

Appendix F

Comments on the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR
and Responses

F COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIS/EIS/EIR AND RESPONSES

This Final EIS/EIS/EIR includes all comments received during the public review period for the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR and provides responses to issues identified in those comments. All written comment letters are included at the end of this appendix under Section F.4, "Comment Letters." As described in Chapter 1, "Introduction," of this Final EIS/EIS/EIR, comments were accepted during a 60-day public and agency review period for the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR from June 10 through August 9, 2022. During the review period, public meetings and workshops were held on June 14, June 22, and June 27, 2022, to provide an overview of the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR and answer questions on the document and alternatives. In conformance with 40 CFR 1503.4, Section 6.14.1 of the TRPA Rules of Procedure, and Section 15088(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines, written responses in this appendix address comments on substantive or significant environmental issues (i.e., specific comments on the adequacy of the environmental document) received from reviewers of the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.1 LIST OF COMMENTERS ON THE DRAFT EIS/EIS/EIR

Table F-1 presents the list of commenters, including a numerical designation for each comment letter, the author of the comment letter, the date the comment letter was submitted, and the section number that contains the responses to each comment letter. Comment responses are organized by topic. Because many of the comment letters included comments on more than one topic, there are multiple sections listed in the table to encompass each of the responses for an individual comment letter.

Table F-1 List of Commenters

Letter #	Commenter	Date	Response Location (Section Number)
Agencies			
29	Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California Herman Fillmore	August 2, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.30
32	US Environmental Protection Agency Sarah Samples and Jean Prijatel	August 3, 2022	F.2.2
33	Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Edward Miller	August 4, 2022	F.2.3
47	Nevada State Clearinghouse Scott Carey	August 9, 2022	F.2.4
48	California State Lands Commission Eric Gillies and Jason Ramos	August 9, 2022	F.2.5
49	Tahoe City Public Utility District Matthew Homolka	August 9, 2022	F.2.6
50	Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California Rhiana Jones	August 9, 2022	F.2.7, F.3.14, F.3.32
Organizations and Individuals			
1	Gina Thompson	June 10, 2022	F.3.33
2	Joann Helmus	June 10, 2022	F.3.32
3	Marc Roos	June 10, 2022	F.3.6, F.3.7, F.3.23, F.3.31
4	Cory Allison		F.3.22, F.3.32

Letter #	Commenter	Date	Response Location (Section Number)
5	Robin Albee-Kesich	June 16, 2022	F.3.6, F.3.7, F.3.11, F.3.24
6	Kathy Astromoff	June 17, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.22, F.3.30, F.3.32
7	Michael Bosse	June 17, 2022	F.3.13, F.3.14, F.3.29, F.3.31, F.3.32
8	Whitney Foehl	June 21, 2022	F.3.6, F.3.7, F.3.11, F.3.31
9	Harold Appleton	June 22, 2022	F.3.42
10	Doris Healy	June 22, 2022	F.3.40
11	Maureen Montgomery	June 25, 2022	F.3.32
12	Dr. Owen Hughes	June 27, 2022	F.3.3, F.3.4, F.3.41
13	Owen Hughes	June 28, 2022	F.3.4
14	Owen Hughes	June 28, 2022	F.3.3
15	Owen Hughes	June 28, 2022	F.3.3, F.3.4
16	Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners Association William Lyons, Jr.	June 28, 2022	F.3.6, F.3.7, F.3.11, F.3.32, F.3.43,
17	Kimberly Enzensperger	June 28, 2022	F.3.24
18	Connie Spencer	June 28, 2022	F.3.29
19	Dana Schneider	June 29, 2022	F.3.32
20	Donna Reid	June 30, 2022	F.3.30, F.3.32
21	Friends of the West Shore Judith Tornese	July 4, 2022	F.3.8, F.3.32
22	Walter Mirczak	July 6, 2022	F.3.32
23	Michael Henriques	July 6, 2022	F.3.32
24	Lori Krumrei	July 6, 2022	F.3.32
25	Natural Heritage Institute Gerald Meral	July 7, 2022	F.3.32
26	John Dayberry	July 19, 2022	F.3.13, F.3.14, F.3.29, F.3.32
27	David Coward	July 28, 2022	F.3.32
28	David Coward	July 28, 2022	F.3.32
30	Gerald Meral	August 3, 2022	F.3.29, F.3.32
31	Belinda Breyer	August 3, 2022	F.3.19
34	Marilyn Henriques	August 4, 2022	F.3.32
35	Katie Roos	August 4, 2022	F.3.6, F.3.22, F.3.30, F.3.31
36	Jason Steves	August 4, 2022	F.3.32
37	Jeanne Baker	August 5, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.22, F.3.32
38	Jerry Winters	August 6, 2022	F.3.29, F.3.44

Letter #	Commenter	Date	Response Location (Section Number)
39	Tahoe Area Group, Sierra Club Peggy McKee	August 7, 2022	F.3.23, F.3.24, F.3.30, F.3.32
40	Friends of the West Shore Judith Tornese	August 8, 2022	F.3.2, F.3.5, F.3.11, F.3.25
41	Bill Ray	August 8, 2022	F.3.5, F.3.6, F.3.7, F.3.10, F.3.37
42	David Coglizer	August 8, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.24, F.3.32
43	Owen Hughes	August 8, 2022	F.3.3, F.3.17
44	Dennis Kuzak	August 9, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.11, F.3.23, F.3.32
45	Robert Tolin	August 9, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.11, F.3.20, F.3.29, F.3.34
46	Patricia Ferguson	August 9, 2022	F.3.32, F.3.35
51	Linnea and Greg Kehlet Hull	August 9, 2022	F.3.29, F.3.36
52	Friends of the West Shore Judith Tornese	August 9, 2022	F.3.3, F.3.5, F.3.8, F.3.9, F.3.10, F.3.12, F.3.22, F.3.25
53	Doug and Valerie Welch	August 9, 2022	F.3.22, F.3.23, F.3.24, F.3.32
54	Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association Jan Brisco	August 9, 2022	F.3.8, F.3.15, F.3.32
55	Susan Hacker	August 9, 2022	F.3.32
56	Linnea Kehlet Hull	August 9, 2022	F.3.17, F.3.19, F.3.21, F.3.33, F.3.40
57	Kirk Robinson	August 9, 2022	F.3.7, F.3.8, F.3.16, F.3.18, F.3.22, F.3.23, F.3.25, F.3.26, F.3.29, F.3.32, F.3.39, F.3.45
58	Julie Hutchinson	August 9, 2022	F.3.1, F.3.2, F.3.5, F.3.8, F.3.9, F.3.10, F.3.18, F.3.26, F.3.27, F.3.28, F.3.35
59	Mike Hacker	August 9, 2022	F.3.11, F.3.14, F.3.42
60	The League to Save Lake Tahoe Laura Patten	August 10, 2022	F.3.13, F.3.28, F.3.32, F.3.40
61	Roberta Freeberg	August 9, 2022	F.3.8, F.3.11, F.3.32
62	Joseph Carroll	August 10, 2022	F.3.29
63	Mimi Morris	August 10, 2022	F.3.32
64	Julie Hutchinson	August 10, 2022	F.3.1, F.3.2, F.3.5, F.3.8, F.3.9, F.3.10, F.3.18, F.3.26, F.3.27, F.3.28, F.3.35

Source: Compiled by Ascent Environmental in 2022.

F.2 RESPONSES TO AGENCY COMMENTS

Several comment letters were received from federal, state, and local agencies. This section provides responses specific to each agency comment letter.

F.2.1 Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Herman Fillmore, Cultural and Language Resources Director

August 2, 2022

The comment letter includes a statement of support for Alternative 3 and Alternative 4, the preferred alternative. The comments in this letter also express opposition to construction of a pier and boat ramp in Meeks Bay because of the scenic effects and limited functionality of those structures if water levels continue to decline. This comment letter pertains to the merits of the project and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. This comment will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval process.

Rhiana Jones, Director of the Washoe Environmental Protection Department

August 9, 2022

The comment letter states support for the preferred alternative but suggests removal of the paddlecraft storage. This letter also suggests that the Washoe Tribe could support implementing proposed AIS control measures. This comment pertains to the merits of the project and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. This comment will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

The comment letter also requests that the lead agencies clarify the discussion of the archaeological site described under the header "P-09-005224 - Mayala Wata" to indicate this site was a summer home and not a summer camp. In response to this comment, the following edits are made in Section 3.3, "Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources:"

P-09-005224 - Mayala Wata

This archaeological site was a prehistoric ~~camping~~ summer home site along Meeks Creek that was used by the Washoe Tribe during midsummer for fishing and plant resource gathering. Among the utilized natural resources readily available at *Mayala wata* were wild strawberries, raspberries, currant, rhubarb, camas, wild onions, lilies, and various seeds that were prominent in the Washoe diet. The site is still regarded as important by the Washoe Tribe who cooperatively manage the landscape with the U.S. Forest Service. The primary site locus of *Mayala Wata* is described as being located below the Meeks Creek Bridge on State Route 89 (SR 89); however, it was likely affected by bridge construction, and its informational value lost. Existing site boundaries appear to be incompletely defined and additional work would be needed to better characterize the resource. No previously unrecorded artifacts or features associated with the *Mayala wata* site were observed during the archaeological field survey.

F.2.2 US Environmental Protection Agency

Jean Prijatel, Manager, Environmental Review Branch

August 3, 2022

The comment letter expresses support for Alternative 4, the preferred alternative, because it best minimizes adverse effects while achieving project objectives. This comment pertains to the merits of the project and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. This comment will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval process.

The comment letter also notes that the document does not describe the percentage of non-English speaking visitors at the project area and suggests that interpretive materials be translated to languages reflective of the community

and visitors. The letter includes a specific example where interpretive signage could include a QR code that provides a link to materials translated for a variety of languages. In response to this comment, the following addition to the description of interpretive elements of the project shown with underlined text has been added to page 2-16 of Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," of this Final EIS/EIS/EIR:

INTERPRETATION

Interpretive features would be installed along the restored reach of Meeks Creek to highlight the restored condition of the creek, the history of Meeks Bay, Washoe Tribe cultural heritage, or other appropriate natural or cultural history themes relevant to the site. Interpretive features could include signs, kiosks, interpretive panels, interactive displays, and a self-guided nature trail. The USDA Forest Service would develop interpretive content and identify specific locations and designs of interpretive elements as part of the final design for the restoration features. Multiple languages to serve diverse users would be incorporated into interpretive materials, where appropriate and feasible.

The comment provides recommendations for additional air quality control measures. Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 under Impact 3.8-1 in Section 3.8, "Air Quality," of the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR includes a list of emission reduction measures, which incorporates some of the measures suggested by the comment (e.g., limiting equipment idling, operating equipment consistent with manufacturer's recommendations, and locating equipment away from sensitive receptors). The additional suggested mobile and stationary source controls identified in the comment letter are added to Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 on pages 3.8-18 and 3.8-19 of the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR. One measure recommended in the comment letter was not included in the mitigation measure because this measure would constrain the pool of available contractors and increase project implementation costs, which could make it infeasible to complete the project. The suggested measure that was not included recommended that the implementer prepare an inventory of all equipment prior to construction and identify the suitability of add-on emission controls for each piece of equipment before groundbreaking. Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 as revised in response to this comment, is shown below. As revised, all dust control measures identified in Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 have been determined to be feasible and appropriate and will be required during project implementation.

Mitigation Measure 3.8-1: Implement an El Dorado County Air Quality Management District-Approved Fugitive Dust Control Plan ~~Measures~~ During Construction

This mitigation measure will apply to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4.

As required by EDCAQMD Rule 223-1, USDA Forest Service shall implement all feasible and practicable fugitive dust control measures during construction. Emission reduction measures will include the EDCAQMD Rule 223-1 Best Management Practices as well as any additional measures deemed appropriate. The following feasible measures have been deemed appropriate for this project and will be implemented to reduce vehicle or equipment emissions. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ▶ All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using tarps, water, ~~non-toxic chemical~~ or organic stabilizer/suppressant, or vegetative ground cover.
- ▶ All onsite unpaved construction roads and offsite unpaved construction access roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or ~~non-toxic chemical or organic stabilizer/suppressant~~ wood chips.
- ▶ All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking.
- ▶ During demolition of buildings, ~~all exterior surfaces of the building~~ surfaces shall be wetted as necessary to control fugitive dust.

