

ATTACHMENT 1



California Tahoe Conservancy
2012-2017 Strategic Plan
Accomplishments and Challenges



Preface

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the major accomplishments achieved by the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) under its 2012-2017 Strategic Plan and to briefly discuss challenges the organization faced in implementing the Strategic Plan. While the Strategic Plan included both high level strategies and detailed actions and performance targets, this document summarizes key accomplishments and does not systematically track each action and performance target. Similarly, the document includes some quantitative accomplishments where the actions and targets are more readily measured such as certain land management activities, and qualitative descriptions of actions that are more strategic and/or planning in nature. Also, some items below are interlinked and advance more than one Strategy; hence they may appear in more than one section.

Introduction

The Conservancy last issued a Strategic Plan in 2012. A key element of that process was an independent assessment, based on dozens of interviews with staff and Board members, partners, and stakeholders, of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the organization.

The key **strengths** identified included its mission, the quality of its staff, its leadership in getting things done, and its reputation, image, and accomplishments. The key **weaknesses** cited were a lack of stable funding, lack of public awareness of its work, a wavering organizational vision, and weak internal operations. Major **opportunities** included playing a bigger role in coordinating State priorities in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Basin), improving communications, and exploring private funding opportunities. The key **threats** cited were twofold: the lack of future funding to maintain its progress, and the new and emerging threats of catastrophic wildfire, aquatic invasive species, and climate change will require greater coordination and collaboration among agencies whose budgets and capacities are in flux.

To address these issues while building upon its strengths, the SWOT analysis recommended that the Conservancy focus on two key areas:

- Environmental Improvement Program (EIP)/Basin-wide priority projects; and
- Regional policy and coordination needs of the Basin.

The SWOT analysis also emphasized that as State policy is increasingly moving to a systems approach, the Conservancy would need to adjust its focus on funding and implementing EIP projects to better integrate and coordinate its efforts with other Basin partners. Finally, the analysis noted that in making this transition, the Conservancy should consider providing less direct oversight to its grantees, and instead focus on a more strategic level to help meet State priorities in the Basin.

The Strategic Plan largely reflects these recommendations, while maintaining a strong commitment to managing more than 4,700 parcels and improving Conservancy

operations. The following sections summarize the Conservancy's progress in achieving the major goals of the Strategic Plan.

Strategy I: Lead California’s Basin Efforts on Sustainability, Climate Change, and Other Area-Wide Initiatives

This strategy stems from State-wide mandates, including the enactment of AB32, SB 375, and several executive orders, to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and adapt to the growing impacts of climate change. As the only State agency focused entirely in the Basin, the Conservancy is uniquely positioned to work with its partner agencies to help promote and achieve these State mandates and priorities in the Basin.

A. Support Lake Tahoe’s Sustainable Communities Program

Key Accomplishments:

- **Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS):** Participated in a collaborative effort led by Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to develop a SCS, a state-mandated plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Basin as part of its Regional Plan.
- **Sustainability Action Plan:** Helped TRPA secure a Strategic Growth Council grant and participated in the development of TRPA’s Sustainability Action Plan, which provides a framework and menu of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory:** Funded the first ever greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the Basin to support TRPA’s sustainability programs.
- **Tahoe Livable Communities (TLC) Program:** Launched the TLC program, which refocused the Conservancy’s land acquisition and marketable right programs to support the Regional Plan and SCS. Acquired four aging developed parcels on sensitive land and reserved their development rights for projects in town centers, sold two “asset” lands, and acquired four vacant parcels in roadless subdivisions to remove the threat of new development and infrastructure.
- **Area Plans:** Participated in the Meyers and Placer County area planning processes, as part of the Regional Plan implementation.

Key Challenges:

- Limited staffing prevented the Conservancy from more actively participating in the development of area plans, as in the past.
- Limited funding prevented the Conservancy from acquiring and restoring more developed properties on sensitive land through the TLC program.

B. Align State Agency Activities and Policies in the Basin to Support Sustainability and Climate Change Initiatives

Key Accomplishments:

- **AB1004 (Dahle):** Secured State legislation clarifying its authority to sell or transfer parcels to promote the State’s planning priorities, including infill

development, more efficient land use patterns, and implementation of Sustainable Communities Strategies required by SB 375.

