prompted channel aggradation from the hydraulic structures, which would decrease channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Enhancing the existing trail alignment providing access to Cove East Beach by constructing a spur trail and boardwalk to an observation platform near the river mouth. The platform would provide a view across the river mouth and the meadow and lagoon to the east, as well as out across the lake. The boardwalk railings and its height above the ground would help keep people off the sandy areas during periods of low lake level.

- Constructing new trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Providing a raised boardwalk connection to the beach. An observation platform would be constructed at the end of the boardwalk to provide an overlook of the lake, beach, and the wetland, while discouraging entry onto the beach itself.

- Providing a raised boardwalk for both pedestrians and cyclists that would cross Trout Creek in the southern portion of the site, and link to existing bicycle trails at both ends. The boardwalk would allow visitors visual access into the meadow and to the lake beyond, while minimizing the disturbance that large numbers of hikers can have on meadow plants.

- Constructing a Class I bike trail along Venice Drive.

- Constructing a loop trail for both pedestrian and bicyclists through the wooded area north of Highland Woods.

- Constructing a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

- Removing fill behind Harootunian Beach to recreate lagoon and wet meadow conditions.

- Restoring sand ridges ("dunes") at Cove East.

ALTERNATIVE 2. NEW CHANNEL – WEST MEADOW (MINIMUM RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Key elements specific to Alternative 2 include:

- Excavating a new geomorphic bankfull capacity channel that re-establishes the existing meadow as an active floodplain. Most of the new channel alignment would be located east of the existing channel. A hydraulic structure would be constructed in the channel to facilitate the flow transition from the relatively low bed elevation of the existing incised channel to the higher bed elevation of the new channel.

- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel excavated east of the LWS and straightened reach that has a sinuous planform, bankfull capacity, and active floodplain connection with the existing meadow surface.

- Constructing a new river mouth with a reduced capacity and higher bed elevation west of the existing location. This would provide the opportunity for a small area of beach restoration in the existing channel location. Since this area is prime Tahoe yellow cress habitat, it is anticipated that Tahoe yellow cress would expand in this beach restoration area.

- Maintaining a low-flow channel in the same alignment, and providing hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release.

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee River lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. The new lagoon would be constructed just west of the Upper Truckee River. At flow events greater than bankfull, water would overtop the river's banks and begin to flow into the lagoon. There would be no change to the dredged depth of the lagoon.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site. No new buildings, public restroom facilities, or additional buildings would be constructed.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed by encouraging aggradation behind the hydraulic structures would restore channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach to west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Constructing view points (on-grade or elevated as observation platforms) on the eastern margin of the site at the end of each of several streets where people currently access the site. The design intent of the view points would be to discourage pedestrians and their pets from entering the site.

- Maintaining the location of existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.

- Constructing a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

- Removing fill behind Harootunian Beach to recreate lagoon and wet meadow conditions.

- Restoring sand ridges ("dunes") at Cove East.

ALTERNATIVE 3. MIDDLE MARSH CORRIDOR (MODERATE RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Key elements specific to Alternative 3 include:

- Creating a new geomorphic bankfull capacity pilot channel to connect the river with the existing network of small channels in the middle of the marsh and re-establish an active floodplain on the existing meadow surface. A hydraulic structure would be constructed in the existing channel to facilitate the flow transition from the relatively low bed elevation of the existing incised channel to the higher bed elevation of the pilot

channel and existing meadow channels. No construction would occur within the main meadow's channel sections; the river flow paths would be dictated by natural processes.

- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing with local cut and fill and constructing a higher bed elevation with engineered grade controls that simulate the resistant horizontal layers in the subsurface.

- In the reach between U.S. 50 and the "Big Bend," maintaining the low-flow channel in the same alignment, and provide hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release. Options for additional high flow conveyance under U.S. 50 could include bored overflow conduits.

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. Limited re-contouring would be used to adjust the contours and edges of the lagoon.

- Constructing a small self-service visitor and interpretive center just north of the cul-de-sac at the LWS. Public restrooms would be included as part of the visitor's center. A new parking lot would be located on a Conservancy-owned parcel near the end of Venice Drive.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed by encouraging aggradation behind the hydraulic structures would restore channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach to west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Constructing trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control the existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would also be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Limiting the eastern trail to the most frequently accessed central portion of the border, and no connection is provided north across the wetland to the beach.
- Maintaining existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.
- Constructing a loop trail for both pedestrians and cyclists through the wooded area north of Highland Woods.

ALTERNATIVE 4. INSET FLOODPLAIN (MODERATE RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Alternative 4 is fundamentally different from Alternatives 1 through 3 in that the existing streambed elevation would not be raised and no new channels would be excavated into the existing meadow/terrace surface. Key elements specific to Alternative 4 include:

- Excavating portions of the meadow surface along the corridor of the existing channel to create an inset floodplain that would increase active floodplain area and flood storage for small magnitude events.
- Using local cut and fill to reduce the width and capacity of the existing channel.
- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel constructed along a similar alignment as the straightened reach using local cut and fill.
- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing it with local cut and fill.
- Maintaining the low-flow channel in the same alignment, and providing hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release.
- Retaining the open connection between the sailing lagoon, the marina, and Lake Tahoe.
- Constructing a small self-service visitor and interpretive center just north of the cul-de-sac at the LWS. Public restrooms would be included as part of the visitor's center. A new parking lot would be located on a Conservancy-owned parcel near the end of Venice Drive.
- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.
- Constructing trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would also be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Limiting the eastern trail to the most frequently accessed central portion of the border, and no connection is provided north across the wetland to the beach.
- Maintaining existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.
- Constructing a perimeter Class I bike trail along the southern border of the site intended to provide a bike trail connection.
- Creating a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

ALTERNATIVE 5. NO PROJECT/NO ACTION

Under Alternative 5, no changes to the river or marsh would be implemented and existing conditions in the study area would be projected into the future.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following subject areas include potential environmental effects associated with the range of alternatives identified above. These issues will be explored further during project scoping and during preparation of the draft EIR/EIS:

Land Use. Land use impacts to be addressed in the EIR/EIS/EIS include changes to onsite uses, land use compatibility, and community character. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address consistency with the TRPA plan area statement (PAS) requirements (PAS 100 and 102).

Hydrology, Geomorphology, and Water Quality. Alternatives 1-4 would restore a portion of the Upper Truckee River with the intent to improve long-term water quality in the river and Lake Tahoe by reducing the reach's contribution of nutrients and suspended sediment to the river. Implementation of Alternatives 1-4 could create a risk that short-term increases in sediment load during the construction period. Best Management Practices and mitigation measures would be developed to address potential short-term impacts to water quality that are identified in the EIR/EIS/EIS. Restoration of the river channel would change the hydrologic and geomorphic processes of the river. The hydrologic analysis will focus primarily on assessing changes to flow patterns as related to changes in channel form and function, support of restoration objectives, and avoidance of any increase in flood hazard to developed land uses adjacent to the river. The geomorphic assessment will focus on potential short- and long-term changes in sediment fate and transport and landscape-scale factors. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address long-term water quality monitoring needs.

Biological Resources (Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Vegetation and Wildlife). Alternatives 1-4 include actions for enhancing or restoring native vegetation communities, protecting sensitive wildlife habitat areas from

excessive public use, and enhancing terrestrial and aquatic habitat values. These actions would affect the distribution, extent, and quality of sensitive and common biological resources on the project site. Each alternative was designed to result in long-term benefits to biological resources; however, construction of Alternatives 1-4 would remove or disturb terrestrial and aquatic habitats in some locations. Each alternative would result in changes in existing public access to and recreational uses of the project site, which would influence future patterns of disturbance on biological resources. The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the potential indirect, direct, and cumulative effects of each alternative on: 1) existing vegetation communities, wildlife habitats, and aquatic resources; 2) common and ecologically significant vegetation, wildlife, and aquatic resources; and 3) special-status plant, wildlife, and aquatic species, including TRPA Special Interest Species. The relationship of project effects to TRPA thresholds for vegetation, wildlife, and fisheries will be evaluated.

