

Executive Director's Report

Budget and Accounting

Fiscal Year 2020/21

On June 15, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the State of California budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020/21. The Newsom Administration anticipates economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and has implemented a number of statewide fiscal measures, including proposed salary and funding reductions.

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) proposed FY 2020/21 appropriations include the following:

- \$1,892,000 for capital outlay and local assistance grants to fund various programmatic priorities and support the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) for the Lake Tahoe Basin (Basin), including:
 - \$622,000 for conceptual feasibility and planning of projects;
 - \$850,000 for minor capital outlay projects under the Land Management and Forestry Programs; and
 - \$420,000 for local assistance grants.
- \$11,391,000 for ongoing Conservancy operations, including:
 - \$1,504,000 in bond funds from Propositions 1, 12, 40, 50, and 68;
 - \$5,945,000 from special revenue funds (Environmental License Plate Fund, Habitat Conservation Fund, Lake Tahoe License Plate proceeds, and Tahoe Conservancy Fund); and
 - \$3,942,000 in reimbursement authority for federal and state grants to the Conservancy.

At the time of this writing, the Governor and the State Legislature continue to develop the budget for FY 2020/21. For further detail please see Agenda Item 10.

Program Areas

1. Land Management

- Renewed a short-term license with Comstock Seed for native seed collection on Conservancy land.
- Executed a new license with Crawford and Associates for a geotechnical investigation in the City of South Lake Tahoe (City).
- Renewed a short-term license with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to place noise-monitoring stations on Conservancy lands as part of Basin threshold attainment.
- Executed a license with City Fire & Rescue for wildland fire training using Conservancy lands.
- Closed the Upper Truckee Marsh to dogs on May 1; closure remains in effect until the end of July.
- Opened Van Sickle Bi-State Park for the season on May 1.

COVID-19 Response Actions

- Conducted regular observations and analyses of use patterns of Conservancy lands and adjusted management as appropriate.
- Coordinated with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) on north shore beach parking restrictions and management support.
- Developed fieldwork safety protocols for land management and forestry crews.
- Adjusted seasonal staffing and operational plan.

Strategic Initiatives

There are no updates to report.



Land Management Projects and Grants

The Land Management Program continues to plan and implement small-scale projects on Conservancy lands. Land Management projects include restoration and water quality protection, property and facility maintenance, urban lot forestry and fuel hazard reduction, and encroachment resolution.

Considering COVID-19-related fieldwork precautions and constraints, staff reduced or delayed crew capacity for the 2020 field season. Staff will proceed with normal or expanded forestry and fuel reduction operations, while prioritizing only critical restoration, encroachment-resolution, and maintenance projects.

Project Status:



2. Community Forestry

- Coordinated forestry treatments with the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT).

Strategic Initiatives

Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (PTEIR)

The Conservancy continues to lead and work with the TFFT to align community forestry treatments across land ownerships. The Conservancy and its TFFT partners are developing the PTEIR, which agencies will use to analyze forest fuel reduction on Conservancy, local government, and private lands in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) on the California side of the Basin. TFFT partners released the Public Draft PTEIR on May 22. The goal of the PTEIR is to more efficiently and comprehensively evaluate the effects of forest management within the WUI, and streamline the project approval and delivery process for fuel reduction activities.



Community Forestry Projects and Grants

The following forestry projects continue:

Forestry Projects in the Planning Phase:

A. Dollar Creek Forest Restoration Project (260 acres)

Located on the east side of the Conservancy's Dollar property; Funded by a California Climate Investments (CCI) grant

B. Biomass Transport and Utilization Project (17,500 tons of woody biomass)

Funded by a CCI grant; Initial Study and Negative Declaration submitted for public review May 1-June 1, 2020 (See Agenda Item 5 for more information)

C. Dollar Forest Health and Biomass Project Phase 2 (102 acres)

Located on the southwest side of the Conservancy's Dollar property; Funded by a CCI grant and Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) grant

D. Miscellaneous forest health and fuels reduction projects - multiple locations (26 acres)

Deferred maintenance funding

Forestry Projects in the Implementation Phase:

