

ALERT TAHOE LICENSE AGREEMENT

Summary: Staff recommends authorization of a long-term license agreement with the University of Nevada, Reno, for the University's Alert Tahoe Ward Peak Fire Camera Station and Early Warning System.

Location: Approximately 0.6 miles northwest from the intersection of Verbier Road and Courchevel Road in Placer County and approximately 0.4 miles east of Ward Peak within the Conservancy-owned Ward Peak Property (Placer County APN 083-010-014) (Attachment 1).

Fiscal Summary: Minor incidental staff costs related to the preparation and processing of the agreement.

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 16-03-02 (Attachment 2).

Background

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) has developed a modern broadband microwave communications network to provide a scalable broadband platform that can adapt data collection and delivery for any internet-connected device (e.g., seismograph, fire camera, meteorological sensor, data center, GPS sensor, etc.). The network informs first responders with critical and real-time natural disaster data and provides private broadband links to critical facilities that rely strictly on grid-power, the public internet, or the cellular network. In addition, the platform creates a managed communications infrastructure for multi-disciplinary remote network sensors in the Lake Tahoe Basin and throughout Nevada and Eastern California.

UNR is expanding the Lake Tahoe Basin fire monitoring network to include additional broadband mountain top communication sites to accommodate new digital video monitoring through a multi-hazard camera network. These high elevation links will provide line-of-sight connections to most Lake Tahoe Basin locations as well as sites to the east of the Basin. Fire personnel, emergency centers, and the public will have

improved web-based access to real-time, time-lapse video of an unfolding situation that will provide for improved disaster response. As this network evolves, a more coordinated approach to emergency response and environmental data collection is anticipated.

The Board previously approved a fire camera tower with seismographic station on the Conservancy-owned Dollar property (Placer County APN 092-010-012). This camera is currently operational and can be viewed at <http://alerttahoe.seismo.unr.edu/firecams.html>. There are currently six cameras in the network (four within the Lake Tahoe Basin, one in the Reno area, and one on the east side outside of the Basin) and UNR has plans to expand this network this summer with another five cameras to be installed in the Basin, including this one, three on the west slope, one north of Truckee and three more on the east side outside of the Basin. Funding is in place for this site. If UNR obtains Board approval of the license agreement, the broadband wireless fire camera could be fully operational by summer.

Project Description

Staff recommends authorization to enter into a long-term license agreement with UNR for the camera station on Placer County APN 083-010-014. The parcel was acquired in 1987 under the Conservancy's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Acquisition Program with Lake Tahoe Acquisitions Bond Act (Bond Act) funds. This parcel is currently under a long-term lease agreement with Alpine Meadows ski resort for ski resort operations. The Conservancy, UNR, and Alpine Meadows have agreed to the location as to not interfere with ski resort operations.

The station includes an 18-foot triangle antenna mast with a solar panel (approximately 65 inches x 40 inches), antennae, equipment enclosures, a 32-foot connecting cable encased in a ¾ inch flex conduit. The installation will consist of two areas, one with the antenna mast, solar panels, camera mount, a 360-degree pan camera, and minor equipment enclosures and the second where the two-foot battery vault will be buried approximately four feet into the ground with a two-foot concrete base. The entire license area shall not exceed an area larger than 8 feet by 32 feet. The fire camera station will be painted to meet Tahoe Regional Planning Agency scenic requirements.

The proposed camera equipment and building materials will be delivered by hand cart and backpacks to the site from an existing access road on the property. Construction will be completed using various power and hand tools. Any maintenance and materials equipment required throughout the term of the license will be delivered in a similar manner.

The proposed improvements will benefit the Conservancy's ongoing management objectives for the property as well as adjacent properties by providing information that could prevent wildfire from spreading onto Conservancy-owned land and/or reduce losses from wildfire through early detection. Additionally, this station may assist in monitoring and electronic data collection. The license agreement of up to five years with the option to renew for an additional five years will provide UNR with access rights necessary to install, operate, and maintain a fire camera to collect essential data for fire monitoring. Science education, public awareness, and public safety will also benefit from the collection of this data. As technology evolves, it is possible the station may be used for additional equipment and/or appropriate activities in the future, subject to Conservancy approval.

UNR will ensure the construction, operation, and maintenance of this site will not interfere with any existing public or private recreational use.

