

ATTACHMENT 3.4a

LAKE TAHOE WEST RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP

Grant Type: Planning Grant Augmentation

Applicant: National Forest Foundation

Recommended Funding: \$398,750 (Attachment 3.4b)

Location: Over 59,000 acres of federal, State, local, and private land on the west shore of Lake Tahoe, north of Cascade Creek to Dollar Point in unincorporated El Dorado and Placer counties (Attachment 3.4c).

Overview

Description of Recommended Action

Staff recommends the Board authorize funding of up to \$398,750 to augment an existing grant to the National Forest Foundation (NFF) for ongoing planning efforts associated with the Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership (LTW; formerly Lake Tahoe West Collaborative). NFF will use the recommended funding to provide the following support to the LTW planning effort:

- continued project management and facilitation services (July 2018 – June 2019);
- expanded science services subcontracted through the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) Pacific Southwest Research Station (January – July 2018) including validation of vegetation and wildlife models, preparation of an ecosystem services analysis, and incorporation of a decision support tool; and
- continued stakeholder participation stipends (January 2018 – July 2019).

NFF provides program management and neutral facilitation services to LTW, a multi-agency and stakeholder initiative. Other LTW organizing agencies include the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy), USFS, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team. This interagency initiative includes a subcontracted science team to provide objective information that informs decision making. Additionally, formal stakeholder participation takes the form of two groups: the Stakeholder Community Committee

and the Stakeholder Science Committee. The latter group provides review, critique, and guidance regarding the scientific concepts, information, and analyses for LTW. LTW reimburses three non-profit organizations (Sierra Forest Legacy, Friends of the West Shore, and Truckee River Watershed Council) through a previously approved LTW stipend policy. This stipend provides the non-profits approximately \$4,000 each per year to serve on the Stakeholder Science Committee. This policy could be updated in the future.

The goals of LTW include restoring and maintaining the resilience of the forests, watersheds, recreational opportunities, and communities on Lake Tahoe's west shore within 10 years. Achieving these goals relies upon implementation of landscape-level management activities that enhance the capacity of natural resources to withstand drought, climate change, wildfire, bark beetles, increased visitor use, and other stressors.

The LTW restoration landscape encompasses an area of 59,000 acres. The LTW planning effort is expected to result in multiple benefit project treatments, including forest health, fuels reduction, wildlife habitat enhancement, stream and stream environment zone restoration, etc. The first planning phase is mostly done with the completion of a Landscape Resilience Assessment, which identifies areas for future restoration as part of LTW implementation activities.

History

LTW partners recognize the importance of integrating watershed restoration and forest health programs to implement large-scale, multi-jurisdictional restoration projects and to jointly develop climate adaptation strategies to improve natural resource resilience. The LTW planning process represents a fundamental change in how agencies work together to holistically manage and protect public lands. This shift from small-scale forest and watershed restoration projects to an ecosystem management strategy can serve as a model for future projects. The integration of land management and regulatory agencies in this planning effort allows for their consideration of opportunities to streamline the regulatory process for LTW implementation activities.

In March 2016, the Board authorized a Proposition 1 planning grant for LTW. This \$849,100 award reduced the amount NFF originally applied for (\$1,238,428) by almost \$400,000. The Conservancy and NFF structured the award so that the reduction occurred across all grant categories, allowing initial work efforts to proceed, recognizing that additional funds would be required to complete the scope of work. At the time, NFF staff indicated their intent to seek funding from other sources to bridge the shortfall. The LTW partners were unsuccessful in securing a federal grant that

would have made up the shortfall. The requested \$398,750 provides funding required for the full scope of the LTW planning effort.

Financing

NFF succeeded in securing non-State LTW funding and has applied for other funding as follows:

Leveraged Project Funding

Funding Source	Cost Share (secured)	Other grant applications (not secured)
State Fire Assistance Grant (CEQA and communications funding)	\$300,000	
NFF Project Administration (indirect)	\$101,140	
Planning – Agency staff time cost share	\$82,000	
USFS Supplemental Hazardous Fuels Funding (supporting science)	\$250,000	
Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Secondary List (science request; 3/2017)		\$235,000
Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, Fire Risk and Forest Management Projects (planning and collaboration request; 3/2017)		\$3,000,000
SNPLMA Round 17 (varied request; 5/2017)		\$2,992,730
Totals	\$733,140	\$6,227,730

Some of the unsecured grant requests reflected in the Leveraged Funding table included tasks that were also part of NFF’s Proposition 1, Round 2 grant request. LTW partners have agreed that, should other funding be awarded, the Proposition 1 grant could be partially reduced or returned. Consequently, the table below reflects the maximum potential augmentation:

Proposed Grant Augmentation Budget

Budget Category	Requested Augmentation
Task 1: Collaborative Process	
Facilitation (NFF)	\$85,000
Task 2: Scientific Modeling and Monitoring*	
Initial Model Development and Monitoring	\$170,000
Task 3: Project Management	
a. Program Administration/Planning (NFF)	\$85,000
b. Stakeholder Participation Stipends	\$22,500
Contingency (10 percent)	\$36,250
Total Augmentation Funds	\$398,750
Total Original Grant (2016)	\$849,097
Project Total	\$1,247,847

**Subcontract with USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station*

NFF will revise the grant workplan reflecting this augmentation, including the budget and tasks. While the budget may be adjusted between tasks and line items in the workplan budget, total expenditures under this grant augmentation will not exceed \$398,750, for a cumulative grant total of \$1,247,847.

Proposed Project Schedule

Task and Activity	Timeframe
1. Facilitation for third year of planning	July 2018 – July 2019
2. Initial model development and monitoring	Jan. 2018 – July 2018
3a. Project administration/management for third year of planning	July 2018 – July 2019
3b. Stakeholder participation stipends for second year of planning	Jan. 2018 – July 2019

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation, Strategic Plan, and Program Guidelines

The recommended action to award grant funding for LTW is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation, the Strategic Plan, and the Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended action is consistent with the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) because it facilitates implementation of EIP project #02.01.01.0116, LTW Collaborative Landscape Restoration Strategy & Planning. The recommended action is also consistent with the *2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildlife Prevention Strategy*, as amended.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to have no significant effect on the environment. Staff has evaluated the proposed planning activities and found them to be exempt under CEQA. These activities qualify for a statutory exemption under CEQA Guidelines section 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies). A notice of exemption (NOE) has been prepared for the activities (Attachment 3.4d). If the Board approves the project, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15062.

List of Attachments

Attachment 3.4b – Resolution 17-09-02.4

Attachment 3.4c – Project Map

Attachment 3.4d – Notice of Exemption, Exhibit A

Conservancy Staff Contacts

Lisa O'Daly
Juan Carlos Urizar

lisa.odaly@tahoe.ca.gov
juancarlos.urizar@tahoe.ca.gov