- ▶ Keep soil or other bulk materials with the potential to generate fugitive dust sufficiently wet when handling and storing.
- ▶ When materials are transported offsite, all material shall be covered, effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, or at least 6 inches of freeboard space from the top of the container shall be maintained.
- ▶ All construction operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from SR 89 and roadways within the project area ~~at least once every 24 hours~~ when operations are occurring. (Rotary brushes may be used to remove mud or dirt when it is preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions. ~~Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden.~~)
- ▶ Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surfaces of outdoor storage piles, piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or other dust control measures ~~chemical stabilizer/suppressant~~.
- ▶ Onsite vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall be limited to 15 mph.
- ▶ ~~Sandbags or other~~ Erosion control measures shall be installed to prevent silt runoff to public roadways from adjacent project areas ~~with a slope greater than 1 percent~~.
- ▶ Wheel washers shall be installed for all exiting trucks and equipment, or wheels shall be washed to remove accumulated dirt before leaving the site.
- ▶ Shaker racks (also referred to as rumble strips) shall be installed ~~on the perimeter of~~ at vehicle exits from the construction site to remove material from vehicle tire prior to entering a paved roadway.
- ▶ Excavation and grading activities shall be suspended when winds exceed 20 mph, or when visible emissions exceed 20 percent opacity at point-of-origin or if visible emissions extend more than 50 feet from point-of-origin, whichever is less.
- ▶ The overall area subject to excavation and grading at any one time shall be limited to the fullest extent possible.
- ▶ Onsite equipment shall be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturers' specifications.
- ▶ Incentivize the use of on-highway vehicles that meet, or exceed, EPA exhaust emissions standards for model year 2010 and newer heavy-duty on-highway compression-ignition engines (e.g., drayage trucks, long haul trucks, refuse haulers, shuttle buses, etc.).
- ▶ Incentivize the use of off-road vehicles and equipment that meet, or exceed, EPA Tier 4 exhaust emissions standards for heavy-duty nonroad compression-ignition engines (e.g., nonroad trucks, construction equipment, cargo handlers, etc.).
- ▶ When not in use, onsite equipment shall not be left idling for more than 5 minutes.
- ▶ Use existing power sources (e.g., power poles) or clean fuel (e.g., gasoline, biodiesel, natural gas) generators rather than temporary diesel power generators and use electrified equipment when feasible.
- ▶ Idling of construction-related equipment and construction-related vehicles is not permitted within 1,000 feet of any sensitive receptor (i.e., house, hospital, or school).
- ▶ ~~Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors.~~ Locate construction staging areas as far as feasible from sensitive air pollution receptors.
- ▶ Plant vegetative ground cover in disturbed areas as soon as feasible. Water appropriately until vegetation is established.

Additional measures may be identified by USDA Forest Service, TRPA, EDCAQMD, Lahontan RWQCB, or a contractor as appropriate. ~~All measures shall be incorporated into a Fugitive Dust Control Plan.~~

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 would reduce emissions of fugitive dust PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} through the application of tested fugitive dust control measures ~~through the prepared of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan~~. EDCAQMD's guidance states that projects that implement a ~~Fugitive Dust Control Plan~~ fugitive dust control measures would have less-than-significant PM impacts. Thus, application of Mitigation Measure 3.8-1 would be sufficient to reduce this impact to a **less-than-significant** level.

The comment letter suggests the mitigation measure include a measure to prepare a traffic and parking management plan that minimizes traffic interference and maintains traffic flow. Because the project would include replacement of the SR 89 bridge, which would interrupt traffic flow, preparation of a traffic management plan that addresses maintaining vehicle access across Meeks Creek during construction activities is already incorporated into the project and is described under Section 2.10.2, "State Route 89 Bridge Replacement," in Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives." Construction of the bridge could result in some temporary reduction in on-highway parking at either end of the bridge, but there would not be a substantial loss of permanent or temporary parking from this project such that parking would not be available during construction of the project. Thus, there would not be a need for a parking management plan.

F.2.3 Meeks Bay Fire Protection District

Edward Miller, Board President

August 4, 2022

The comment letter notes that Meeks Bay Fire Protection District (MBFPD) and North Tahoe Fire Protection District service areas cover more shoreline than any other fire district, do not have a public safety watercraft, and Lake Tahoe is a dangerous body of water. The "Fire Protection and Emergency Services" subsection in Section 3.10, "Public Safety and Hazards," provides a description of the setting as it relates to the district service areas and emergency responses provided by these emergency responders.

The comment letter suggests that the project area, with close proximity to the MBFPD Station 67, would be geographically fitting as a location for an emergency services boat if a pier is built. The letter notes that if a pier is constructed as part of the project, MBFPD would like their request for a public safety boat to be considered. As described as part of Alternative 1 in Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," this alternative proposes a boating pier that could have the capability of docking an emergency services boat. Although Alternative 4, the preferred alternative, would not construct a pier, as noted on page 3.10-18 of Section 3.10, "Public Safety and Hazards," TRPA along with emergency service providers have completed a regional planning process to identify locations for shoreline public safety facilities. The North Tahoe Fire Protection District (which includes Meeks Bay) was included in this process and has identified a location at Tahoe State Recreation Area in Tahoe City. This location is centrally located and includes a deep-water pier that can be improved for a safety facility. Thus, consideration of providing a public safety boat on the west shore is occurring outside of this EIS/EIS/EIR process.

The comments included in this letter pertain to the merits of the alternatives and do not provide evidence that indicates the EIS/EIS/EIR is inadequate. This comment will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval process.

F.2.4 Nevada State Clearinghouse

Scott Carey, State Lands Planner

August 9, 2022

The comment letter notes that the Nevada State Clearinghouse is the single point of contact for NEPA proposals for the State of Nevada and posted the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR for the project for 60 days. No comments were received during that time. No specific issues related to the content, analysis, or conclusions in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR are raised in this comment.

F.2.5 California State Lands Commission

Eric Gillies, Assistant Chief Division of Environmental Planning and Management

Jason Ramos, Senior Environmental Scientist

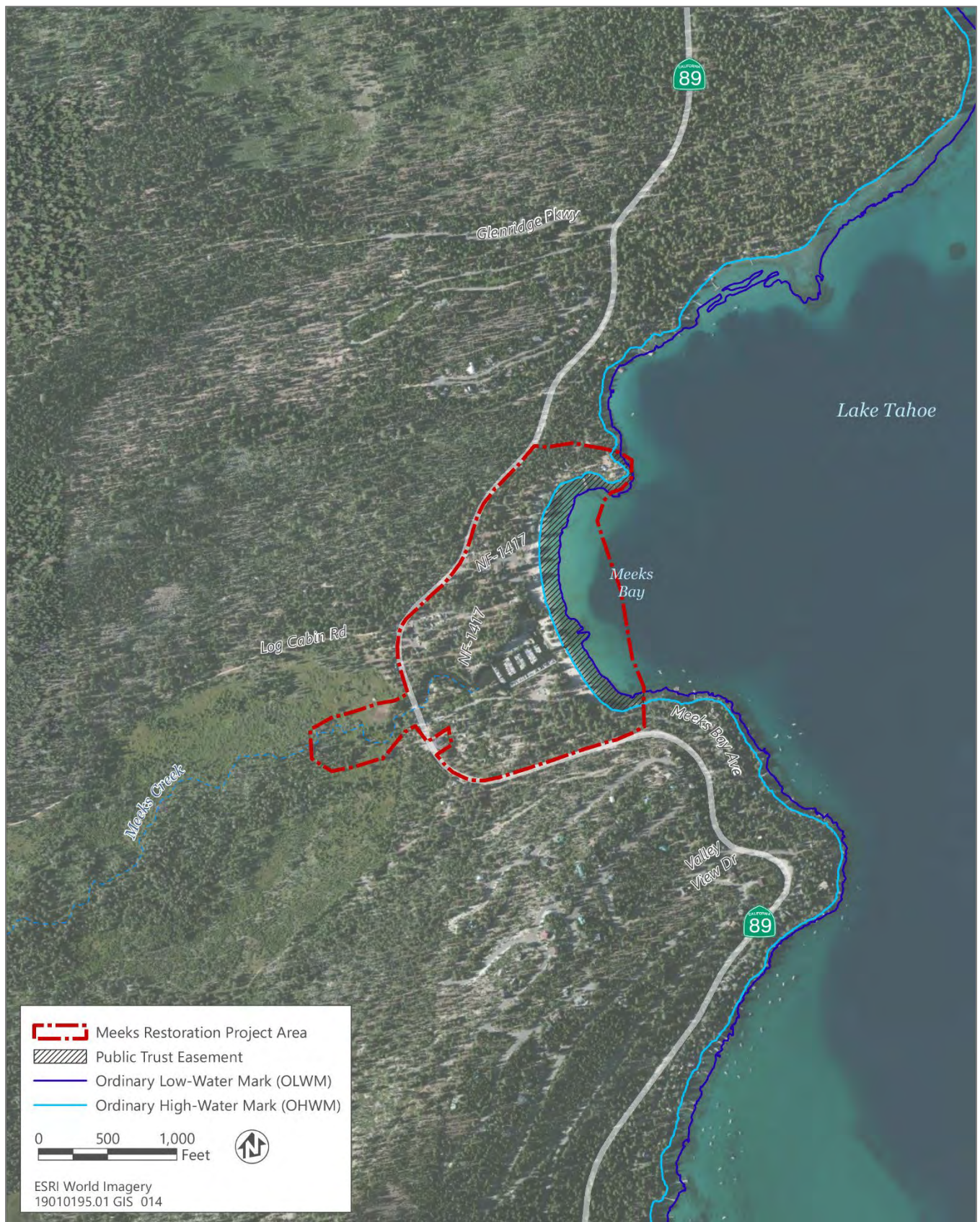
August 9, 2022

The comment letter includes comments related to California State Lands Commission (Commission) jurisdiction, day-use access to the beach and parking, public access restrictions during construction, and Lake Tahoe shoreline and nearshore restoration. Each of these topics is addressed below.

COMMISSION JURISDICTION AND PUBLIC TRUST LANDS

The comment letter describes the jurisdiction and management authority for the Commission to include all ungranted tidelands, submerged lands, and the beds of navigable lakes and waterways. As it relates to lakes, the state holds fee ownership of the bed of the waterway landward to the ordinary low-water mark (OLWM) (below elevation 6,223 feet) and a Public Trust easement landward to the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) (6,228.75 feet). The comment letter requests that these elevation lines be identified for all proposed work, inclusive of any pier construction, construction activities at the mouth of Meeks Creek, non-motorized watercraft launch structure, and removal and new construction of shoreline stabilization structures. Figure 2-2, "Meeks Bay Restoration Project Area," on page 2-5 and Figure 2-4, "Meeks Bay Conceptual Restoration Design," on page 2-9 of Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," have been revised with the updated versions below to identify the approximate locations of the OLWM, OHWM, and public trust easement within the project area.

It is assumed that, for all action alternatives, removal of marina infrastructure at the mouth of the creek and removal of rock gabion wall and concrete structures and shoreline stabilization in the northern portion of the project area would occur within the Public Trust easement between the OLWM and OHWM. For Alternatives 1 and 2, a proposed pier would be located on State sovereign land and formal authorization for use of this land would be required from the Commission. For Alternatives 3 and 4, a proposed moveable, universally accessible paddlecraft launch structure could be located within the Public Trust easement since it would extend below elevation 6,223 feet (i.e., OLWM). During final design of the selected alternative, exact dimensions and locations of all proposed facilities would be identified relative to the OLWM and OHWM. As described under "State Actions/Permits" in Chapter 1, "Introduction," of the EIS/EIS/EIR, construction of any structure on state lands under the Commission's jurisdiction would require lease approval from the Commission. Although no permit from the Commission would be required for structures in the Public Trust easement, TRPA would coordinate with the Commission before issuing a TRPA permit, and design of project features would need to demonstrate that public access would be maintained.



Source: Adapted by Ascent in 2021.

Figure 2-2 Meeks Bay Restoration Project Area

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Source: Image produced and provided by Balance Hydrologics, Inc. in 2021.

Figure 2-4 Meeks Bay Conceptual Restoration Design

DAY-USE BEACH ACCESS AND PARKING

The comment letter recommends describing the potential range of uses that available parking could serve, including identifying the location and number of parking spaces that would primarily serve day-use beach access. The comment requests clarification related to whether the proposed increase in parking for Alternative 4 would be used for day-use beach access or overflow campground parking and other uses.

