



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029



TOP IMAGE: *California Tahoe Conservancy staff on a field tour to plan future ecosystem restoration on Conservancy land in El Dorado County.*

BOTTOM IMAGE: *New wetlands and an accessible-to-all trail to the lake shore, the result of the Conservancy's Upper Truckee Marsh Restoration Project on the south shore of Lake Tahoe.*

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Who We Are

A scenic photograph of three people standing on a snow-covered rock in a forest of evergreen trees. They are looking out over a large lake towards a range of mountains under a clear sky. The scene is captured from a slightly elevated perspective, with the people in the lower center of the frame.

Mission

The mission of the California Tahoe Conservancy is to lead California's efforts to restore and enhance the extraordinary natural and recreational resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Vision

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) envisions a future for the Lake Tahoe Basin (Basin) where:

- **The Lake is clear and its watersheds are healthy**
- **The Basin has vibrant fish and wildlife, safe and healthy communities, and resilient forests and watersheds**
- **Outdoor recreation and eco-tourism support a sustainable economy**
- **All communities and visitors have equitable access to the Lake and Basin landscapes**
- **Communities and visitors minimize their carbon footprints as much as possible by walking, biking, and rolling, and using public transit**
- **Basin projects and programs provide national models for sustainability, stewardship, equity, social and ecological resilience, innovation, and adaptation to climate change**

Established in 1984, the Conservancy is one of ten state conservancies in California that collectively work towards conserving, protecting, and restoring the State's natural resources, and providing public recreational opportunities for all. The Conservancy owns and manages approximately 4,700 parcels of land totaling around 6,500 acres in the Basin.

Visit our website to learn more about us: tahoe.ca.gov/about-us/.

Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles reflect how we continue to meet our mission and achieve our vision for the Basin. We embed these fundamental principles in every facet of our work. Our guiding principles serve as a compass to navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and build enduring partnerships. We will:

INTEGRATE adaptive measures into all our work to enhance the Basin's climate resilience.

COLLABORATE with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (Washoe Tribe) in elevating Tribal involvement, practices, and presence in the Basin.

COMMIT to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all actions and decisions.

FOSTER partnerships, including with communities facing the greatest inequities, to amplify our impact and optimize resources.

SEEK process and policy improvements to increase the pace and scale of our work.

EMPLOY the best available science, including Tribal expertise, and planning principles, to inform our work.

EMBRACE the integration of ecological and community values to conserve the Basin for all.

Commitment to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

The Conservancy is committed to working with the Washoe Tribe in the Basin given the special relationship that we have with the Tribe. As a state department, the Conservancy works to implement state Tribal policy including Governor Gavin Newsom's apology through Executive Order N-15-19 on behalf of California to California Native American Peoples for the many instances of violence, mistreatment, and neglect inflicted upon California Native Americans throughout the State's history. In the Basin, this extended to land management practices where overfishing and clearcutting timber had harmful impacts on the Tribe and native fisheries and flora important to the Tribe.

Our land acknowledgement, provided by the Washoe Tribe, represents our understanding of the responsibility we have as we work in the Tribe's ancestral homelands. We recognize the value of uplifting native voices and providing space for meaningful Tribal contributions to the development of policies, programs, science and research, and project decisions, particularly when they may affect Tribal communities.

Daʔaw (Lake Tahoe) is the homeland of the waš́-šiw (Washoe people—the people from here). The waš́-šiw are the ancestral stewards of the land in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin since the beginning of time. As a sovereign nation the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, as it is known today, continues to advocate for the protection and preservation of waš́-šiw ʔítdeʔ (the Washoe people's homelands). The waš́-šiw relied on the land for survival; hunting, fishing, and gathering of traditional foods and medicines within their homelands is an integral part of the waš́-šiw (Washoe) culture and through this intrinsic relationship they helped shape the natural beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin that so many enjoy today.

As colonizers arrived en masse in the mid-1800s, the waš́-šiw summer camps became prime locations for logging and cattle grazing and the waš́-šiw were no longer allowed to manage their lands as they had done for millenniums. The removal of waš́-šiw people from the land and increase in development and tourism to the Lake Tahoe Basin have negatively impacted an area that is not only renowned for its natural beauty and pristine waters but is now in dire need of rehabilitation. The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California has maintained their role as environmental stewards of the Lake Tahoe Basin (despite policies that sought to eradicate them) by continuing to advocate for their homelands and to protect, respect, and take care of waš́-šiw ʔítdeʔ.

We commit to treat this place with the same respect as those who walked before, the waš́-šiw. We are also committed to creating and finding opportunities for the Washoe Tribe to reestablish and grow their presence in the Basin through land ownership and management, access, representation on Basin boards

and committees, language and cultural revitalization and reclamation, and capacity building of a Tribal workforce for Conservancy and Basin partner projects and programs.

As a state department, pursuant to Assembly Bill 52, the Conservancy provides consultation notification to a broader suite of Tribes who have indicated their desire to be formally notified of Conservancy projects, and initiates formal consultation as requested by these Tribes.



Rhiana Jones, Environmental Director for the Washoe Environmental Protection Department, speaking to volunteers at a restoration event as part of the Ma?yála Wá’á (Meeks Meadow) Restoration Project. Photo courtesy of John Peltier Photography.

Commitment to Racial Equity

Historical actions by federal, state, and local governments have created and maintained racial inequity through law, policy, funding, programs, and organizational culture. Institutionalized policies and practices continue to perpetuate injustice throughout the nation, the State, and the Basin. The Conservancy continues efforts to address racial equity in our work while improving our community engagement. Conservancy Board members and staff have participated in multiple trainings on community engagement and equity. We commit to strengthening our relationship with the Washoe Tribe and developing relationships with organizations who represent communities facing the greatest inequities. Racial equity is integral to all the Conservancy’s work. Therefore, we interweave racial equity throughout the goals and strategies of this Strategic Plan (Plan). In addition, the Conservancy is developing and implementing a racial equity action plan, which will complement this Plan.



Overview

Purpose

The Conservancy's Strategic Plan is our guiding document that directs staff work and agency focus through 2029. We purposefully designed this Plan to be integrated across the Conservancy's programs to maximize our impact.

This Plan communicates how we will continue to meet our mission and achieve our vision through a focus on Access, Innovation, Protection, Restoration, and Stewardship. Our Plan is structured by these focus areas. Following each focus area is a goal, with strategies to achieve the goal, and examples of Conservancy actions listed for each strategy. This Plan also describes how we will deploy our resources to carry out strategies aligned with statewide and Basin-specific mandates, plans, and partnerships. Lastly, this Plan points the Conservancy towards achieving measurable outcomes to restore and enhance the Basin's extraordinary natural and recreational resources.

FOCUS AREA: Access

GOAL: Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All

The Conservancy is committed to ensuring that the Basin's recreational resources are accessible to all. We are committed to making the Basin a welcoming and inclusive destination while maintaining sustainable and thriving communities. We will expand recreational networks, develop effective trail management strategies, and enhance equitable and sustainable access.

FOCUS AREA: Innovation

GOAL: Drive Forward-Thinking Solutions and Accountability

The Conservancy is committed to embracing innovative approaches to address today's challenges with creative solutions that will pave the way for a more resilient Basin. We will advance scientific and technological solutions, seek diverse funding sources, foster teamwork and staff development, and cut green tape.

FOCUS AREA: Protection

GOAL: Safeguard the Basin's Environmental, Cultural, Tribal, and Recreational Attributes for Future Generations

The Conservancy is committed to protecting the Basin from the potential harms that future risks, especially those exacerbated by climate change, pose to its environmental, Tribal, cultural, and recreational attributes.

FOCUS AREA: Restoration

GOAL: Restore the Basin's Social and Ecological Resilience

The Conservancy is committed to restoring the Basin's social and ecological resilience by addressing and ameliorating longstanding environmental impacts from the past. We will advance comprehensive restoration projects and engage with local communities to revitalize the Basin's biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and promote sustainable practices for the long-term well-being of the region.

