

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY

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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
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TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

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2800 Cottage Way
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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS

FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

PROJECT: Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project (State Clearinghouse #2006082150)

AGENCIES: California Department of Parks and Recreation, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

ACTION: Notice of availability of the draft environmental impact report/environmental impact statement/environmental impact statement (draft EIR/EIS/EIS) and notice of public hearing.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Article VII of the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact and Chapter 5 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances, California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency have made available for public review and comment the draft EIR/EIS/EIS for the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project.

The notice of availability and/or draft EIR/EIS/EIS is being distributed to interested agencies, stakeholder organizations, and individuals. This distribution ensures that interested parties have an opportunity to express their views regarding the environmental effects of the project, and to ensure that information pertinent to permits and approvals is provided to decision makers for the lead agencies, CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA responsible agencies.

DATES: A public meeting on the draft EIR/EIS/EIS will be conducted by State Parks, Reclamation, and TRPA. Public comments will be accepted during this meeting and recorded on the public comment table. However, it is not necessary to provide testimony during the public hearing; comments on the draft EIR/EIS/EIS will be accepted throughout the review period, as described below. In compliance with the time limits mandated by State law and TRPA, your response should be sent at the earliest possible date, but received no later than November 4, 2010.

Oral and written comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, will be made available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from public disclosure, which will be honored to the extent allowable by law. There may be circumstances in which a respondent's identity may also be withheld from public disclosure, as allowable by law. If you wish to have your name and/or address withheld, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

All comments will be combined and addressed in the final EIR/EIS/EIS. It is only necessary to send comments to one agency. Written comments can be sent to the following address:

State of California Department of Parks and Recreation
Sierra District
Cyndie Walck
P.O. Box 16
Tahoe City, CA 96145

If comments are provided via email, please utilize the following format:

Email to: utproject@parks.ca.gov
Subject Line: River-Golf Course EIR/EIS/EIS
Directions:

- (1) Attach comments in an MS Word document
- (2) Include commenter's U.S. Postal Service mailing address in MS Word.

Following the close of the public comment period for the draft EIR/EIS/EIS, a final EIR/EIS/EIS will be prepared and circulated in accordance with CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA requirements that will include responses to all comments and selection of a preferred alternative. The lead agencies will circulate the final EIR/EIS/EIS for 60 days before taking action on the preferred alternative. Following the 60-day circulation period and lead agency consideration of all comments received during public review of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS and circulation of the final EIR/EIS/EIS each of the lead agencies (State Parks, Reclamation, and TRPA) would follow their respective agency processes to complete the environmental review process.

ADDRESSES: The following public site tours and public meetings are being held to provide interested persons with the opportunity to learn about the project and submit comments on the content of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS.

An informational public open house will be held at the following time and location:

September 29, 2010, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Lake Tahoe Golf Course
2500 Emerald Bay Road
South Lake Tahoe CA 96150

The public site tours will be held at the following times and locations:

September 8, 2010, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Lake Tahoe Golf Course
2500 Emerald Bay Road
South Lake Tahoe CA 96150

September 22, 2010, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Lake Tahoe Golf Course
2500 Emerald Bay Road
South Lake Tahoe CA 96150

In addition, the project alternatives will be an agenda item at the following TRPA meetings:

October 13, 2010
TRPA Advisory Planning Commission Meeting
Lower Kingsbury Grade
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

October 27 or 28, 2010
TRPA Governing Board Meeting
Lower Kingsbury Grade
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Please check the TRPA agenda for final date and time of project presentation at: <http://www.trpa.org/>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cyndie Walck at (530)581-0925

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the project is to improve geomorphic processes, ecological functions, and habitat values of the Upper Truckee River within the study area, helping to reduce the river's discharge of nutrients and sediment that diminish Lake Tahoe's clarity while providing access to public recreation opportunities in Washoe Meadows State Park (SP) and Lake Valley State Recreation Area (SRA). Four alternative approaches to implementing the proposed project are being considered, along with the No Project/No Action Alternative. Depending on which alternative is selected, the proposed restoration project may include continuing existing golf course use, removal of the entire Lake Tahoe Golf Course, or reconfiguration of the golf course to allow for restoration of the river, to reduce the area of Stream Environment Zone (SEZ) occupied by the golf course, and to allow for establishment of a buffer area between the golf course and the river.

The 520 acre study area is just north of Meyers and south of the City of South Lake Tahoe, within El Dorado County, California. It includes the southern portion of Washoe Meadows SP, Lake Valley SRA, and small portions of US Forest Service (USFS) and California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) lands, as well as a 1.5 mile reach of the Upper Truckee River.

The four action alternatives (Alternatives 2—5), and the No-Project/No-Action Alternative (Alternative 1) are analyzed in the draft EIR/EIS/EIS. For the No Project/No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, the river restoration and changes to the golf course would not be implemented. This alternative represents a projection of reasonably foreseeable future conditions that could occur if no project actions were implemented. Alternative 2 would involve restoration of the Upper Truckee River with a reconfigured 18-

hole regulation golf course. Alternative 3 would involve river restoration and providing a reduced-play golf course. Alternative 4 would use a combination of hard and soft stabilization to keep the river in its present configuration and includes only minor changes to the existing golf course, and Alternative 5 would involve decommissioning and removing the 18-hole regulation golf course to restore all or a portion of the golf course landscape to meadow and riparian habitat.