Earth Resources: Geology and Soils, and Land Capability and Coverage. Alternatives 1-4 would involve grading and excavating for reconfiguration of a portion of the Upper Truckee River and changing site topography for restoration purposes, including filling portions of the existing, degraded channel. The EIR/EIS/EIS will describe potential environmental effects related to land capability and coverage, soils and geology, topographic alteration, seismic hazards, slope stability, and erosion potential. If soil export outside of the study area is necessary, potential disposal sites will be identified and evaluated.

Scenic Resources. Alternatives 1-4 would result in the changes to natural elements that contribute to the scenic quality of the study area (e.g., river channel, river mouth, lagoon, vegetation), as well as changes related to the installation of recreation-related structures (e.g., trails, boardwalks, viewing points, visitor center). Visibility of these changes from the appropriate shoreline travel route on the lake and from U.S. 50, a TRPA-designated scenic travel route, will be determined. Potential impacts from construction and operation of the alternatives will be evaluated from sensitive viewpoints in or near the study area. Scenic effects will be evaluated in terms of visibility of the alternatives, alteration of the visual setting, sensitivity of viewpoints, and potential effects on TRPA scenic thresholds.

Public Access and Recreation. Construction and operation of Alternatives 1-4 would result in changes in existing public access to and recreational uses of the study area. The study area is surrounded by residential neighborhoods of South Lake Tahoe. PAS 102 on west side of the study area includes a priority for public access to the lake at Cove East Beach. PAS 100, which occupies the center and east side of the study area, emphasizes resources conservation. The location of a boat take-out site on the river differs among the alternatives, so impacts to paddling use of the river will be evaluated. The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the changes to existing recreation areas and uses, the change to TRPA persons-at-one-time (PAOTs) allocations in the project area, the effect on TRPA recreation thresholds, trail connectivity, and river access and crossings.

Cultural Resources. The study area is located on undeveloped land. The EIR/EIS/EIS will analyze the potential for cultural resources to be located on or near the site and the potential for disturbance of known and/or undiscovered cultural resources due to implementation of the proposed alternatives. Also, the proposed action includes consideration of Native American cultural uses of the study area and how restoration can be compatible with and support those uses. The EIR/EIS/EIS process will include consultation with the Washoe Tribe and evaluation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Transportation, Parking and Circulation. Alternatives 1-4 would generate short-term, construction-related traffic. Long-term traffic generated by the recreational components will also be discussed. The transportation analysis will include identification of major roadways that may be affected by the proposed alternatives, traffic volumes on those roadways, overall operating conditions, public transit routes that may be affected by the proposed alternatives, and major pedestrian or bicycle routes that may be affected by the proposed alternatives.

Air Quality. Alternatives 1-4 would involve construction emissions and generation of fugitive dust, as well as generate construction traffic in the area, contributing pollutants to the air basin. The EIR/EIS/EIS will include an assessment of short-term (i.e., construction) air quality impacts and long-term (i.e., operational) regional air pollutant emissions, including mobile, stationary, and area source emissions.

Noise. The EIR/EIS/EIS will assess potential short-term (i.e., construction) noise impacts, relative to sensitive receptors and their potential exposure. Noise levels of specific construction equipment will be determined and resultant noise levels at nearby receptors (at given distances from the source) will be calculated. Long-term (i.e., operational) noise impacts, including increased noise from mobile, stationary, and area sources, will be assessed.

Public Services and Utilities. The public services and utilities section of the EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate impacts on power, water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection, solid waste collection and disposal, police services, fire protection services, schools, and fire fuel management.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The EIR/EIS/EIS will assess whether potential hazardous materials may be located in the study area. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address hazardous materials issues related to adjoining properties.

Agricultural and Mineral Resources. The proposed alternatives are not expected to affect agricultural or mineral resources in the study area. Existing resources will be verified and discussed in the EIR/EIS/EIS.

Socioeconomics. With the exception of recreation, discussed above, the proposed alternatives are not expected to significantly affect socioeconomic factors associated with the study area. The EIR/EIS/EIS will consider potential economic impacts related to implementation of the proposed alternatives.

Growth Inducement. The effects of the proposed alternatives on growth inducement will be addressed in the EIR/EIS/EIS; however, the proposed alternatives are not expected to induce or result in the growth of population in the region, cause an increase in demand for employment opportunities, or cause an increase in other public needs.

Cumulative Effects. The EIR/EIS/EIS will identify and describe recently approved and reasonably anticipated non-river related projects in the South Lake Tahoe area and vicinity of the Upper Truckee Marsh, other river restoration projects being contemplated for upstream reaches of the Upper Truckee River, and region-wide planning efforts currently underway (e.g., Pathway 2007, the total maximum daily load [TMDL] requirement being developed for the Upper Truckee River). The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the combined effects of these activities with the proposed action.

TRPA Threshold Carrying Capacities: The EIR/EIS/EIS will include assessment of the proposed action's compliance with and contribution to the attainment of threshold carrying capacities adopted by TRPA.

INTENDED USES OF THE EIR/EIS/EIS

The Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA will use this EIR/EIS/EIS to consider the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives, when reviewing the proposed action for approval. The EIR/EIS/EIS will serve as the State's CEQA compliance document, as Reclamation's NEPA compliance document, and as TRPA's compliance document with respect to its Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. State responsible and trustee agencies and federal cooperating agencies may also use this EIR/EIS/EIS, as needed, for subsequent discretionary actions.

PUBLIC SCOPING

Public scoping meetings are being conducted to provide you with the opportunity to learn more about the proposed action and to express oral comments about the content of the EIR/EIS/EIS, in addition to your opportunity to submit written comments. The scoping meetings will be held at the following times and locations:

Wednesday, October 11, 2006
TRPA Advisory Planning Commission Meeting
North Tahoe Conference Center
See agenda item at:
http://www.trpa.org/default.aspx?tabid=259
North Tahoe Conference Center
8318 North Lake Boulevard
Kings Beach, CA 96143

Wednesday, October 25, 2006
Governing Board Meeting
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
See agenda item at:
http://www.trpa.org/ default.aspx?tabid=258
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Tuesday, October 24, 2006
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Inn By The Lake
3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Tuesday, October 24, 2006
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Inn By The Lake
3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Mike Elam

Project Manager, TRPA

October 3, 2006

Date

Richard J Robinson

Program Manager, California Tahoe Conservancy

October 3, 2006

Date

CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY
1061 Third Street
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA 96150
(530) 542-5580

March 13, 2007

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Comment Period Continuation
for the
Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) are pursuing a restoration project along the reach of the Upper Truckee River that extends from U.S. 50 north to Lake Tahoe, including the adjacent meadow and wetland. 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. The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is identified in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) as a project that is necessary to restore and maintain environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin. EIP projects are designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources.

The Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA are preparing a joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/EIS for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project (project).

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Conservancy issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft EIR/EIS/EIS for the project on October 5, 2006. The purpose of this notification is to provide public notice that the NOP review and comment period is continuing and remains open for the public and agencies.

The Conservancy has determined that the NOP public comment period will continue to April 30, 2007.

The scoping periods for the project conducted by Reclamation for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and by TRPA pursuant to its Code of Ordinances and Rules of Procedure are not affected by this notice.

The original NOP is attached to this notice. The NOP may also be reviewed at: http://www.trpa.org/default.aspx?tabindex=4&tabid=291. Paper copies of the NOP are available upon request by contacting

Jacqui Grandfield
Wildlife Program
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Phone: (530) 543-6048

Written comments should be provided to Ms. Jacqui Grandfield at the addresses shown above by April 30, 2007 to ensure their consideration during preparation of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS. Additional information concerning the project and the proposed alternatives that are currently being considered will be available as it is developed at the project website at: www.uppertruckeemarsh.com.