FOCUS AREA: Stewardship

GOAL: Care for the Basin's Natural, Tribal, and Cultural Resources

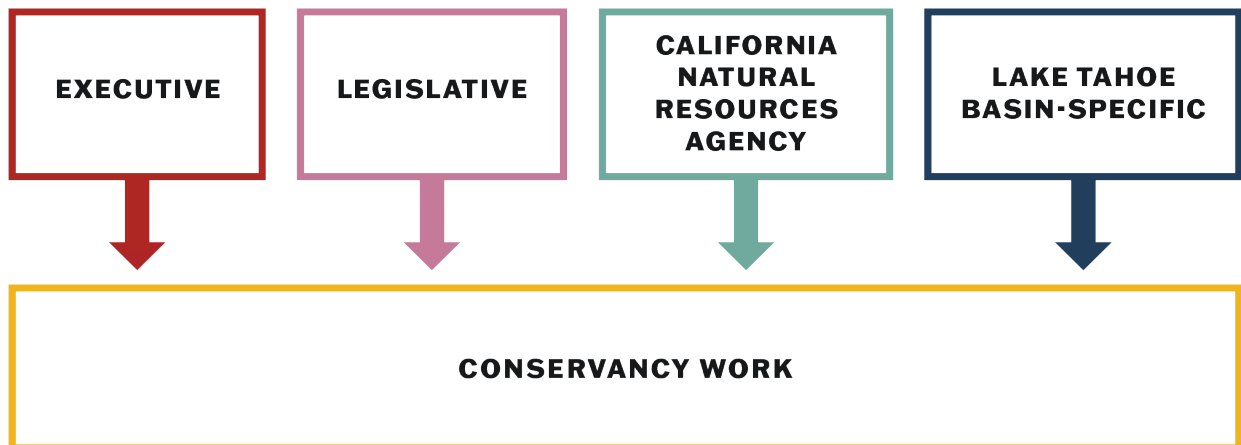
The Conservancy is committed to caring for the Basin's natural, Tribal, and cultural resources through our immediate and continuous responsibilities to maintain Conservancy lands. We will modernize land management policies, enhance community engagement and partnerships, and promote Tribal presence.

Policy Drivers

As a place-based state department, we are uniquely positioned to act as a bridge to advance state and regional priorities simultaneously. Numerous key policies, initiatives, and plans shape our goals and the strategies articulated in this Plan. We use our position and resources to incorporate executive orders and legislative intent to advance statewide initiatives. Such initiatives include **Tribal engagement, racial equity, outdoor access, climate adaptation, wildfire risk reduction, biodiversity, and embedding equity analysis into strategic plans and practices.** Our strategies and actions are designed to use **nature-based solutions** and implement key state strategies such as the **California Climate Adaptation Strategy, California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, Outdoors for All Strategy, and Pathways to 30x30 Strategy.**

While advancing these and other state priorities, our goals and strategies align with regional, Tribal, and Basin priorities and plans to ensure that Basin interests are met. We specifically look to the **Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Bi-State Compact, Lake Tahoe Regional Plan, and Threshold Standards,** which guide sustainable development while preserving the Basin’s unique environmental values to inform project planning and design, collaborative efforts, and funding. We plan acquisitions and projects and provide grant funding to help meet the goals of the **Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP),** focusing on projects that enhance water quality and forest health, support wildlife habitats, protect communities, and improve recreational amenities in the Basin.

Policy Drivers



People

Our Plan is founded on a steadfast commitment to people—from our Board and partners to the Conservancy personnel and the diverse public we serve:

- CONSERVANCY BOARD:** Our Board plays a critical role in steering the Conservancy’s strategic direction, ensuring our actions and initiatives are aligned with our mission and the broader vision for the Basin. The Board oversees and guides the development and implementation of our Plan, ensuring it responds effectively to the evolving needs of the Basin and its communities.
- CONSERVANCY STAFF:** Our dedicated employees bring a wealth of expertise, passion, and commitment to our mission. Their work is instrumental in advancing our mission and making a tangible difference in the Basin.
- WASHOE TRIBE:** The Conservancy recognizes the vital importance of the Basin’s original stewards, the Washoe Tribe. In carrying out this Plan, the Conservancy commits to meaningful collaboration and engagement with the Tribe to honor and incorporate traditional ecological knowledge, practices, and perspectives in land management and conservation. This special partnership aims to ensure that our work respects and enhances the Tribal, cultural, and natural resources that are central to the Tribe’s heritage and identity.
- PARTNERS:** Collaboration with our partners is key to our success. We work closely with a wide array of existing and new partners, including local communities, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and the private sector, to leverage resources, knowledge, and expertise. These partnerships enhance our capacity to undertake comprehensive restoration and conservation efforts, driving progress towards our shared vision for the Basin.
- PUBLIC:** Our commitment extends to all Californians and specifically to Basin communities, including those who government agencies have systematically excluded. We strive to engage with and serve all communities, ensuring that our work is inclusive and equitable. Through open communication, community engagement initiatives, and our specific racial equity actions, we aim to ensure that the benefits of our work are widely shared and that everyone has a voice in shaping the Basin’s future.

DEFINITION: SYSTEMATICALLY EXCLUDED COMMUNITIES

Groups of people who have been left out of decision-making processes that impact their way of life. Political and social frameworks prevented communities facing the greatest inequities from fully participating in society, leading to discrimination and unfair disadvantages that still manifest into many aspects of life.

In the Basin, this includes employment, housing, representation on local boards and committees, and recreational access. The Conservancy is working to address these inequities and combat racist policies that have plagued underserved communities for too long.



People enjoying the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway in South Lake Tahoe.

Our Evolution

The Conservancy has had a pivotal role in shaping the environmental health and sustainability of the Basin since its establishment in 1984. Over the years, our organization has evolved through four different “eras” while consistently maintaining our mission.

Foundation and Early Years

The California State Legislature established the Conservancy in 1984 to acquire and improve land to complement the land use planning and regulatory authorities of the TRPA. The Conservancy’s early objectives included protecting and restoring water and air quality, and wildlife habitat. We acquired land and restored, managed, and promoted the Basin’s scenic beauty and public access and recreation opportunities.

Eras of Development

The Conservancy's history is defined by four distinct periods, each characterized by specific achievements. The Conservancy continues to advance and build on the work that defines each era for its current and future focus.

1984–1996

ACQUISITIONS ERA

The Conservancy began with a focus on acquiring environmentally sensitive lands to preserve and restore the natural resources, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities, and to provide public access to Basin lands. During this time, the Conservancy acquired thousands of parcels, mostly undeveloped lots, throughout the California side of the Basin. In addition, the Conservancy advanced our mission by awarding over 120 grants to Basin partners. Grants funded such efforts as erosion control and public access and recreation projects. While the Conservancy continues to acquire land to this day, our mission has expanded to address changing environmental conditions and priorities.

1997–2008

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ERA

After years of environmental protection, planning, and land acquisition, scientists and environmental advocates sounded the alarm that more needed to be done to protect the Lake's famed clarity and the Basin's resources. The 1997 Presidential Forum included a pledge to restore and protect the Basin through the EIP, a component of the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan. The EIP aligned the Conservancy's resources with funding from federal, state, local, and private partners to increase the efficiency and impact of environmental restoration. To achieve this commitment, voter-approved state bonds funded most of the Conservancy's work. The Conservancy's role as a Basin funder continues in support of the EIP, with the Conservancy providing over 200 grants to government partners and nonprofit organizations from 1997 to the present. These grants fuel a wide array of projects focused on ecological restoration, public recreation and access, land protection, forest health, and wildfire risk reduction. The cumulative impact of these efforts is substantial, reflecting the Conservancy's significant contribution to the Basin's resilience.

2009–2017

POST-GREAT RECESSION ERA

Amidst funding losses that impacted projects, bond grant programs, and staff positions, the Conservancy reduced its capacity and operations to prioritize core functions. The Conservancy began to pursue more diverse funding options to continue its work and advance its mission.

2018–PRESENT

CLIMATE RESILIENCE ERA

This era has marked a focus on landscape-scale watershed restoration, land management, wildfire mitigation, and public recreation enhancements to advance the Conservancy’s mission and the EIP. As we look forward, the Conservancy will consider climate resilience, including climate equity, in all aspects of our work as embodied in one of our guiding principles, “integrate adaptive measures into all our work to enhance the Basin’s climate resilience.”





