

**UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER AND MARSH RESTORATION
PROJECT UPDATE**

The Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project (Project) aims to restore the natural geomorphic processes and functions of the Upper Truckee River and Marsh to improve the area's ecological values and filtering capacity, with a complementary and appropriate level of recreation infrastructure. The Upper Truckee Marsh (UTM) is a 600 acre wetland at the confluence of the two largest watersheds in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek). The Conservancy acquired the majority of the UTM in two acquisitions in 1988 and 2000, and has been developing the Project ever since. The Conservancy leads the Project team, which includes the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the California Department of General Services (DGS) and the State's engineering and environmental consultants (Cardno and AECOM, respectively).

The Project's draft environmental document (Draft EIR/EIS/EIS) analyzed the four action alternatives and the no project alternative equally, as no preferred alternative was identified. Upon completion of the public review period, the Project team developed criteria and a process for identifying a recommended alternative. Conservancy staff identified a preliminary recommended alternative (Recommended Alternative) (Attachments 1 and 2) and presented it for informational purposes at the September 2014 Board meeting. The Recommended Alternative consists of restoration and recreation elements from the alternatives which were evaluated within the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

Following the September Board meeting the Conservancy distributed the Recommended Alternative for peer reviews. A technical advisory committee comprised of agency representatives reviewed the Recommended Alternative and provided support for the proposed improvements. A science review panel, made up of experts from several resource areas, also analyzed the Recommended Alternative. The panelists evaluated the Recommended Alternative based on its consistency with recent scientific research and its rationale as the superior option, and they demonstrated strong overall support for the elements proposed in the Recommended Alternative.

The Conservancy is preparing the final environmental document (EIR/EIS/EIS), and it is expected to be presented to the Conservancy Board for review and consideration in December 2015. The final document identifies the Recommended Alternative as presented to the Board in September 2014, and it includes responses to comments, the adoption of findings related to each significant effect, and updated flood modeling results. The updated flood modeling confirms the draft document's findings that the Recommended Alternative does not result in increased flood risks to developed areas. As the final environmental document is a joint EIR/EIS/EIS, TRPA and the BOR must also review and approve the environmental document. If all three agencies approve the Project, and pending availability of funding, construction could begin as early as 2018.

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Preliminary Staff Recommended Alternative Map

Attachment 2 - Preliminary Staff Recommended Alternative Description

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