E. Ski Run/Bijou Open Space Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (65 acres)

Funded by a SNPLMA grant

F. South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) Treatment Plant Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (104 acres)

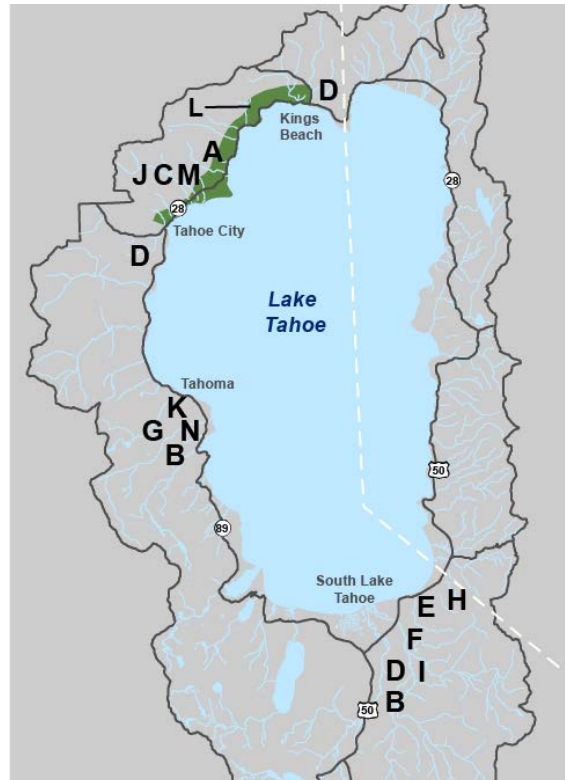
Conservancy grant with SNPLMA funding

G. Phase 2 of the California State Parks Fuel Hazard Reduction and Understory Burning Project

Conservancy grant with SNPLMA funding

H. Phase 2 of the Van Sickle Bi-State Park Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (108 acres)

Funded by a SNPLMA grant



- I. Montgomery Estates Urban Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (32 acres)**
Funded by a SNPLMA grant
- J. Burton Creek State Park Forest Restoration Project (132 acres)**
Conservancy grant with CCI funds
- K. Tahoma Unit Fuel Hazard Reduction Project (9 acres)**
Funded by a SNPLMA grant
- L. North Tahoe Fire Hazardous Fuel Reduction and Defensible Space Project (220 acres of Conservancy land)**
Funded by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and managed by North Tahoe Fire Protection District

Forestry Projects in the Monitoring Phase:

- M. Dollar Creek Forest Health and Biomass Project Phase 1 (151 acres)**
Funded by CCI and SNPLMA grants; 569 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduced
- N. Phase 1 of the California State Parks Fuel Hazard Reduction and Understory Burning Project (150 acres)**
Conservancy grant with SNPLMA funding

3. Landscape Forestry

- Released Lake Tahoe West Restoration Project Scoping Notice / Notice of Preparation with fellow lead agencies.

Strategic Initiatives

Lake Tahoe West Restoration Project (LTW)

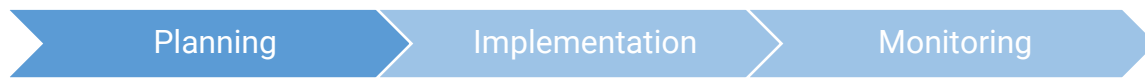
Project Status:



The three lead agencies, the Conservancy, TRPA, and USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), released the LTW Scoping Notice/Notice of Preparation on April 10, 2020. LTW aims to increase the landscape’s resilience to disturbance on the west shore of Lake Tahoe. The Scoping Notice/Notice of Preparation included a description of the types of restoration treatments that may be used within the project area. LTW partners held two virtual public scoping meetings. The first was held on April 22 as part of the TRPA Governing Board meeting, and the second was held on April 28, hosted by the LTBMU. The LTW Scoping Notice/Notice of Preparation public comment period was originally set to conclude on May 11; however, it was extended and concluded on May 26. The lead agencies will spend the next several months conducting environmental analysis and prepare the joint environmental document for LTW.

Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI)

Project Status:



The Conservancy continues to collaboratively lead planning, investment, science, and management across the 2.4-million acre TCSI landscape.

The Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Conservancy released a “Roadmap to Resilience,” in March 2020, that explains the TCSI’s science-based approach to restoration. The two agencies are also developing a biomass utilization strategy that will recommend policy, procurement, and funding changes, as well as pilot projects.

Partners also began work on an Action Plan to aid communication and coordination with elected officials, stakeholders, the public, and peer agencies, as well as to guide future funding requests. The Action Plan is scheduled for release in fall 2020.

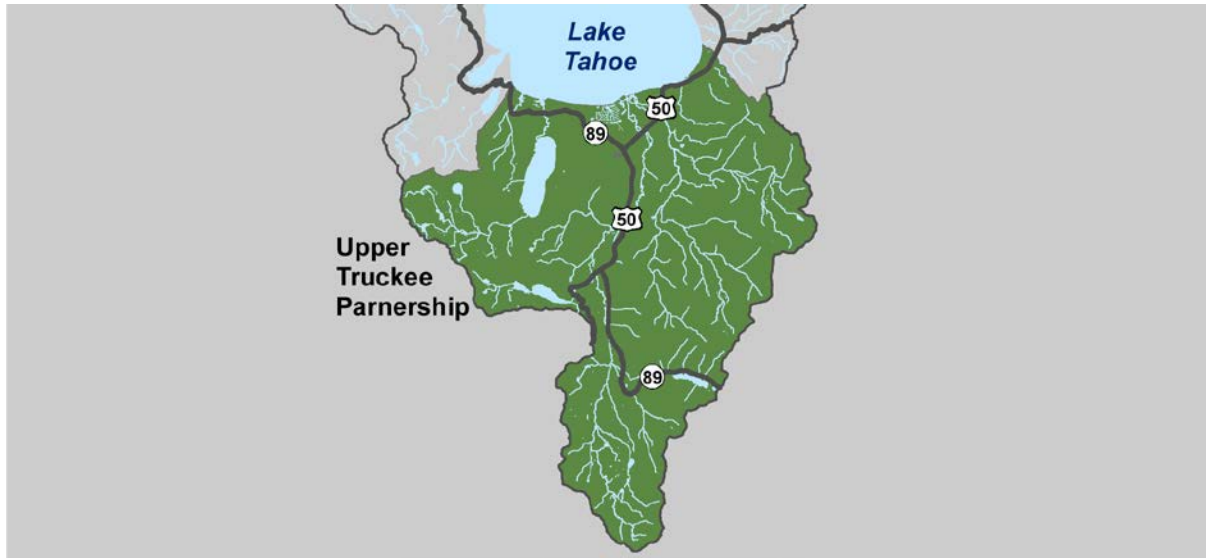
4. Watershed Health

- Started the Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project implementation in April.
- Started the Tahoe Pines Campground Restoration and Public Access Project implementation in May.

Strategic Initiatives

Greater Upper Truckee River Watershed Partnership (UTP)

Project Status:



The Conservancy is working with a coordinating committee, EIP working groups, various stakeholders, and the public to develop the UTP Synthesis that identifies current programs and projects, future opportunities, and information needs. As part of this effort, the committee will also develop a vision for a resilient landscape and climate adaptation on the south side of the Basin. Staff is incorporating feedback and input from EIP working groups, and will hold meetings with the public and partner agencies to review the draft UTP Synthesis, likely during the summer or fall depending on COVID-19.

Watershed Health Projects and Grants

Upper Truckee River and Marsh Restoration Project

Project Status:



The Conservancy has begun river and marsh restoration to improve wildlife habitat and water quality in the largest wetland in the Basin. Specifically, the Conservancy has started site preparation activities near the Tahoe Keys Marina and Cove East Beach. The Conservancy received construction grant funds from several state and federal partners, including \$1 million from the LTBMU, \$2.98 million from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, and \$2.6 million from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Tahoe Pines Campground Restoration and Public Access Project

Project Status:



On this Conservancy land along the Upper Truckee River in Meyers, the Conservancy is removing fill materials, stabilizing riverbanks, replacing a bridge, and installing a fully accessible parking lot and trail. Implementation started in May and will be completed in October. Staff will monitor the site for years after construction to ensure that improvements persist and result in intended outcomes.

Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project – Phase 3

Project Status:



El Dorado County is pursuing comprehensive water quality and restoration improvements in the Country Club Heights subdivision. Phase 3 of the Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project includes storm water treatment, wetland restoration, and public access elements on County right-of-way, one County parcel, and the Conservancy's two parcels near Elks Club Drive and U.S. Highway 50. The County Board of Supervisors recently adopted a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Phase 3 Project. El Dorado County staff provided an update to the Conservancy Board on the Phase 3 Project in December 2019. As discussed, Conservancy staff plans to recommend that the Board authorize a license agreement for the Phase 3 Project, which will provide El Dorado County the necessary rights to work on Conservancy lands. El Dorado County plans to construct the project in

2021, and is seeking funding. The Lake Tahoe Flea Market, formerly operated on the site, has permanently shut down.

Polaris Creek Wetland Restoration Project

Project Status:



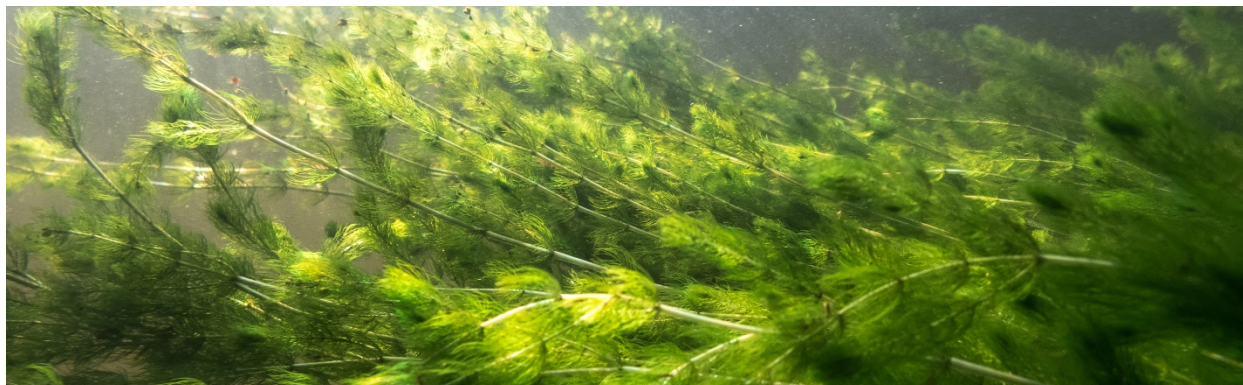
The Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) is planning the Polaris Creek and Wetlands Restoration Project with the goal of relocating baseball fields and a campground from Pomin Park, and restoring historical wetlands. Tahoe RCD has completed initial feasibility studies, developed restoration and relocation alternatives, and held a public meeting. Tahoe RCD will complete a Feasibility Report in early summer 2020 and is pursuing funding for the next planning phase.

5. Water Quality and Storm Water

- Began Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Action Agenda implementation for the 2020 field season.

Strategic Initiatives

Aquatic Invasive Species Action Agenda



The AIS Coordinating Committee, led by Tahoe RCD and the TRPA, began implementing a work plan that guides 2020 program activities and prioritizes available funding for projects that control AIS. Partners based the work plan on the recently completed Action Agenda that improves how partners weigh alternatives and assess the likely benefits of potential projects. In response to COVID-19, the work plan emphasizes critical AIS-prevention planning.

