

TRAILHEAD RELOCATION GRANT

Recommended Actions: Adopt Resolution 25-09-03 (Attachment 1) making the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination and authorizing an implementation grant to the Tahoe Cross-Country Ski Education Association (TCCSEA) for up to \$125,000 of Proposition 68 funding to construct the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project, Phase 1 (Project).

Executive Summary: The recommended action authorizes a \$125,000 grant to the TCCSEA to construct the Project. The Project will create a new public trailhead near North Tahoe High School in Tahoe City by constructing a parking lot, sidewalk, and storm water improvements. The new trailhead will provide public access to the extensive network of hiking, mountain bike, and cross-country ski trails in north Lake Tahoe. This includes Burton Creek State Park, the California Tahoe Conservancy's (Conservancy) Dollar Property, and other public open space lands (Attachment 2). The improvements constructed during the Project will also support the future relocation of the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge to the Project site. The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Goal to Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All. Upon Board authorization, staff will execute a grant agreement with the TCCSEA.

Location: The Project is located in Tahoe City on Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) land (Assessment Number (AN) 093-160-064) off Polaris Road and adjacent to the North Tahoe High School, in Placer County (Attachment 3).

Fiscal Summary: The Conservancy will award up to \$125,000 of Proposition 68 funds to TCCSEA to construct the Project.

Overview

History

The Conservancy has supported recreational activities near the Project location for several decades. Through acquisitions and land exchanges, including the 1989 purchase of the 940-acre Dollar Property, the Conservancy has significantly expanded public lands available for a wide range of recreational uses. In addition, the Conservancy has long-standing license agreements with the TCPUD to allow cross-

country ski grooming in the winter and a range of summertime activities on the Dollar Property.

The Tahoe Cross-Country Ski Area consists of the Dollar Property and adjacent lands owned by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, TCPUD, and USDA Forest Service. The Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge serves as the entrance to the ski area and as the primary trailhead. The TCCSEA operates the lodge year-round, providing grooming, ski rentals, and winter programs, as well as mountain bike rentals and outdoor programs during the summer.

The TCPUD and TCCSEA began working together in 2014 to begin planning to relocate the lodge to a TCPUD-owned property adjacent to North Tahoe High School (AN 093-160-064). The Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project will relocate the existing lodge to this new site to improve public trail access and connectivity, expand parking to reduce neighborhood impacts, and take advantage of the site's higher elevation for a more consistent snowpack. In 2022, the Conservancy Board authorized a land exchange with the TCPUD, in part, to support the future relocation of the lodge and improve other management efficiencies.

Detailed Description of Recommended Action

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

Conservancy staff recommends the Board authorize a grant up to \$125,000 to the TCCSEA. The TCCSEA is implementing the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project in two phases. The grant will support Phase 1. For Phase 1, the TCCSEA will develop a new public trailhead near the North Tahoe High School by constructing a parking lot, sidewalk, and stormwater infrastructure. In a future phase, the TCCSEA will construct the new lodge and associated amenities at the same site.

2. Overall Context and Benefits

The Project offers immediate public benefits that warrant moving forward with construction now, even if the new lodge and associated amenities are not built for several more years. The new trailhead will serve as a major regional access point for the extensive network of trails between Tahoe City and Kings Beach. Compared to the existing lodge location, the new trailhead provides access to flatter, wider, and more accessible trails, which will enable a wider variety of users to access the trails. The TCCSEA will also build a direct sidewalk connection between North Tahoe High School and the new trailhead, therefore improving access for students.

The Project will also help reduce parking impacts on the surrounding neighborhood by significantly increasing available parking. The new parking lot, located on TCPUD property, will provide 70 dedicated parking spaces and access to an additional 125 spaces through a shared parking agreement with North Tahoe High School. In contrast, the existing lodge parking lot has 43 spaces and is regularly filled to capacity, even during summer months, forcing visitors to park along unpaved road shoulders

throughout the neighborhood. The expanded parking and shared use agreement will better accommodate events and reduce shoulder parking, which causes erosion and creates safety concerns.