Project Implementation

If the Board approves this recommendation, staff intends to enter into the license agreement referenced above and take all necessary actions to implement the agreement in the spring of 2016. The agreement includes provisions relating to resource protection during construction and site restoration in the event the license terminates, insurance, and indemnification. Consistent with the Board's direction under the Conservancy's adopted Special Use Program Guidelines, UNR will not be charged a fee for the use of Conservancy property associated with the fire camera because the Conservancy will benefit from the data collected.

UNR will obtain all necessary permits prior to installation of the station.

Project Evaluation

The requested special use satisfies the requirements of the Conservancy's adopted Special Use Guidelines. There is no feasible alternative location given the need for uninterrupted sight lines. The long-term value and beneficial uses of the land, which was acquired with Bond Act funding, will not be adversely impacted. There are no significant impacts to soil, wildlife, stream environment zones or native vegetation. The activity will not interfere with existing disbursed public recreational use and the private commercial use by Alpine Meadows under its existing ski area lease. The use is consistent and in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and permits.

Most important, the project will significantly improve wildfire prevention in the Lake Tahoe basin. This camera fills a gap in the current camera network, as there are portions of the “view shed” that are not visible due to ridges, hills and large trees. Specifically, this camera will allow a view of Sand Harbor and areas south of Glenbrook on the east shore and near Ward Canyon on the west shore. The camera also provides redundancy if other cameras in the network are inoperable during a critical fire event.

Authority

The recommended license is consistent with the Bond Act and the Conservancy’s enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.8 as amended, authorizes the lease, rent, sale, exchange, or transfer any interest in real property to state agencies and non-profit organizations or partnerships to fulfill the Conservancy’s statutory purposes, including land management. Under Government Code section 66907.9, the Conservancy is authorized to initiate, negotiate, and participate in agreements for the management of land under its ownership or control with local public agencies, state agencies, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, individuals, corporate entities or partnerships, and to enter into any other agreements authorized by state or federal law.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary for Resources to have no significant effect on the environment. Pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 21001(f) and 21082, the Conservancy has also adopted regulations to implement, interpret, and make specific, the provisions of CEQA. Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 12100 et seq. Staff has evaluated this project, and has found it to be exempt under CEQA. This project qualifies for a categorical exemption under CEQA Guidelines, section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), and the Conservancy’s CEQA regulations, section 12102.3. A Notice of Exemption (NOE) has been drafted for the project (Attachment 3). If the Board approves the project, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 1506.2.

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Location Map (Area)

Attachment 2 – Resolution 16-03-02

Attachment 3 – CEQA Notice of Exemption

Exhibit A – Location Map (Project)