Sandhill cranes and red-winged blackbirds on Conservancy property in South Lake Tahoe. Photo courtesy of Brent Coe.

How We Work

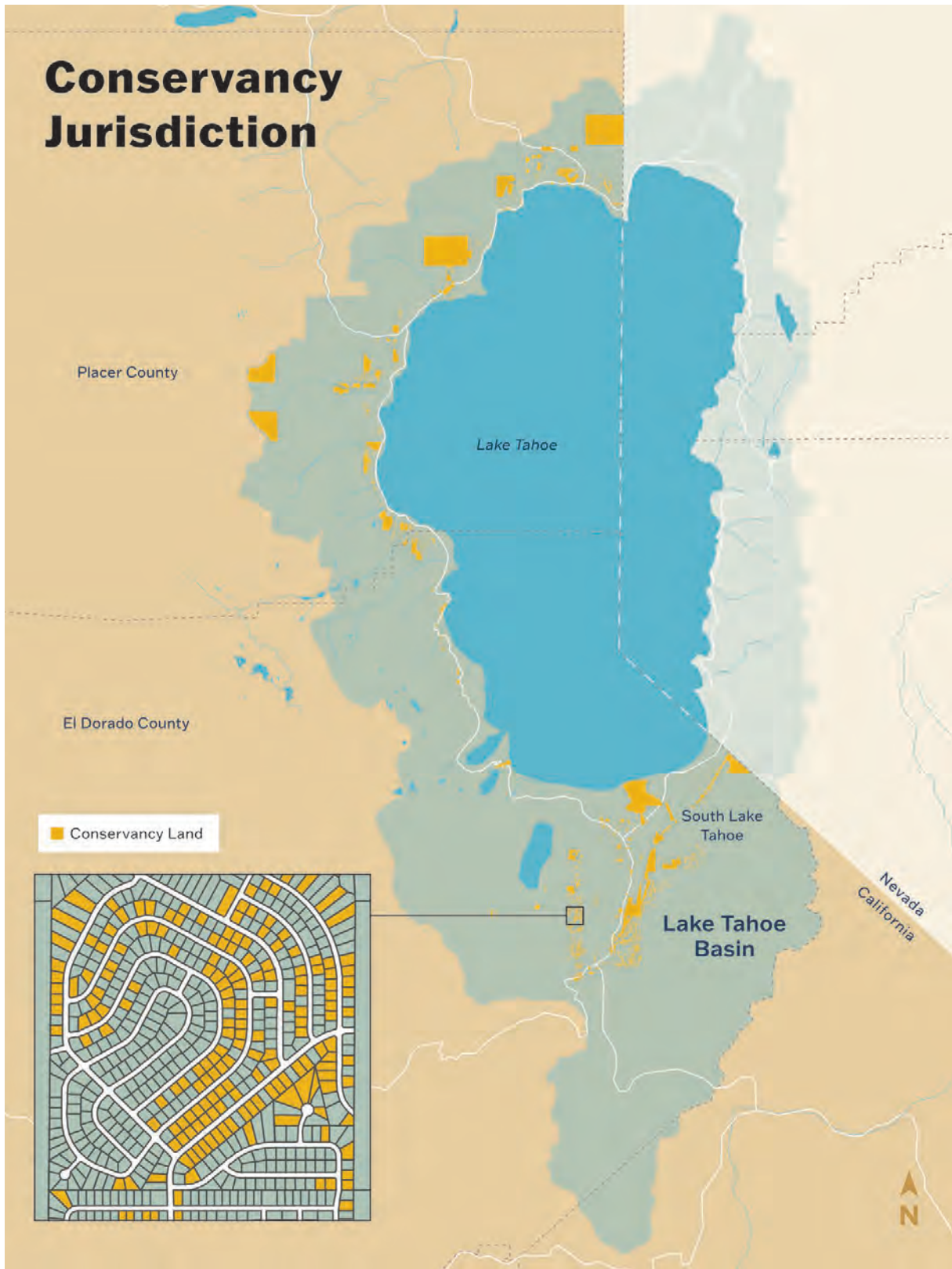
We prioritize partnerships and collaboration to strategically implement Basin priorities and optimize outcomes. This section provides an overview of our jurisdiction and governance, land management practices, all-lands approach, funding, and roles.

Jurisdiction and Governance

The Conservancy is a state department within the California Natural Resources Agency. The Conservancy's jurisdiction covers the California side of the Basin, encompassing 236 square miles. The Conservancy is governed by an eight-member Board, including:

- 👤 The State Secretary for Natural Resources (or designee)**
- 👤 The State Director of Finance (or designee)**
- 👤 One public member appointed by the State Senate**
- 👤 One public member appointed by the State Assembly**
- 👤 One appointed representative each from El Dorado County, Placer County, and the City of South Lake Tahoe**
- 👤 One ex officio, non-voting member representing the United States Secretary of Agriculture**

Conservancy Jurisdiction



NOTE: The inset box in the map above depicts an example of Conservancy open-space parcels within neighborhoods throughout the California side of the Basin.



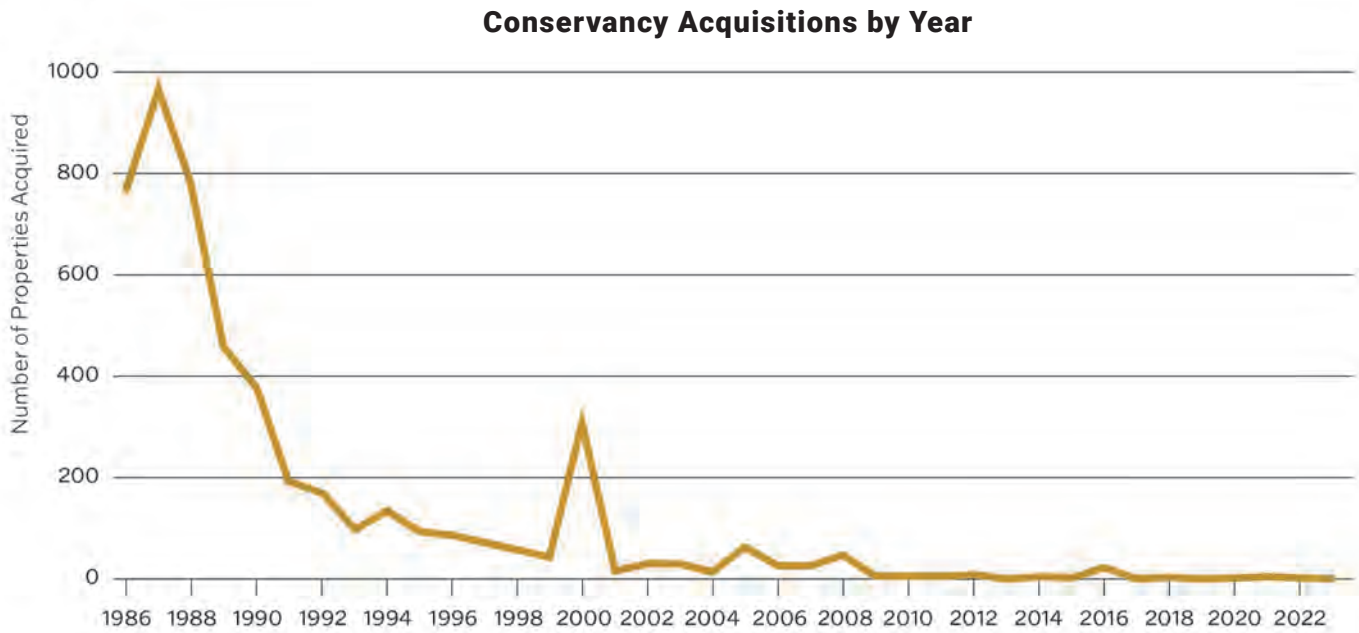
Land Management

Since it began operations, the Conservancy has focused on fulfilling its mission by acquiring and managing environmentally sensitive lands and parcels. The Conservancy's portfolio includes nearly 4,700 parcels, with a significant portion deemed environmentally sensitive. This number represents nearly ten percent of all state-owned parcels across California. The Conservancy's land management efforts are diverse, comprehensive, and generally focus on public access, stream environment zone protection, open space conservation, and wildlife preservation.