- **Proposition 1 grants:** Incorporated Sustainable Communities as a key focus area in the Conservancy's Proposition 1 grant guidelines and funding allocations.
- **Climate Adaptation Plan and Vulnerability Assessment:** In 2017, launched the development of a Climate Adaptation Action Plan for the Basin. As part of that effort, partnered with Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) to secure a \$359,756 grant from Caltrans to perform a vulnerability assessment of the Basin's transportation network.

Key Challenges:

- State funding for climate related programs is still largely "stovepiped" with Caltrans providing funding for impacts on the highway system, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) providing funding for impacts on wildlife, etc., which makes it challenging to do planning that requires synthesis across a large range of topics and data streams, and at the same time build the capacity of interagency teams to collaborate.

C. Coordinate Across State Agencies in Support of Other Basin-Wide Collaborative Initiatives

Key Accomplishments:

- **Tahoe Interagency Executives (TIE):** Represented California State agencies at regular meetings to coordinate federal, state, and local programs and investments through the EIP.
- **State and Regional workgroups:** Represented the Basin on several statewide and regional efforts, including the state Forest Carbon Action Team, the Mountain Meadows workgroup, the Tahoe-Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, the Great Basin Large Landscape Collaborative, and others.
- **Forest Health Interagency Position:** Secured funding to host an interagency position to coordinate the Basin's forest health management programs on behalf of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT). Helped secure several large interagency grants, including \$25 million in federal funding in 2016 and a \$5 million grant from CAL FIRE through the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI).
- **Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership (LTW):** In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), TRPA, National Forest Foundation, and others, launched and funded LTW in 2016, a collaborative interagency and stakeholder effort to restore the health and resilience of forests and watersheds on a large landscape scale from Emerald Bay to Dollar Hill. Accomplishments include completing a cutting-edge landscape resilience assessment and initiating a landscape-scale restoration strategy, which is intended to result in several large projects with streamlined planning, permitting, and implementation. The LTW partners have also been successful in developing interagency budgeting and grant proposals to fund the planning process.

- **Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI):** In partnership with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, launched a collaborative effort to plan and coordinate the restoration of 2.4 million acres of forests and watersheds across the Central Sierra.
- **Tahoe Yellow Cress Conservation Strategy:** The Conservancy facilitated a renewed memorandum of understanding with Basin land management and regulatory partners and an updated conservation strategy, which resulted in supporting a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision in 2015 to not list the species.
- **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS):** Worked with agency partners to secure sustainable funding and on implementation of the Basin’s AIS prevention and control programs. Implemented a stakeholder process to prioritize projects for funding under SB630, in coordination with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB) and the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). Partnered with the League to Save Lake Tahoe (League) to complete AIS surveys in the Upper Truckee Marsh (UTM) through the League’s “Eyes on the Lake” program.

Key Challenges:

- The Conservancy has had to continually assess where it is better positioned to be in a leadership role (LTW, TFFT, Upper Truckee River Strategy), a support role (AIS, storm water planning, etc.), or lacks the resources or staffing to actively participate (Sustainable Recreation).
- The Conservancy enjoys strong relationships with the staff of many of our federal funding partners outside of the Basin, but have yet to build strong personal ties to staff with some State funding agencies (WCB, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), etc.).
- Lack of staff capacity and sustainable (non-bond) funding to help steer and participate in collaborative processes has limited the Conservancy’s involvement in some areas.
- Measuring progress requires procedural metrics (e.g., number of partnerships formed, collaboration statistics) as well as substantive metrics (e.g., implementation and effectiveness) that are novel to some efforts.
- There continues to be a tension between the Conservancy’s changing role as a strategic leader of large scale restoration efforts and implementer of direct projects on its own land or funder of partner projects. Funding and staffing do not always align to support larger collaborative strategic initiatives.

