

**COUNTRY CLUB HEIGHTS EROSION CONTROL PROJECT - ELKS CLUB WATER
QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 23-06-05 (Attachment 1) authorizing staff to expend up to \$1,200,000 for Conservancy implementation of the Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project – Elks Club Water Quality and Accessibility Improvements (Project) on Conservancy-owned parcel, El Dorado County Assessment Number (AN) 033-181-05 and making the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination.

Executive Summary: The Project builds on years of investments at the Conservancy’s Elks Club property along the Upper Truckee River (river) in the Country Club Heights neighborhood by improving water quality and flood resilience, as well as accessible facilities. The Elks Club site is important for residents and visitors to access the river and broader trail network, and staff has identified important improvements to protect resources and support continued public use. The Conservancy will improve the parking lot and ensure accessible connections to trails leading to the river and other public lands. In the future, the Conservancy may install a permanent restroom facility. The Conservancy will achieve multiple benefits through the Project by: 1) reconstructing the parking lot; 2) installing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to capture storm water runoff to protect water quality; and 3) providing accessible parking spaces, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as bicycle racks, signage, and trail connections to existing on-site trails.

The recommended action is consistent with Strategic Plan Goals 2 (Restore the Resilience of Lake Tahoe Basin Forests and Watersheds) and 3 (Provide Public Access and Outdoor Recreation for All Communities). The action will support the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) project 01.01.01.0067 (Country Club Heights Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Project). If approved by the Board, staff will take all necessary steps to implement the Project shortly thereafter.

Location: The Project is located on Conservancy property (AN 033-191-05) in El Dorado County (County) along Elks Club Drive, bordered by Boca Raton Drive to the east, U.S. Highway 50 to the west, and the river to the north (Attachment 2).

Fiscal Summary: Staff seeks authorization to expend up to \$1,200,000 of Proposition 50 and General Fund monies, or other state funding sources.

Overview

History

The Project is located along the river on Elks Club Drive near U.S. Highway 50, on a Conservancy parcel in the Country Club Heights neighborhood. Development of the historical Elks Club Lodge on the site, and associated filling of the wetland and floodplain, degraded the stream environment zone (SEZ) and habitat. The Conservancy demolished the Elks Club Lodge after acquiring the property but did not remove most of the historically placed fill. The South Lake Tahoe Flea Market also operated at the site for more than 30 years, until 2019.

From 2016 through 2021, the County planned and completed significant work on the Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project. The Conservancy provided funding for the County to plan and implement multiple phases with three Proposition 1 grants, totaling \$940,000. The County's planning comprehensively addressed storm water management and restoration opportunities within the Country Club Heights neighborhood and publicly owned meadows, including the Elks Club site. During Phase III, the County removed historical fill north of the parking lot to restore the river floodplain and create a new retention basin. The County also installed ADA accessible paths to the river and restored a small portion of the western side of the parking lot. However, the County did not proceed with the Phase III plans to reconstruct and raise the parking lot or install a permanent restroom facility.

The Conservancy purchased the Elks Club property in part to enhance public access to recreation on public lands and waterways. The site is an important trailhead for river-oriented activities and access to the unpaved trail network on adjacent public lands. This is a place where everyone can picnic and enjoy the natural environment and may eventually serve as an important hub for future shared-use trail connections. People heavily use the site, especially in spring and early summer to launch boats to float down the river.

The Conservancy is moving forward with elements from the previous County project to protect resources and support public use. The parking lot surface is in the 100-year floodplain and must be replaced. Much of the surface is degraded, impacting accessibility and causing sediment runoff to the river and also eroding the recently completed restoration on the site. Staff aims to build on historical investments and construct improvements at the Elks Club property that are fully accessible and are consistent with the purposes of acquisition and the previous County project.

Detailed Description of Recommended Action

1. Major Elements and/or Steps of the Recommended Action

Staff seeks authorization to expend up to \$1,200,000 to implement the Project. Staff will work with the Department of General Services (DGS) to complete the final design, prepare bid documents, obtain permits, and construct the Project.

To implement the Project, the Conservancy will:

- remove the existing asphalt;
- reconstruct the parking lot by raising it above the surface of the floodplain, installing new asphalt, and incorporating a paved sidewalk and curb and gutter system for additional storm water treatment;
- provide access improvements, including ADA-compliant parking spaces, bicycle racks, signage, and improved connections to existing trails; and
- modify and prepare utility connections and a foundation for a permanent restroom facility.

In the future, the Conservancy may install a permanent, ADA-compliant restroom facility using existing utilities onsite, to replace the current seasonal portable toilets.