3. Anticipated Schedule for the Recommended Action

The TCCSEA anticipates completing the Project by summer 2026. As a condition of the grant, the TCCSEA will be required to monitor Project use for two years and operate and maintain it for twenty years after construction.

Financing

The total cost of the Project is approximately \$3 million. The recommended \$125,000 funding authorization will close the Project funding gap and allow the TCCSEA to complete the Project. The table below shows secured funding for the Project:

Funding Source	Amount
TCPUD	\$1,310,000
TOT-TBID Dollars at Work Program	\$1,000,000
Placer County Park Dedication Fees	\$250,000
Truckee Tahoe Airport District	\$125,000
Tahoe Fund	\$107,000
Private donations	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$2,842,000

The cost estimate for the future lodge relocation is approximately \$10 million.

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.7 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to nonprofit organizations for purposes consistent with its mission.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, which aims to provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All by improving connections between trails on Conservancy lands and neighboring paths and by working with partners to address seasonal public land access issues such as winter access to trailheads and parking areas.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Public Access and Recreation Program Guidelines (2009). The Project will increase and enhance significant regional public access and public recreational opportunities consistent with

natural resource preservation and increase non-motorized transportation and recreation opportunities.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended action supports the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) priority to improve public recreation facilities (EIP project number 03.01.02.0141, Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Project).

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

The TCPUD, acting as the lead agency, prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project to comply with CEQA. The TCPUD's Board of Directors certified the EIR, adopted CEQA Findings of Fact and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and filed a notice of determination (NOD) on February 25, 2021. The TCPUD's EIR and related documents are available for public review on [the TCPUD website](https://www.tcpud.org/district-projects/special-projects/tahoe-cross-country-lodge-replacement-and-expansion) at: <https://www.tcpud.org/district-projects/special-projects/tahoe-cross-country-lodge-replacement-and-expansion> (Attachment 4).

The Conservancy, acting as a responsible agency, previously reviewed and considered the EIR as part of its consideration of a land exchange with the TCPUD. The EIR analyzed the exchange as a component of the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project. On June 16, 2022, the Conservancy Board approved Resolution 22-06-04, adopting the MMRP and its own CEQA Findings of Fact, and authorizing the exchange (Attachment 5).

On October 15, 2024, the TCPUD filed an addendum to the EIR to analyze minor changes made to the Tahoe Cross-Country Lodge Replacement and Expansion Project during the design phase. These changes include an alternate route for a utility corridor, with less disturbance than the route originally considered; increasing the building size by approximately 200 square feet, in part to accommodate Americans with Disabilities Act requirements; moving the location of the lodge by approximately 30 feet to reduce meadow intrusion and provide space for a solar panel arrangement; rearranging and reducing impervious coverage in the parking lot and incorporating a shared parking agreement with North Tahoe High School; and incorporating greenhouse gas reduction strategies. The addendum did not identify any new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified significant effects. In addition, due to the changes, fewer large trees will be removed from the site than were contemplated in the EIR.

Staff has reviewed the EIR and the addendum and believes that the Project was adequately analyzed in those documents. Therefore, no further environmental review is required. Further, staff reviewed the Findings of Fact adopted by the Board in June 2022, which addressed each of the Tahoe Cross Country Lodge Replacement and

Expansion Project's potentially significant effects, and determined that the Findings considered all of the Project's potentially significant effects.

Staff recommends that the Board consider the addendum prepared by the TCPUD as lead agency; find that the potential environmental effects of the Project are within the scope of the EIR and addendum, and the Conservancy can rely on the previously adopted Findings of Fact; and authorize the proposed grant. If the Board authorizes the grant, staff will file an NOD with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15096. Attachment 6 contains the Conservancy's proposed NOD.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1 – Resolution 25-09-03

Attachment 2 – Location Map

Attachment 3 – Project Map

Attachment 4 – TCPUD CEQA Documentation

Attachment 5 – Resolution 22-06-04

Attachment 6 – Notice of Determination

 Exhibit A – Location Map

 Exhibit B – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Filing Fee Receipt

Conservancy Staff Contact

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