Water Quality Projects and Grants

Stormwater Resources Performance Measures



Tahoe RCD recently completed a final Enhanced Storm Water Resources Plan project report. In exploring new methods to better define storm water project benefits, the report described a general method for tracking water quality program improvements. The documented approach is already informing efforts to update EIP performance measures and TRPA water quality threshold standards. The work will also help prioritize future Conservancy projects. The Conservancy and EIP partners are exploring how the recommended structure could support EIP performance measure updates.

6. Recreation and Public Access

- El Dorado County started constructing South Tahoe Greenway Shared Use Trail (Greenway) Phases 1b and 2 in April.
- Began reviewing conceptual design alternatives for the Alta Mira Public Access Project.
- Continued planning the Conolley Beach Public Access Project.

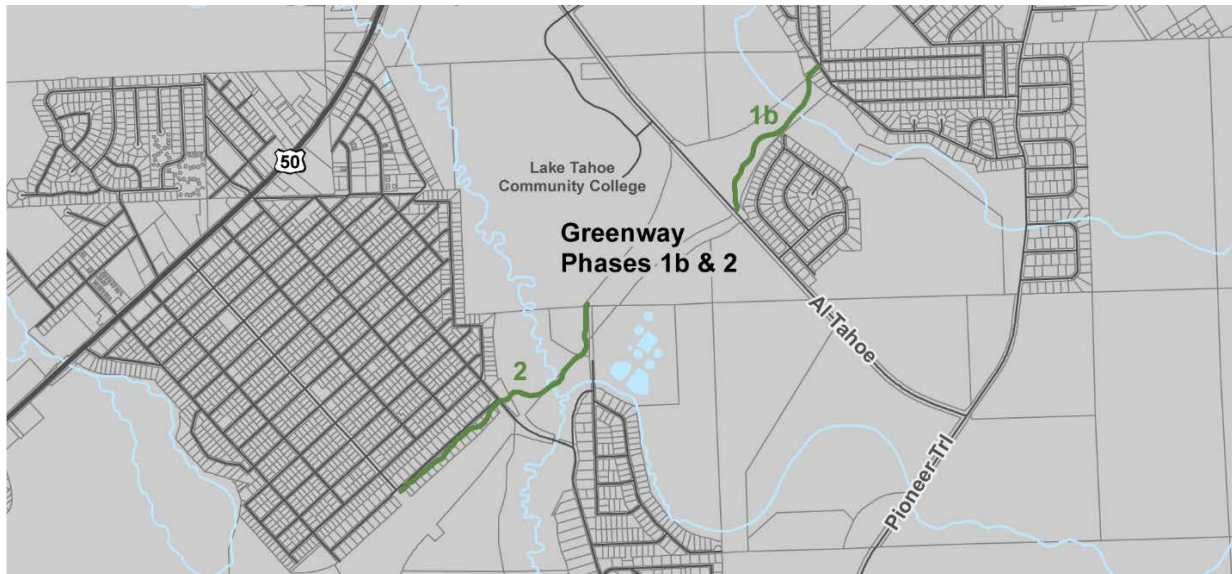
Strategic Initiatives

There are no updates to report.

Recreation and Public Access Projects and Grants

South Tahoe Greenway Shared Use Trail (Greenway) Phases 1b and 2

Project Status:



El Dorado County is constructing the Greenway Phases 1b and 2. Funding for the project comes from the Conservancy, federal sources, and the Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC). The Greenway provides the backbone of non-motorized travel in the south shore area. El Dorado County will complete Phases 1b and 2 in fall of 2020. Phases 1b and 2 will connect several neighborhoods and the LTCC.

Alta Mira Lakefront Comprehensive Planning

Project Status:



Staff is working with the California Department of General Services, the City, and other partners to design conceptual alternatives for expanded public access and recreation opportunities, permanent slope stabilization, and storm water treatment at and around the Conservancy's lakefront Alta Mira site.