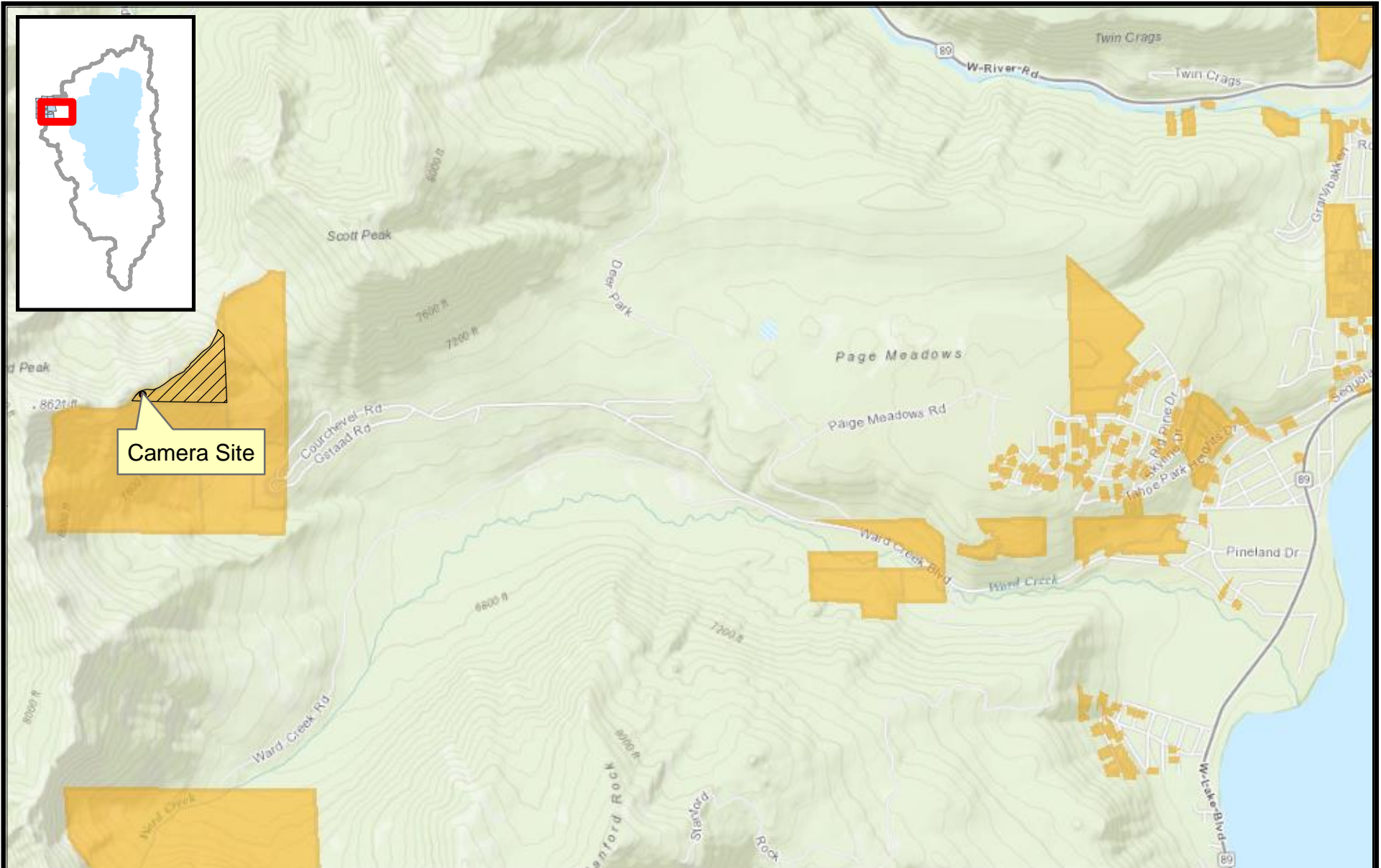
Conservancy Staff Contact:



Nick Meyer

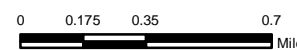
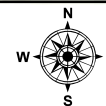
(530) 543-6073

nick.meyer@tahoe.ca.gov

ATTACHMENT 1 Alert Tahoe



-  Subject Property
-  Conservancy Owned



California Tahoe Conservancy
March 2016

Map for reference purposes only.
Sources: TRPA, ESRI, CTC



ATTACHMENT 1
Alert Tahoe

ATTACHMENT 2

California Tahoe Conservancy
Resolution
16-03-02
Adopted: March 17, 2016

ALERT TAHOE LICENSE AGREEMENT

Staff recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Government Code sections 66907.8 and 66907.9:

“The California Tahoe Conservancy hereby authorizes staff to enter into a long-term license agreement with University of Nevada, Reno for the Alert Tahoe Ward Peak Fire Camera Station and Early Warning System on Placer County Assessor Parcel Number 083-010-014, and authorizes staff to take all other necessary steps consistent with the accompanying staff recommendation.”

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution duly and regularly adopted by the California Tahoe Conservancy at a meeting thereof held on the 17th day of March 2016.

In WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 17th day of March 2016.

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT 3

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

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

Project Title:

Alert Tahoe Ward Peak Fire Camera Station Early Warning System License Agreement

Project Location – Specific:

Placer County APN: 083-010-014 (see Exhibit A)

Project Location – City:

Unincorporated

Project Location – County:

Placer

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

This project will provide the University of Nevada, Reno with access rights to install, operate, and maintain a video monitoring station to collect essential data for fire protection.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy meeting of 3/17/2016) (Agenda Item7)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

California Tahoe Conservancy

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial (§ 21080 (b)(1); § 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§ 21080 (b)(3); § 15269 (a))
- Emergency Project (§ 21080 (b)(4); § 15269 (b)(c))
- Categorical Exemption Class 3, § 15303, “New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures” (See also Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 12102.3)

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

This project consists of construction of a single small structure and related equipment.