Strategy II: Invest in High Priority Conservation and Recreation (EIP) Projects and Programs

The EIP, launched by TRPA in 1997, provides the framework for more than 50 federal, state, local, and private partners to prioritize, coordinate, and implement a broad range of capital improvement programs necessary to meet TRPA's thresholds. The Conservancy continues to lead California's involvement in the EIP by helping to secure the State's share of funding, and by funding and implementing high priority EIP projects, both on its own lands and through grants to local agencies.

A. Lead California's Involvement in the EIP

Key Accomplishments:

- **Conservancy EIP Funding:** Provided over \$30 million for EIP projects between 2012 and 2017.
- **TIE:** As noted above, represented California State agencies at regular meetings to coordinate federal, state, and local programs and investments through the EIP.
- **EIP Priority Setting and Tracking:** Through the EIP Coordinating Committee, a group of mid-level agency staff and managers, assisted TRPA staff in updating annual project priority lists and reporting on EIP accomplishments.
- **EIP workgroups:** Actively participated and played a leadership role in a broad range of EIP workgroups to establish priorities, coordinate investments, and report accomplishments through TRPA's EIP tracking system. These include the TFFT, AIS Coordinating Committee, SB 630 workgroups, Storm Water Quality Improvement Committee, Tahoe Yellow Cress Working Group and Executive Committee, and others.
- **State Team:** Established an interagency State team, with regular coordination calls and email updates, and bi-monthly executive meetings with LRWQCB, TRPA, and CDFW.
- **Private Funds:** Developed partnerships with the Tahoe Fund and League to raise private funding for EIP projects.

Key Challenges:

- Maintaining a State agency team proved challenging given the disparate agency missions and projects at Lake Tahoe. May need to explore new approaches to building partnerships, including interagency agreements, shared space, and joint positions.

B. Restore the Upper Truckee River (UTR) and Other Key Watersheds

Key Accomplishments:

- **UTR Marsh:** After years of planning and public input, completed a final restoration plan for the UTR Marsh, the largest wetland in the Basin and a major source of fine sediment that impacts Lake Tahoe's famed clarity.
- **Airport and USFS reaches:** Partnered with the City of South Lake Tahoe (City) and the USFS to complete major restoration projects on key segments of the UTR.
- **UTR Restoration Strategy:** In 2013, developed a draft UTR restoration strategy and hosted a UTR workshop with a blue ribbon scientific panel. Staff has collaborated with the UTR working group to garner support for an updated strategy, which is now under development.
- **Blackwood and Ward creeks:** Completed significant restoration projects on Blackwood and Ward creeks, and coordinated with partners and Alpine Meadows on the completion of several additional restoration and best management practices projects.
- **Key Research:** Secured U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and State funding (Conservancy and State Water Resources Control Board) funding for research on floodplain management and other benefits of stream restoration projects.
- **Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association (TKPOA) Corporation Yard Relocation:** Successfully concluded decades of work with TKPOA to identify and agree upon a relocation option for TKPOA's corporation yard out of the UTR Marsh to a less environmentally sensitive parcel. The relocation will allow the existing corporation yard site to be restored as part of the Conservancy's UTR Marsh restoration project.

Key Challenges:

- As a small State agency, the Conservancy works through the California Department of General Services for large direct project management and land transaction review of higher value acquisitions and other land transactions. This can sometimes cause impacts to project timelines and budgets with extra layers of oversight and management.
- Proposition 1 funding restrictions required that funds be distributed through competitive grants to Basin partners, rather than used for Conservancy direct projects. This has required the Conservancy to seek other federal and State funds to support priority projects, including the UTR Marsh.

C. Invest in Storm Water Management Projects and Programs

Key Accomplishments:

- **Grant awards:** Awarded 12 grants to local governments, totaling almost \$4,000,000, for high priority storm water projects.

- **Storm Water Management Plan:** Funded comprehensive plan to assist local governments in meeting new state mandate to develop multi-benefit projects.
- **Interagency Coordination:** Participated in Storm Water Quality Improvement Committee and Regional Storm Water Management Plan workgroups to jointly establish priorities, track progress, and assess performance.
- **Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Targets:** The TMDL storm water partnership was successful in reaching the first five year targets to reduce fine sediment loads by ten percent, total phosphorus by seven percent, and total nitrogen by eight percent. Each jurisdiction met their respective targets.