Conolley Beach Public Access Project

Project Status:



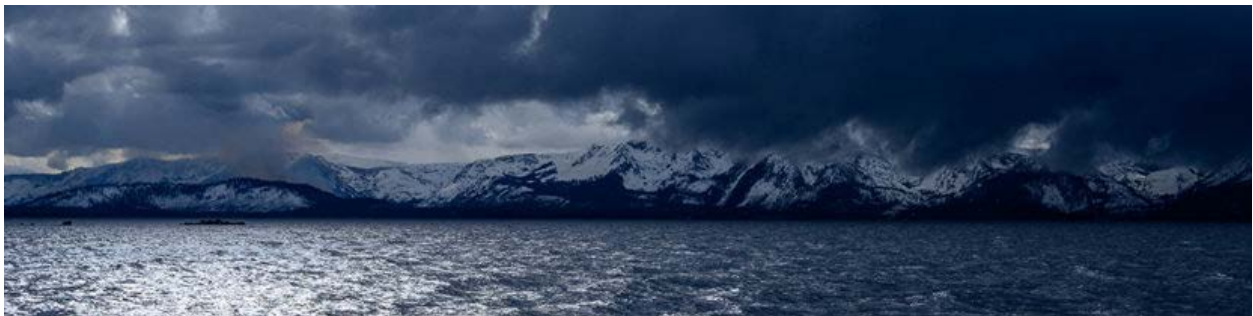
This project will improve public beach access in the heart of South Lake Tahoe, just east of the Alta Mira site. Staff is negotiating land use rights with private landowners, addressing concerns about privacy and noise in engineering designs, and preparing for construction in 2021.

7. Climate Change Adaptation

- Continued work on the Lake Tahoe Climate Adaptation Action Portfolio (CAAP).

Strategic Initiatives

Climate Adaptation Action Portfolio



The Conservancy is collaboratively assessing the Basin’s vulnerability to climate change and developing a corresponding action plan. Staff released the final vulnerability assessment on the Conservancy website: <https://tahoe.ca.gov/programs/climate-change/>. Staff has drafted the CAAP and is revising with a team of partner agencies.

Climate Change Adaptation Projects and Grants

Climate Action Acceleration Grant

The University of California, Berkeley is researching how to use new climate science and technology to improve natural resource and recreation management at Tahoe. The goal is to protect water resources, reduce wildfire risk, improve forest health, maintain biodiversity, sequester carbon, enhance community resilience, and sustain the Basin’s recreation economy.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory Grant

TRPA is producing an updated GHG emissions inventory for the Basin and is also developing a carbon sequestration budget for the Basin’s working lands. TRPA is engaging stakeholders throughout the update and development process.

Sugar Pine Adaptive Traits Grant

The University of California, Davis is evaluating and identifying genetic traits of sugar pine trees that are best suited for climate change adaptation. The goal is to benefit future reforestation projects by using seeds that are more likely to withstand climate change.

Water Infrastructure Grant

The STPUD is developing a Basinwide climate change vulnerability assessment for water infrastructure. On the California side of the Basin, work includes preparing designs for a prioritized set of projects to harden water and sewer infrastructure.

8. Tahoe Livable Communities (TLC)

- Made progress on potential mixed-use, affordable housing projects on four Conservancy parcels in South Lake Tahoe and one in Placer County.
- Worked with the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) on a land exchange to achieve multiple purposes.
- Continued work on pending requests for land bank rights for proposed affordable housing, town center, and other infill projects.
- Improved the Land Bank section of the Conservancy website by converting paper applications into online forms.

For additional information, please refer to the TLC Update, Agenda Item 11.