These parcels, often no larger than a third of an acre and interspersed throughout developed areas, pose singular challenges and opportunities for land management. Our approach includes restoring, maintaining, updating, improving, and biennially inspecting Conservancy properties, managing forest health, and reducing wildfire risks. We also support partner environmental projects through use of Conservancy land for storm water basins, shared-use trails, and other public improvements. These activities are vital for protecting the Basin's natural environment and promoting public recreation and access for all.

ACQUISITIONS

The Conservancy acquires environmentally sensitive lands to protect and enhance the Basin’s natural and recreational resources. These acquisitions, ranging from subdivision-sized parcels to larger tracts, are aimed at preventing environmental damage from development in sensitive areas. The Conservancy’s current acquisition priorities are guided by funding, eligibility, and parcel location, where possible emphasizing lands in undeveloped subdivisions to mitigate potential environmental harms.



NOTE: In 2000, Caltrans transferred 278 properties to the Conservancy that the State of California had originally acquired as right-of-way for a planned, but never completed, freeway through the south shore. Today, the first sections of the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway follow the same right-of-way alignment.

The Conservancy also engages in the strategic sale of certain parcels classified as “asset lands.” In 2014, the Conservancy designated 17 asset lands in Kings Beach, Meyers, and the City of South Lake Tahoe that could support sustainable compact development consistent with local area or town center plans. This approach contributes to sustainable development within the Basin and supports the Conservancy’s efforts to balance conservation initiatives with community and economic development needs.

Acquisitions and strategic land management practices exemplify the Conservancy’s commitment to preserving the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the Basin, ensuring its resources are safeguarded for future generations.



ACQUIRING THE KNOX JOHNSON AND MOTEL 6 PROPERTY

In 2024, the Conservancy acquired 31 acres along the Upper Truckee River in South Lake Tahoe. This acquisition—supported by state, regional, and private partners—helps protect Lake Tahoe’s water quality and provides an important wildlife corridor. The acquisition includes floodplain, mountain meadow, and wetlands, and provides the opportunity to remove four acres of fill that was wetlands before being developed in the 1960s. The property had been a top priority for acquisition and restoration for state and regional partners for decades.

◀ *Map Data: Google, 2024 Airbus*

Approach

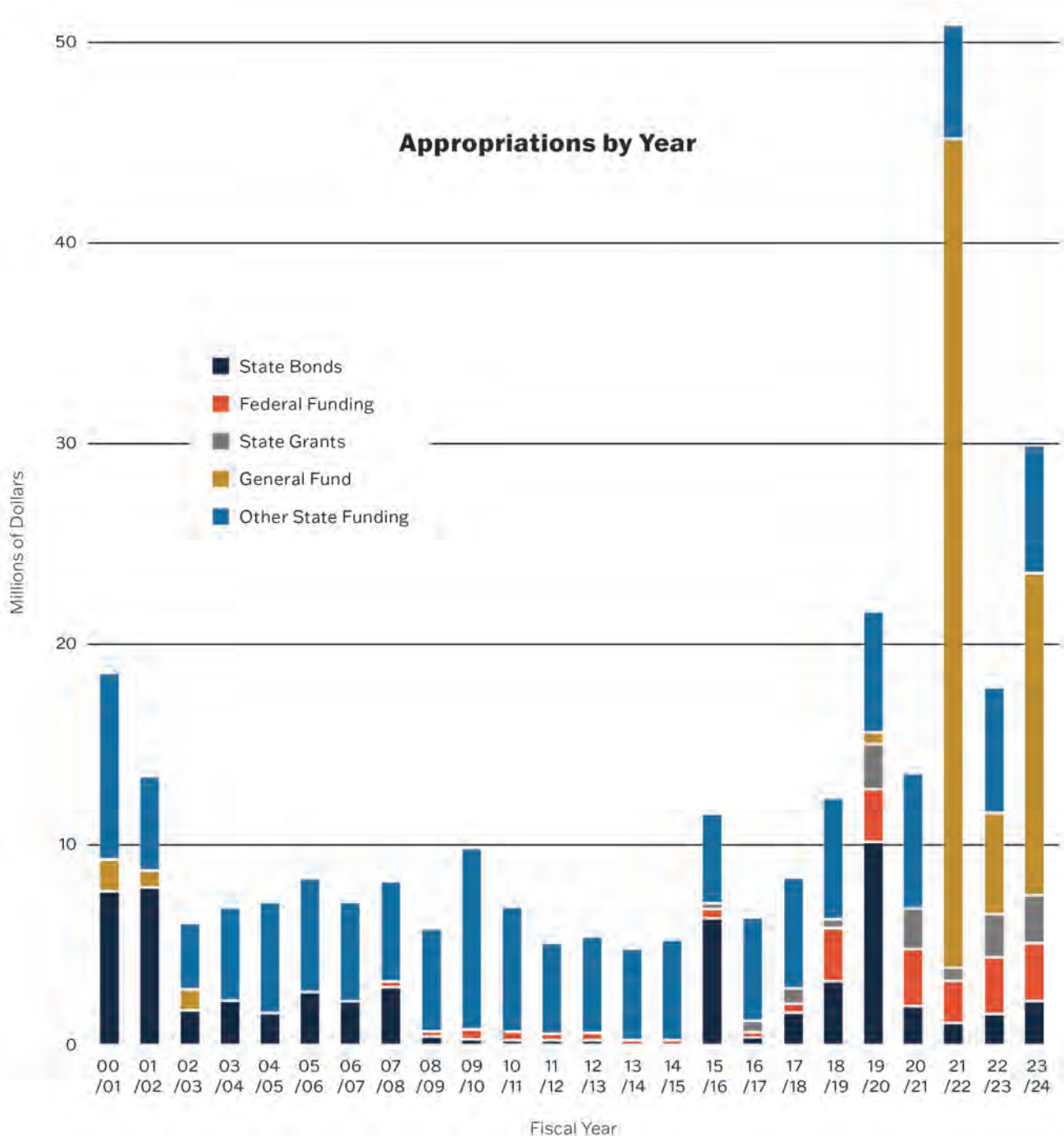
The Conservancy takes an all-lands approach to our work. This approach brings landowners and interested parties together across boundaries to decide on common goals for the landscapes they share. We scale our work at the Conservancy lands, watershed, Basinwide, and regional levels as follows:

- **CONSERVANCY LANDS SCALE** pertains to the specific parcels of land managed by the Conservancy, targeted for conservation, public access, and recreational purposes.
- **WATERSHED SCALE** focuses on the specific areas that drain into Lake Tahoe, emphasizing water quality, soil health, and ecosystem services within these critical hydrological units.
- **BASINWIDE SCALE** refers to the entirety of the Lake Tahoe Basin, addressing environmental management practices and policies that affect the Lake, surrounding lands, and communities as a unified ecosystem.
- **REGIONAL SCALE** encompasses a broad geographical area beyond the immediate Lake Tahoe Basin, considering cross-border environmental and economic impacts, and initiatives that span multiple jurisdictions and ecosystems that strategically address larger-scale issues and achieve economies of scale.

Funding

The Conservancy is mostly funded by state special revenue funds (e.g., Lake Tahoe license plate, Habitat Conservation Fund, Environmental License Plate Fund), state and federal grants, and state bonds. We also receive funding from other agencies and partnerships in the Basin. In recent years, the Conservancy received General Fund appropriations to further forest health and wildfire resilience, climate adaptation, and nature-based solutions. The Conservancy anticipates its funding levels will continue to vary into the future. One of our strategies is to seek more diverse funding options, such as public-private opportunities, to enhance the Conservancy’s fiscal sustainability and effectiveness.

FUNDING SOURCES



Roles

The Conservancy plays a multifaceted role as California's EIP lead agency within the Basin. The Conservancy's roles have evolved over time and within any given project to meet the Basin's needs. Key roles include:

ACQUIRING AND MANAGING LAND: Acquiring environmentally sensitive lands for protection, public access, wildlife conservation, and to help support area and Lake Tahoe Regional Plan priorities, including sustainable community projects with development rights.

