

California Tahoe Conservancy
Agenda Item 7
June 20, 2012

ANNUAL PLANNING AUTHORIZATION

Summary: Staff recommends authorization to expend up to \$940,000 for the purposes of program and project development, review, and implementation (including planning activities such as technical studies, conceptual designs, and environmental document preparation); to assist in regional planning efforts including the Environmental Improvement Program, climate change, and sustainability; to advance Conservancy communications, and for outreach and marketing of the Lake Tahoe License Plate.

Location: Project development activities throughout the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin, as well as statewide Lake Tahoe License Plate outreach and marketing.

Fiscal Summary: Up to \$940,000 from State sources, including support funds, Lake Tahoe License Plate funds, bond funds, the Charter Special Deposit Account, and other appropriate funding sources.

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 12-06-01 (Attachment 1).

Background

This annual planning authorization includes authorization for supplementary consultant services and resources in support of: 1) the development and implementation of acquisition and site improvement projects, 2) coordination of regional planning efforts, and 3) continued outreach and marketing efforts in support of the Lake Tahoe License Plate.

Since December 1988, the Board has approved a total of \$30,604,588 in 24 annual authorizations for planning activities. The amount being recommended for approval at this time is less than in previous years, reflecting both a carryover from previous authorizations, as well as the limitation of funds available at this time.

If the Board approves this authorization request, the Conservancy will arrange, pursuant to State contracting procedures, to obtain the necessary specialized expertise and resources to further program and project development. Arrangements will be made with a variety of public or private sources, including other public agencies, university research institutes, and private contractors.

Project Description

Staff is recommending the approval for allocation of funds to support the development and implementation of Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects under the Conservancy's Public Access and Recreation, Land Acquisition, Wildlife Enhancement, Stream Environment Zone/Watershed Restoration, and Soil Erosion Control Programs. Funds are also being requested to support the Conservancy's Information Technology department; ongoing regional efforts in climate change and sustainability; and various additional efforts needed to coordinate and align its activities with its EIP partners. Lastly, funds will also be used to continue outreach and marketing of the Lake Tahoe License Plate.

1. A total of \$640,000 in State funding is recommended for planning, environmental review, Geographic Information System (GIS), and other specialized technical support for development and implementation of EIP projects under the various Conservancy programs. This could include up to \$250,000 for planning activities related to wildlife habitat or watershed enhancements at the Tahoe Pines, Johnson Meadow, or other sites. Funds will also be utilized to coordinate communications supporting regional sustainability planning and coordination of climate change efforts.
2. An additional \$100,000 in State funding is recommended to support ongoing Conservancy information technology materials, website, and network support. These funds will improve information available to the public and Information Technology assistance for staff by:
 - providing needed computer assistance to staff in implementing Conservancy programs;
 - updating the Conservancy's data storage processes, and shift of certain network functions as part of a statewide consolidation of internet and network services; and
 - continuing enhancements and upgrades to the Conservancy's website.

3. A total of \$150,000 is being recommended to continue outreach and marketing activities for the Conservancy's Lake Tahoe License Plate. The launch of a new plate design in Summer 2010 has underscored the need to aggressively market the plate in order to increase sales. To date, the Lake Tahoe License Plate has generated more than \$15,000,000 for the Tahoe Conservancy, with revenues of over \$1,100,000 generated during the 2011-12 Fiscal Year. These revenues have been used to fund non-motorized trails and restoration projects. Under the program, up to 25% of license plate revenues can be used for marketing purposes.
4. Lastly, a total of \$50,000 is being recommended to fund ongoing communication activities. This includes continued development of the Conservancy's website, identification signage for Conservancy-owned lands, and program materials detailing the State's interest in the Environmental Improvement Program.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

The recommended planning activities are consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66907.10, the Conservancy is authorized to improve and develop acquired lands for a variety of purposes, including protection of the natural environment, provision of public access or recreational facilities, preservation of wildlife habitat areas, or providing access to or management of acquired lands. The Conservancy is also authorized to award grants to other public agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes, specific transportation organizations, and nonprofit entities for these purposes pursuant to Government Code Section 66907.7(a). Under Government Code Section 66906.8, the Conservancy is authorized to select and hire private consultants or contractors as necessary to achieve these purposes.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

While the proposed action itself does not require CEQA review, each project implemented pursuant to this staff recommendation will be subject to CEQA review. Staff will evaluate each project prior to implementation to determine whether the project is statutorily or categorically exempt from CEQA, or whether the project requires a negative declaration or environmental impact report. Staff will bring such CEQA determinations to the Board for review and adoption of environmental findings prior to expending funds to implement the project.

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Resolution 12-06-01

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ATTACHMENT 1

California Tahoe Conservancy
Resolution
12-06-01
Adopted: June 20, 2012

ANNUAL PLANNING AUTHORIZATION

“The California Tahoe Conservancy hereby authorizes Staff to expend up to \$940,000 for the purposes of program and project development, review, and implementation (including planning activities such as technical studies, conceptual designs, and environmental document preparation); to assist in regional planning efforts including the Environmental Improvement Program, climate change, and sustainability; to advance Conservancy communications, and for outreach and marketing of the Lake Tahoe License Plate.”

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution duly and regularly adopted by the California Tahoe Conservancy at a meeting thereof held on the 20th day of June 2012.

In WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 20th day of June 2012.

Patrick Wright
Executive Director