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY
P.O. Box 5310
128 Market Street
Stateline, Nevada 89449-5310
Phone: (775) 588-4547
Fax: (775) 588-4527
Email: trpa@trpa.org www.trpa.org

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY
Arnold Schwarzenegger, *Governor*
CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 542-5580
(530) 542-5591 (fax)

This notice is being issued jointly by the State of California and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and meets CEQA and TRPA noticing requirements for a Notice of Preparation.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: California State Clearinghouse
Nevada State Clearinghouse
Cooperating Agencies
Responsible and Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations
Affected Property Owners (within 300 feet of the study area boundaries)

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.**

Lead Agencies:

State of California
California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
Contact: Jacqui Grandfield, UC Consultant, Wildlife Program
Phone: (530) 542-5580
Fax: (530) 542-5591
Email: jgrandfield@tahoecons.ca.gov

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898
Contact: Myrnie Mayville, NEPA Coordinator
Phone: (916) 978-5037
Fax: (916) 978-5055
Email: mmayville@mp.usbr.gov

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89448
Contact: Mike Elam, Associate Environmental Planner
Phone: (775) 588-4547 ext.308 Fax: (775) 588-4527
Email: MElam@trpa.org

Project Title: Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

Project Location: The Upper Truckee River drains the largest watershed in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Upper Truckee Marsh is located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe where the river enters the lake. The study area for the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is generally bounded by U.S. Highway 50 (U.S. 50) and the Highland Woods neighborhood on the south, the Al Tahoe neighborhood on the east, and Tahoe Islands/Sky Meadows

and Tahoe Keys neighborhoods on the west (Exhibit 1). The study area is approximately 592 acres, and includes parcels owned by the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), other public agencies, and private landowners (Exhibit 2). It includes the downstream reaches of Trout Creek and the Upper Truckee River, adjacent wetland and uplands habitats, and the Lower West Side (LWS) Wetlands Restoration Project site (located in the northwest portion of the study area, just east of the Tahoe Keys Marina).

The Conservancy, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) are preparing a joint EIR/EIS/EIS for the Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration Project (project). This joint document will serve as an EIR prepared by the Conservancy pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); an EIS prepared by Reclamation pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations Implementing NEPA; and an EIS prepared by TRPA pursuant to its Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. This notice meets the CEQA and TRPA noticing requirements for a Notice of Preparation (NOP). Reclamation has prepared a separate notice that meets NEPA requirements for a Notice of Intent (NOI) for publication in the *Federal Register*.

We would like to know the views of interested persons, organizations, and agencies as to the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the EIR/EIS/EIS. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed alternatives. The project description, location, alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS, and potential environmental effects of the proposed alternatives (to the extent known) are contained in this NOP.

In compliance with the time limits mandated by State law and TRPA, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than **November 2, 2006**. Please send your written responses to:

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

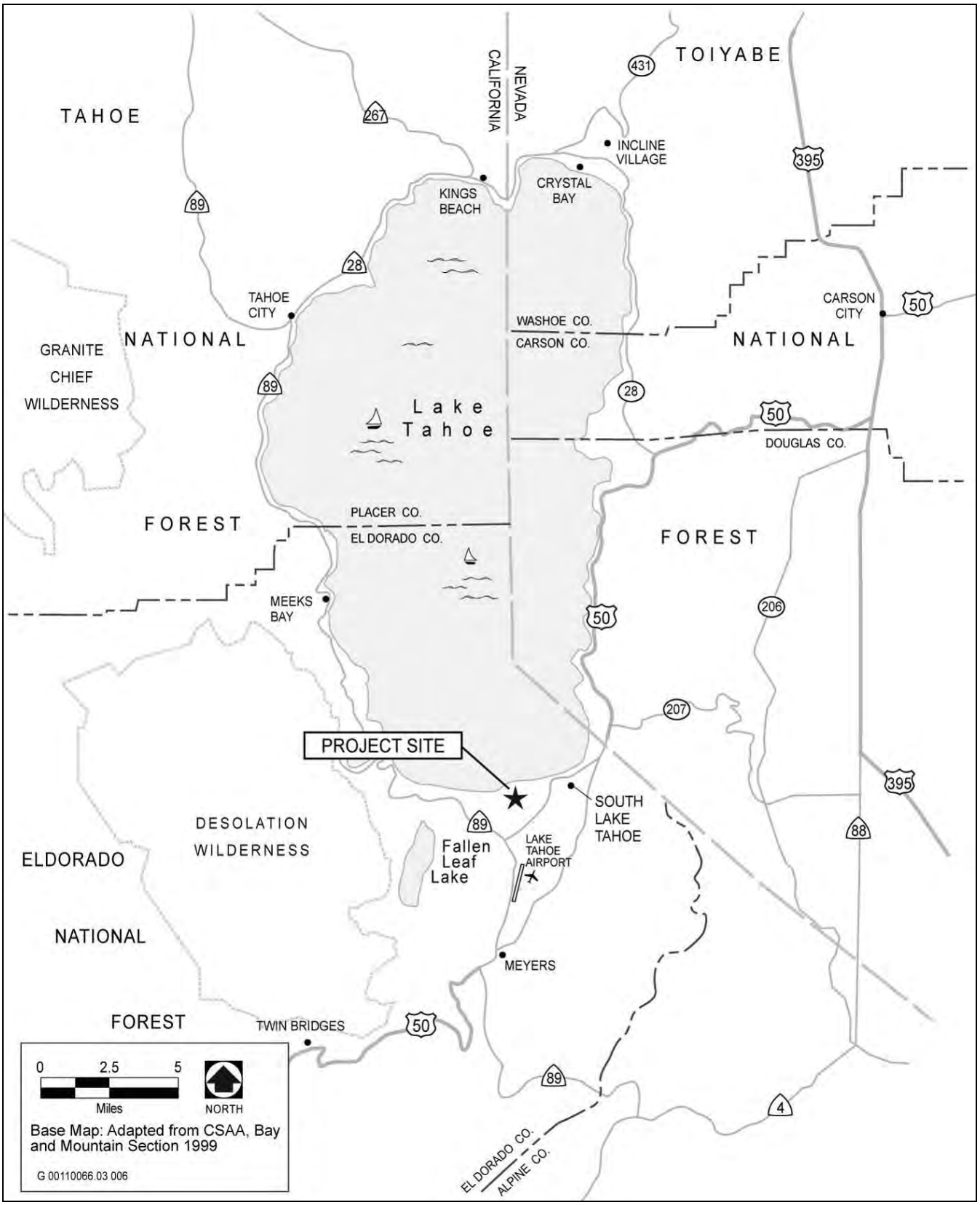
OR

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Mike Elam, Associate Environmental Planner
P. O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449

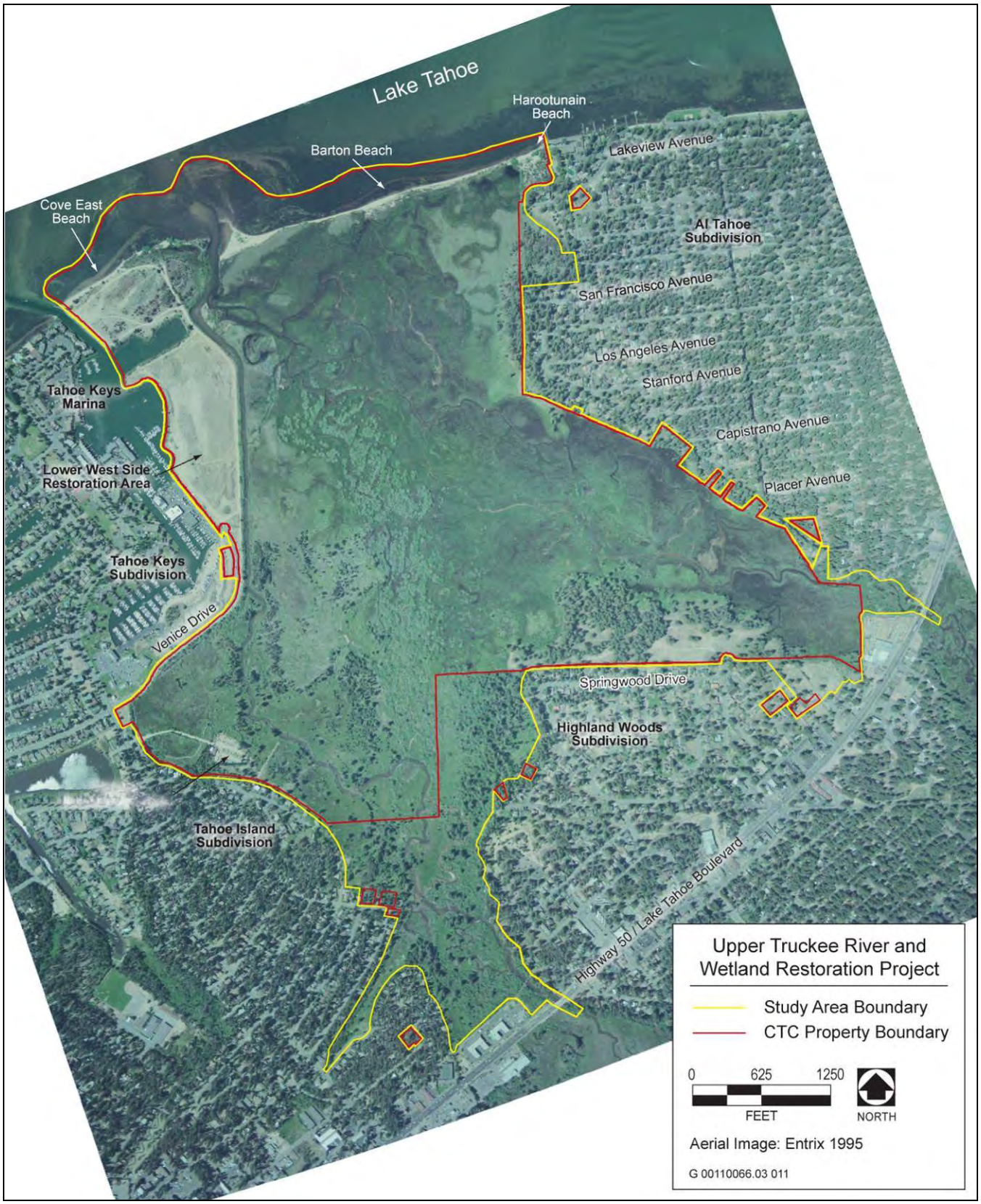
Responses should include the name of a contact person at your agency or organization.

