

SENATE BILL 630 PUBLIC ACCESS GRANTS

Recommended Actions: Adopt Resolutions 25-03-02.1, and 25-03-02.2 authorizing Senate Bill 630 (SB 630) funding for the following grants:

1. Resolution 25-03-02.1 (Attachment 1) authorizing a grant of up to \$500,000 to the City of South Lake Tahoe (City) to complete environmental analysis and preliminary plans for the Regan Beach Enhancement and Accessibility Improvement Project (Regan Beach project); and
2. Resolution 25-03-02.2 (Attachment 2) authorizing a grant of up to \$90,000 to the North Tahoe Public Utility District (NTPUD) to complete environmental analysis for the Secline Beach Enhancements Project (Secline Beach project).

Executive Summary: The recommended actions authorize planning grants for two projects that will advance public access improvements at Lake Tahoe by: (1) achieving environmental analysis and completing preliminary plans for public lake access and recreational improvements at Regan Beach in the City; and (2) completing environmental analysis for public lake access and recreational improvements at Secline Beach in Placer County.

Funding for the grants comes from the SB 630 Lake Tahoe Science and Lake Improvement Account (Account). The grants advance both California's "Outdoors for All" initiative and the California Tahoe Conservancy's (Conservancy) Strategic Plan Goal to Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All. The grants are identified in the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) because the projects advance regional priority recreation and public access projects. Upon Board authorization, Conservancy staff will work with the City and NTPUD to execute the proposed grant agreements.

Location: Regan Beach is located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe in the City (Attachment 3). Secline Beach is located on the north shore of Lake Tahoe adjacent to Kings Beach in Placer County (Attachment 4).

Fiscal Summary: The two SB 630 grants combined are up to \$590,000 from the Account.

Overview

History

The California State Lands Commission collects fees for public use of state lands at Lake Tahoe, most commonly for use of the lakebed for pier supports and buoy anchors. In 2013, the California Legislature, through SB 630, mandated that those fees be deposited into the Account to support a bi-state science advisory council and nearshore management.

As one of three recipients of Account funding (the California Natural Resources Agency and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board are the other two), the Conservancy directs resources towards aquatic invasive species control and lake access projects. To date, the Conservancy has awarded nearly \$3 million in SB 630 grants. The Conservancy has a balance of \$734,000 available for grants from the Account. Additionally, it receives approximately \$500,000 annually to fund grants and support activities. These recommended actions continue the Conservancy's commitment to investing Account funds in lake access facilities.

Regan Beach History

The South Lake Tahoe community and visitors have recreated at Regan Beach since the early twentieth century. Covering approximately 6.2 acres, with about 2,000 feet of shoreline, this site is a legacy recreational and social center. The facilities need replacement and updates to meet current accessibility requirements and improve the overall recreational experience at the beach.

The City and Conservancy began exploring opportunities to improve Regan Beach in 2007. Outcomes from three public meetings, online surveys, staff research, and outside consultation were combined to complete preliminary plans for Regan Beach in 2015. Since then, the City postponed implementing Regan Beach improvements due to competing priorities. The City is now ready to proceed with Regan Beach and requests \$500,000 in SB 630 funding to complete environmental analysis and preliminary plans. The City will match this request with \$450,000 in secured City funds to begin the implementation process. The City estimates that it will cost approximately \$9 million to construct the Regan Beach project.

Secline Beach History

In the 1990s the Conservancy initiated the Secline Street Lake Access Project to acquire private properties that would improve public access to Lake Tahoe in Kings Beach. The Conservancy Board began authorizing Secline Beach acquisitions in April 1995 with a \$460,000 grant to the NTPUD to acquire a 0.22 acre lakefront parcel (AN 090-073-001). The Board approved a second Secline Beach acquisition in May 1997, authorizing

Conservancy staff to expend up to \$497,000 to acquire a nearby 0.29 acre parcel (AN 117-180-011). Placer County owns the Secline Street public right of way and adjacent parcels. In 2003, the Conservancy developed concepts for Secline Beach lake access and recreational improvements that were not pursued.

Kings Beach residents and visitors have advocated for public access improvements at Secline Beach for many years. Recognizing this desire, the NTPUD secured \$240,000 in grant funding from the North Tahoe Community Alliance (NTCA) and matched it with \$60,000 of their own funding for a robust community-driven Secline Beach planning process and 50 percent plans, which the NTPUD anticipates completing by 2026.

The NTPUD hosted its first Secline Beach public workshop in October 2024, in partnership with Placer County and the Conservancy. More than 60 people attended this in-person event and over 200 people completed an online survey. Initial feedback indicates that the public is interested in improving Secline Beach site accessibility, installing permanent restrooms, formalizing picnic areas, adding kayak and paddleboard storage, improving e-bike infrastructure, and improving walkable connections to nearby North Tahoe Beach and Kings Beach State Recreation Area. The NTPUD is taking that public input and proposing to complete environmental analysis.