Key Challenges:

- The storm water/TMDL targets will become increasingly difficult to attain after the most cost effective projects are completed.

D. Improve & Enhance Recreational and Mobility Opportunities, and Public Access to Lake Tahoe

Key Accomplishments:

- **Van Sickle Bi-State Park:** Partnered with Nevada State Parks, the Tahoe Fund, and others to open the nation's first bi-state park, which has rapidly become one of Nevada's most visited parks.
- **South Tahoe Greenway Shared Use Trail (Greenway):** Completed the first phase of the Greenway, the backbone of the bike trail network in the south shore. Secured funding and completed environmental documentation for the next phase of the trail.
- **Kings Beach State Recreation Area (KBSRA):** Partnered with DPR to develop a new vision for KBSRA, including a new pier, concert space, picnic areas, and other amenities.
- **Lake Tahoe Water Trail:** Awarded a grant to the Sierra Business Council to take over management of the Lake Tahoe Water Trail, and installed water trail signs on Conservancy-owned north shore beaches.
- **Public Lake Access:** Funded the development of a Strategic Public Access Investment Plan to help guide future investments to improve public access to Lake Tahoe.
- **Lake Tahoe Bikeway:** Funded planning grants for several segments of bike trails, including the Dollar Creek Shared-Use Trail, Homewood Bike Trail, El Dorado to Ski Run Bike Trail, Lake Tahoe Boulevard Bike Trail, and Sawmill Bike Trail.

Key Challenges:

- Due to the restrictions of Proposition 1, which authorized funding only for water-related projects, the Conservancy was unable to provide significant funding in recent years for public access and recreation projects, with the notable exception of the Greenway project. Fortunately, the TTD has been able to fill much of this gap and fund several high priority bike trail projects.

E. Acquire Strategic Parcels

Key Accomplishments:

- **Johnson Meadow:** Awarded \$4 million to the Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) to acquire Johnson Meadow, the last major private landholding in the Truckee River watershed. Partnered with the Tahoe RCD and the Tahoe Fund to secure an additional \$4 million from CDFW for the acquisition.
- **TLC:** Acquired four aging developed parcels on sensitive or lakefront land and reserved their development rights for projects in town centers, sold two “asset” lands, and acquired four vacant parcels in roadless subdivisions to remove the threat of development that would require new infrastructure.
- **Bijou Park Creek Watershed:** Awarded grants to the City acquire several developed properties on sensitive or frequently flooded land to reduce polluted runoff.
- **Kings Beach Gateway:** Awarded Proposition 1 funding to Placer County to acquire key developed parcels at the intersection of Highways 267 and 28, the gateway to Kings Beach.
- **Brockway Campground:** Partnered with the USFS to facilitate acquiring and permanently protecting a scenic area on the north shore near Northstar that was the site of a proposed campground.

Key Challenges:

- Lack of willing sellers precluded several other high priority acquisitions, including several privately owned parcels adjacent to the UTR Marsh.

Strategy III: Effectively Manage Land and Assets

Managing more than 4,700 parcels on 6,500 acres of land is a daunting task, particularly since most are quarter acre lots scattered across developed areas and neighborhoods. The primary focus of the Conservancy's ongoing land management program is to perform inspections, respond to citizen complaints, remove hazard trees, review and process requests for easements and special uses, and restore and maintain the ecological health of these properties.

A. Efficiently Manage Conservancy-Owned Lands

Key Accomplishments:

- **Comprehensive Database:** Developed Property Data Management System (PDMS) to centralize and track property management information for the Conservancy's 4,700 parcels, including acquisition, survey, inspection, land capability, trespass, citizen report, project, lease and license agreement, maintenance, and other data.
- **Mobile/Paperless Data Collection:** Implemented mobile inspection data collection with tablets and development of software applications. This technology was also used to develop a field program to monitor usage of parcels acquired by Conservancy grantees. Developed a web-enabled electronic/paperless citizen report system.
- **Property Inspections:** Inspected about 2,500 parcels annually.
- **Hazard Trees:** Removed up to 128 hazard trees annually.
- **Maintenance Projects:** Completed about 116 annual maintenance projects.
- **Restoration Projects:** Completed about 25 restoration projects annually. Ninety percent of all urban lot restoration projects have resulted in some type of water quality benefit.
- **Forest Health Projects:** Treated about 200 acres annually.
- **Interagency Agreements:** Developed interagency agreements through which DPR manages the Conservancy's north shore beaches, and Nevada State Parks manages Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Negotiated and maintained a Joint Powers Agreement with the Tahoe RCD for land management services.
- **Land Management Classifications:** Approved land management classifications for all of the Conservancy's lands. These classifications will help guide the development of an American with Disabilities Act transition plan and a land management strategy for long term management.

Key Challenges:

- The Conservancy owns over 4,700 parcels, and 6,500 acres. These parcels must be managed and maintained on an ongoing basis. Eighty seven percent of these parcels are less than a half an acre in size intermixed within residential communities, which adds to the complexity and challenges of management. Management costs have

increased over time and several of the funding sources dedicated to property management purposes are flat or declining.

- While the Strategic Plan identified the development of a land management plan as a top priority, the Conservancy was not able to complete this effort due to funding and staffing constraints.
- The Conservancy has a number of management challenges associated with its ownership, including a backlog of encroachments and boundary disputes. The number of encroachments increased from 264 in 2012 to 396 in 2016. Given funding constraints, the Conservancy is not able to resolve more encroachments than are discovered annually.
- Due to the pace and scale of acquisitions in the 1980s and 1990s, the Conservancy did not complete surveys of many acquired properties in advance of acquisition. This created management challenges for addressing encroachments and in processing land transactions, such as easements. The Conservancy has had only a small budget available to complete a limited number of surveys each year, which has contributed to the encroachment backlog.

B. Complete Federal, State, and Local Land Exchanges

Key Accomplishments:

- **USFS/Conservancy/DPR Exchange:** Secured Congressional authorization through the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act for a large scale land exchange through which the USFS would exchange over 2,000 urban lots for about 80 larger Conservancy parcels of about the same total acreage.
- **DPR/Conservancy Land Exchange:** Completed first of a series of planned exchanges with DPR to consolidate DPR ownerships adjacent to Washoe Meadows and Emerald Bay State Parks and Conservancy ownerships in the Rubicon neighborhood on the west shore.
- **City of South Lake Tahoe/Conservancy Exchange:** Completed a land exchange with the City to improve management efficiency and further program objectives. The Conservancy received almost 33 acres, including 24 acres along the UTR for exchange of about 19 acres to the City.

Key Challenges:

- Lack of staff resources has prevented the Conservancy and USFS from moving forward with the exchange, but staff are developing a strategy through which the Conservancy may be able to secure responsibility and funding for managing USFS urban lots through a USFS Good Neighbor agreement, which allows the USFS to enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with states to perform forest management services on National Forest System lands.
- Staff time has also limited our ability to pursue potential interagency agreements or exchanges to better manage overlapping public agency lands in north shore.

C. Improve the Land Coverage and Marketable Rights Programs

Key Accomplishments:

- **TRPA Development Rights Workgroup:** Actively participated and provided funding for TRPA's workgroup, which is seeking to streamline TRPA's development rights system.
- **TRPA Excess Coverage Mitigation Task Force:** Participated in TRPA's Excess Coverage Mitigation (ECM) task force between 2014 and 2015, which developed and implemented modifications to TRPA's ECM fee program to better facilitate and mitigate impacts from development.
- **Land Bank Coverage and Development Commodities:** Between 2012 and 2017 the Conservancy's Land Bank sold over 220,000 square feet of coverage and other development rights commodities.

Key Challenges:

- There continues to be a lack of available commodities for appropriate development projects.