SUMMARY

The Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA are pursuing a restoration project along the reach of the Upper Truckee River that extends from U.S. 50 north to Lake Tahoe, including the adjacent meadow and wetland. The primary purpose of the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is to restore natural geomorphic



Regional Location **Exhibit 1**



Study Area Map **Exhibit 2**

processes and ecological functions along this reach of river. The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project is identified in TRPA's Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) as a project that is necessary to restore and maintain environmental thresholds for the Lake Tahoe Basin. EIP projects are designed to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds that protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources.

An extensive evaluation and restoration planning process has been conducted to identify potentially feasible approaches for restoration of the river and marsh. As a result of that process, the following five alternatives, including four action alternatives and a No Project/No Action Alternative, are intended to be evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS.

- Alternative 1. Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 2. New Channel – West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 3. Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 4. Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure)
- Alternative 5. No Project/No Action

These alternatives are named for their approach to restoration of the Upper Truckee River, and the associated level of recreation infrastructure, and are described in more detail below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

The Upper Truckee River has been substantially altered by land practices during the past 150 years. Throughout its watershed, the river has experienced ecosystem degradation typical of what has occurred elsewhere in the Basin. The river has been modified from its original conditions by human activities, such as logging; livestock grazing; roads; golf courses; an airport; and residential, commercial and industrial developments. These conditions have resulted in increased sediment and nutrient loads discharging into Lake Tahoe from the river, which contribute to the declining clarity of the lake. Human influences have also resulted in reduced habitat quality for plant, wildlife, and fish species in the watershed. Restoration of natural processes and ecological functions of the river is an important part of the response to the decline in lake clarity.

Restoration planning for the marsh began in the early 1990's with studies conducted by the University of California. In 1995, the Conservancy commissioned a restoration planning and design study, which identified a tentatively preferred river restoration concept two years later. However, it was determined that river restoration required use of the entire Upper Truckee Marsh, and at that time the east side of the marsh was not owned by the Conservancy; therefore, this tentatively selected concept could not be pursued. In 1998, the Conservancy began planning and design of an initial phase of wetland restoration on a 23-acre portion of a study area located on the

east side of the Upper Truckee River near Lake Tahoe (Exhibit 2). This is an area, called the Lower West Side Wetland Restoration Project (LWS), where the marsh had been previously filled during the construction of the adjacent Tahoe Keys. After careful investigations, planning, and design; extensive environmental review; and community outreach, the Conservancy approved restoration of 12 acres of wetland through fill removal as the LWS Project in 2001. Construction commenced in the summer of 2001 and was completed in the summer of 2003.

In 2000, the Conservancy purchased 311 acres of land in the center of the marsh from a private party, bringing nearly the entire Truckee Marsh into public ownership. Currently, the majority of the study area is owned by the Conservancy, including the marsh and meadows surrounding the lower reach of Trout Creek. Restoration concepts encompassing the whole marsh and the lower reach of the river could be developed after the acquisition. As part of this process, the Conservancy has also conducted public access and recreation use management planning for the river, marsh, and beach.

Initially, the Conservancy defined project objectives and desired outcomes to direct the restoration planning process. A comprehensive evaluation and documentation of the existing natural processes and functions in the study area were conducted to begin the alternatives planning process. This evaluation enabled the identification of potential restoration opportunities and constraints. Armed with detailed information about the river and marsh processes and ecological functions, the Conservancy hosted a design charrette (i.e., interactive workshop) for agencies and other stakeholders to identify the spectrum of potentially feasible restoration ideas to be considered in the development of concept plan alternatives. Four alternative concept plans, all developed to be potentially feasible, were formulated to represent a reasonable range of restoration approaches. The four concepts generated by this extensive process became the four action alternatives being evaluated in the EIR/EIS/EIS. A preferred alternative will be identified after public review of the four alternatives and public comments are received on the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

To date, key stages of the Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration project have included the following:

- Evaluating existing natural processes and functions of the Upper Truckee River and marsh in 2000 and 2001
- Establishing project objectives and desired outcomes in 2002, and updating them in 2005.
- Defining restoration opportunities and constraints in 2002 and 2003
- Conducting a restoration design charette in 2003 to receive input from stakeholders on project priorities, concerns and constraints, and design ideas.
- Conducting hydraulic modeling studies to support the development and evaluation of project alternatives.

- Initial development and comparative evaluation of four conceptual restoration alternatives in 2004 and 2005.
- Regulatory agency review of alternative concepts for key issues and regulatory requirements in 2005.
- Further refinement and evaluation of the alternatives, and preparation of a Concept Plan Report (July 2006).

PURPOSE AND NEED

The need for the project originates from the environmental degradation that the Upper Truckee River has historically experienced as a result of human alterations to the river and watershed. The purpose of the proposed action is to restore natural geomorphic processes and ecological functions in this lowest reach of the Upper Truckee River and the surrounding marsh to improve ecological values of the study area and help reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The following basic objectives of the project were developed for the proposed action to meet the purpose and need:

Objective 1. Restore natural and self-sustaining river and floodplain processes and functions

Objective 2. Protect, enhance, and restore naturally functioning habitats

Objective 3. Restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat quality

Objective 4. Improve water quality through enhancement of natural physical and biological processes

Objective 5. Protect and, where feasible, expand Tahoe yellow cress populations

Objective 6. Provide public access, access to vistas, and environmental education at the Lower West Side and Cove East Beach

Objective 7. Avoid increasing flood hazard on adjacent private property

Objective 8. Design with sensitivity to the site's history and cultural heritage

Objective 9. Design the wetland/urban interface to help provide habitat value and water quality benefits

Objective 10. Implement a public health and safety program, including mosquito monitoring and control

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Four "action" alternatives, and the No Project/No Action Alternative, will be evaluated at an equal level of detail in the EIR/EIS/EIS. The four action alternatives are illustrated in Exhibits 3 through 6 and are described below. It is important to note that 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.

All four action alternatives include a recreation and public access component. These ideas are expressed at three levels of development intensity with respect to recreation-related infrastructure ("maximum", "minimum", and "moderate"). At this point in project planning, there is no necessary connection between the recreation and public access approach included in a particular alternative and the river restoration strategy of that alternative. 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.