Parking locations are shown in Figure 2-3, "No Action Alternative Conceptual Plan," which depicts existing conditions in the project area. Parking lots are located near day-use areas north and south of Meeks Creek, near the Meeks Bay Resort office, and behind the resort lodging units. Each of the conceptual plans for the action alternatives (i.e., Figures 2-8, 2-10, 2-12, and 2-14) in Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," also provide approximate locations for parking. The action alternatives would also include new bike parking areas and bike racks near both day-use areas to accommodate cyclists accessing the project area via the new multi-use path that would connect to off-site multi-use paths. To clarify the existing and future management of parking in the project area, which is primarily for day-use, the paragraph under the "Parking" section in Section 2.5.5, "Other Common Features," on page 2-16 of Chapter 2 is edited as follows:

Parking in the southern part of the project area would vary by alternative (see the description of alternatives in Sections 2.6 through 2.8, below), but parking in the northern part would be relocated and reconfigured under all four action alternatives, retaining the existing number of parking spaces (a total of approximately 300 spaces). Parking at the Meeks Bay Resort consists of approximately 300 total parking spaces interspersed throughout the resort and including formal paved parking areas, dispersed parking areas along access roads, parking associated with cabins, and approximately 50 informal parking spaces on unpaved areas adjacent to the marina that has provided boat trailer parking. The majority of the existing parking throughout the project area is intended to be used for day-use purposes to facilitate access to the beach. A portion of the parking is used by guests at Meeks Bay Resort, and permit holders (i.e., Washoe Tribe and Tahoe Recreation) manage the parking areas for overflow parking for overnight visitors, as needed. Implementation of each of the action alternatives would result in a continuation of the existing patterns of parking uses. Designated parking in the Meeks Bay Resort would be located in areas surrounding the general store and cabins. The existing, unpaved parking spaces would be restored to natural conditions and or paved to current standards and the new spaces would be constructed with water quality BMPs. New bicycle racks would be installed near both day-use areas to accommodate cyclists accessing the project area via the proposed Tahoe Trail multi-use path.

PUBLIC ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

The comment letter requests that the EIS/EIS/EIR provide a detailed description of any temporary restrictions on shoreline access and navigation in the lake during all construction phases of the project. The comment suggests including mitigation measures that require public notices or signs be placed at the project area to inform the public of temporary access restrictions.

Impact 3.1-1, "Affect the Quality of Recreational Opportunities," includes analysis of temporary disruption of recreation uses in the project area during construction. The action alternatives would be required to implement RPM REC-1, which includes requirements for notification of construction activities and closures in the project area. The second paragraph on page 3.1-17 has been revised to clarify that implementation of this RPM would be required for each of the action alternatives:

Construction of features of Alternative 1 would result in temporary disruption of recreation uses in the project area, including temporary closures of limited portions of the beach and lake during active periods of construction. While visitors are likely to continue to access portions of the project area during construction, the daytime construction noise could temporarily degrade the quality of recreational opportunities. Construction noise impacts are discussed in Impact 3.11-1 in Section 3.11, "Noise." With implementation of the

project, notification of planned construction would be provided on websites associated with the project area and signage would be posted at the project area consistent with RPM REC-1.

LAKE TAHOE SHORELINE AND NEARSHORE RESTORATION

Comments request additional detail about how the restoration would improve and affect shoreline and nearshore conditions for the lake environment surrounding Meeks Creek. The restoration design is conceptual at this planning phase and, thus, detailed information about changes to stream mouth morphology and meandering, sediment discharge, littoral drift conditions (i.e., movement of water and sediment within the lake along the shoreline), lake bottom bathymetry (i.e., underwater topography), and discharge of organic matter would be further developed at final design prior to Lease of State Lands and issuance of TRPA, Lahontan RWQCB, and US Army Corps of Engineers permits.

Shoreline and nearshore water quality are discussed in Impacts 3.6-1 and 3.6-4 in Section 3.6, "Hydrology and Water Quality." The following underlined language has been added to the first paragraph under "Alternative 1: Restoration with Boating Pier," to clarify the surface water quality benefits to Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe as a result of the project. Impact summary 3.6-1 is amended as follows:

The restoration project would improve water quality in Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe by reducing erosion, allowing for floodplain sediment deposition, removing hydrocarbons and metals in the marina, and improving channel stability. Implementation of erosion and sediment controls, maintenance of temporary construction BMPs, waste control measures, and management controls for stormwater runoff would be required by regulatory agencies including TRPA and the Lahontan RWQCB for both construction and maintenance activities. Because regulatory protections are in place to minimize erosion and transport of sediment and other pollutants during construction, construction related impacts on water quality for the action alternatives would be reduced to a **less-than-significant** level.

Also, in response to this comment, the following language was added to the text on page 3.16-11 under the "Alternative 1: Restoration with Boating Pier," header in the Impact 3.6-1 discussion:

Human disturbance of Meeks Creek has increased fine sediment production from bank erosion and eliminated overbank flow, which would otherwise deposit fine sediment on the floodplain. This condition has resulted in reduced water quality of Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe. Pollution directly related to marina use has also decreased the water quality of Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe. The restoration of Meeks Creek, the lagoon, and barrier beach would improve water quality of the creek and lake by reducing fine sediment production and eliminating metals and hydrocarbons deposited by boats in the marina. Allowing the mouth of the lagoon to periodically aggrade and create a barrier beach would prevent fine sediment carried in suspension from freely entering Lake Tahoe as it does under existing conditions at the fixed marina mouth. During periods of high flow, Meeks Creek would breach the barrier beach and some sediment stored in the lagoon or being supplied from upstream will be flushed into Lake Tahoe; however, the long-term trend would be for less sediment—in particular fine sediment—entering the lake. This periodic closure and breaching of the barrier beach is a natural process consistent with undisturbed lagoons around Lake Tahoe.

Alternative 1 would involve complete restoration of Meeks Creek and lagoon and removal of the marina and related infrastructure, which would result in several periods of high-intensity disturbance during restoration activities. The primary threat to water quality during these periods would be sedimentation from physical disturbance associated with the removal of the marina and fill placement in the creek channel to restore the wetland, which is further described along with the construction effects below. This alternative would also replace the SR 89 bridge over Meeks Creek to provide a wider opening for Meeks Creek to restore natural flow patterns and sediment transport dynamics by reducing the severity of the hydraulic bottleneck created by the existing box culverts (Balance Hydrologics 2021). The bridge replacement would decrease bank and bed erosion in Meeks Creek, and improve channel stability and aquatic habitat conditions. The proposed bridge would include a 10-foot-wide multi-use path and would span the floodplain. An additional multi-use path bridge would be constructed downstream to connect both campgrounds. As described in Chapter 2,

"Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," the proposed bridges would span over the entire Meeks Creek channel (i.e., no abutments on the bank or support piers in channel) and be above the FEMA 100-year flood elevation. Thus, these project components would not contribute to soil erosion in the creek. The hydraulics of the flow area under the bridge would have velocities that do not exceed those in adjacent reaches upstream or downstream. Biotechnical bank protection would be used as a preference to exposed rip rap rock wherever possible. This would eliminate the deep fill found along the current alignment, allow for better overbank flow conveyance, and increase meadow area. Various design options including boardwalks and multiple bridge spans could be used to provide for floodplain flow conveyance. Replacement of the SR 89 bridge and the addition of bank protection measures would reduce fine sediment production and improve fine sediment deposition along the creek; thereby reducing the release of fine sediment into Lake Tahoe and improving water quality in the creek and lake over time.

Also, in response to this comment, the second paragraph on page 3.16-11 under Alternative 1 in the Impact 3.6-1 discussion has been revised to clarify:

One of the objectives of the Meeks Creek Restoration Project is to improve long-term water quality in both Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe due to stabilization of the channel bed and banks, as well as through enhanced floodplain connectivity and re-establishment of a transitional delta lagoon wetland system... Permanent BMPs would be installed for the entire project area resulting in a long-term benefit to water quality in both Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe.

To clarify that these surface water quality benefits of restoration under Alternative 1 would also occur under Alternative 2, the first paragraph under "Alternative 2: Restoration with Pedestrian Pier," on page 3.6-13 has been revised as follows:

Restoration and construction activities associated with Alternative 2 would be similar to those discussed in Alternative 1, except that Alternative 2 would not include demolition and reconstruction of the motel style cabins and would include two multi-use path bridges that would span or minimize impacts to the reconstructed floodplain and connect the campgrounds. Benefits to surface water quality of Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe would also be the same as described above for Alternative 1. Impacts related to construction and maintenance of other upland facilities would be ~~the same as~~ very similar to those discussed under Alternative 1.

To clarify that these surface water quality benefits of restoration under Alternative 1 would also occur under Alternative 3, the following new sentence has been added to the first paragraph under "Alternative 3: Restoration with No Pier," on page 3.6-14 as follows:

Restoration activities and construction associated with Alternative 3 would be similar to those discussed for Alternative 1 except Alternative 3 would include two multi-use path bridges that would span or minimize impacts to the reconstructed floodplain and connect the campground. Benefits to surface water quality of Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe would also be the same as described above for Alternative 1.

To clarify that these surface water quality benefits of the project would also occur under Alternative 4, the following new sentence has been added to the first paragraph under "Alternative 4: Preferred Alternative," on page 3.6-14 as follows:

Restoration and construction activities associated with Alternative 4 would be very similar to those discussed in Alternative 1, except that Alternative 4 would not include construction of a pier. Benefits to surface water quality of Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe from restoration would also be the same as described above for Alternative 1.

Lake currents, littoral processes, shoreline erosion, and stream mouth morphology are discussed under Impact 3.6-2 on page 3.6-15 of the EIS/EIS/EIR. Additional explanation of how the restoration activities would affect these processes has been added to the first paragraph under the Alternative 1 heading as shown by the underlined text here and is included in Section 3.6 this Final EIS/EIS/EIR:

Alternative 1 would include complete restoration of Meeks Creek and lagoon, which would allow natural geomorphic processes to occur, resulting in modulated sediment supply to the littoral zone (Balance Hydrologics 2021) and the formation of a barrier beach at the mouth of Meeks Creek. Adams and Minor (2002) estimated that between 1938 and 1998, about 1.7 acres shoreline eroded from Meeks Bay, amounting to approximately 9,150 cubic yards (or 11,500 tons) of sand. Sediment aggradation in the marina and subsequent dredging are likely main causes of erosion. Restoration of the lagoon would allow more sand-size sediment important to littoral processes to reach the shorezone. Under current conditions, a large fraction of the sand transported by Meeks Creek is thought to settle within the marina (Balance Hydrologics 2021). After restoration, during times of low flow when Meeks Creek is transporting fine sediment but not sand, there would be increased opportunity for the fine sediment to settle within the lagoon due to emergent riparian vegetation, increased complexity in flow paths, or a physical barrier when the mouth closes (Balance Hydrologics 2021). Geomorphic function would be restored to the Meeks Creek channel by restoring pre-disturbance channel morphology, including a riparian corridor and associated floodplain that transitions through a dynamic delta system into a shallow lagoon with a dynamic mouth that may open and close or migrate laterally within a defined migration zone (Balance Hydrologics 2021). Additionally, with the sheet piling for the marina inlet removed, the mouth of Meeks Creek would be allowed to interact with backwater from Lake Tahoe and the mouth would be expected to periodically close at the barrier beach. The mouth would also be able to migrate laterally within a confined section of the barrier beach (Balance Hydrologics 2021). This type of dynamic barrier beach is present at the nearby mouth of Trout Creek in the Upper Truckee Marsh. At the Trout Creek barrier beach, a relatively high frequency of inundation, littoral sediment transport, sediment transport and deposition from upstream, and subsurface of resistant silt and clay layers provide for a post-restoration dynamic equilibrium and dynamic vertical stability at the mouth of the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek (CTC and DGS 2017). This stable condition would also be expected for Meeks Creek once restored. The restoration would have a beneficial effect on littoral processes and decrease shoreline erosion.

As noted on page 3.6-15 under "Alternative 2: Restoration with Pedestrian Pier," and under "Alternative 3: Restoration with No Pier," and "Alternative 4: Preferred Alternative," on page 3.6-16, each of these action alternatives would result in a less-than-significant impact on lake currents, littoral processes, and shoreline and effects would be similar to those discussed for Alternative 1. Furthermore, as noted in Section 4.5, "Environmentally Superior Alternative," in Chapter 4, compared to Alternatives 3 and 4, with implementation of the boat or pedestrian pier, Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in slightly greater short-term adverse effects on aquatic biological resources and hydrology and water quality from pier construction activities that would occur in the lake; however, compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of best management practices discussed in Impact 3.5-1 in Section 3.5, "Aquatic Biological Resources," and Impact 3.6-1 in Section 3.6, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the overall impact would be less than significant.

For a discussion of nearshore fish habitat, please refer to Section 3.5, "Aquatic Biological Resources." The EIS/EIS/EIR concludes that there would be long-term benefits to the nearshore environment and surrounding the mouth of Meeks Creek.

Long-term improvements to nearshore aquatic habitats are captured in the response above (see discussion on water quality and lake currents, littoral processes, shoreline erosion, and stream mouth morphology). Additionally, Impact 3.5-6, "Long-Term Disruption of Nearshore Aquatic Habitat," states: "Further, replacement of existing concrete and rock gabion shoreline revetments on the northern end of the project area with more-natural boulder and vegetation shoreline protection would benefit nearshore habitat." Impact 3.5-7, "Long-Term Change in in Habitat Conditions Associated with Restoration and Enhancement" also states: "Further, resource enhancement would be conducted associated with aquatic invasive species control and shoreline stabilization, which would involve removal of the existing gabion wall and replacement with more natural stabilization techniques." No edits or additions to this text are required.