SUPPORTING RESTORATION PROJECTS: Implementing and partnering on projects aimed at restoring natural habitats and ecological resilience across the Basin.

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY, TRIBES, AND PARTNERS: Collaborating with the Tribe, local communities, organizations, and government agencies to amplify conservation efforts and ensure inclusive access to natural areas.

LEADING POLICY AND PLANNING EFFORTS: Guiding environmental management practices, planning processes, and policy development to sustainably manage the Basin's resources.

PROVIDING FUNDING: Supporting partner-led projects through focused grants that align with the Conservancy's strategic initiatives and regional priorities.

These roles, shaped by decades of conservation and partnerships, underline the Conservancy's commitment to a healthier, more accessible, and resilient Basin.

Programs

The Conservancy is structured to address its current priorities and achieve its mission. We work across program teams to collaboratively carry out the strategies detailed in this Plan across several fronts:

LANDSCAPE RESILIENCE: Addressing biodiversity, climate impacts, and natural and Tribal resources at a landscape scale.

FORESTRY: Focusing on forest health and resilience.

LAND MANAGEMENT: Managing land for conservation and protection.

RECREATION & PUBLIC ACCESS: Increasing public access to natural areas.

TAHOE LIVABLE COMMUNITIES: Promoting sustainable community initiatives.

WATER QUALITY & WATERSHEDS: Improving water quality and watershed health.

These programs are supported by the Conservancy's legal, communication, information technology, fiscal, human resources, and executive staff, ensuring a comprehensive approach to program delivery and strategic plan execution. The success of these programs hinges on a cross-functional strategy that does not confine specific goals to a single program, allowing for a more flexible and integrated approach to achieving the Conservancy's mission.

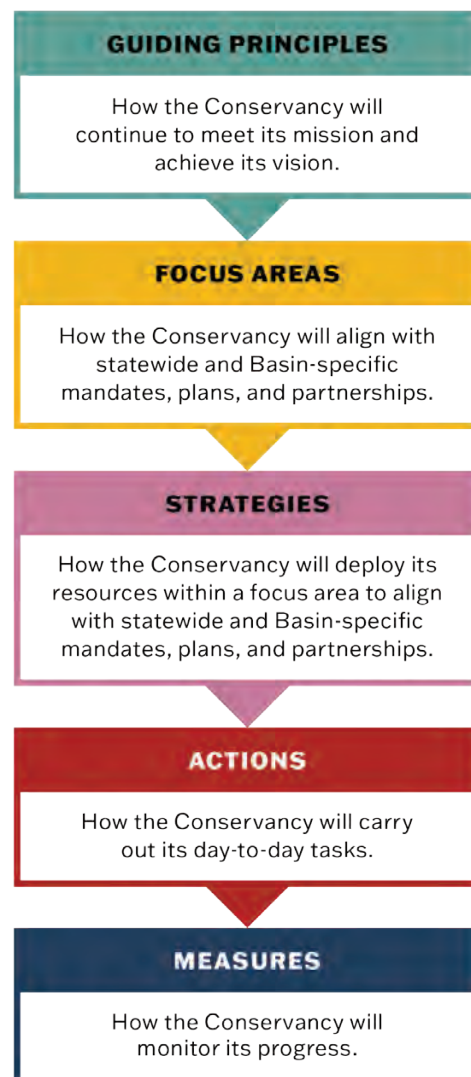
How to Read Our Plan

Our guiding principles act as a compass throughout our Plan, ensuring that with every goal set, strategy devised, and action taken, we are true to our fundamental values. They inform every aspect of our Plan, reminding us of who we are and how we must act to achieve our vision.

As you move through our Plan, you will notice that each focus area, goal, and strategy builds upon the last—each encompassing and supporting the next. This cumulative approach ensures that our work is informed by measures of success.



Strategic Plan Concepts



Our Plan is structured around our five focus areas, listed in alphabetical order: Access, Innovation, Protection, Restoration, and Stewardship. Each of these focus areas is a critical component of our mission, reflecting the breadth of our commitment to lead California’s efforts to restore and enhance the extraordinary natural and recreational resources of the Basin. Where focus areas and goals of this Plan conflict, we will collaborate with the Washoe Tribe, partners, and the public to identify priorities. Here is how to navigate our Plan:

FOCUS AREAS

We begin with our five focus areas—Access, Innovation, Protection, Restoration, and Stewardship. Each represents a pillar of our commitment to fostering an environment where nature and people can thrive together.

GOALS

Within each focus area, we define a central goal. These goals mirror the essence of the focus area they belong to and are designed to channel our efforts towards impactful outcomes.

STRATEGIES

For every goal, we highlight key strategies. These are our pathways to achieving the goals, chosen to maximize our effectiveness and aligning with both statewide and Basin-specific mandates, plans, and partnerships.

ACTIONS

Under each strategy, we provide examples of concrete actions. We will begin or continue these specific steps to ensure our strategies produce tangible results. It is in these actions that our guiding principles are most evident, helping to guide our decision-making and execution.

MEASURES

Measuring both the outputs and outcomes of our work under this Plan is important. Over the lifetime of the Plan, we will develop measures aligned with Executive Order N-16-22’s equity considerations and data reporting requirements, threshold and EIP performance measures, Tribal cultural and other attributes important to the Tribe, and other state and Basin initiatives. We commit to reporting our progress on the Plan annually to our Board.

Strategic Plan Development Process

Developing the Strategic Plan involved a comprehensive process that included analyzing past achievements and challenges, forming new focus areas, goals, and strategies, and drafting the Plan. The Conservancy engaged various parties, including Board members, staff, the Washoe Tribe, partners, and community members to ensure the Plan aligns with the needs and priorities of Basin communities and partners. In developing the Plan, we also considered environmental, social, and economic factors to create a balanced and forward-looking strategy.

A photograph of a paved trail winding through a forest. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a purple t-shirt and black pants, is sitting in a wheelchair and looking towards the right. In the middle ground, a person wearing a blue helmet and a teal shirt is riding a blue mountain bike. Further down the trail, another person in a blue shirt is also riding a bicycle. The trail is bordered by green plants with yellow flowers. The background is filled with tall, thin trees.

FOCUS AREA: **ACCESS**

GOAL:

Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All

ACCESS to the outdoors is a fundamental right and a cornerstone of well-being for all Californians. We aim to strategically leverage the land we manage and partnerships with other public land managers to ensure that everyone, regardless of background or ability, can enjoy the Basin's outdoor spaces. As in the rest of California and across the country, outdoor access and its benefits are not equitably distributed to all communities. Race and income often determine access. We focus on fostering inclusivity and empowerment to create outdoor spaces that people of all backgrounds can enjoy and help steward. Working together with the Washoe Tribe and local communities, we aim to co-create recreational and access opportunities. Together with our Basin partners and the community, we forge a path toward a future where the outdoors is a source of enjoyment for all.

THIS GOAL FEATURES THREE STRATEGIES:

1. Expand Recreational Networks and Partnerships
2. Develop Effective Trail Management Strategies
3. Enhance Equitable and Sustainable Access

EXPAND RECREATIONAL NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS

Expanding recreational networks and partnerships is crucial for improving access to the Basin. By working closely with local communities, our partners, and the Washoe Tribe, we aim to build a wider and more inclusive recreational network. This collaboration with expanded partnerships makes more natural spaces accessible to more people. It also ensures that their development and management are guided by diverse inputs, including the invaluable traditional knowledge of the land. Through this united effort, we strive to enhance our care for the Basin and make recreational opportunities more readily available to everyone.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Support and expand the Basin's active transportation trail network, such as the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway.
- Implement multiple-benefit recreation projects that expand equitable access, protect the environment, and create resilience to climate change.
- Promote shared environmental stewardship with the Washoe Tribe, visitors, and the local community.
- Strengthen and expand partnerships to support access for all and regional priorities.
- Use partnerships, such as the Lake Tahoe Destination Stewardship Council, to make it easier for people to find information about recreating at and accessing Lake Tahoe.