D. Increase Public Awareness of the Value of Conservancy Lands

Key Accomplishments:

- **Publications:** Began preparing annual reports in 2014 and monthly newsletters in 2017 to better document and increase awareness of Conservancy lands.
- **EIP Tracker:** Documented and tracked land management accomplishments through TRPA's new EIP tracking system.
- **Signage:** Developed new signage system in 2014 and posted signs with the Conservancy's logo on about 4,650 of the Conservancy's 4700 parcels. The remainder will be posted in 2018.
- **Website:** Developed a new Conservancy website and increased users from about 1,000 users in July 2014 to 2,100 users in January 2018, a 110 percent increase.

Key Challenges:

- Loss of dedicated communications staff prevented the Conservancy from significantly improving its outreach. The Conservancy hopes to fill a new position in 2018.

Strategy IV: Strengthening Conservancy Operations

The Conservancy's operations, including its budgeting, accounting, information technology, and human resources systems, had long been a neglected part of the organization, but are now essential to function at a high level, and to handle increasingly complex projects with funding from multiple sources, challenging security issues, growing reporting requirements, and sensitive personnel issues.

A. Develop Financial Sustainability Strategy

Key Accomplishments:

- **State and Federal Grants:** Aggressively sought and secured State and federal grants to supplement traditional revenue sources.
- **Full Cost Recovery:** Developed new accounting and timekeeping systems to allow for full cost recovery.
- **License Plate Sales:** Developed a Plates for Powder campaign and other marketing tools to maintain about \$1 million in annual revenue from license plate sales.
- **Office Space:** Renegotiated the Conservancy office space lease to save \$92,256 or 17 percent, and are now seeking funding to evaluate the purchase, lease, or construction of new office facilities.
- **Shared Resources:** As noted above, negotiated agreements with DPR to manage our north shore beaches and Nevada State Parks to manage Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Negotiated and maintained a Joint Powers Agreement with the Tahoe RCD for land management services.
- **Land Bank/Property Sales:** Sold two "asset" lands in South Lake Tahoe, and generated more than \$1.4 million from sales of coverage and other land bank transactions.
- **Organizational Efficiencies:** Implemented several efforts to gain efficiencies and reduce costs while maintaining an effective organization (e.g., staffing was reduced by about 20 percent to 37.0 positions, information technology was used to create efficiencies in data base maintenance, project tracking, and fiscal and human resources recordkeeping).

Key Challenges:

- Over the past five years, a decline in traditional funding sources has prompted the Conservancy to explore different sustainable long-term financial scenarios. The elimination of General Fund support and exhaustion of most bond funding streams resulted in a need for a major adjustment to the support, local assistance, and capital budgets. The Conservancy had to aggressively prioritize, reorganize and implement cost cutting and revenue enhancing strategies to sustain its operations. With the amount of assured funding limited, the Conservancy navigated a set of ongoing and emerging fiscal issues and trends, including:

- Land Management costs increased and several of the funding sources dedicated to property management purposes were flat or declining.
- The model for funding and implementing projects changed. Throughout much of the EIP era, the Conservancy had the financial ability to self-fund its direct projects, as well as those of its grantees. Project finance is now often the result of an interagency cooperative, collaborative effort where funding is packaged from among several sources. In many cases, the Conservancy is now a grant recipient rather than a grantor.
- As discussed, packaging project funding has become increasingly important. The Conservancy actively requested increased budgetary authority to seek grant funds. The Conservancy built on existing relationships with federal funding entities such as the USACE, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bureau of Land Management.
- The current “boom and bust” cycle of Conservancy funding through voter-approved bonds makes it challenging to plan and develop projects and programs and build an organization to implement Strategic Plan goals.

B. Increase Operational Efficiency

Key Accomplishments:

- **Tracking and Budgeting:** Improved tracking and budgeting of projects through new project line item capital and local assistance budget.
- **Reporting and Contract Administration:** Standardized budget and fiscal reporting systems through the new statewide accounting and budgeting system (Fi\$cal).
- **Contracting:** Converted several professional service contracts for information technology and land management services to State positions.
- **Timekeeping:** Implemented a new paperless and electronic timekeeping system (Tempo).
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS):** Significantly improved our GIS systems, providing staff with powerful web-based tools for mapping, geospatial analysis, and remote data collection.
- **Property Management:** As described above, developed and launched a centralized system (PDMS) to track property management information.
- **Information Technology:** Secured a data hosting agreement with CNRA resulting in predictable and fixed information technology expenses.