Improvements to fish passage are discussed under Impact 3.5-4, "Long-Term Disruption of Fish Passage/Migration" (starting on page 3.5-18). Additional information to address the comment has been added to the discussion as shown in the following underlined text.

Restoration included in Alternative 1, specifically replacing box culverts at the SR 89 bridge, raising the creek bed, and improving lagoon connectivity with Lake Tahoe would result in a long-term improvement of fish passage and migration conditions in the project area, including between nearshore habitats in Lake Tahoe and Meeks Creek.

F.2.6 Tahoe City Public Utility District

Matt Homolka, Assistant General Manager

August 9, 2022

The comment letter notes that Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) may have discretionary authority related to modifying or installing utility systems and recreation facilities managed by TCPUD, and should be listed as a responsible agency. In response to this comment, Section 1.4.2, "Cooperating, Trustee, and Responsible Agencies," has been updated to list TCPUD as a responsible agency as shown below.

Under NEPA regulations, a cooperating agency is any Federal agency, other than the lead agency, which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project or project alternative. Under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, a trustee agency is a State agency that has jurisdiction by law over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California, and a responsible agency is a public agency, other than the lead agency, which has discretionary approval responsibility for reviewing, carrying out, or approving elements of a project. For the Meek's Bay Restoration Project, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are Federal cooperating agencies. While the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has review authority, it is not considered a cooperating agency. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California State Lands Commission are trustee agencies with jurisdiction over resources potentially affected by the project, and Caltrans, with discretionary approval for project activities within the SR 89 right-of-way, including the proposed replacement of the SR 89 bridge, is a responsible agency. Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) is also a responsible agency with discretionary approval over changes to infrastructure managed by TCPUD, including utility lines that cross Meeks Creek. Other responsible agencies, their jurisdictions, and approval authorities are listed below.

Responsible and trustee agencies should participate in the lead agencies' environmental process, review the lead agency's environmental document, and use the document when making decisions on project elements.

The commenter agrees that the alternatives would not have an appreciable effect on water and wastewater capacity and supports the fact that public services and utilities were excluded from detailed review in this EIS/EIS/EIR. This comment is consistent with the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR, and no change is warranted.

The comment also notes that TCPUD's existing sewer main across Meeks Creek is a gravity main placed at a very flat elevation. The comment clarifies that relocation of the sewer main to a different elevation by either burying it deeper or relocating it to the SR 89 bridge would not be feasible while maintaining gravity flow. The letter asks that the sewer main remain in its current position and be protected from scour if needed. The lead agencies agree with this request and have revised Section 2.5.5 of the EIS/EIS/EIR to incorporate this change as shown below:

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Utility infrastructure, including water, sewer, electric, and communication facilities that would impede restoration or be adversely affected by it, would be upgraded, or relocated, either above or below ground. An existing Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) sewer line crosses Meeks Creek. This line ~~would~~ be protected at its current elevation by burying it at a sufficient depth and/or encasing it in additional concrete, ~~and/or relocating it and attaching it to the replaced SR 89 bridge or a new bridge.~~ However, because the

final restoration design is not complete, the ultimate location of the TCPUD sewer line is uncertain. Thus, the USDA Forest Service would consult with TCPUD on the design of the bridge as it relates to maintaining TCPUD infrastructure through the project area. If modifications to the TCPUD sewer line are necessary, those modifications would be incorporated as part of the restoration project proposed by USDA Forest Service. Powerlines inside the restoration project footprint would be relocated as needed to facilitate restoration. The USDA Forest Service water line that crosses Meeks Creek at SR 89 would be relocated to below the scour limits of the restored Meeks Creek channel.

F.3 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

Many common themes and issues were included in the comment letters received during the public review period. Rather than responding individually to each comment letter, responses have been provided that comprehensively address each issue. Table F-1, above, identifies the issues that pertain to each comment letter.

F.3.1 Coordination and Consultation

One comment letter expresses concerns about how conflicts between lead agencies would be addressed and the transparency of agency decision making after completion of the environmental review process. These comments address the stakeholder engagement and project approval process rather than the adequacy or completeness of the EIS/EIS/EIR.

Section 1.5, "Public Engagement and Stakeholder Process," describes the collaborative stakeholder process that was used to develop the alternatives evaluated in this EIS/EIS/EIR. The process far exceeded the public review requirements of NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA, in an attempt to develop project alternatives in a transparent manner that considered perspectives from a wide array of individuals.

As described in Section 1.4, "Agency Roles and Responsibilities," LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB are all lead agencies consistent with NEPA, TRPA Code, and CEQA, respectively. These three lead agencies have worked together closely throughout the development of the alternatives. All three lead agencies identified Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative, which is recommended for adoption by each lead agency. Because the lead agencies have closely collaborated on the development of the proposed action and the joint environmental review, there are no known conflicts among lead agencies. Each lead agency would take independent actions to certify or adopt the environmental documents, which would confirm that the analysis complies with their respective environmental review requirements. The project would only be implemented if it is approved by all three lead agencies.

As summarized in Section 1.4, "Agency Roles and Responsibilities," the LTBMU Forest Supervisor, TRPA Governing Board, and Executive Officer of Lahontan RWQCB will determine whether to certify the EIS/EIS/EIR and approve the project. The TRPA Governing Board decision would occur at one of the Governing Board's regularly scheduled meetings, which are open to the public and include opportunities for comment. LTBMU would prepare a draft Record of Decision documenting the rationale for its decision regarding the project. This project is also subject to the NEPA predecisional objection process (36 CFR 218 subparts A and B), which allows individuals and organizations that have submitted timely public comments on this document to file an objection to LTBMU's decision. Section 1.5, "Public Engagement and Stakeholder Process," provides additional detail on the objection process.

F.3.2 Baseline Conditions

Multiple comment letters question the use of a baseline scenario that includes operation of the Meeks Marina. These comments suggest the analysis should compare the effects of the alternatives against the existing condition, in which the marina is not in operation.

To evaluate the impacts of a proposed action, agencies compare the effects of that action against the environmental baseline. Federal and state authorities recognize that existing conditions will normally represent the baseline condition. However, NEPA case law has specifically acknowledged that a baseline scenario can include operation of a facility that was temporarily inactive at the time of the analysis (*Overseas Shipholding Group, Inc., v. Skinner*, 767 F.Supp. 287, 299 (D.D.C. 1991); *City & County of San Francisco v. U.S.*, 615 F.2d 498, 501 (9th Cir. 1980)). In this case, Navy leasing of temporarily inactive shipbuilding facility did not need to analyze impacts from baseline that assumed no shipbuilding operations; the Navy only needed to analyze impacts unique to the new tenant as compared to prior use. An agency has discretion as to how to determine existing conditions or to deviate from this norm under appropriate circumstances. See, for example, *American Rivers v. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission*, 201 F.3d 1186, 1194 (9th Cir. 2000).

The CEQA baseline for assessing significance of impacts of any proposed project is normally the environmental condition at the time a Notice of Preparation (NOP) is issued (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a]). This directive was interpreted and applied by the California Supreme Court in *Neighbors for Smart Rail v. Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority* (2013) 57 Cal.4th 439 (*Neighbors for Smart Rail*). There, the court reiterated that “[t]he CEQA Guidelines establish the default of an existing conditions baseline even for projects expected to be in operation for many years or decades” (Id., 455). According to the court, for such a project, “existing conditions constitute the norm from which a departure must be justified—not only because the CEQA Guidelines so state, but because using existing conditions serves CEQA’s goals in important ways” (Ibid.). Therefore, while a lead agency has the discretion to deviate from an existing conditions baseline, “the agency must justify its decision by showing an existing conditions analysis would be misleading or without informational value.”

As described above, CEQA baseline cases have essentially confirmed the Ninth Circuit’s reasoning that a lead agency has discretion in choosing where to set its baseline for an EIS or EIR but should justify its choice with evidence in the record. In light of these authorities, lead agencies determine the baseline conditions and the appropriate scope of the proposed action to measure against the baseline.

For most purposes, the environmental baseline in this EIS/EIS/EIR reflects conditions in 2018, when the NOP was released, and scoping began. Where data on the environmental conditions in 2018 are incomplete, this EIS/EIS/EIR incorporates the most recent available data as a proxy for 2018 conditions. However, for logical environmental and policy reasons, this EIS/EIS/EIR incorporates an alternative baseline condition related to the operation of the Meeks Bay Marina.

The Meeks Bay Marina was constructed in the early 1960s and was in operation through 2015 in all years in which water levels were sufficient to support the marina. In 2015, LTBMU removed the moveable elements of the marina, including the floating slips, and temporarily closed the marina to address water quality concerns and facilitate Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) management. LTBMU never permanently closed the marina and the permanent physical elements of the marina, including bulkheads and the boat ramp, remain in place. LTBMU instead deferred to this planning process for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project as the appropriate forum to determine the long-term fate of the marina.

The Meeks Bay restoration planning process has resulted in the five alternatives considered in this EIS/EIS/EIR. If the lead agencies select the No Action Alternative, the movable elements of the marina could be replaced, and the marina could return to operation with no approval action on the part of LTBMU. If one of the action alternatives is selected, the remaining elements of the marina would be removed, and the marina would be permanently closed. Because no prior decision was made to permanently close the marina, the effects of the permanent closure of the marina were never previously analyzed pursuant to NEPA, CEQA, or TRPA. Therefore, the significant and unavoidable effects of marina closure on access for motorized boating were never previously disclosed or mitigated. It would be inappropriate for the lead agencies to evaluate a baseline scenario in which the marina was permanently closed because it would forgo their obligation to evaluate the effects of closing the marina under NEPA, CEQA, and TRPA. This EIS/EIS/EIR provides the documentation and analysis required for the lead agencies to determine whether to permanently close (through the action alternatives that assess the impacts of marina closure) or maintain the marina (through adoption of the no action alternative). For these reasons, the lead agencies selected the appropriate baseline condition for analysis in this EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.3 Concern Related to Mosquitoes

One commenter expresses concerns that the proposed restoration activities could result in increased mosquito populations leading to an increase in mosquito-borne disease. There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed restoration activities would increase mosquito populations, and ongoing mosquito surveillance and abatement measures would continue to control nuisance mosquitos and reduce the potential for mosquito-borne disease in the project area.

The proposed restoration activities would include excavating, filling, and grading portions of the existing marina to create a shallower lagoon with more emergent vegetation and a more diverse edge. It would also involve the removal of sheet pile at the marina mouth and restoration of a barrier beach that could close the lagoon off from the lake during periods of low water, similar to existing conditions at Taylor/Tallac creeks and the Upper Truckee Marsh. The overall amount of open water within the project site would not increase as a result of restoration and, during dry times of the year, the amount of water would decrease. However, with the return to a more natural condition, the restored lagoon would likely provide more suitable habitat for mosquito larvae, as well as for other species that prey on mosquito larvae (e.g., juvenile fish, amphibians, ducks). Based on observations of other similar restoration projects in the El Dorado County portion of the Tahoe Basin, restoration of natural wetlands would not increase mosquito populations, because any potential increase in mosquito larvae is offset by an increase in species that prey on mosquitos (Tekulve pers. comm. 2022).

Mosquito surveillance and control in the project area is provided by El Dorado County Vector Control (EVC). The frequency and location of mosquito surveillance depends on the season. Surveillance occurs wherever shallow, slow-moving water is present on site, with more frequent surveillance when temperatures are warmer and more conducive to mosquitoes. Typically, surveillance occurs once every two weeks throughout the summer and involves taking water samples from shallow areas where mosquito larvae are likely to be present. The samples are evaluated for the presence of mosquito larvae and, if present, species are identified to determine if it is one that can transmit West Nile virus or other diseases. The past surveillance conducted by EVC found that most mosquitos at Meeks Bay are from the genus *Aedes*. These "snow melt" mosquitos occur in snow melt pools during the spring and generally do not travel far from their larval sources. These are nuisance mosquitoes that do not pose a significant human health threat (Tekulve pers. comm. 2022).

At Meeks Bay, EVC controls mosquitos with a larvicide that affects only mosquitoes. The larvicide is very effective in control of mosquito populations, and it is effective for approximately 2 to 3 weeks, before needing retreatment to control the next batch of mosquito larvae. During the mosquito season, Meeks Creek and the marina/lagoon are treated approximately every two weeks (Tekulve pers. comm. 2022).

After completion of restoration activities, EVC would increase its surveillance at Meeks Bay to determine if new areas of mosquito habitat are present and/or determine if the timing of mosquito control needs to be adjusted to account for changes in habitat and hydrology. EVC would continue to regularly treat the restored lagoon and surrounding areas for mosquitos. If the restoration project creates additional potential mosquito habitat, EVC would incorporate any additional habitat into their regular surveillance and treatment routine. There are no barriers to EVC's surveillance and treatment of mosquitos at Meeks Creek and this service will continue into the future (Tekulve pers. comm. 2022).