SIGNIFICANT OR ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ANTICIPATED: Implementing Alternative 1, the No Project/No Action Alternative would not result in any changes within the study area and; therefore, not result in any significant unavoidable impacts. Project-related and cumulative effects on modifications in Upper Truckee River coarse sediment transport and delivery downstream under Alternative 1 were found to be too speculative for meaningful significance conclusions.

Implementation of Alternative 2 would require relocation of a portion of the Lake Tahoe Golf Course to allow for geomorphic restoration of the river, to reduce the area of SEZ occupied by the golf course, and to allow for establishment of a riparian habitat zone and buffer area between the golf course and the river. Implementing Alternative 2 would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related and cumulative impacts: short-term risk of surface water or groundwater degradation during construction and short-term risk of surface water or groundwater degradation following construction. In addition, the cumulative effects of Alternative 2 on modifications in Upper Truckee River coarse sediment transport and delivery downstream and operations-related GHG emissions were found to be too speculative for meaningful significance conclusions.

Alternative 3 would include full geomorphic and ecosystem restoration of the Upper Truckee River and provision of a reduced-play golf course. This alternative would result in the same significant and unavoidable project-related and cumulative impacts discussed above for Alternative 2 and the same cumulative effects would be too speculative for meaningful significance conclusion. In addition, Alternative 3 would have a significant unavoidable impact related to a reduction in recreation opportunities, uses, and experiences related to golf related to the reduced-play golf course. Although golfing opportunities would still exist under Alternative 3, the existing golf experience at the Lake Tahoe Golf Course would be substantially reduced. Alternative 3 would also result in an adverse economic impact on both the community of South Lake Tahoe and State Parks. This impact would not contribute to a cumulative effect on golf recreation.

Alternative 4 would use a combination of hard and soft stabilization to keep the river in its present configuration and includes only minor changes to the existing golf course. This alternative would result in the same significant and unavoidable project-related and cumulative impacts and cumulative effects that would be too speculative for meaningful consideration discussed above for Alternative 2.

Alternative 5 would involve decommissioning and removing the 18-hole regulation golf course to restore all or a portion of the golf course footprint to meadow and riparian habitat. This alternative would result in the same significant and unavoidable project-related and cumulative impacts discussed above for Alternative 3. Alternative 5 would also result in cumulative effects on modifications in Upper Truckee River coarse sediment transport and delivery downstream and operation-related GHG emissions that were found to be too speculative for meaningful consideration.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS: Implementation of Alternative 1 (No Project/No Action) would not result in any changes within the study area; therefore, this alternative would not result in any project-related beneficial effects.

Implementing Alternative 2 would result in project-related beneficial effects on long-term increase in peak flows generated or released downstream, long-term increase in overbanking during small to moderate flood events, long-term modification of groundwater levels and flow patterns, long-term increased surface/soil erosion within the study area, fine sediment and nutrient retention within the study area, long-term changes to fish and aquatic habitat, long-term effects on sensitive habitats and special-status plant species, effects on potential wildlife movement corridors, and land coverage changes. Alternative 2 would also result in the following cumulative beneficial effects: long-term modified groundwater levels and flow patterns, long-term stream channel erosion, long-term fine sediment and nutrient retention, long-term effects on fisheries and aquatic resources, effects on special-status plants and sensitive habitats, effects on common or special-status wildlife resources. Implementing Alternative 2 would assist in the long-term productivity of the Lake Tahoe Golf Course while restoring the river and reducing sediment delivery to the lake, which would help to sustain and support the social and economic health of the South Lake Tahoe area by providing an improved 18-hole regulation golf course. The golf course would support seasonal tourism in the South Lake Tahoe area, which would provide an economic benefit to the Lake Tahoe business community and foster employee retention.

Alternative 3 would result in the same project-related and cumulative beneficial effects as discussed above for Alternative 2 except for long-term increased surface/soil erosion within the study area. In addition, Alternative 3 would result in a beneficial effect on long-term increase in stormwater runoff volumes, long-term reduction of irrigation-water demand, and long-term effects on special-status and common wildlife species and habitats.

Implementation of Alternative 4 would result in project-related and cumulative beneficial effects on long-term changes to fish and aquatic habitat, long-term effects on sensitive habitats and special-status plant species, long-term effects on special-status and common wildlife species and habitats, and potential wildlife movement corridors.

Alternative 5 would result in the same project-related and cumulative beneficial effects as discussed above for Alternative 3.

DRAFT EIR/EIS/EIS COPIES: Copies of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS are available for public inspection and review at the following locations:

This document is available for review by the public during normal business hours at the following locations:

State Parks' Administrative office at Sugarpine Point State Park
7360 West Lake Blvd
Tahoma, Ca 96142

State Parks' Northern Service Center
One Capitol Mall, Suite 410
Sacramento, CA 95814

TRPA front desk
128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Regional Library,
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

South Lake Tahoe Library front desk
1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Posted electronically at:

<http://www.restoreuppertruckee.net/index.htm>
http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=981 (click on El Dorado County)
www.trpa.org
http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=5760

Hard copies can be printed for purchase at:

Staples
2061 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

CDs are also available upon request from State Parks. Please submit request to: utproject@parks.ca.gov.