DEVELOP EFFECTIVE TRAIL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Developing effective trail management strategies is crucial for providing sustainable recreational opportunities and access for all. Our intent is to maintain ecological integrity as more people come to enjoy the Basin's natural landscapes. We will protect the Basin while enhancing the visitor experience by implementing best practices in design, maintenance, and resource conservation for trails, roads, and associated infrastructure. We will also look to how our strategies connect with partner efforts addressing similar management needs. These efforts also ensure that access to these recreational areas remains open and sustainable for future generations.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Develop a dirt road and trail management plan on Conservancy lands for resource protection, safety, navigation, and access.
- Improve connections between trails on Conservancy lands and neighboring paths and paved shared-use trails.

ENHANCE EQUITABLE & SUSTAINABLE ACCESS

Enhancing equitable and sustainable access is fundamental to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background or ability, have the opportunity to enjoy the Basin's recreational offerings. This strategy focuses on removing barriers to access and fostering a more inclusive environment for the Washoe Tribe, visitors, and residents, in particular communities facing the greatest inequities. One of the Conservancy's roles is to ensure that the Basin remains a destination for recreational and cultural engagement. This means balancing the needs of visitors and residents with the stewardship, restoration, and protection of the many natural spaces found within our public lands. We also intend that our efforts to increase access do not detrimentally impact the natural environment by incorporating sustainable practices into the development and maintenance of recreational areas. Our vision is for the Basin to be a welcoming and resilient destination for all.

- Provide opportunities and remove barriers on Conservancy and other public lands for communities facing the greatest inequities to access and connect with the natural environment.
- Acquire lands to improve year-round public access.
- Work with partners to address seasonal public land access issues, such as winter access to trailheads and parking areas.



IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY AT PATTON LANDING BEACH

The Conservancy's Patton Landing Beach is an excellent example of enhanced equitable and sustainable access to Lake Tahoe. The beach includes a small café building, picnic areas, nonmotorized boat launch, a small wetland, and a large beach area. A Conservancy-authorized concessionaire operates a nonmotorized watercraft rental and café business at the beach. A nonprofit organization associated with the concessionaire organizes paddling programs for people with physical disabilities and mental health challenges, and underserved youth. The Conservancy plans to install additional amenities at the beach that meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. Accessibility improvements at Patton Landing Beach will benefit a large number of people with and without disabilities.

◀ *People enjoying Patton Landing Beach on the north shore of Lake Tahoe.*

GOAL:

Drive Forward-Thinking

Solutions and Accountability

INNOVATION introduces positive changes to the Conservancy by creating efficiencies and providing new solutions, making us more capable of overcoming complex challenges facing the Basin. We strive to invest the resources and time necessary to foster innovation as a catalyst for accomplishing our mission. By embracing proven technological advances, piloting novel programs, and applying the best available science, planning principles, and data to our work, we will continue to promote innovation in the Basin. We also recognize that the talents and contributions of Conservancy employees are the key to our success, and we will strive to foster an environment of collaboration, equity, and advancement. We commit to maintaining high standards of accountability, transparency, and integrity. Collaborating with our partners and the public, we will lead the way towards a more resilient and thriving Basin.

THIS GOAL FEATURES FOUR STRATEGIES:

1. Advance Scientific, Planning, and Technological Solutions
2. Seek Diverse Funding Sources
3. Foster Teamwork and Development
4. Cut Green Tape

ADVANCE SCIENTIFIC, PLANNING, & TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Adapting and advancing our mission is critical to address climate change impacts as the resulting challenges become increasingly complex. We will employ the best available science, including Tribal expertise, and planning principles that promote sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development of diverse communities, to inform our work. Science provides a reliable foundation to inform our decisions. Using planning principles helps determine and promote sustainable and equitable policies. These solutions help us improve how we manage lands, including conducting more effective land and wildlife surveys during project planning, using the most current information to inform restoration and the treatments we implement, and identifying the best methods to measure the effectiveness of our work. We will engage with groups such as the Tahoe Science Advisory Council and Tahoe Living Working Group to keep pace and find opportunities to apply new ideas to our work.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Work with the science, planning, and technology communities to support and inform relevant innovations that increase the impact of our programs, accelerate our actions, and maximize our effectiveness.
- Apply scientific advancements, Tribal expertise, and new technologies in areas such as climate resilience, biodiversity, and aquatic invasive species control.



SCIENCE TO ACTION

The Conservancy and its partners work closely with the Tahoe Science Advisory Council to inform our work through science and monitoring. The Council's "Science to Action Strategy" provides insights into the effectiveness of our environmental restoration and management in meeting Basin threshold standards, such as lake clarity, and furthering climate resilience. The Conservancy has been working directly with researchers at the University of Nevada, Reno to measure the amount of carbon that is captured and stored in soil and vegetation through wetland and meadow restoration. This and other innovative studies can improve our understanding of the impacts and benefits of the investments the State and others are making in Basin restoration.

◀ *Ben Sullivan, a researcher with the University of Nevada, Reno, paddles while taking measurements at the Upper Truckee Marsh for a study on how functioning wetlands can combat climate change by capturing and storing carbon from the atmosphere.*

- Employ planning principles that make communities easier to navigate for people walking, biking, and rolling, with an increased number of affordable housing units.
- Use geographic data, including demographics and resource usage patterns, to identify systematically excluded communities and non-traditional partners and use this information to identify and execute projects that have maximum benefit.

SEEK DIVERSE FUNDING SOURCES

Pursuing diverse funding sources continues to be an important part of our work in maintaining and building our funding capacity into the future. Financial diversity—especially through public-private partnerships—allows us to innovate, adapt, and continue to meet our mission, including expanding our services to systematically excluded communities and non-traditional partners through grants and novel programs. Transparent management of these varied funding streams reflects our commitment to effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Identify and pursue diverse funding opportunities, including private-public partnerships.
- Continue to apply for federal, state, local, and private grants to support the Conservancy’s work to help ensure a more stable funding outlook.

FOSTER TEAMWORK & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Fostering teamwork and staff development is pivotal for our success. We commit to investing in learning and development opportunities for our employees. Working together effectively and growing the capabilities of our staff allows us to better serve the public while empowering a high-functioning workforce. We value our employees and see their professional growth as key to the success of the organization as a whole. We nurture a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and continuous learning within our organization, including providing training on racial equity for our staff and Board. By doing so, we equip our team with the knowledge, skills, and perspective necessary to innovate and tackle challenges. This strategy strengthens our capacity to collaboratively accomplish our mission, and to serve the public equitably.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Cross-train, mentor, and integrate Conservancy employees across divisions to raise awareness of core agency activities and needs.
- Expand equity awareness and understanding among Conservancy employees and incorporate equity into our work and hiring retention practices.
- Provide training and leadership opportunities for staff to support growth and operational excellence.

CUT GREEN TAPE

Streamlining processes and reducing bureaucratic hurdles accelerate action and impact. We strive to implement projects more quickly and efficiently to accomplish our mission. This commitment to efficiency, while maintaining quality and integrity, fosters innovation and enhances transparency, responsiveness, and equity in our conservation efforts. Cutting green tape creates a pathway for more dynamic and impactful stewardship of the Basin, aligning closely with our mission and the expectations of the public and our partners.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Identify opportunities within state processes and policies to make our projects more timely, impactful, and cost effective.
- Maximize our institutional knowledge of, and ability to navigate, laws and policies to ensure that we meet all requirements efficiently, including using California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemptions, when appropriate, to accelerate our work.
- Streamline internal operations to best use our resources.
- Evaluate projects and initiatives using a racial equity lens to open opportunities and develop relationships with new grantees and contractors.



SPEEDING FOREST RESTORATION

The Conservancy is committed to reducing barriers that impede progress in addressing the complex environmental challenges facing the Basin. We will continue to focus efforts on increasing the pace and scale of our forest health work. We helped develop a Programmatic Timberland Environmental Impact Report for state, local, and private land on the California side of the Basin, and we use that analysis to implement forest health projects across land ownerships. We use a Good Neighbor Authority agreement with the USDA Forest Service to treat federal lands at the same time our crews are working on adjacent Conservancy parcels. These streamlining efforts help us reduce wildfire risk for communities and improve the resilience of Basin forests.