As described above, the project would not result in an increase in mosquito populations or mosquito-borne disease due to natural predation of mosquitos, and ongoing mosquito surveillance and control activities.

F.3.4 Concern Related to Bears

One commenter asserted that implementation of the restoration project will increase problem encounters between humans and black bears by creating a wildlife corridor that attracts bears into the campground and nearby residential areas.

Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is a common native species in the Lake Tahoe Basin, including Meeks Bay. The primary causes of increased bear frequency or abundance in urban and recreation areas (e.g., neighborhoods, campgrounds)

in the Tahoe region, and the increased potential for bear-human encounters, include access to human food and garbage, exacerbated by limited natural food supplies during some months. Some bears in the Tahoe region have habituated and become dependent on human food and garbage year-round during some years. The existing availability of human food sources around the recreation site is substantial, and the changes represented by the project—considering both natural food sources created by the riparian/meadow restoration and human food sources—would be negligible. Restoring a small amount of native riparian/meadow habitat and potential natural food sources for native wildlife, including black bears, along Meeks Creek will have significantly less impact on problem bear encounters at Meeks Bay and nearby neighborhoods as human food sources at the campground and day use areas. In fact, to the limited extent that riparian and meadow habitat restoration could enhance conditions for bears in the proposed restoration area, the project could reduce the potential for direct human-bear interactions by increasing natural food sources immediately outside of the campground and nearby neighborhoods, away from areas where people concentrate. The comment provides no biological rationale or evidence to support the claim that proposed restoration would attract bears and increase the potential for bear-human encounters.

The proposed project would not introduce black bears or other native wildlife species to the area. As required for the EIS/EIS/EIR, potential impacts on terrestrial biological resources are evaluated based specifically on the significance thresholds described on page 3.4-18. While the project could affect common species (e.g., black bear) and animal movement corridors, the potential for an effect alone does not constitute a significant impact that would require mitigation. For these reasons, potential effects on black bear abundance or distribution in the area are not considered substantial or potentially significant issues.

F.3.5 Purpose and Need for Piers

Several comment letters assert that the piers proposed under Alternatives 1 and 2, or the public safety boat associated with the pier in Alternative 1, do not meet the purpose and need of the project. The purpose and need for the project are described in Section 1.2, "Purpose, Need, and Project Objectives." As described in that section, the project purpose involves enhancing the ecological function of the restored creek and lagoon while "continuing to support sustainable recreation opportunities." The EIS/EIS/EIR also specifies that the need and objectives for the project include "[m]aintain and enhance access to Lake Tahoe and National Forest System lands," and "[p]rovide sustainable recreation opportunities consistent with a functioning ecosystem."

With the removal of the Meeks Marina, the project would result in the loss of a recreational amenity and access point to Lake Tahoe. Consistent with the purpose and need, Alternatives 1 and 2 propose new piers to offset this loss, maintain and enhance access to Lake Tahoe, and provide sustainable recreation opportunities. Similarly, the public safety boat accommodated on the pier under Alternative 1 would maintain and enhance emergency access to Lake Tahoe that could be affected by the removal of the marina. Thus, these elements of Alternatives 1 and 2 are consistent with the purpose and need for the project.

F.3.6 Pier or Boat Launch Effects on the Character of the Recreation Site

Several comment letters express concern that a pier or boat launch that would facilitate motorized boat activity in Meeks Bay would negatively affect the tranquility and character of the project area. None of the alternatives include a new boat launch, although Alternative 1 includes a pier that would accommodate boating activity in the project area.

The EIS/EIS/EIR discloses that Alternative 1 would result in boating activity in the project area and evaluates how this activity would affect the recreational experience and tranquility of the project area. The EIS/EIS/EIR evaluates the effects of the boating pier on the overall quality of the recreational experience in Impact 3.1-1, "Affect the Quality of Recreational Opportunities." It analyzes the potential for conflicts between motorized boating and other users in Impact 3.1.2, "Create Recreational User Conflicts," and it assesses noise resulting from motorized boating use in Impact 3.11-3, "Long-Term Changes in Boat Noise." The comments are generally consistent with the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR and do not indicate that the environmental analysis is incomplete or inaccurate.

F.3.7 Effects of a Pier on Scenic Quality

Several comments note the importance of the natural scenery at Meeks Bay and expressed concerns that installing a new pier in Meeks Bay would degrade the scenic quality of Meeks Bay as viewed from the beach or otherwise negatively affect the character of Meeks Bay.

The EIS/EIS/EIR evaluates the effects of the alternatives on views from the beach in Section 3.2, "Scenic Resources," under Impact 3.2.2, "Alter Views of Lake Tahoe from the Project Area," including through visual simulations showing the visual effect of the piers proposed in Alternatives 1 and 2. The EIS/EIS/EIR recognizes and describes the importance of the scenic quality of the project area in Section 3.2.2, "Environmental Setting." Consistent with the comments, this analysis found that a new pier in Meeks Bay would adversely affect scenic views from the beach. The analysis determined that the 300-foot boating pier in Alternative 1 would "substantially degrade the overall visual character quality of the view" and "reduce the coherence of the view by introducing new human-made features that partially block an existing unobstructed view of Lake Tahoe." It determined that the pier in Alternative 1 would result in a significant impact to scenic views from the beach. The analysis found that the 100-foot pedestrian pier proposed in Alternative 2 would "detract from the scenic quality of the view, [but] it would not reduce the scenic score for the TRPA-designed scenic recreation area." Thus, the comments are consistent with the EIS/EIS/EIR analysis in that the piers would detract from the scenic quality of Meeks Bay.

The EIS/EIS/EIR also evaluates the effects of the piers on noise and the quality of the recreation experience in Sections 3.11, "Noise," and 3.1, "Recreation." The comments are generally consistent with the analysis of effects of the piers and do not indicate that the environmental analysis is incomplete or inadequate. The effects of the piers on scenic quality and other resources will be considered by the lead agencies when they consider approval of the project.

F.3.8 Adequacy of Scenic Analysis of Piers

Several comment letters address the scenic analysis of the piers proposed under Alternatives 1 and 2. Comments questioned the location of viewpoints used for visual simulations, questioned whether the simulations accurately depicted the proposed piers, asserted that piers would have negative effects on scenic quality, and requested additional detail on the scenic scoring of upland and shorezone structures.

The EIS/EIS/EIR evaluates the scenic quality effects of the piers proposed under Alternatives 1 and 2 in Section 3.2, "Scenic Resources," under Impact 3.2-1, "Substantially Degrade Views of Meeks Bay from Lake Tahoe," and Impact 3.2-2, "Alter Views of Lake Tahoe from the Project Area." The analysis uses a variety of metrics to evaluate the visual effects of the proposed piers. The visible mass of the pier in each alternative is calculated from two perspectives: when viewed perpendicular and parallel to the shoreline. The additional visible mass of the pier is then evaluated in the context of other proposed changes to human-made structures visible from the lake to determine if each alternative, as a whole, would result in an increase or decrease in the area of human-made features visible from the lake. A visual simulation was also prepared from a TRPA-designated scenic resource (i.e., viewpoint), located approximately 0.25 mile offshore. A second visual simulation was prepared from the north end of the beach looking toward the proposed pier. The analysis also qualitatively evaluated the changes in the viewshed relative to the factors that contribute to scenic scores for the TRPA scenic thresholds.

Some comments questioned whether the pier simulations accurately reflected the proposed size, design, and location of the piers. The simulations incorporate photographs of existing conditions from each viewpoint. The views in the simulations are comprised of multiple separate photographs that have been digitally combined to create a panoramic view. Each photograph was taken with a 50 mm lens, which is the camera lens that most closely approximates the view from the naked human eye. This approach provides an accurate view of the affected area, including the pier and its surroundings, while avoiding distortion that could occur with the use of a wide-angle lens. A three-dimensional model of each pier was developed using the exact dimensions proposed for the pier in each alternative (see Figures 2-10 and 2-13 in Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives"). These three-dimensional models were then colored to match the proposed pier colors consistent with the TRPA Code requirements and placed in their proposed locations within each photograph. The size and location of known existing

structures within the photographs were used as reference points to ensure the proposed pier simulations were located in the correct location and shown at the correct size. The simulated piers include the features proposed for each, including a boat lift and emergency services boat on the pier in Alternative 1. The design of piers proposed in Alternatives 1 and 2 are described in Sections 2.6.1 and 2.7.1, respectively. No additional signs, railings, or other visible features are proposed. Thus, the simulations accurately reflect views of the proposed piers.

Other comments questioned the location of the viewpoints used in the simulations or requested additional viewpoints from closer to the pier and/or from the south end of the beach. The viewpoints included in the EIS/EIS/EIR are intended to show representative views of the proposed piers in context with their surroundings and from locations where the public may view them. Viewpoint 1 reflects the view from TRPA-designated Shoreline Scenic Resource 10.3, which is 0.25 mile offshore consistent with the standard distance for scenic evaluation in TRPA Code Section 66.3. This is the view from Lake Tahoe that has the greatest chance of being degraded by Alternative 1 or 2 because it provides direct views of the changes that would be the most visible from the lake and have the greatest potential to detract from scenic quality, including the new pier and cabin relocations. Viewpoint 2 is located on the northern end of the beach in the project area facing toward southern Meeks Bay and Lake Tahoe. While visitors experience views of Lake Tahoe from multiple points along the beach, this viewpoint provides a representative assessment of changes affecting all viewers along the beach. This viewpoint provides views of a greater expanse of the beach and the major features that would be visible from the beach, including the pier. It also provides a view of the proposed pier at an appropriate distance to view the entire structure and its visual context. The viewpoint is also within the TRPA-designated scenic recreation area for Meeks Bay Resort.

Additional simulations could be created from other locations within the project area, however they would not provide any more meaningful information from which to assess scenic impacts. Simulations of the piers from closer to the location of the proposed pier would make the pier appear more prominent, but those simulations would not allow for an accurate analysis of the visual effects of the pier because they would not show the pier within its visual context to allow for assessment of how it would affect the overall views from the beach or lake. Additionally, the pier proposed in each alternative is located at approximately the center of the project area. A viewpoint from the south end of the beach at a location that provides for a view of the entire pier and its surroundings would provide a view very similar to viewpoint 2. That is, it would show the pier within its visual context from approximately the same distance and angle, except that it would be viewed from the south side instead of the north side. For these reasons, the viewpoints selected for analysis are appropriate and the inclusion of additional viewpoints would not meaningfully improve the analysis, nor would they alter the significance determinations.

While the preferred alternative does not include a pier, if Alternatives 1 or 2 were selected, additional design detail would be developed, which would identify the specific materials, colors, and architectural details of proposed facilities, and the site would be required to achieve contrast rating scores required by TRPA Code Section 84.4.3.A.4. Compliance with these requirements could result in additional improvements to scenic quality in the project area.

For the reasons described above, the scenic analysis of the piers is appropriate.

F.3.9 Visitation Estimates

Several comment letters raise concerns that the estimates of numbers of visitors provided on page 3.1-13 of Section 3.1, "Recreation," do not accurately represent the number of visitors to the project area. Comments suggest that the visitation estimates do not consider closures due to fire risk in 2020, evacuations during the Caldor Fire in 2021, and the number of non-motorized recreational visitors accessing the project area. Comments also assert the EIS/EIS/EIR claims that Meeks Bay is underutilized except during weekends and holidays. Comments assert that the beaches are at capacity throughout the entire months of July and August and often beginning in mid-June and extending through early September.

The EIS/EIS/EIR incorporates all relevant day-use and overnight recreation data collected by LTBMU and the concessionaire managing the southern portion of the project area. The trail counter data collected from the Tahoe Trail segment between Sugar Pine Point State Park and Meeks Bay were used to extrapolate visitation estimates for

the entire project area during the seasons when Meeks Bay is open to visitors. Visitation estimates are comprehensive in that they are provided for the campground, visitors in day-use vehicles, and walk-in day-use visitors; however, sufficient data was not available to provide a comparison between weekday and weekend visitation. These estimates, including a description of supporting assumptions, are included in Table 3.1-7 on page 3.1-14 of Section 3.1. To visually characterize visitation during peak summer periods, photographs of summer beach conditions were added as new Figure 3.1-3 in Section 3.1, "Recreation."

The visitation estimates included in Table 3.1-7 provide a basis for comparison with implementation of each action alternative. They allow for a comparison of the potential relative changes in visitation using the same assumptions that supported the development of the existing visitation estimates. The visitation estimates provide average number of daily visitors, which acknowledge that heavy visitation can occur during the week and in particular during July and August (see Table 3.1-7). For example, the total estimate of average visitors per day in the project area in July is 5,560 visitors and in August is 5,150 visitors.