TLC Projects and Grants

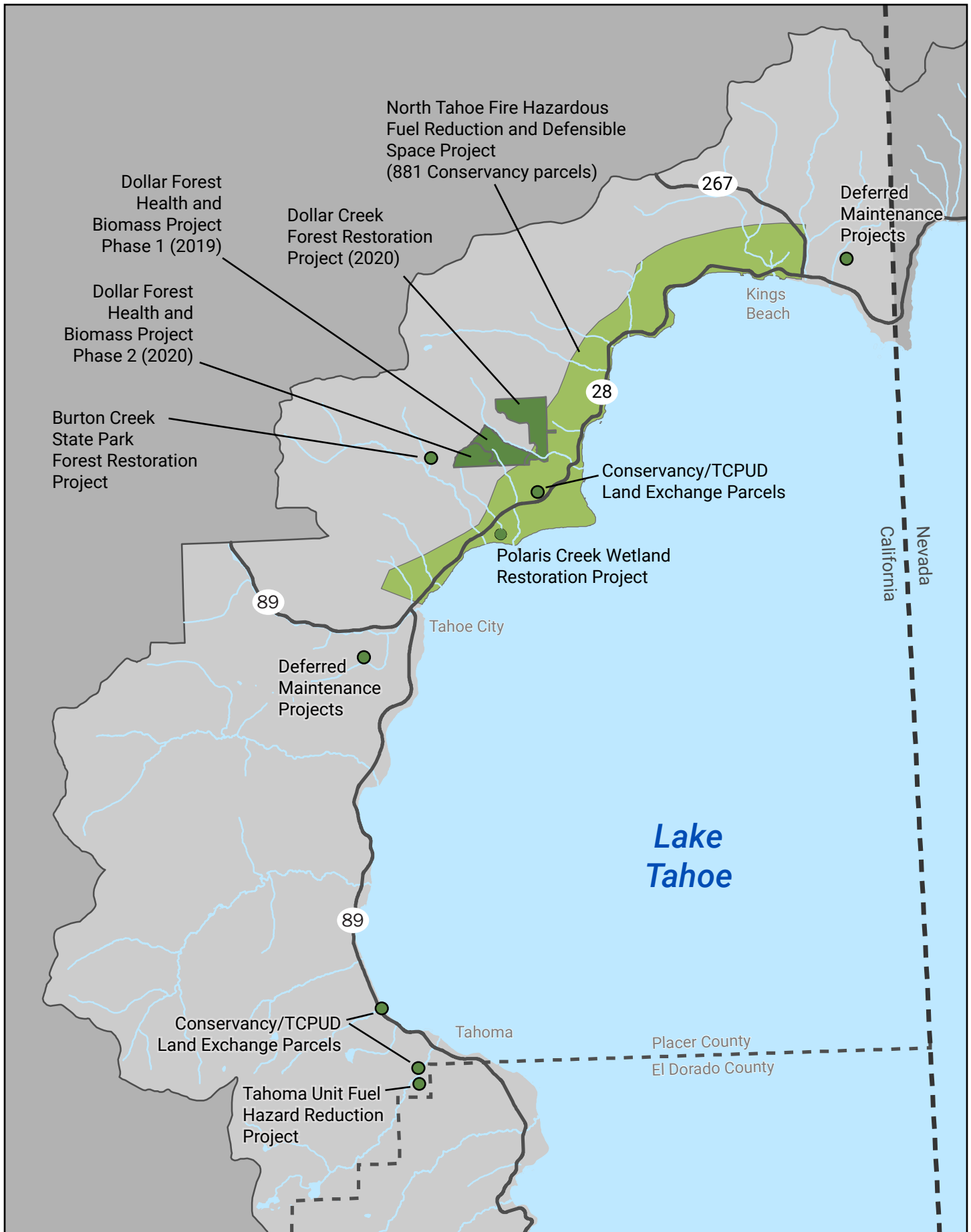
Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project

Project Status:

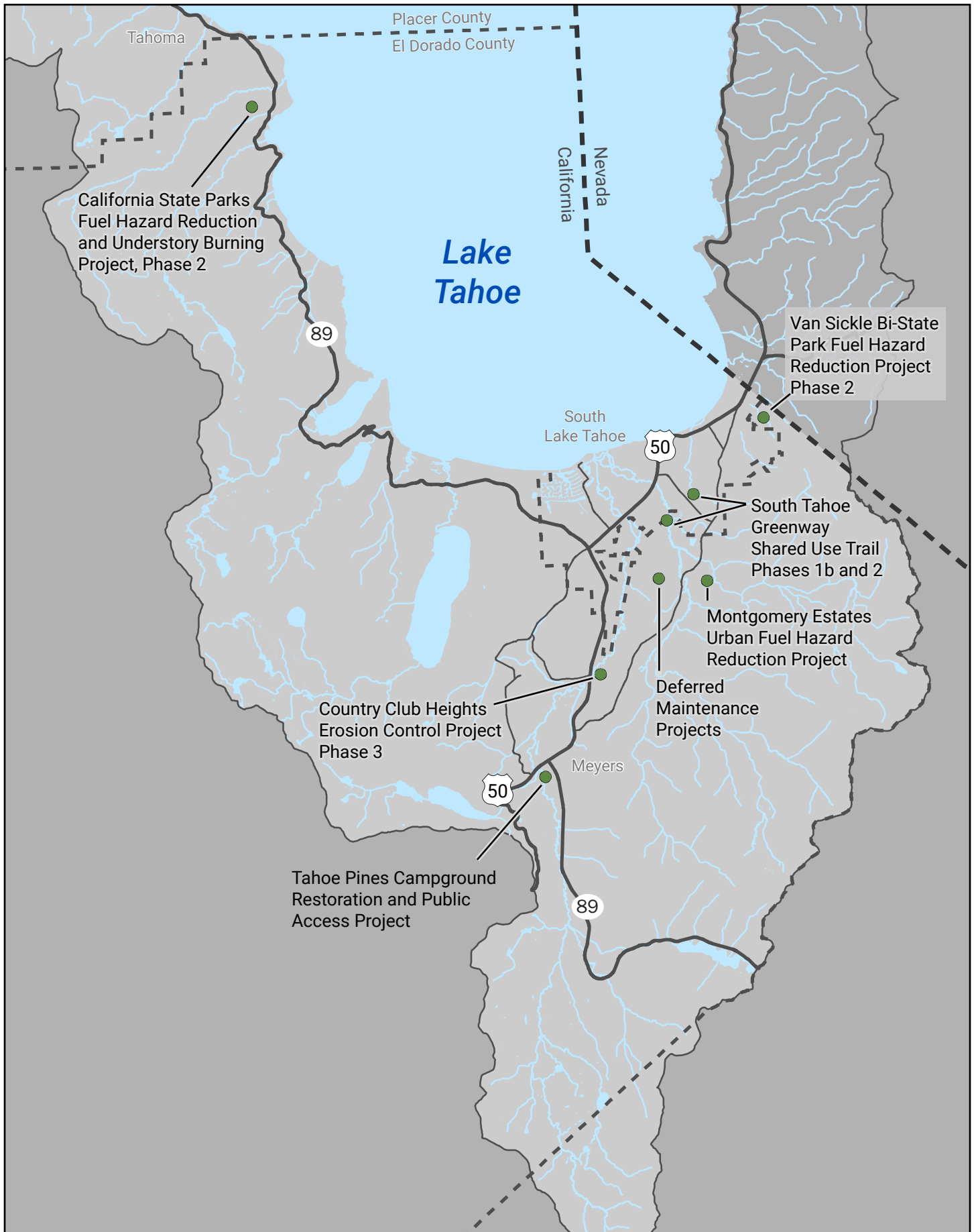


On June 5, 2020, the TCPUD released the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project for public review. The proposed Project involves the relocation, expansion, and reconstruction of the Schilling residence into the Schilling Lodge; the construction of associated improvements; and the relocation of functions and operations of the Tahoe Cross-Country Center to a new location. Implementation of the proposed Project would necessitate development of the Schilling Lodge and associated improvements on a portion of property currently owned by the Conservancy. The affected property is part of a separate and larger land exchange currently being contemplated by the TCPUD and Conservancy, which is considered in the draft EIR. The purpose of the land exchange is to consolidate ownership and increase land management efficiencies for the agencies. The properties being considered in the land exchange include the Highlands properties, the Quail Lake properties, and the Tahoe Cedars properties. The TCPUD is holding a public meeting on the proposed Project on July 17 and the draft EIR is under public review until July 24.

Projects and Grants in Placer County



Projects and Grants in El Dorado County



Projects and Grants in the City of South Lake Tahoe