ALTERNATIVE 1. CHANNEL AGGRADATION AND NARROWING (MAXIMUM RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

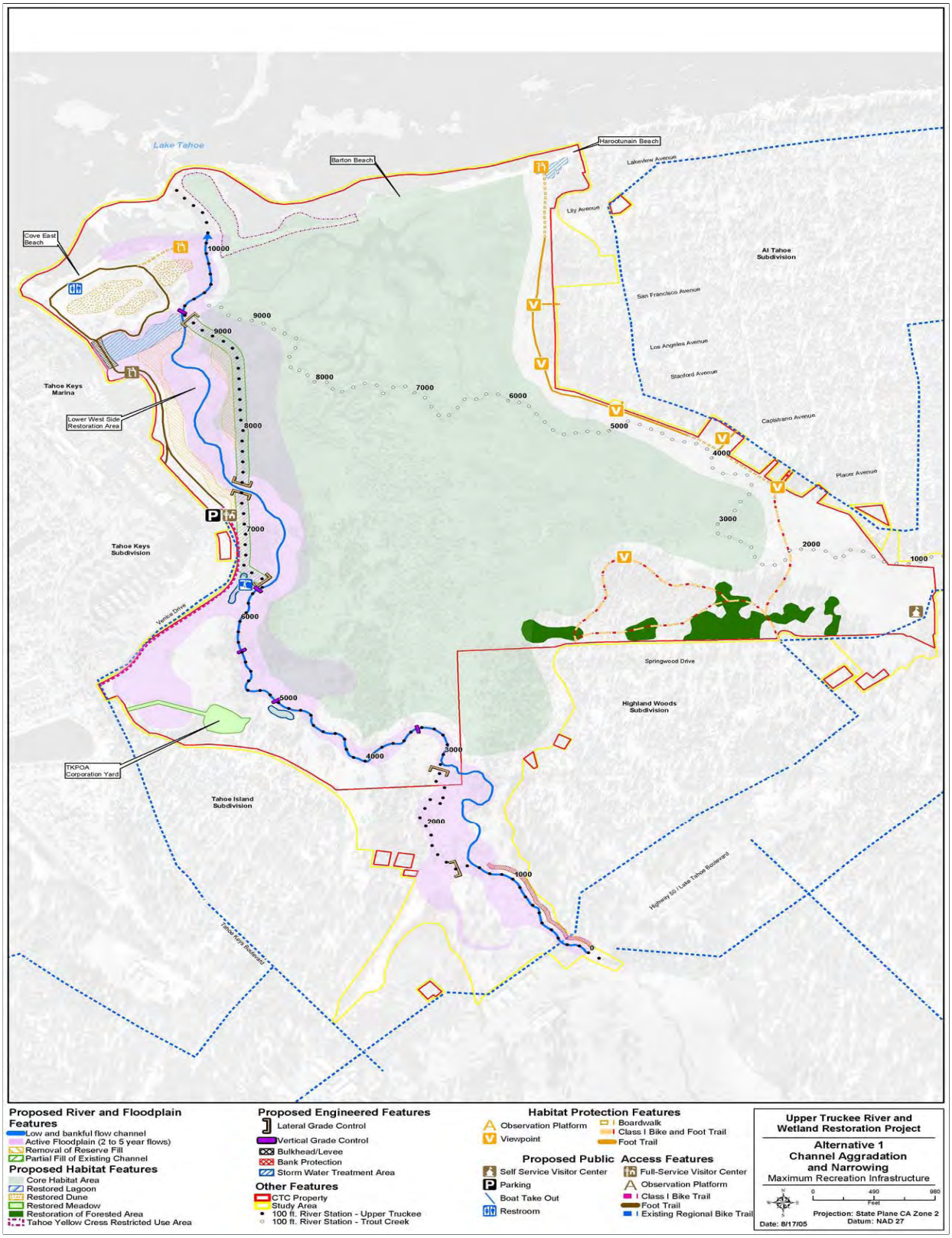
Key elements specific to Alternative 1 include:

- Raising the bed elevation of the existing channel closer to the existing meadow surface as a means of re-establishing an active floodplain, which would be achieved by placing a series of structures in the channel designed to alter hydraulics and intentionally cause sediment aggradation of the bed. Local cut and fill would be used to narrow the channel. Bar development in the aggrading channel would also contribute to channel narrowing.

- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel excavated through the LWS.

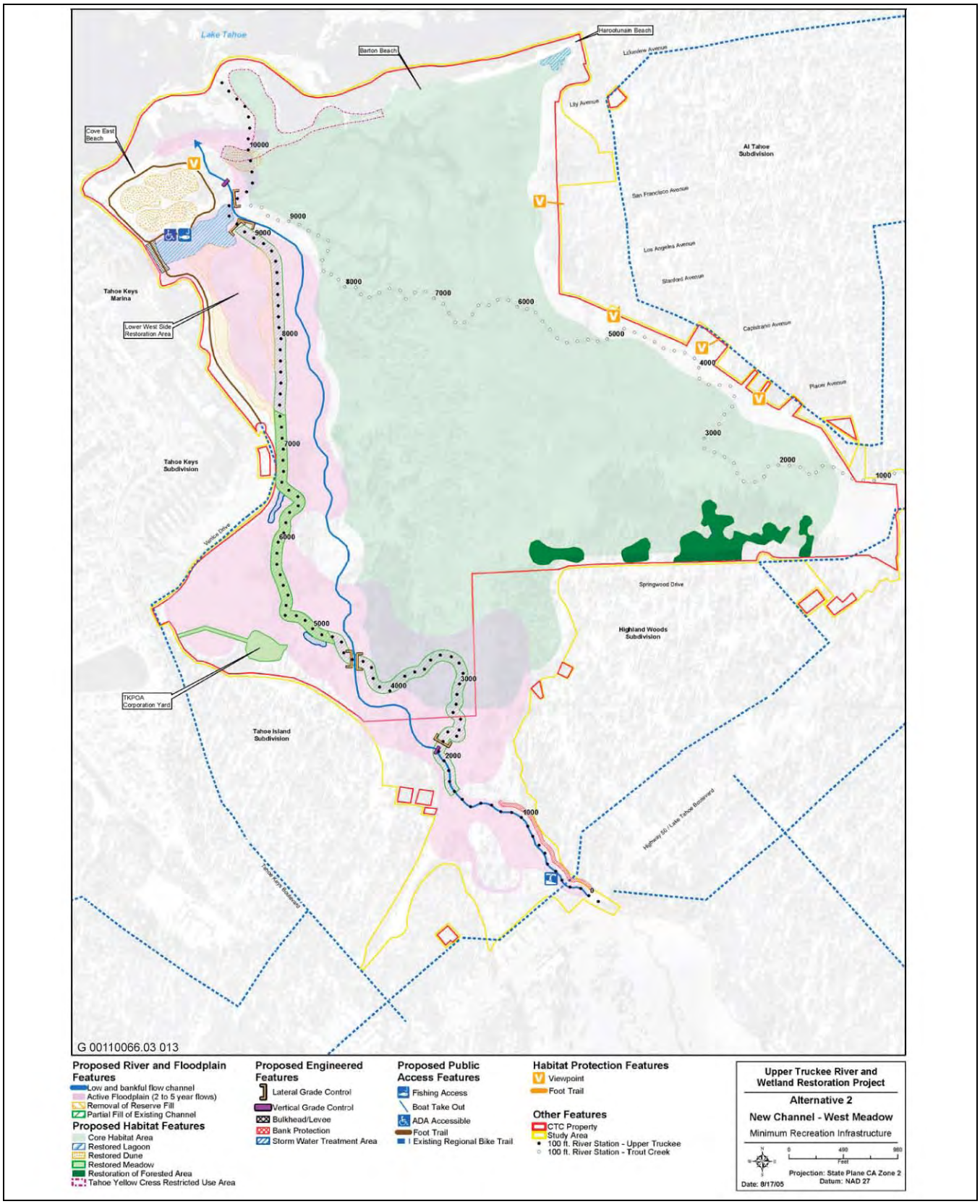
- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing it with local cut and fill and/or placement of bioengineered structures to encourage sediment deposition.

- Reconfiguring two sections of split channel from River Station (RS) 500 to RS 2,600. The low flow channel would continue to flow through the east branch of the split channel from RS 500 to RS 1,400, but unlike existing conditions, would continue in the second east branch channel from RS 1,400 to RS 2,600. The west branches of the split channels would reduce the flow volume and hydraulic stress in the east low-flow channel by conveying a portion of the high flow.