Impact 3.1-1 addresses the impact of each action alternative in the context of the beach at capacity during peak periods (see the discussion under "Crowding" on pages 3.1-19 through 3.1-20 and 3.1-21 for Alternatives 1 and 2, pages 3.1-22 and 3.1-23 for Alternative 3, and pages 3.1-24 and 3.1-25 for Alternative 4. Implementation of Alternatives 1 and 2 would not include project components that would expand visitor capacity in the project area. Implementation of Alternative 3 proposes the addition of 7-22 campsites and up to 14 additional parking spaces and Alternative 4 proposes to add up to 14 parking spaces, which could moderately expand visitor capacity. Because the same assumptions used to estimate existing visitation trends were also used to estimate the increase in visitation associated with each of these alternatives, the estimate of additional visitors provides a relative order of magnitude increase over the estimated existing visitation. As discussed under "Crowding" for Alternative 3 on page 3.1-21, implementation of Alternative 3 could result in a 5 percent increase in visitors during peak periods compared to the existing visitation during those times and would result in a 7-8 percent increase in visitors during May, June, September, and October (see Table 3.1-9). As discussed under "Crowding" for Alternative 4 on page 3.1-23, implementation of this alternative could result in a 4 percent increase in visitors during peak periods compared to the existing visitation during those times and would result in a 3-5 percent increase in visitors during May, June, September, and October (see Table 3.1-10).

Comments expressed a concern that the visitation estimates do not take into account temporary closures, heavy smoke days, and evacuations. Due to the location of the project in a region with high wildfire risks, such closures or hazardous conditions preventing people from visiting the project area could occur in future years. Additionally, the Caldor Fire occurred in 2021 and the visitation estimates were provided for 2020, so the visitation estimates are not affected by the limited visitation that likely occurred in August 2021. The total estimated visitation at the project area for July and August in 2020 are 172,310 and 159,650 visitors, respectively, which show there was a 7 percent difference in visitation between the two busiest months.

In response to the comment expressing concern that the visitation estimates do not take into account nonmotorized visitors (i.e., bicyclists and walk-in visitors), a discussion of the number of visitors using the Tahoe Trail to access the project area is included under "Visitor Capacity at Meeks Bay" on page 3.1-12, "On an average day in July, the Tahoe Trail at Sugar Pine Point State Park is used by over 100 trail users with up to approximately 160 trail users on a peak day. It is reasonable to assume that some portion of those riders travel to Meeks Bay." Footnote 4 of Table 3.1-7 acknowledges that the estimate of walk-in day-use visitors "likely underestimate visitation as it is nearly impossible to count every person walking in during busy kiosk times." However, the action alternatives would not be anticipated to generate visitation by Tahoe Trail users, thus an exact count of trail visitors is not necessary to evaluate the effects of the alternatives.

For the reasons described above, the visitation estimates included in the EIS/EIS/EIR appropriately represent typical visitation in the project area. These visitation estimates are sufficiently accurate to evaluate relative changes in visitation that could occur under Alternatives 3 and 4.

F.3.10 Visitor Crowding

Some comment letters note the beaches at Meeks Bay are frequently at capacity during mid-summer and summarize concerns about trash on the beaches and bad behavior of some visitors. Comments suggest the project could increase crowding.

The on-site permittees are responsible for ongoing management of trash at Meeks Bay Resort and the area south of Meeks Creek. On-site staff, local law enforcement, and LTBMU law enforcement rangers are responsible for addressing conflicts between visitors. For Alternatives 3 and 4, which would result in some increase in visitor capacity in the project area, Impact 3.10-3, "Increased Demand for Emergency Response Resources," in Section 3.10, "Public Safety and Hazards," concludes that the annual increase in visitors to the project area would be a small increase over the number of existing annual visitors. Due to the limited increase in visitation, the associated increase in demand for emergency response resources would not be substantial and would not render the current services inadequate.

As described under "Visitor Capacity at Meeks Bay," on page 3.1-23 in Section 3.1, "Recreation," day-use and overnight visitor capacity at the Meeks Bay Resort and the area south of Meeks Creek is limited by day-use and lodging parking within the project area, parking along SR 89, parking at the Meeks Bay trailhead west of the project area, and the number of campsites in the project area. The discussion under Section F.3.9, "Visitation Estimates," above, acknowledges there are visitors that access Meeks Bay by walking or biking in; however, the majority of visitors drive and park in the limited available parking at the Meeks Bay Resort and Meeks day-use areas. The potential for the action alternatives to result in additional crowding is assessed under Impact 3.1-1. The proposed components for Alternatives 1 and 2 would not result in an increase in visitors; thus, there would not be an anticipated increase in crowding as a result of these alternatives. Additional visitation associated with users accessing the site via boat under Alternative 1 would be negligible and offset by the reduction in visitors resulting from the permanent closure of the marina. As explained on pages 3.1-22 through 3.1-24, the analysis of the potential for additional crowding caused by an increase in visitors under Alternatives 3 and 4 would be alleviated by project components that include relocation of lodging units away from the beach, which would increase the amount of available beach space; and changes in the day-use areas that would provide more space for visitor use. Thus, the potential increase in visitors would be accommodated by the increase in size of these areas available for public use, such that there would not be a noticeable change in crowding. These comments do not identify any new impacts that were not addressed in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.11 Recreation User Conflicts

Multiple comment letters express concerns that motorized watercraft accessing the pier in Alternative 1 could conflict with other recreational uses in the project area. Comments suggest boating activity could result in safety hazards when boating occurs in proximity to paddlecraft or swimmers. One comment also questions whether boaters would adhere to the 600-foot no-wake zone and suggests the pier could be a navigational hazard.

The EIS/EIS/EIR evaluates the potential for Alternative 1 to result in conflicts between motorized watercraft and non-motorized recreationists in Impact 3.1-2, "Create Recreational User Conflicts." As described in Impact 3.1-2, the permanent closure of the marina would reduce a source of motorized boating activity, such that the pier in Alternative 1 would not result in a substantial net increase in motorized boating activity. Furthermore, motorized boats would be required to travel at 5 mph within the no-wake zone that essentially encompasses the entire bay. Slow travel speeds would help to maintain the safety of swimmers and nonmotorized watercraft users (e.g., kayakers and paddleboarders) by reducing wake and allowing motorized boaters to more easily see and travel around swimmers and nonmotorized watercraft users. In addition, designated swim areas would be demarcated by buoys and motorized boats would not be allowed to access the swim area. Because of the designated swim area, requirements of the no-wake zone, and because the removal of the marina and boat ramp would offset the increase in boating associated with the pier, the analysis found that Alternative 1 would not result in a substantial change in conflicts between these recreation users.

The EIS/EIS/EIR also evaluated the potential for navigational hazards associated with the pier and boating under Alternative 1 in Impact 3.10-4, "Navigational Hazards to Motorized and Nonmotorized Recreation." As described above, this analysis found that due to the presence of the 600-foot no-wake zone and limited net change in boating activity, Alternative 1 would not create significant navigational hazards. The EIS/EIS/EIR appropriately relies on adherences to the no-wake zone rules because the requirements are clearly posted at marinas, boat ramps, and other locations where boaters congregate; they are monitored by TRPA boat patrols, enforced by the US Coast Guard, and local law enforcement agencies; and violators could be subject to a fine. In addition, as part of the recently adopted Lake Tahoe Shoreline Plan, TRPA has required that marinas and boat rental concessions increase boater education about the no-wake zone and safe boating practices. The Lake Tahoe Boating app is also now available to guide motorized and non-motorized boaters around the lake and to recognize no-wake zones. For these reasons the EIS/EIS/EIR appropriately considered the potential for Alternative 1 to result in conflicts between motorized watercraft and other users.

F.3.12 Designated Swim Areas

One comment letter requests that the designated swim areas be expanded to the length of the beach to allow for less crowding of swimmers and improve safety for swimmers from motorized boats.

The figures that depict the existing and potential locations of designated swim areas are generally representative of where the designated swim areas would be located (see Figures 3.1-3, 3.1-4, 3.1-5 and 3.1-6 in Section 3.1, "Recreation"). Each year, the exact locations could vary but each of the beach areas north and south of the creek would have a designated swim area. The designated swim areas do not allow nonmotorized watercraft; thus, designating the length of the beach as a swim area would preclude the use of nonmotorized watercraft throughout that area, reducing recreational opportunities at Meeks Bay. For that reason, it would not be feasible to expand the designated swim areas to encompass the entire length of the beach.

Potential recreation user conflicts, including conflicts between swimmers or nonmotorized watercraft users and motorized boats, are assessed in Impact 3.1-2 beginning on page 3.1-25 of the EIS/EIS/EIR. The analysis concludes that because of the no-wake zone in the bay and because the removal of the marina and boat ramp would offset some of the boating conflicts, Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4 would not result in a substantial change in conflicts between these recreation users. These comments do not identify any new impacts that were not adequately addressed in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.13 Interpretation Opportunities

Several comment letters express support for specific interpretation elements to be included in the project. Commenters wish to see specific restoration project information, Washoe knowledge inclusion, native and endemic species guides, and tools to stop the spread of invasive species. Commenters added that the information should be translated in several languages to be useful to domestic and international visitors. In Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4, "Upland Recreation Facilities," heading, "Interpretation," specific interpretation opportunities are identified and include the restored condition of the creek, the history of Meeks Bay, Washoe Tribe cultural heritage, or other appropriate natural or cultural history themes relevant to the site with appropriate interpretation tools that would be relevant to the subject being conveyed. Section 2.5.3, "Resource Enhancement," identifies more directed interpretation opportunities for the restoration elements of the project. The suggested interpretation features are consistent with the types of interpretation envisioned for the action alternatives. The specific interpretation information will be developed during final design of the project. As described in Section F.2.2, above, the "Interpretation" section in Chapter 2 of this Final EIS/EIS/EIR has been updated to describe how interpretation materials would be provided in multiple languages, when appropriate and feasible.

These comments are generally consistent with the alternatives and do not identify any new impacts that were not addressed in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.14 Involve Washoe Tribe in Restoration

Several comment letters advocate for maintaining a Washoe Tribe presence at Meeks Bay and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into the project. These comments also inquire about outreach to the tribes. As noted in the "Interpretation" section of Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Action Alternatives," interpretive opportunities would be installed along the restored reach of Meeks Creek and would include information related to the Washoe Tribe cultural heritage. The Washoe Tribe currently holds a special use permit with USFS for management of the Meeks Bay Resort and has the opportunity to re-apply for that permit in the future. While incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge is not currently included in the alternatives, additional design work would need to occur prior to implementation of the restoration activities. The lead agencies are committed to continuing to coordinate with the Washoe Tribe and would consider suggestions from the tribe regarding specific traditional ecological knowledge to be incorporated into revegetation plans. These comments pertain to the merits of the project and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

Tribal consultation in compliance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.2. for AB 52 and in compliance with Section 106 are described under the "Tribal Cultural Resources" section in Section 3.3, "Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources," of the EIS/EIS/EIR. AB 52 notices were sent to the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) and Wilton Rancheria and Native American consultation under Section 106 included outreach to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe.

F.3.15 Effects of Restoration on Lake Tahoe

One comment letter requests that the effects of removal of the marina be addressed in more depth, especially the potential effects related to littoral drift, barrier beach development, sand migration, and water quality. A response related to these comments is provided above under "Lake Tahoe Shoreline and Nearshore Restoration," under Section F.2.5, "California State Lands Commission."

F.3.16 Effectiveness of Restoration and Fish Passage with Upstream Beaver Dams

One comment letter questions the effectiveness of the project in supporting Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT) spawning due to the presence of a beaver dam upstream of the restoration site. The project is intended to support LCT and other aquatic species by restoring natural lagoon and stream habitat within the restoration area and allowing for managed fish movement between the restoration area and the upper watershed. Currently movement between the marina and upper watershed is blocked by a fish barrier at the SR 89 bridge. With implementation of the action alternatives, the SR 89 bridge would be replaced, and a new fish management structure would be installed. The structure would allow biologists to selectively allow fish passage when it supports management goals, including the protection and reestablishment of LCT in the upper watershed. LTBMU adaptively manages stream conditions based on changes over time and works with other agencies to implement the LCT conservation strategy. This adaptive management could include opening or closing the stream to fish movement as appropriate for recovery of LCT and/or modifications to beaver dams if necessary to achieve LCT recovery goals. There is not a specific target for length of spawning habitat in the watershed. This comment addresses the merits of the project and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. This comment will be considered by the lead agencies during implementation.