Detailed Description of Recommended Actions

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

Regan Beach Project Grant

The City proposes to use the recommended funding to complete environmental analysis and begin site planning for improvements at Regan Beach. The City will form a Technical Advisory Committee to advise the planning team and complete additional public outreach and tribal consultation to meet regulatory requirements and community expectations.

Secline Beach Project Grant

The NTPUD requests \$90,000 to complete environmental analysis for the Secline Beach project in conjunction with the planning activities described above.

2. Overall Context and Benefits

Regan Beach Project Grant

Located in the heart of South Lake Tahoe and connected to several bicycle routes, Regan Beach is a popular lake access facility and public park. It offers stunning lake views, shallow water for swimming, a playground, restrooms, and other amenities. As the City's oldest beach facility, Regan Beach needs upgrades to handle heavy visitor use and meet current accessibility standards. The City's modernization plans include constructing new restrooms and concession facilities, improving picnic areas, stabilizing the shoreline, and creating a launch and storage area for small personal watercraft such as kayaks and stand-up paddleboards.

Secline Beach Project Grant

Secline Beach has minimal recreational amenities despite being a spectacular public beach located in the heart of Kings Beach. The NTPUD is leading an effort to make improvements at this beach to enhance the user experience, lake access, and accessibility. Secline Beach has the potential to reduce crowding issues at the nearby Kings Beach State Recreation Area and at North Tahoe Beach.

3. Schedule for the Recommended Actions

Regan Beach Project Grant

The City anticipates completing preliminary plans and environmental analysis for the Regan Beach project by 2028.

Secline Beach Project Grant

The NTPUD anticipates completing environmental analysis for the Secline Beach project by 2027. The NTPUD will complete this environmental analysis in conjunction with its Secline Beach public outreach and conceptual design process that began in 2024.

Financing

Regan Beach Project Grant

The City requests \$500,000 in SB 630 funding to complete environmental analysis and preliminary plans for the Regan Beach project. The City will provide \$450,000 in secured matching funding to start the implementation process. The City estimates construction costs will be over \$9 million. The City will seek construction funding after environmental analysis has been completed and better understands potential construction costs.

Secline Beach Project Grant

The NTPUD requests \$90,000 in SB 630 funding to complete environmental analysis for the Secline Beach project. The NTPUD will augment the environmental analysis budget if costs exceed \$90,000 to ensure that it completes this task. The NTPUD has up to \$300,000 in other funds that serve as match funding for the SB 630 grant.

Combined, the two SB 630 grants will allocate up to \$590,000 from the Account.

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

The recommended actions are consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.7 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to local public agencies for purposes consistent with its mission.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan

The recommended actions are consistent with the Strategic Plan Goal to Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended actions are consistent with the Conservancy's Public Access and Recreation Program Guidelines and the Conservancy's Grant Guidelines. These grants advance the program objectives to improve public access and recreational opportunities.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended actions are consistent with the authority given to the Conservancy through SB 630 pursuant to Public Resources Code section 6717.6.1. The Conservancy engaged the SB 630 stakeholder group to evaluate the proposals. The Regan Beach project is EIP project #03.01.02.0135. The Secline Beach project is EIP project #03.01.02.0139.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to have no significant effect on the environment. Staff has evaluated the recommended actions and has found them to be exempt under CEQA.

Regan Beach Project Grant

This recommended action qualifies for a statutory exemption under CEQA Guidelines section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, because it involves only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions related to the Project and has no legally binding effect on later activities. This grant will involve planning and preparing environmental compliance documents for future actions that have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded. Staff prepared a notice of exemption (NOE) for this action (Attachment 5). If the Board approves this recommended action, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

Secline Beach Project Grant

This recommended action qualifies for a statutory exemption under CEQA Guidelines section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies, because it involves only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions related to the Project and has no legally binding effect on later activities. The grant will involve preparing environmental compliance documents for future actions that have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded. Staff prepared an NOE for this action (Attachment 6). If the Board approves this

recommended action, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1 – Resolution 25-03-02.1

Attachment 2 – Resolution 25-03-02.2

Attachment 3 – Regan Beach Enhancement and Accessibility Improvement Project Map

Attachment 4 – Secline Beach Enhancements Project Map

Attachment 5 – Regan Beach Project Notice of Exemption

- Exhibit A – NOE Map

Attachment 6 – Secline Beach Project Notice of Exemption

- Exhibit A – NOE Map

Conservancy Staff Contact

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