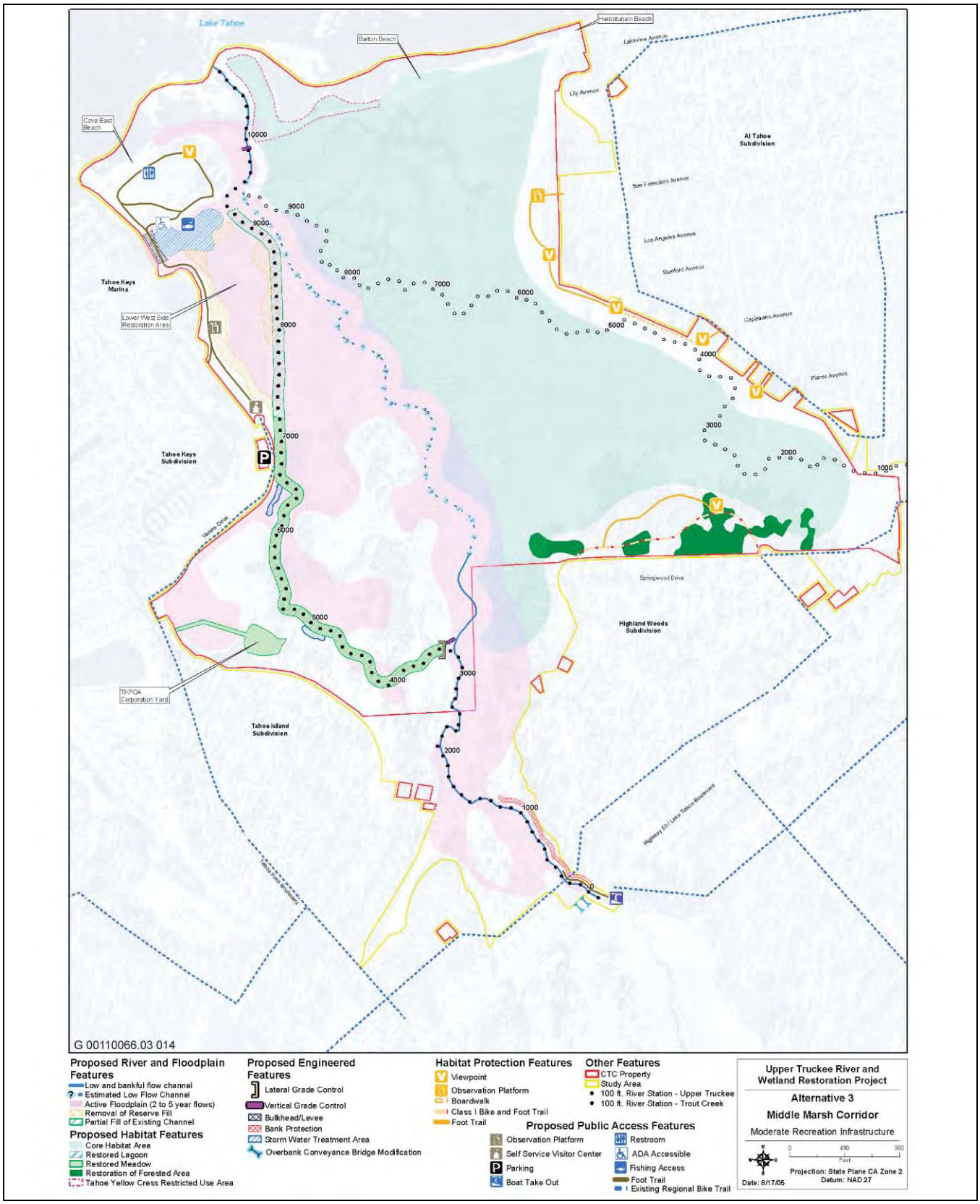
Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 1. Channel Aggradation and Narrowing (Maximum Recreation Infrastructure) Exhibit 3



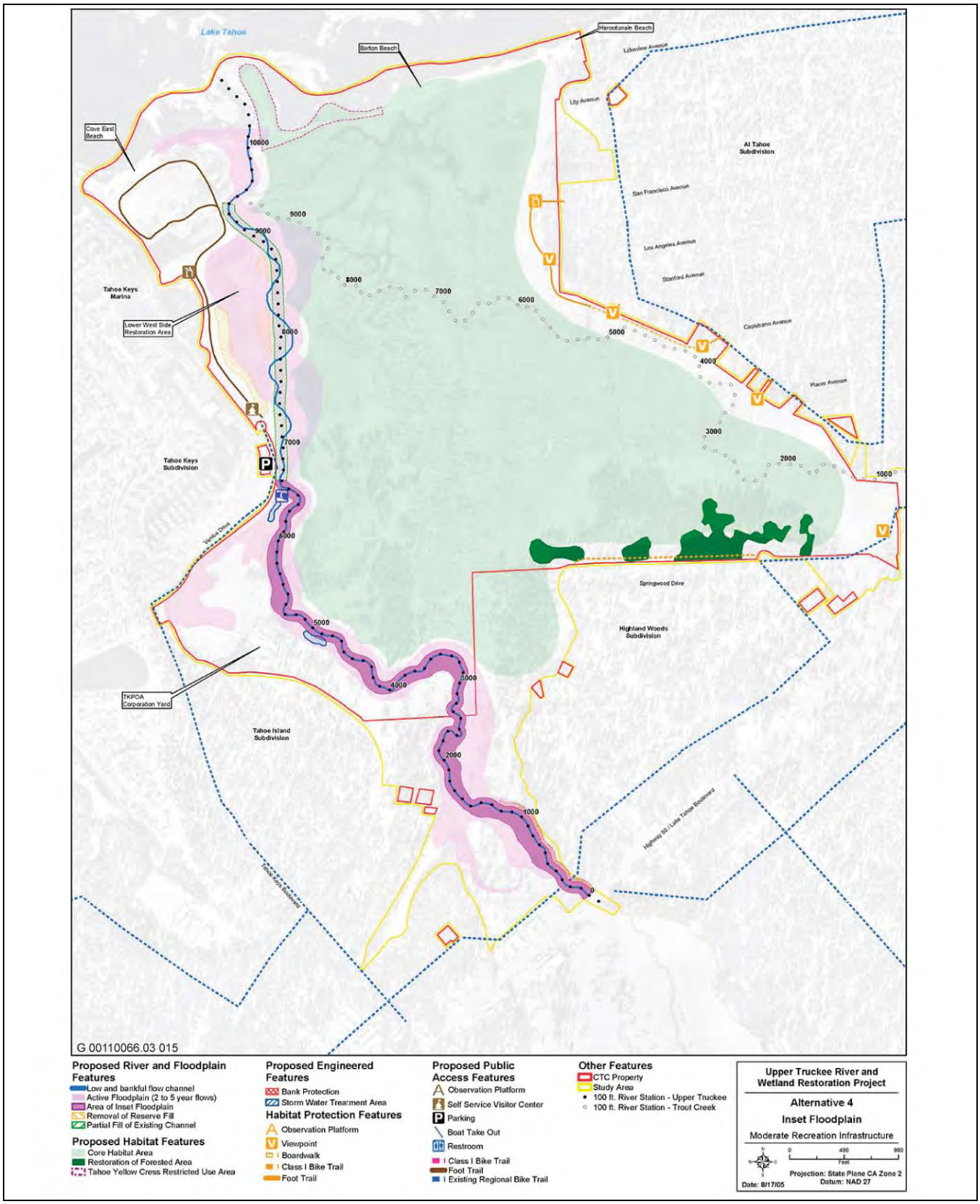
Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 2. New Channel – West Meadow (Minimum Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 4**



Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 3. Middle Marsh Corridor (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 5**



Source: ENTRIX 2005

Alternative 4. Inset Floodplain (Moderate Recreation Infrastructure) **Exhibit 6**

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. The lagoon would be constructed just west of the Upper Truckee River. At flow events greater than bankfull, water would overtop the river's banks and begin to flow into the lagoon. Local cut and fill would be used to re-contour the topography of the lagoon and decrease its depth.