F.3.17 Restoration Activities Could Affect Beach Access

A couple of comment letters express concerns that restoration activities could decrease or prohibit recreational use of the beach. As described in Section 2.5.1, "Restoration of Meeks Creek and Lagoon," the restored mouth of Meeks Creek would allow natural lateral migration, and the sand bar at the mouth of Meeks Creek would be allowed to form and breach naturally. Some additional native vegetation may become established near the creek mouth and resource protection barriers (e.g., downed logs, vegetation, or fencing) could be installed around populations of Tahoe Yellow Cress near the creek mouth. However, resource protection barriers and native vegetation would affect a very narrow portion of the beach surrounding the creek mouth, estimated to be less than 100 linear feet of beach. In addition, Alternatives 1 and 4 would relocate cabins away from the beach and open additional beach for public use, increasing the total amount of beach available by an estimated 130 to 175 linear feet. The effects of the project on crowding and available beach area are analyzed in Impact 3.1-1, "Affect the Quality of Recreational Opportunities," which determined that there would be limited changes to the amount of beach available and the impact would be less than significant. These comments do not identify any new impacts that were not addressed in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.18 Support for Restoration Activities Only

Two comment letters assert that restoration should be the only element of the Meeks Bay restoration project. The letters express concern that additional recreation elements have been added unnecessarily to a critical effort towards ecological restoration of Lake Tahoe. The comments suggest that an alternative should be evaluated that includes only restoration activities.

As described in Section 1.2, "Purpose, Need, and Project Objectives," the project purpose involves enhancing the ecological function of the restored creek and lagoon while "continuing to support sustainable recreation opportunities." The need and objectives for the project include to "[m]aintain and enhance access to Lake Tahoe and National Forest System lands," and "[p]rovide sustainable recreation opportunities consistent with a functioning ecosystem." With the removal of the Meeks Marina, the project would result in a loss of a recreational amenity and access point to Lake Tahoe. Consistent with the purpose and need, the alternatives propose recreation features to offset this loss, maintain and enhance access to Lake Tahoe, and provide an opportunity to improve the recreation site while implementing the restoration project. Removing the marina without replacing the recreation amenities would not meet the purpose and the need for the project.

F.3.19 Impacts of Closing the Marina

Two comment letters express support for retaining the marina and note that the marina is an important recreational amenity for boaters. These comments express concerns about crowding at other nearby access points and a perceived decrease in nearby property values if the marina is permanently closed.

The assertion that the marina is an important recreational feature is consistent with the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR. The effect of removing the marina on motorized boating is evaluated in Impact 3.1-3, "Affect Regional Access or Opportunities for Motorized Watercraft," and Impact 3.1-4, "Affect Local Access or Opportunities for Motorized Watercraft." The analysis found that regional access throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin would not be significantly degraded because the boating access removed from the project area would likely be replaced elsewhere on Lake Tahoe over time. However, the analysis found that there would be a significant and unavoidable impact to localized access for motorized boating the project vicinity because there are limited other options for launching motorized boats along the west shore, consistent with the sentiment expressed in the comments.

Because most marina and boating access points on Lake Tahoe already operate at capacity during peak boating periods, it is unlikely that the removal of the Meeks Bay Marina would result in a noticeable change in crowding at other nearby access points. Rather, a boater that would have accessed the lake at Meeks Bay could lose the opportunity to launch their boat in the project vicinity, which would result in the significant and unavoidable loss of localized access described in Impact 3.1-4, "Affect Local Access or Opportunities for Motorized Watercraft."

There is no evidence to suggest that private property values would decrease due to the permanent closure of the marina. It is possible that property values could decrease due to the closure of the marina or increase due to the improved multi-use paths, a restored creek, improved day use facilities, and other project features. Regardless, fluctuations in private property values are not an environmental issue addressed under NEPA, CEQA, or TRPA environmental review. This comment will be considered by the lead agencies when they consider approval of the project.

F.3.20 Marina Provided Safe Harbor for Boats

One comment letter expresses concern over a lack of emergency shelter and egress opportunities for motorized boats on Lake Tahoe between Emerald Bay and Tahoe City. This topic was evaluated in Impact 3.10-2, "Emergency Access to and from Lake Tahoe." The analysis determined that, due to its protected location, Meeks Bay would continue to provide a safe harbor from wind or storm conditions; and it provides the opportunity for boats to land on shore and unload passengers in emergencies. All alternatives improve upland circulation in the Meeks Bay area that would enhance emergency access through the project area to and from the lake. This comment does not present evidence to suggest the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR is incomplete or inadequate.

F.3.21 Support for a Boat Ramp

One comment letter suggests that an alternative should include a boat launch to benefit access for boaters. As described in more detail in Section 2.12.2, "Boat Ramp Alternatives," the lead agencies initially proposed an alternative that included a publicly accessible boat ramp at the southern end of Meeks Bay to provide boat launch access. During the alternative development process, the lead agencies, in consultation with stakeholders, considered multiple possible locations and configurations for a boat launch within the project area. However, an alternative that included a boat launch was not considered for detailed review because the possible launch locations would likely result in significant environmental effects, not be permissible under the TRPA Code, and/or not achieve the purpose and need for the project.

F.3.22 Support for Permanently Closing the Marina

Multiple comment letters describe benefits to non-motorized recreation that have occurred since the marina has been temporarily closed. These comments describe benefits to beach recreation and paddle sports from fewer motorized boats in Meeks Bay. The comments also advocate for permanently closing the marina.

All four action alternatives would permanently close the marina to facilitate restoration of the creek and lagoon. The EIS/EIS/EIR evaluates the effects of closing the marina on the overall quality of the recreational experience in Impact 3.1-1, "Affect the Quality of Recreational Opportunities." It analyzes the changes in the potential for conflicts between motorized boating and other users in Impact 3.1-2, "Create Recreational User Conflicts," and it assesses changes in noise associated with motorized boating use in Impact 3.11-3, "Long-Term Changes in Boat Noise." The comments are generally consistent with the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR, which found that removal of the marina could improve the quality of recreation of non-motorized uses, reduce the potential for conflicts between user groups, and reduce boating noise. The comments do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental analysis. The comments will be considered by the lead agencies during the decision-making process for this project.

F.3.23 Sufficient Motorized Boat Access is Already Provided Elsewhere

Several comment letters suggest that sufficient access for motorized boating is already provided at other locations around Lake Tahoe. These comments advocate for managing the project area for non-motorized access.

The effects of removing the marina on boating access is evaluated in Impact 3.1-3, "Affect Regional Access or Opportunities for Motorized Watercraft," and Impact 3.1-4, "Affect Local Access or Opportunities for Motorized

Watercraft.” As summarized above in Section F.3.19, “Impacts of Closing the Marina,” the analysis found that regional access throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin would not be significantly degraded but also found that there would be a significant and unavoidable impact to localized access for motorized boating in the project vicinity. These comments do not suggest the analysis of the boating effects is inadequate or incomplete. These comments will be considered by the lead agencies during the decision-making process.

F.3.24 Opposition to a Pier in Meeks Bay

Several comment letters express opposition to any type of pier (for pedestrians or motorized watercraft) proposed in Meeks Bay and support for recreation opportunities that maintain the area in as natural state as possible. These comments address the merits of alternative features and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.25 Potential for a Water Taxi

Several comment letters raise concern related to the possibility for the boating pier in Alternative 1 to accommodate a water taxi. Comments assert that the EIS/EIS/EIR should analyze the potential for a water taxi to increase the number of visitors to the project area and should analyze the associated effects. One comment noted that the water taxi could be a reasonably foreseeable project and should be analyzed as a cumulative project. Another comment noted that the SR 89 Corridor Management Plan does not propose a water taxi stop at Meeks Bay.

Although it would be possible for a water taxi to temporarily dock at the boating pier proposed under Alternative 1, a water taxi is not proposed as a component of that alternative. There are no current proposals for a water taxi that would access Meeks Bay. While the Tahoe Regional Transportation Plan and SR 89 Corridor Management Plan envision the potential for water taxis on Lake Tahoe, neither of these plans identify Meeks Bay as one of the proposed water taxi stops. Thus, a water taxi is not a reasonably foreseeable cumulative project. If a water taxi were proposed in the future, then it would be required to undergo environmental review to assess the potential impacts of such a project consistent with the applicable requirements of NEPA, TRPA, and/or CEQA. I Because there are no proposals or plans for a water taxi to access Meeks Bay, it does not warrant any further cumulative analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.26 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

A couple of comment letters question the analysis in Section 4.4, “Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources,” and question how the installation of a pier or moveable, universally accessible paddlecraft launch would permanently dedicate the project area to this use. Section 4.4 discusses significant irreversible environmental changes as required State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c). This section discloses elements of the project that include a large commitment of resources such that the removal or nonuse of that element would be unlikely. This section does not refer to land use designations or other regulatory changes. Nor does this section authorize the future change or expansion of a pier or other structure included as part of this project. Instead, Section 4.4 discloses that if the lead agencies committed resources to constructing a pier as part of this project, that structure would remain for the long-term and would preclude other uses of the site where the pier is located. To clarify language and more accurately reflect the effects of including a pier or launch facility, Section 4.4 is revised as shown below to remove the word “permanently” because the change would be long-term but not necessarily permanent.

Commitment of shorezone to pier construction would ~~permanently~~ transfer the area within the shorezone occupied by the pier to this use. Commitment of the shorezone to an accessible watercraft launch facility would also ~~permanently~~ transfer the area occupied by the facility within the shorezone to this use.

F.3.27 Impacts of a Paddlecraft Launch

One comment letter suggests that the moveable and universally accessible paddlecraft launch could degrade the recreational experience by displacing beach use that occurs in shaded areas on the south end of the project area and removing trees that provide shade and buffering from SR 89. As described in Section 2.8.1, "Alternative 3 Paddlecraft Launch," the launch structure would be a portable floating platform or ramp no longer than 30 feet. It would be placed in the water and would not be accessed by roads or motor vehicles. The landward side of the launch would include an accessible path (e.g., heavy duty mats or moveable decking) connecting the parking area to the launch. The only feature on the beach would be the access path, which would be linear and several feet wide. As such, the moveable, universally accessible paddlecraft launch is not expected to require tree removal, nor would it displace a substantial amount of beach use. For these reasons, the analysis in the EIS/EIS/EIR appropriately discloses the effects of the paddlecraft launch on recreational uses.

F.3.28 Necessity of an Emergency Response Boat

One comment letter suggests that the available information on emergency response incidents does not justify the need for an emergency response boat at Meeks Bay. The comments suggest that a separate process be initiated with multiple emergency response agencies to identify the appropriate location for an emergency response boat. The comments address the merits of one alternative (Alternative 1) rather than the completeness and adequacy of the environmental review.

The comments' suggestion that an interagency process be undertaken to identify the appropriate location for an emergency response boat is consistent with a process being led by TRPA and emergency response agencies. As described under Impact 3.10-2, "Emergency Access to and from Lake Tahoe," TRPA and emergency service providers along the west shore have initiated a planning process to identify a public safety boat access point on the west shore of Lake Tahoe. Through this process, emergency service providers are considering opportunities and constraints for various locations to identify an ideal site to provide a public safety pier along the west shore. The lead agencies have not proposed an emergency response boat at Meeks Bay as part of the preferred alternative (Alternative 4). Instead, they are relying on the interagency planning process to identify the most appropriate location consistent with these comments.

F.3.29 Suggestion for Additional Project Elements

Multiple comment letters include suggestions for additional project elements to include in the preferred alternative. These comment letters provide recommendations for additional project elements, including a bus stop, safe access across Meeks Creek, regular personnel to enforce rules, additional emergency access and response facilities, public buoys and launch facilities, worker housing, a stream profile chamber, additional swim buoys, elimination of parking along SR 89, variety of interpretation opportunities, and modified bicycle paths. The planning team has considered the suggested additional project features and determined that the suggestions are either not necessary to achieve the purpose and need for the project (e.g., worker housing, public buoys), are cost prohibitive (e.g., stream profile chamber), are minor modifications that could be considered during final design of the selected alternative (e.g., additional swim buoys, modified bicycle path), or are already included (e.g., safe access across Meeks Creek, interpretation opportunities). Elimination of parking along SR 89 is identified as a potential component of the SR 89 Corridor Management Plan (TRPA et al. 2020), which is a separate project. As described in Impact 3.10-6, "Potential Changes in Wildfire Risk" in Section 3.10, "Public Safety and Hazards," construction of the new cabin units and utilities improvements would be built to meet the standards of the Uniform Fire Code, California Fire Code, and Meeks Bay Fire Protection District Fire Code, including standards for building construction related to fire hazards, automatic interior fire sprinklers, on-site fire hydrants, and adequate emergency and fire apparatus access. The decision-making bodies of the lead agencies will consider all of the suggested modifications during their review of the project, and minor modifications could be incorporated into the final design of the selected alternative. These comments address the content of the alternatives and do not raise issues related to the completeness or adequacy of the environmental review.