Key Challenges:

- The recent transition to more centralized State accounting and information technology systems impacted reliability and timeliness of data, payments, and reporting.

C. Strengthen Human Resource Development

Key Accomplishments:

- **Human Resources staff:** Hired in-house staff to replace contracted human resources services, which has significantly expanded our level of service and provided more personal attention to staff.
- **Retirements/Succession Planning:** Filled several key positions after retirements of long-serving staff.
- **Professional Development/Training:** Increased training opportunities for all staff, including courses on CEQA, Project Management, writing skills, and other topics.
- **Career Planning:** Developed an annual process and budget to provide job required, job related, and career related training for all staff.

Key Challenges:

- Career mobility opportunities are limited in a small agency.

D. Improve Communications

Key Accomplishments:

- **Website:** As noted above, developed a new Conservancy website and increased users from about 1,000 users in July 2014 to 2,100 users in January 2018, a 110 percent increase.
- **Annual Reports:** Began issuing annual reports in 2014 to showcase Conservancy accomplishments and provide accountability.
- **Executive Director's Report:** Issued Executive Director's Reports as part of Board meeting packets to highlight new and ongoing Conservancy projects and programs.
- **ED Newsletter:** In 2017, began issuing monthly newsletters to share program, project, and staffing updates with the Board and staff.
- **License Plate Marketing:** Maintained and strengthened license plate marketing through winter Plates for Powder campaign, and pilot tested a summer Plates for Projects program.
- **Internal Communications:** Maintained weekly meetings of all senior staff and monthly all-hands meetings, and launched quarterly "fireside chats" with each program and the Executive and Deputy Directors to solicit feedback on key issues.
- **Tours:** Hosted dozens of tours throughout the spring, summer, and fall for staff, Board members, legislators, funders, key stakeholders, and the public.

Key Challenges:

- Lack of communications position has delayed efforts to upgrade and update website, improve newsletters and license plate campaign, develop annual reports, and showcase projects.
- Need to continue to improve internal communications and Board involvement and awareness of programs and projects.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in the previous pages, the Conservancy has achieved many of the key goals of its 2012-2107 Strategic Plan. In particular, with the passage of Proposition 1 and remaining funds from previous bonds and new grants, the Conservancy was able to invest in a broad range of high priority projects and programs while maintaining its commitment to managing its large inventory of lands.

Summary of Key Accomplishments

To further the goals of the EIP and Regional Plan, the Conservancy's most significant accomplishments included:

- Completing the final plan for the UTR Marsh, one of the most important restoration projects in the history of the Basin;
- Investing in the transformation of one of the Basin's most visible and popular lakefront parks: KBSRA;
- Opening Van Sickle Bi-State Park in partnership with Nevada State Parks;
- Launching the new TLC program to refocus land acquisition efforts to support the new Regional Plan;
- Investing in Basin-wide AIS, storm water, public access, and climate adaptation plans to guide priority setting and coordinate projects;
- Launching the LTW and TCSI and hosting the first full-time coordinator of the Basin's forest management programs; and
- Performing ongoing high quality management and improvement of more than 4,700 parcels.

The Conservancy also made significant progress in upgrading its land management, fiscal, and budget operations by:

- Developing a comprehensive PDMS;
- Significantly upgrading our fiscal, accounting, information technology, and timekeeping systems; and
- Enhancing our human resources services through in-house staff.

Finally, and most important, the Conservancy retained most of its key staff and filled several vacancies from retirements with outstanding new hires at all levels.

Summary of Key Challenges

Despite these accomplishments, the Conservancy struggled to achieve its Strategic Plan goals in a few key areas:

- Securing more reliable sources of funding to facilitate planning and minimize the "boom and bust" cycle of bonds;

- Completing a comprehensive land management plan to guide decision-making and potentially providing revenue from its lands;
- Decreasing the backlog of encroachments and securing funding for ongoing maintenance issues; and
- Improving communications and showcasing Conservancy efforts with the Board, key stakeholders, and the public.

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