- Constructing a full-service visitor and interpretive center on a Conservancy-owned parcel on high capability land near the end of Venice Drive and a small self-service visitor and interpretive center along the existing bike trail near Trout Creek Bridge. The full-service facility would be fully staffed and would likely require a concessionaire to support its maintenance costs. It could have office space included, for instance, for the Conservancy or an appropriate non-profit entity to rent. The full-service facility would contain public restrooms. A new parking lot would be located adjacent to the full-service visitor and interpretive center near the end of Venice Drive.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed due to prompted channel aggradation from the hydraulic structures, which would decrease channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Enhancing the existing trail alignment providing access to Cove East Beach by constructing a spur trail and boardwalk to an observation platform near the river mouth. The platform would provide a view across the river mouth and the meadow and lagoon to the east, as well as out across the lake. The boardwalk railings and its height above the ground would help keep people off the sandy areas during periods of low lake level.

- Constructing new trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Providing a raised boardwalk connection to the beach. An observation platform would be constructed at the end of the boardwalk to provide an overlook of the lake, beach, and the wetland, while discouraging entry onto the beach itself.

- Providing a raised boardwalk for both pedestrians and cyclists that would cross Trout Creek in the southern portion of the site, and link to existing bicycle trails at both ends. The boardwalk would allow visitors visual access into the meadow and to the lake beyond, while minimizing the disturbance that large numbers of hikers can have on meadow plants.

- Constructing a Class I bike trail along Venice Drive.

- Constructing a loop trail for both pedestrian and bicyclists through the wooded area north of Highland Woods.

- Constructing a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

- Removing fill behind Harootunian Beach to recreate lagoon and wet meadow conditions.

- Restoring sand ridges ("dunes") at Cove East.

ALTERNATIVE 2. NEW CHANNEL – WEST MEADOW (MINIMUM RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Key elements specific to Alternative 2 include:

- Excavating a new geomorphic bankfull capacity channel that re-establishes the existing meadow as an active floodplain. Most of the new channel alignment would be located east of the existing channel. A hydraulic structure would be constructed in the channel to facilitate the flow transition from the relatively low bed elevation of the existing incised channel to the higher bed elevation of the new channel.

- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel excavated east of the LWS and straightened reach that has a sinuous planform, bankfull capacity, and active floodplain connection with the existing meadow surface.

- Constructing a new river mouth with a reduced capacity and higher bed elevation west of the existing location. This would provide the opportunity for a small area of beach restoration in the existing channel location. Since this area is prime Tahoe yellow cress habitat, it is anticipated that Tahoe yellow cress would expand in this beach restoration area.

- Maintaining a low-flow channel in the same alignment, and providing hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release.

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee River lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. The new lagoon would be constructed just west of the Upper Truckee River. At flow events greater than bankfull, water would overtop the river's banks and begin to flow into the lagoon. There would be no change to the dredged depth of the lagoon.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site. No new buildings, public restroom facilities, or additional buildings would be constructed.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed by encouraging aggradation behind the hydraulic structures would restore channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach to west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Constructing view points (on-grade or elevated as observation platforms) on the eastern margin of the site at the end of each of several streets where people currently access the site. The design intent of the view points would be to discourage pedestrians and their pets from entering the site.

- Maintaining the location of existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.

- Constructing a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

- Removing fill behind Harootunian Beach to recreate lagoon and wet meadow conditions.

- Restoring sand ridges ("dunes") at Cove East.

ALTERNATIVE 3. MIDDLE MARSH CORRIDOR (MODERATE RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Key elements specific to Alternative 3 include:

- Creating a new geomorphic bankfull capacity pilot channel to connect the river with the existing network of small channels in the middle of the marsh and re-establish an active floodplain on the existing meadow surface. A hydraulic structure would be constructed in the existing channel to facilitate the flow transition from the relatively low bed elevation of the existing incised channel to the higher bed elevation of the pilot

channel and existing meadow channels. No construction would occur within the main meadow's channel sections; the river flow paths would be dictated by natural processes.

- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing with local cut and fill and constructing a higher bed elevation with engineered grade controls that simulate the resistant horizontal layers in the subsurface.

- In the reach between U.S. 50 and the "Big Bend," maintaining the low-flow channel in the same alignment, and provide hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release. Options for additional high flow conveyance under U.S. 50 could include bored overflow conduits.

- Constructing a bulkhead at the sailing lagoon to cutoff its open connection with the marina and Lake Tahoe and reconfiguring the relationship between the sailing lagoon and the Upper Truckee River so that the river controls the hydrology of the lagoon. The new lagoonal system would be analogous to what currently exists along Trout Creek, but on a larger scale and similar to the Upper Truckee lagoon system prior to the construction of the Tahoe Keys development. Limited re-contouring would be used to adjust the contours and edges of the lagoon.

- Constructing a small self-service visitor and interpretive center just north of the cul-de-sac at the LWS. Public restrooms would be included as part of the visitor's center. A new parking lot would be located on a Conservancy-owned parcel near the end of Venice Drive.

- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.

- Reconfiguring the channel dimensions and raising the streambed by encouraging aggradation behind the hydraulic structures would restore channel capacity.

- Re-routing the trail providing public access to Cove East Beach to west of the sailing lagoon on a new levee parallel to the marina channel. This would allow integration of the sailing lagoon into an Upper Truckee River-lagoon complex.

- Constructing trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control the existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would also be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Limiting the eastern trail to the most frequently accessed central portion of the border, and no connection is provided north across the wetland to the beach.
- Maintaining existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.
- Constructing a loop trail for both pedestrians and cyclists through the wooded area north of Highland Woods.

ALTERNATIVE 4. INSET FLOODPLAIN (MODERATE RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE)

Alternative 4 is fundamentally different from Alternatives 1 through 3 in that the existing streambed elevation would not be raised and no new channels would be excavated into the existing meadow/terrace surface. Key elements specific to Alternative 4 include:

- Excavating portions of the meadow surface along the corridor of the existing channel to create an inset floodplain that would increase active floodplain area and flood storage for small magnitude events.
- Using local cut and fill to reduce the width and capacity of the existing channel.
- Creating a sinuous, single thread bankfull channel constructed along a similar alignment as the straightened reach using local cut and fill.
- Using the existing river mouth location, but reducing its capacity by narrowing it with local cut and fill.
- Maintaining the low-flow channel in the same alignment, and providing hydraulic stress relief by excavating portions of the meadow/terrace separating the split channel branches to create areas for high flow release.
- Retaining the open connection between the sailing lagoon, the marina, and Lake Tahoe.
- Constructing a small self-service visitor and interpretive center just north of the cul-de-sac at the LWS. Public restrooms would be included as part of the visitor's center. A new parking lot would be located on a Conservancy-owned parcel near the end of Venice Drive.
- Developing an interpretive program and installing additional interpretive signage in appropriate locations throughout the site.
- Constructing trails and boardwalks along the eastern perimeter of the site to help direct and control existing pedestrian access to Barton Meadow, and in particular to the interior of the site. Wet swales and low mounds would also be used to discourage visitor access to the sensitive areas in the center of the marsh. The function of boardwalks would be to raise people out of the wetter portions of the site where they currently walk and damage wetland vegetation.

- Limiting the eastern trail to the most frequently accessed central portion of the border, and no connection is provided north across the wetland to the beach.
- Maintaining existing bicycle trails around the perimeter of the study area.
- Constructing a perimeter Class I bike trail along the southern border of the site intended to provide a bike trail connection.
- Creating a river corridor barrier near the current river alignment to reduce wildlife disturbance.

ALTERNATIVE 5. NO PROJECT/NO ACTION

Under Alternative 5, no changes to the river or marsh would be implemented and existing conditions in the study area would be projected into the future.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following subject areas include potential environmental effects associated with the range of alternatives identified above. These issues will be explored further during project scoping and during preparation of the draft EIR/EIS:

Land Use. Land use impacts to be addressed in the EIR/EIS/EIS include changes to onsite uses, land use compatibility, and community character. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address consistency with the TRPA plan area statement (PAS) requirements (PAS 100 and 102).