Conservancy staff anticipates that through the Project, the Conservancy will restore SEZ and remove asphalt (land coverage), resulting in an increase in development rights for the Conservancy Land Bank. The Conservancy Land Bank will sell, transfer, or retire these commodities, consistent with TRPA and local jurisdiction policies.

2. Overall Context and Benefits

The Project will result in several benefits consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan. The Conservancy will improve water quality by removing the poor-quality pavement and replacing it with new asphalt above the river flood zone. The new parking area will also include BMPs to infiltrate storm water runoff. These improvements will make the site more resilient to the extreme precipitation events expected with climate change. The Greater Upper Truckee Watershed Restoration Accomplishments and Opportunities document highlights the importance of the Project and the connections to other Conservancy and partner efforts in the watershed.

The Conservancy will also expand and enhance public access. The Project will provide improved access and parking, including ADA-compliant facilities, near the river and other public lands, consistent with the State's Outdoors for All initiative. It also supports the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Trails Strategy (Strategy), which identified this site as a critical trailhead to access public lands and trails. This site connects to a vast network of dirt trails that span much of the south shore of Lake Tahoe. The Strategy also identified potential upgrades, including a toilet and signage at the site.

3. Schedule for the Recommended Action

If approved, the Conservancy and DGS will complete the final design and prepare bid documents for the Project. Staff anticipates the Project to be completed in one construction season, consistent with the estimated Project schedule below. However, the Conservancy may install the restroom facility in the future.

Task	Completion Date
Complete final plans, specifications, and reports	Fall 2023
Complete final agency permitting and submittals	Fall 2023
Advertise and bid	Spring 2024
Award contract	Spring 2024
Begin construction	Summer 2024
End construction	Fall 2024

Financing

The total estimated budget to finalize construction plans and specifications, provide construction oversight and materials testing, and complete Project implementation is \$1,200,000, as detailed below. Funding sources include Proposition 50 and General Fund monies, or other state funding sources as available.

Task	Amount
Final Design and Permitting	\$125,000
Construction Contract	\$725,000
Construction Management, Inspection, Material Testing	\$240,000
Construction Contingency (10%)	\$110,000
Total	\$1,200,000

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

Implementing the Project is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.10 authorizes the Conservancy to improve and develop acquired lands for a variety of purposes, including protecting the natural environment. Under Government Code section 66907.9, the Conservancy is authorized to take whatever actions are reasonably necessary and incidental to the management of lands and facilities under its ownership or control. Under Government Code section 66906.8, the Conservancy is authorized to select and hire private consultants or contractors to achieve these purposes.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan

The recommended action is consistent with Strategic Plan Goal 2, Strategy B: to advance multiple-benefit projects that creatively combine restoring and building the resilience of forests and watersheds with water quality protection, green infrastructure, recreation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is also consistent with Strategic Plan Goal 3, Strategy A: to provide signature opportunities on Conservancy lands for all people to experience and enjoy Lake Tahoe's rivers, wildlife, and mountains.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Public Access and Recreation Program Guidelines, as it increases regionally significant public access and recreational opportunities.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended action is consistent with the EIP, because it implements EIP project 01.01.01.0067 (Country Club Heights Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Project) and advances the Tahoe Sierra Region Stormwater Resource Plan. It also supports state and regional priorities, including the Tahoe Regional Trails Strategy, which identifies the site as an important trailhead.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

The County, acting as the lead agency, prepared an initial study/mitigated negative declaration (IS/MND) for the Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project – Phase III to comply with CEQA. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors adopted the MND and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) on April 7, 2020, and filed a notice of determination (NOD) on April 10, 2020.

A copy of the IS/MND and MMRP (Attachment 3) is available for review on [the County's website](https://www.edcgov.us/Government/dot/pages/ceqa.aspx) at <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/dot/pages/ceqa.aspx> or upon request. The MMRP can be found on pages 101-108 of the IS/MND.

As a responsible agency, the Conservancy must review and consider the MND prepared by the County and reach its own conclusions on whether and how to approve the Project. Staff reviewed the IS/MND for the Country Club Heights Erosion Control Project – Phase III and believes that the Project is adequately analyzed in this document. Staff determined that the Project, as mitigated, would not cause a significant effect on the environment.

Staff recommends that the Board review and consider the MND adopted by the County as lead agency, adopt an MMRP, and make the findings set forth in the attached resolution. If the Board considers and concurs with the MND and authorizes the Project, staff will file an NOD with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA guidelines, section 15096 (Attachment 4).

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1 – Resolution 23-06-05
 - Exhibit 1A - MMRP
- Attachment 2 – Project Map
- Attachment 3 – County’s IS/MND and MMRP
- Attachment 4 – Conservancy’s NOD
 - Exhibit 4A – Project Map
 - Exhibit 4B – Filing Fee Receipt

Conservancy Staff Contact

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