▲ *A Conservancy Forestry Aide marks trees in preparation for a future forestry project. We take a comprehensive approach by planning ahead to thin all the public open space lots in a neighborhood at the same time, including federal and local government lands. This lets us treat more properties more effectively than treating lots one at a time.*

GOAL:

Safeguard the Basin's Environmental, Tribal, Cultural, and Recreational Attributes for Future Generations

PROTECTION embodies the tangible actions we are taking today to safeguard and enhance the Basin for tomorrow. This encompasses preserving natural resources, and protecting Tribal and cultural heritage and recreational attributes in the Basin. We will continue to implement adaptive measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change, wildfires, invasive species, and other emerging challenges. Our aim is to keep natural, Tribal, and cultural resources vibrant and enhance the resilience of this unique landscape for residents and visitors alike for generations to come.

THIS GOAL FEATURES THREE STRATEGIES:

1. Protect Forests and Reduce Wildfire Risk
2. Collaborate on Biodiversity and Climate Change Initiatives
3. Expand Proactive Measures to Preserve Natural, Tribal, and Cultural Resources

PROTECT FORESTS & REDUCE WILDFIRE RISK

Improving forest health and reducing wildfire risk are protective measures we must continue to safeguard Basin communities from catastrophic wildfire. Our forestry program works closely with the Washoe Tribe and other partners through the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT) to use Community Wildfire Protection Plans and the Lake Tahoe Basin Forest Action Plan to prioritize, plan, and implement fuels reduction and forest health projects. With the TFFT, we also build capacity for workforce and organizational efficiency, leverage funding to implement projects across multiple land ownerships, and conduct demonstration and pilot projects to reduce costs and increase sustainability of wildfire resilience work. This strategy underscores our commitment to protect Basin communities.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Continue to collaborate with partners to achieve the goals of the Lake Tahoe Basin Forest Action Plan by providing leadership, technical expertise, and resources.
- Reduce wildfire risk through ongoing forest health management on Conservancy lands.



▲ A Corpsmember with the California Conservation Corps working on a forest health and fuels reduction project on Conservancy land in South Lake Tahoe.

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PLANNING

The Conservancy, through a grant from the Department of Conservation Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program, is supporting an innovative update of the Tahoe Basin Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The updated CWPP will serve as a roadmap for community forest health and fuels reduction projects and funding across the Basin. This new online plan will be easier to update, relies on decision-support tools to better prioritize forestry projects, and addresses equity concerns and underserved communities.

COLLABORATE ON BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

A diversity of animal and plant species is critical for balancing and making ecosystems more resilient to climate change. We are integrating biodiversity and climate resilience objectives throughout our programs, including collaborating on such initiatives across the Basin, region, and State. We are committed to implementing actions that promote climate adaptation. Promoting adaptation includes investing in making communities more sustainable and resilient, with priority given to communities facing the greatest inequities. It also includes planning and implementing forest health and mountain meadow restoration, and supporting research and monitoring to inform and improve future projects. In addition, we are studying wildlife connectivity to better understand wildlife corridors and barriers and help land managers protect the Basin's biodiversity.

By strengthening partnerships with other state departments, federal agencies, the Tribe, research institutions, and community organizations, we aim to pool resources and knowledge, and leverage other efforts to create a resilient and biodiverse future for the Basin.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Partner on landscape-scale initiatives by providing expertise and capacity building resources.
- Coordinate with statewide and Basin partners on biodiversity and climate change policy, science, mitigation, and adaptation.
- Execute strategic acquisitions that improve Basin biodiversity and climate resilience.



▲ A bobcat triggers a motion-detecting camera on Conservancy land near the Upper Truckee River in El Dorado County. Photo courtesy of the Wildlands Network and Pathways for Wildlife.

WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY

The Conservancy funded a grant to the nonprofit Wildlands Network, in partnership with Pathways for Wildlife, for a multi-year study of wildlife connectivity in the California side of the Basin. The grantees are analyzing wildlife movement patterns, distribution, and abundance, and identifying key barriers and bottlenecks to wildlife movement, such as roads and infrastructure development. Using this information, the team will recommend actions Basin partners can take to remove barriers to wildlife connectivity. Understanding how wildlife move through and within the Basin will inform the Conservancy's and other Tahoe land managers' decisions and funding priorities.

EXPAND PROACTIVE MEASURES TO PRESERVE NATURAL, TRIBAL, & CULTURAL RESOURCES

We manage nearly 4,700 parcels that provide numerous benefits to the ecosystems and communities in the Basin. Proactive measures, such as expanding encroachment resolution, to preserve natural, Tribal, and cultural resources across these lands are critical to prevent and mitigate risks to the Basin's environment and heritage. Our programs are shifting towards more preemptive action, including embracing innovative technology to manage and track our lands and related assets. We are coordinating with the Washoe Tribe to increase protection of Tribal resources on projects that we fund and implement.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Conduct annual property inspections to identify natural resource and public health and safety issues to inform management actions.
- Prevent and resolve encroachments on Conservancy lands.





FOCUS AREA: RESTORATION

GOAL:

**Restore the Basin's Social
and Ecological Resilience**

RESTORATION emphasizes actions that the Conservancy must take to return natural lands and communities to a resilient state. We recognize that people and natural lands are inherently connected, and a legacy exists of past impacts on both social and ecological systems in the Basin. Through targeted restoration projects and other nature-based solutions, we aim to improve forest and watershed health, revitalize degraded habitats, increase carbon sequestration, control and remove invasive species, and enhance water quality, laying the groundwork for a more resilient ecosystem. By targeting restoration projects that improve social and ecological resilience, we can better ensure the Basin's ability to withstand and recover from climate and social challenges.

Equally important is our commitment to fostering social resilience by engaging with communities, promoting social and cultural well-being, and supporting sustainable economies. Through incorporating Tribal practices into restoration projects and increasing the Tribe's access to Basin lands and resources, we aim to increase the Tribe's social and ecological connection to the land as a way to heal the generational trauma that Tribal members have experienced.

THIS GOAL FEATURES TWO STRATEGIES:

1. Integrate and Scale Up Restoration
2. Support Community Resilience Projects and Regional Priorities

INTEGRATE & SCALE UP RESTORATION

Landscape scale restoration initiatives transcend individual property boundaries to comprehensively address ecosystem-wide challenges. Collaboration is vital to this work, and we will engage a broad coalition of public, private, Tribal, and community partners to leverage resources, share knowledge, and align efforts

for maximum effectiveness. We will continue to collaboratively lead landscape restoration initiatives at both the Basin and regional scale, including the Greater Upper Truckee River Watershed Partnership and the 2.4-million-acre Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative, as well as identify new opportunities to scale up restoration across land ownerships. By embracing this integrated and expansive approach with partners, we aim to address the complex, interconnected challenges facing the Basin, paving the way for a resilient landscape.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Advance multi-benefit, large-scale restoration projects that create resilience to climate change.
- Build capacity for climate resilience and larger scale restoration projects.
- Enhance and maintain healthy ecosystems and natural processes through restoration and management of Conservancy lands and watersheds.
- Partner with the Washoe Tribe to jointly restore Basin watersheds and incorporate tribal practices.



The Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative's ten pillars of landscape resilience reflect the interdependent nature of social and ecological values.

SUPPORT COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECTS & REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Supporting community resilience projects and regional priorities is imperative to protect natural resources, build community resilience, and promote sustainable development. Central to this effort is collaboration with organizations representing communities facing the greatest inequities and the Conservancy's traditional partners within the Basin. The Conservancy uses its lands and development rights in town centers to support local area plan priorities as part of the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan. We will continue to strive for catalytic projects, where one investment draws in additional investments, such as the Sugar Pine Village affordable housing project. These efforts support access to affordable housing, make communities easier to navigate for people walking, biking, and rolling, help ensure long-term economic prosperity, and protect natural resources. By weaving these objectives into our restoration initiatives, we emphasize ecological restoration along with connecting people to the outdoors.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Acquire aging developed properties, restore environmentally sensitive land, and either retire or transfer the associated development rights to town centers.
- Sell, lease, or exchange Conservancy asset lands in town centers.
- Enhance climate resilience in Basin communities by promoting resilient infrastructure—including for people walking, biking, and rolling—and outdoor community gathering spaces.
- Direct Land Bank development rights to facilitate infill development projects on Conservancy non-environmentally sensitive asset lands, and to advance EIP goals within the Basin.
- Acquire the remaining private properties in the Basin's roadless subdivisions.
- Provide Conservancy land and development rights to support partner EIP projects.



SUPPORTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Sugar Pine Village is the largest affordable housing project in the history of the Basin, with 248 units. In 2019, the Department of General Services selected two Conservancy asset land parcels for the Sugar Pine Village Project. The project helps fulfill Executive Order N-06-19 by prioritizing state properties for sustainable, innovative, and cost-effective housing projects.

◀ *The Sugar Pine Village affordable housing project under construction on state land in South Lake Tahoe.*

GOAL:

Care for the Basin's Natural, Tribal, and Cultural Resources

STEWARDSHIP focuses on the responsibility and diverse actions being taken now to care for the Basin. As a steward of land in the Basin, we have a responsibility to leverage effective policies, land management, resource allocation, and engagement approaches to best serve the many people who thrive on our public lands. We preserve the Basin's diverse ecosystems and rich history through collaborative projects and sustainable practices in coordination with the Tribe and other partners and through expanded community engagement. Through a focus on stewardship, we will continue to carry out our work with care for the Basin's forestlands, waters, and communities.

THIS GOAL FEATURES FOUR STRATEGIES:

1. Modernize Land Management Policies
2. Steward and Secure Conservancy Lands
3. Enhance Community Engagement and Partnerships
4. Promote Tribal Presence

MODERNIZE LAND MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Modernizing land management policies stands as a foundational strategy to achieving responsible stewardship. We are committed to updating our approaches to reflect the latest in science, planning, and community needs. This strategy is about ensuring the Conservancy sets forward-thinking and inclusive land management practices that serve our mission and the community.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Develop and implement updated land management practices, policies, and regulations for Conservancy lands that equitably reflect the needs and desires of the public.

STEWARD & SECURE CONSERVANCY LANDS

Stewarding and securing Conservancy lands is pivotal to our mission of caring for the Basin's naturally diverse and culturally rich resources. We are dedicated to implementing comprehensive land management practices that safeguard these lands from threats, whether from environmental pressures or human activities. We aim to steward the resilience and health of lands under our management through ongoing monitoring and by applying rules and regulations. This strategy includes protecting land to enhance biodiversity, habitat, watershed function, and recreation opportunities.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Steward lands, Tribal and cultural sites, and biological resources.
- Implement adaptive management and monitoring measures to align with statewide and Basin-specific environmental goals.



Conservancy staff training in the field to identify project boundaries for future forestry projects.



The Conservancy restored a section of the Upper Truckee River at its Tahoe Pines property in Meyers.

ENHANCE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

Enhancing community engagement and partnerships allows the Conservancy to better address the collective needs of all Basin communities through our work. The challenges we face are multifaceted, and some communities face greater inequities. As such, we commit to strengthening our existing relationships and broadening our network by collaborating with non-traditional partners to bring innovative solutions and diverse perspectives to our stewardship efforts. Through these strengthened and expanded partnerships, we aim to enhance the effectiveness of our programs. Our approach underscores the belief that collective action, rooted in shared commitment and creative collaboration, is key to securing the future of Basin resources.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Collaborate on project teams to enhance our technical support, resource and land allocation, policy and strategy guidance, and operational efficiency.
- Engage with legislators, statewide agencies, Basin agencies, and local and community-based organizations to understand their goals, communicate our priorities, and identify solutions together.
- Expand and create new partnerships, especially with organizations representing communities facing the greatest inequities. Partnerships and volunteer participation can help us improve our projects and better serve our communities.
- Provide additional opportunities for public engagement and meaningful input on Conservancy programs and projects.

PROMOTE TRIBAL PRESENCE

Promoting the Washoe Tribe's presence within the Basin is critical to empowering the Tribe and supporting successful stewardship. Acknowledging the deep connections that the Tribe has with this land, we aim to amplify their voices and perspectives in the stewardship and management of the Basin. This involves not only recognizing the expertise the Tribe holds but also integrating their practices and leadership into our conservation efforts. We have prioritized strengthening our relationship with the Tribe by coordinating on several projects and by identifying opportunities to add Tribal capacity to work in the Basin. By fostering a stronger Tribal presence, we are ensuring that the stewardship of these lands honors their past, current, and future legacy.

KEY ACTIONS MAY INCLUDE:

- Increase and expand Tribal access and land acquisition across the Basin.
- Promote the Washoe Tribe's active participation and leadership in Basin stewardship projects.



SUPPORTING TRIBAL STEWARDSHIP

Ma?yála Wá'á (Meeks Meadow) is an important place for the Washoe Tribe. The Conservancy is providing grant funding to the Tribe to help implement their co-management agreement with the USDA Forest Service for meadow restoration. This restoration will bring back plant and animal species that are culturally important to the Tribe, reconnect Tribal members to the meadow, and support Tribal capacity in meadow restoration, forest health treatments, and groundwater monitoring. Conservancy grants are supporting CEQA analysis, biomass collection and transport, reintroduction of cultural burning and Tribal science and knowledge, and conifer removal in the meadow.

▲ *Ma?yála Wá'á (Meeks Meadow) on the west shore of Lake Tahoe. The meadow and surrounding area have cultural importance for the Washoe Tribe, but the meadow's ecological health has declined since European settlers drove the Washoe people off their homeland. Photo courtesy of John Peltier Photography.*



California Tahoe Conservancy employees in May 2024.

Acknowledgements

The California Tahoe Conservancy Board and staff thank the many people who contributed to the creation of this Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan reflects deep involvement by senior management and staff at the Conservancy. Special thanks to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California for working with us to identify strategies that articulate their vision for their homeland and stewardship. Thanks also to community members, our traditional and non-traditional partners, and the California Natural Resources Agency. Together, their input, collaboration, and passion informed our strategies and gave us a better understanding of how we can meet our collective goals.

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All photos and graphics by the California Tahoe Conservancy unless otherwise noted.

Key Terms

ALL-LANDS APPROACH: A method of addressing challenges that uses a large-scale mindset to overcome traditional geographic and organizational boundaries and leverage capabilities of cross-functional teams and knowledge systems.

COMMUNITY: The Basin community includes residents who live and work in the Basin, the Washoe Tribe who are the original stewards of the Basin, and visitors who come to the Basin for day trips and people visiting from around the U.S. and other countries to vacation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: The process of working collaboratively with groups of people who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being.

CULTURAL AND TRIBAL RESOURCES: Cultural resources include buildings, sites, structures, or objects that may have historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance. The Washoe Tribe has further specified natural assets, such as plants, land, water, animals, and medicine as important Tribal resources. Cultural practices and assets can be either Tribal or non-Tribal.

CUTTING GREEN TAPE: Cutting Green Tape is focused on improving interagency coordination, partnerships and internal processes and policies to allow ecological restoration and stewardship to occur more quickly, simply, and cost-effectively.

EQUITY: Fairness of achieving outcomes for all groups, with no one factor, such as race, serving to predict outcomes. Equity is defined in the context of social and racial equity.

LANDSCAPE-SCALE: An all-encompassing conservation strategy, applied across all lands and at a scale that is both meaningful relative to the challenges being addressed, and that considers Tribal and partner goals and balances competing priorities.

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE: A social-ecological system encompasses the interactions between human activities and natural elements. Social-ecological resilience refers to the capacity of such a system to recover from disturbances and adapt to change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks. This concept recognizes the intertwined nature of ecosystems and human societies, emphasizing that changes in one component can affect the resilience of the entire system.

SYSTEMATICALLY EXCLUDED COMMUNITIES: Groups of people who have been left out of decision-making processes that impact their way of life. See a more thorough definition in the call out box on page 12.



FRONT COVER: Families biking to school in June 2023 on the Dennis T. Machida Memorial Greenway in South Lake Tahoe. The Conservancy and its partners designed the trail to use raised crossings to protect wetland habitat. **BACK COVER:** the Greenway in winter.