Hydrology, Geomorphology, and Water Quality. Alternatives 1-4 would restore a portion of the Upper Truckee River with the intent to improve long-term water quality in the river and Lake Tahoe by reducing the reach's contribution of nutrients and suspended sediment to the river. Implementation of Alternatives 1-4 could create a risk that short-term increases in sediment load during the construction period. Best Management Practices and mitigation measures would be developed to address potential short-term impacts to water quality that are identified in the EIR/EIS/EIS. Restoration of the river channel would change the hydrologic and geomorphic processes of the river. The hydrologic analysis will focus primarily on assessing changes to flow patterns as related to changes in channel form and function, support of restoration objectives, and avoidance of any increase in flood hazard to developed land uses adjacent to the river. The geomorphic assessment will focus on potential short- and long-term changes in sediment fate and transport and landscape-scale factors. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address long-term water quality monitoring needs.

Biological Resources (Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Vegetation and Wildlife). Alternatives 1-4 include actions for enhancing or restoring native vegetation communities, protecting sensitive wildlife habitat areas from

excessive public use, and enhancing terrestrial and aquatic habitat values. These actions would affect the distribution, extent, and quality of sensitive and common biological resources on the project site. Each alternative was designed to result in long-term benefits to biological resources; however, construction of Alternatives 1-4 would remove or disturb terrestrial and aquatic habitats in some locations. Each alternative would result in changes in existing public access to and recreational uses of the project site, which would influence future patterns of disturbance on biological resources. The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the potential indirect, direct, and cumulative effects of each alternative on: 1) existing vegetation communities, wildlife habitats, and aquatic resources; 2) common and ecologically significant vegetation, wildlife, and aquatic resources; and 3) special-status plant, wildlife, and aquatic species, including TRPA Special Interest Species. The relationship of project effects to TRPA thresholds for vegetation, wildlife, and fisheries will be evaluated.

Earth Resources: Geology and Soils, and Land Capability and Coverage. Alternatives 1-4 would involve grading and excavating for reconfiguration of a portion of the Upper Truckee River and changing site topography for restoration purposes, including filling portions of the existing, degraded channel. The EIR/EIS/EIS will describe potential environmental effects related to land capability and coverage, soils and geology, topographic alteration, seismic hazards, slope stability, and erosion potential. If soil export outside of the study area is necessary, potential disposal sites will be identified and evaluated.

Scenic Resources. Alternatives 1-4 would result in the changes to natural elements that contribute to the scenic quality of the study area (e.g., river channel, river mouth, lagoon, vegetation), as well as changes related to the installation of recreation-related structures (e.g., trails, boardwalks, viewing points, visitor center). Visibility of these changes from the appropriate shoreline travel route on the lake and from U.S. 50, a TRPA-designated scenic travel route, will be determined. Potential impacts from construction and operation of the alternatives will be evaluated from sensitive viewpoints in or near the study area. Scenic effects will be evaluated in terms of visibility of the alternatives, alteration of the visual setting, sensitivity of viewpoints, and potential effects on TRPA scenic thresholds.

Public Access and Recreation. Construction and operation of Alternatives 1-4 would result in changes in existing public access to and recreational uses of the study area. The study area is surrounded by residential neighborhoods of South Lake Tahoe. PAS 102 on west side of the study area includes a priority for public access to the lake at Cove East Beach. PAS 100, which occupies the center and east side of the study area, emphasizes resources conservation. The location of a boat take-out site on the river differs among the alternatives, so impacts to paddling use of the river will be evaluated. The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the changes to existing recreation areas and uses, the change to TRPA persons-at-one-time (PAOTs) allocations in the project area, the effect on TRPA recreation thresholds, trail connectivity, and river access and crossings.

Cultural Resources. The study area is located on undeveloped land. The EIR/EIS/EIS will analyze the potential for cultural resources to be located on or near the site and the potential for disturbance of known and/or undiscovered cultural resources due to implementation of the proposed alternatives. Also, the proposed action includes consideration of Native American cultural uses of the study area and how restoration can be compatible with and support those uses. The EIR/EIS/EIS process will include consultation with the Washoe Tribe and evaluation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Transportation, Parking and Circulation. Alternatives 1-4 would generate short-term, construction-related traffic. Long-term traffic generated by the recreational components will also be discussed. The transportation analysis will include identification of major roadways that may be affected by the proposed alternatives, traffic volumes on those roadways, overall operating conditions, public transit routes that may be affected by the proposed alternatives, and major pedestrian or bicycle routes that may be affected by the proposed alternatives.

Air Quality. Alternatives 1-4 would involve construction emissions and generation of fugitive dust, as well as generate construction traffic in the area, contributing pollutants to the air basin. The EIR/EIS/EIS will include an assessment of short-term (i.e., construction) air quality impacts and long-term (i.e., operational) regional air pollutant emissions, including mobile, stationary, and area source emissions.

Noise. The EIR/EIS/EIS will assess potential short-term (i.e., construction) noise impacts, relative to sensitive receptors and their potential exposure. Noise levels of specific construction equipment will be determined and resultant noise levels at nearby receptors (at given distances from the source) will be calculated. Long-term (i.e., operational) noise impacts, including increased noise from mobile, stationary, and area sources, will be assessed.

Public Services and Utilities. The public services and utilities section of the EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate impacts on power, water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection, solid waste collection and disposal, police services, fire protection services, schools, and fire fuel management.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The EIR/EIS/EIS will assess whether potential hazardous materials may be located in the study area. The EIR/EIS/EIS will also address hazardous materials issues related to adjoining properties.

Agricultural and Mineral Resources. The proposed alternatives are not expected to affect agricultural or mineral resources in the study area. Existing resources will be verified and discussed in the EIR/EIS/EIS.

Socioeconomics. With the exception of recreation, discussed above, the proposed alternatives are not expected to significantly affect socioeconomic factors associated with the study area. The EIR/EIS/EIS will consider potential economic impacts related to implementation of the proposed alternatives.

Growth Inducement. The effects of the proposed alternatives on growth inducement will be addressed in the EIR/EIS/EIS; however, the proposed alternatives are not expected to induce or result in the growth of population in the region, cause an increase in demand for employment opportunities, or cause an increase in other public needs.

Cumulative Effects. The EIR/EIS/EIS will identify and describe recently approved and reasonably anticipated non-river related projects in the South Lake Tahoe area and vicinity of the Upper Truckee Marsh, other river restoration projects being contemplated for upstream reaches of the Upper Truckee River, and region-wide planning efforts currently underway (e.g., Pathway 2007, the total maximum daily load [TMDL] requirement being developed for the Upper Truckee River). The EIR/EIS/EIS will evaluate the combined effects of these activities with the proposed action.

TRPA Threshold Carrying Capacities: The EIR/EIS/EIS will include assessment of the proposed action's compliance with and contribution to the attainment of threshold carrying capacities adopted by TRPA.

INTENDED USES OF THE EIR/EIS/EIS

The Conservancy, Reclamation, and TRPA will use this EIR/EIS/EIS to consider the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives, when reviewing the proposed action for approval. The EIR/EIS/EIS will serve as the State's CEQA compliance document, as Reclamation's NEPA compliance document, and as TRPA's compliance document with respect to its Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances. State responsible and trustee agencies and federal cooperating agencies may also use this EIR/EIS/EIS, as needed, for subsequent discretionary actions.

PUBLIC SCOPING

Public scoping meetings are being conducted to provide you with the opportunity to learn more about the proposed action and to express oral comments about the content of the EIR/EIS/EIS, in addition to your opportunity to submit written comments. The scoping meetings will be held at the following times and locations:

Wednesday, October 11, 2006
TRPA Advisory Planning Commission Meeting
North Tahoe Conference Center
See agenda item at:
http://www.trpa.org/default.aspx?tabid=259
North Tahoe Conference Center
8318 North Lake Boulevard
Kings Beach, CA 96143

Wednesday, October 25, 2006
Governing Board Meeting
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
See agenda item at:
http://www.trpa.org/ default.aspx?tabid=258
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Tuesday, October 24, 2006
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Inn By The Lake
3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Tuesday, October 24, 2006
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Inn By The Lake
3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Mike Elam

Project Manager, TRPA

October 3, 2006

Date

Richard J Robinson

Program Manager, California Tahoe Conservancy

October 3, 2006

Date