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STAFF REPORT

Date: March 20, 2024

To: TRPA Environmental Improvement Program Committee

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Environmental Improvement Program Outreach Update and Lake Tahoe Restoration Act Priorities

Summary and Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational item only; no action is required.

Project Description/Background:

The EIP is the implementation arm of the Regional Plan and centers around proactive project implementation to accelerate threshold attainment. This bi-state, cross-boundary restoration partnership has implemented more than 800 projects since 1997 to improve the environmental health of the Tahoe Basin. The [EIP 2022 Accomplishments Report](#) provides a summary of the program focus areas and the most recent accomplishment data.

A key component of the EIP is the collaborative funding framework across federal, state, and local jurisdictions as well as tribal, non-profit, and private partners. Each EIP project is often funded by a variety of funding sources that combine to amplify and increase the pace and scale of restoration. One key federal funding source of the EIP is the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (LTRA). Congress passed the LTRA in 2000, which authorized 300 million dollars for critical restoration projects to maintain and improve Lake Tahoe's clarity and ecosystem. In 2016, President Obama signed legislation that included another iteration of LTRA, and authorized an additional 415 million dollars for restoration projects including aquatic invasive species prevention and control, forest health and wildfire risk prevention, and water quality and watersheds restoration and improvement.

Since 2016, LTRA has provided 114 million dollars for restoration projects throughout the Basin, and catalyzed over 500 million dollars in state, local, and private matching funds. The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2016 expires in September 2024. Without the Act's extension, important projects to thin overstocked forests, tackle aquatic invasive species, and protect the lake's world-famous clarity could be slowed or stalled.

This month, a group of Tahoe EIP partners met with legislators and agency executives in Washington D.C. to discuss the urgent need for LTRA reauthorization. TRPA staff will present key takeaways and outcomes from the trip. Additionally, TRPA staff will provide an overview of upcoming EIP projects that are prioritized for LTRA funding.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this item, please contact Kat McIntyre, EIP Department Manager at 775-589-5263 or kmcintyre@trpa.gov.

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