Contact Person:

Nick Meyer

Telephone Number:

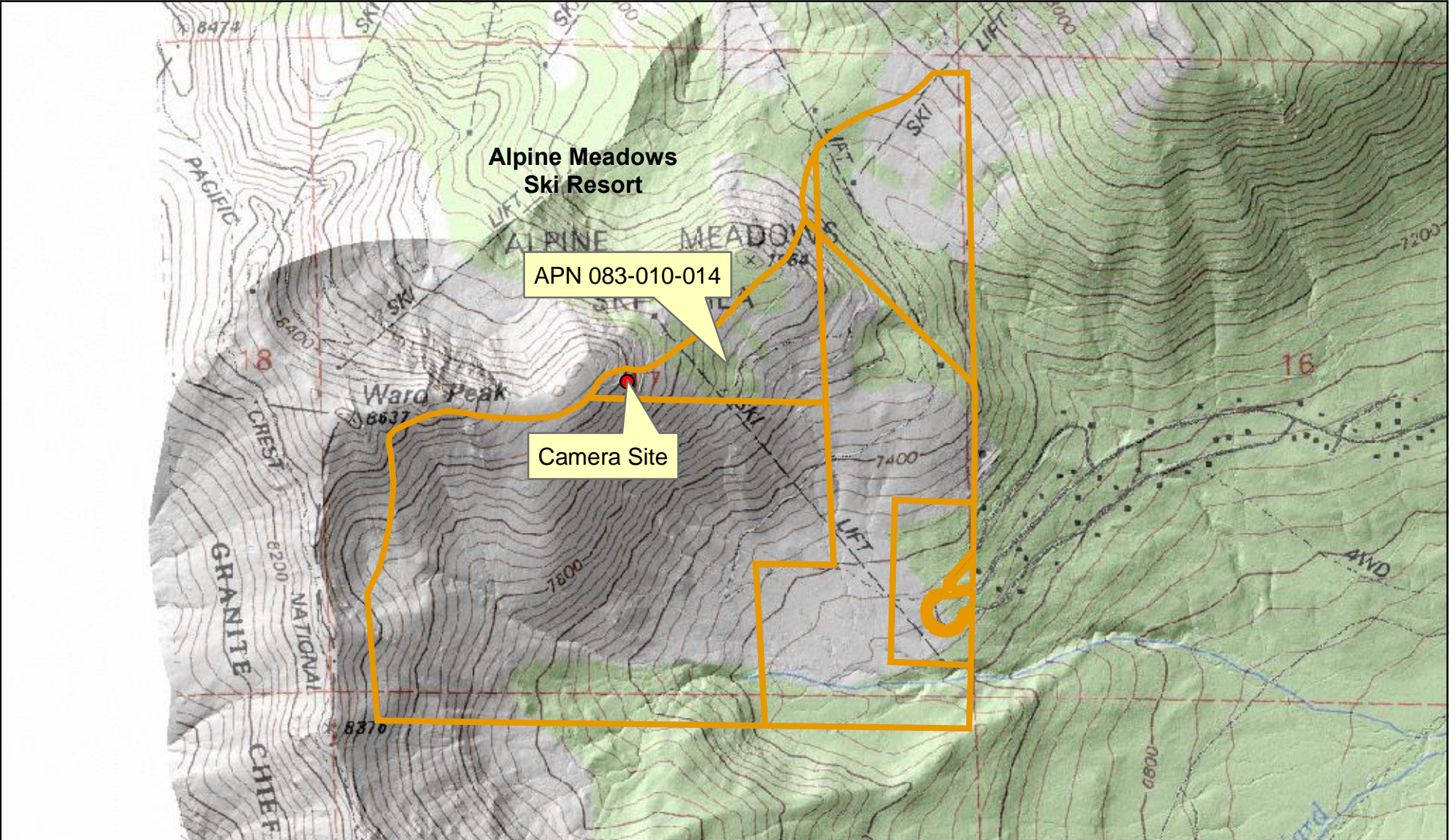
(530) 543-6073

Date Received for Filing:

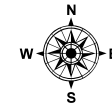
Patrick Wright
Executive Director

**Alert Tahoe Ward Peak Fire Camera Station License Agreement
EXHIBIT A**

**Alert Tahoe Ward Peak Fire Camera Station License Agreement
EXHIBIT A**



 Conservancy Owned



0 0.075 0.15 0.3
Miles

California Tahoe Conservancy
March 2016

Map for reference purposes only.
Sources: TRPA, ESRI, CTC