F.3.30 Support for Non-motorized Alternatives

Two comment letters express a preference for Alternative 3 because it is less intrusive. One comment letter also expresses favor for either the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 3 because they would remove the marina and restore the Meeks Creek channel, wetlands, lagoon, and barrier beach. A couple of other comment letters support any alternative that does not include a boating pier. These comment letters pertain to the merits of the alternatives and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.31 Support for Non-motorized Pier Alternatives

Several comments letters express support for non-motorized pier alternatives. Specifically, one comment letter states suggests that a pier should be for recreational use only such as a structure to jump in the water or to launch a paddle board. Another comment letter states non-motorized piers would ensure no increase in boat traffic and accompanying boat launch and retrieval impacts. A couple of the comment letters express an opinion that a pier is unnecessary and would result in increased traffic and noise impacts.

See Section F.3.5, which explains why piers were included in some alternatives. Only Alternatives 1 and 2 would include the construction of a pier. Alternatives 3 and 4 would not construct a pier but would include a moveable, universally accessible paddlecraft launch structure on the south end of the bay. These comments pertain to the merits of the alternatives and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.32 Support for Alternative 4 - Preferred Alternative

Many comment letters express support of Alternative 4 (the preferred alternative). Specifically, several comment letters express that the restoration achieved by the preferred alternative is vitally important. A number of comments letters express support for not constructing a pier and implementing restoration of the creek and surrounding habitat; new walking trails and multi-use path bridge connecting the two sides; increased opportunities for non-motorized access and recreation; preserving scenic quality; reduced safety and noise impacts, and the other proposed improvements associated with the preferred alternative. Several comment letters support relocation of the motel units to allow more of the beach to be available for visitors. Several comment letters fully support the preferred alternative and implementation of full restoration of the creek and lagoon, the replacement of the SR 89 bridge, and installation of non-motorized lake access features for the public to enjoy. Several comment letters support minimizing impacts to scenic quality, the beneficial impacts to water quality, and reduction in noise and air quality impacts under the preferred alternative. Some comment letters support restoration of the creek and returning Meeks Bay to a more natural state while also implementing enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities and preserving and enhancing low impact recreational opportunities. One comment letter states the preferred alternative also offers the opportunity to significantly reduce both fine sediment and nutrient loading to Lake Tahoe and eradicate a significant infestation of aquatic invasive plant species. One comment letter requests changing the wording of Alternative 4 to read "No Motorized Pier and No Pedestrian Pier" instead of "No Pier" for clarity and transparency. However, the name of this alternative is intentionally broad to convey that there is neither a motorized pier nor pedestrian pier proposed as part of Alternative 4. No changes to the text of the EIS/EIS/EIR were made as a result of this comment. One comment letter supports the preferred alternative but expresses concerns regarding reconstruction of trailer parking, new vehicle routes, and the campground and day use parking areas, and implementation of shoreline stabilization measures at the north end of Meeks Bay.

These comments pertain to the merits of the alternatives and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.33 Support for Alternative 1

Several comment letters support Alternative 1, which includes a pier for motorized boats. Comment letters voiced support for the inclusion of motorized access point to accommodate day trips on Lake Tahoe leaving from Meeks Bay. The comments express support for temporary mooring to access the resort services and suggests that temporary mooring would protect the shoreline and lake environment. Section 3.1, "Recreation," Impact 3.1-1, "Affect the Quality of Recreational Opportunities," notes that the pier proposed as part of Alternative 1 would provide opportunities for motorized boaters to dock for loading and unloading passengers, allow for temporary mooring, and offset removal of the boat ramp. There is no evidence or rationale provided in the comment to indicate that providing temporary mooring would protect the shoreline. These comments pertain to the merits of the alternatives and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.34 Opposition to Alternative 3

One comment letter expresses concern over the proposed expansion of the campground in Alternative 3. The letter states that adding camping to the project area goes against the restoration initiative and quiet atmosphere of Meeks Bay. The letter also notes that increased parking at Meeks Bay is preferred to eliminate the dangerous parking on SR 89. This comment is in opposition to an alternative which will be considered by the lead agencies during decision making but it does not mention issues related to the adequacy of the EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.35 Concern Over Removal and Relocation of Cabins

Two comment letters oppose changes to the Meeks Bay Resort including removal and reconstruction of the motel-style cabins along the beach and associated improvements. One comment expresses concern that this change could have socioeconomic effects and another comment questions how the capacity for overnight accommodations would be maintained. Relocation of the motel-style cabins is proposed under Alternatives 1 and 4 to improve scenic quality, expand the beach area available for public recreation, and replace structures that are nearing the end of their functional lifespan. The removed cabins would be replaced with new cabins with equal capacity farther from the shore. Although final design of the new cabins has not been completed, it is likely that each new cabin may contain multiple units to maintain overnight capacity while minimizing the number of new buildings that would need to be constructed. Because the removed cabins would be replaced with new cabins with the same capacity and the in the same vicinity, it would not result in measurable socioeconomic effects. The comment's opposition to this project element will be considered by the lead agencies during their consideration of the project.

F.3.36 Concern About Multi-use Path Location Near Private Property

One comment letter expresses concern about the location of a potential bicycle path on the east side of SR 89 near Silvertip Road. All four of the action alternatives evaluated in this EIS/EIS/EIR include a multi-use path connection through the project area. However, the alternatives do not specify the route that the path would take once it reaches the south edge of the project area near SR 89 and Silvertip Road, as this area is outside the project area for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. Bicycle path alignments south of the project area will be determined through later planning as part of a separate project. The commenter is encouraged to remain involved in bicycle path planning south of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project area. This comment does not address the adequacy or completeness of the EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.37 Concern About an Increase in RV Sites

One comment letter expresses appreciation for current unobstructed view of Lake Tahoe and its recreation opportunities. The letter also expresses concern regarding potential modifications to the campgrounds to

accommodate large RVs and adding a pier in Meeks Bay. Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," describes proposed campground changes under each alternative. RVs are currently allowed in both campgrounds and none of the alternatives seek to encourage larger RVs or increase the proportion of campsites available for RV use. Camping spur lengths would continue to be limited, which would preclude their use by large RVs, and new RV hookups are not proposed. This comment addresses the merits of the alternatives and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review.

F.3.38 Preferred Location for Day-Use Parking

One comment letter notes that the Preferred Alternative retains the existing location for day-use parking on the south side of the project area and provides the most convenient access for beach day users. The comment requests that this parking arrangement be retained. This comment is expressing support for parking that is proposed by the preferred alternative. This comment pertains to the merits of the alternatives and does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. This comment will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.39 Temporary Noise Impacts from Bridge Replacement

One comment letter notes the proximity of their family cabin to the SR 89 bridge and acknowledges they would be exposed to temporary construction noise, which they are willing to endure while the bridge is replaced. They also note the campgrounds in the project area would be exposed to construction noise associated with the bridge. Impact 3.11-1, in Section 3.11, "Noise," of the EIS/EIS/EIR states that the nearby residents in the area would be exposed to a temporary increase in noise during daytime and nighttime hours, which is identified as significant and unavoidable. Mitigation measures to lessen the noise impact would include prior notification of the construction noise, construction activities would be minimized outside of daytime hours, and construction equipment would be equipped with standard manufacturer-installed noise-reduction mechanisms. These comments do not raise issues related to the completeness or adequacy of the environmental review.

F.3.40 Support for a Multi-use Path Bridge over Meeks Creek

Several comment letters express support for a multi-use path bridge over Meeks Creek. The comments note that currently visitors must cross on the narrow highway bridge and express concerns that this is dangerous and inconvenient especially for families and children. The comments support installing pedestrian facilities including a multi-use path bridge over Meeks Creek and beach access routes that are consistent with the SR 89 Corridor Plan.

As mentioned in Section 2.5 of the EIS/EIS/EIR, pedestrian crossings over Meeks Creek are included in all the action alternatives. These comments pertain to the merits of the project and do not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review. These comments will be considered by LTBMU, TRPA, and Lahontan RWQCB during the project approval and implementation process.

F.3.41 Social Justice Implications of Campground Changes

One comment letter expresses concern over reduced camping capacity, which could affect the ability for middle- and low-income families to enjoy Lake Tahoe. Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 would reconfigure campgrounds to improve access and privacy, while maintaining approximately the existing camping capacity. These alternatives could add up to two campsites or remove up to four sites as needed to accommodate campground improvements. Alternative 3 would increase camping capacity. All action alternatives would allow some campsites to be replaced with alternative camping facilities such as yurts, tent cabins, or hard sided cabins to provide a greater diversity of camping options. The cabins or yurts would replace campsites and would not decrease capacity. A greater diversity in camping facility alternatives would be beneficial for those who do not own camping gear and would overcome financial and knowledge barriers that would

otherwise prevent some people from being able to use the campground. Thus, the alternatives would not substantially reduce camping capacity or reduce the opportunity for middle- or low-income individuals to camp in the project area.

F.3.42 Support for Fish Management Structure

One comment letter expresses support for fish passage under SR 89 in Meeks Creek. Chapter 2, Section 5.2, "Elements Common to the Action Alternatives," describes that the existing SR 89 bridge, which has created a barrier to fish passage, would be replaced to improve the structural integrity, flood flow conveyance, aquatic organism passage, and geomorphic function, consistent with the comment. This comment addresses the merits of the alternatives and does not pertain to the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review.

F.3.43 Opposition to Motorized Watercraft Concession

One comment letter expresses support for the preferred alternative and opposition to any action alternative involving commercial motorized concessions such as boats, jet skis, etc. and the installation of buoy fields. None of the alternatives include proposals for development of commercial watercraft concessions or installation of a buoy field. Furthermore, the TRPA Shoreline Plan prohibits the creation of new buoy fields on Lake Tahoe. The comment does not raise concerns about the adequacy or completeness of the environmental review.

F.3.44 Opposition to Replacement of SR 89 Bridge

One comment letter expresses opposition to replacement of the SR 89 bridge and asserts that the bridge is functional. As described under Section 2.5.2, "State Route 89 Bridge Replacement," in Chapter 2, "Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives," the existing SR 89 bridge over Meeks Creek would be replaced to improve the structural integrity, flood flow conveyance, aquatic organism passage, and geomorphic conditions. The design of the existing bridge has resulted in channel incision on the downstream side of the bridge, which has resulted in an approximately 4-foot-high vertical drop that is a barrier to fish passage. Additionally, the design of the bridge creates a hydraulic bottleneck such that the bridge causes backwater in the meadow for approximately 700 feet upstream and accelerated, erosive flows downstream. The replacement of the SR 89 bridge is integral to the overall restoration of Meeks Creek as part of all of the action alternatives. This comment addresses the merits of a project element and does not pertain to the completeness or adequacy of the EIS/EIS/EIR.

F.3.45 Technical Figure Corrections

One comment letter correctly notes that Figures 3.1-4, 3.1-5, 3.1-6, and 3.1-7 mislabel the 600 ft. no-wake zone during low lake levels and 600 ft. no-wake zone during high lake levels. The no-wake zone would be the more eastern line depicted on the map during high lake levels and the more western line during low lake levels. These figure labels have been corrected in this Final EIS/EIS/EIR. This correction clarifies a figure label, but does not alter the analysis or significance determinations.

F.4 COMMENT LETTERS

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/2/2022 5:25:41 PM

First name: Herman

Last name: Fillmore

Organization: Washoe Tribe of NV and CA

Title:

Comments: My preference is alternative #3 with my second choice being the "preferred alternative" but I find "alternative #3" to be much less intrusive to the space that is already there. Creating more parking will just mitigate the use of the bike path and other access by increasing traffic in the area which is counter-intuitive to so much of the planning that is occurring in the Tahoe Basin.

I also think it is irresponsible to place a pier and boat ramp in the middle of one of the most scenic beaches/bays in Tahoe. This will not only be an eye sore but with ongoing drought and declining water levels these will be practically useless for a large part of the summer months and if water levels continue to decline they will be completely useless all year long. Just look at the other piers and boat ramps/docks around the lake.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/4/2022 12:27:21 AM

First name: Sarah

Last name: Samples

Organization:

Title:

Comments: See attachment.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

August 3, 2022

Ashley Sibr
U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, California 96150

Subject: EPA Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project, El Dorado County, California (EIS Number 20220077)

Dear Ashley Sibr:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the above-referenced document. We are providing comments pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The CAA Section 309 role is unique to the EPA and requires the EPA to review and comment public on every EIS. We provided scoping comments on October 26, 2018.

The Draft EIS evaluates the potential environmental consequences associated with restoring the Meeks Creek channel, wetlands, lagoon, and barrier beach to a more natural condition while continuing to support sustainable recreation opportunities. The project area encompasses approximately 74 acres of National Forest System lands in El Dorado County, California. The Draft EIS evaluates a no action alternative and four action alternatives. Alternative 4 includes a combination of features from Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 and is identified as the preferred alternative.

EPA 309 Review Summary

The EPA did not identify significant environmental concerns to be addressed in the Final EIS. We support the overall environmental restoration of the Lake Tahoe Basin, consistent with the established Environmental Improvement Program objectives for the region. We recognize multiple agencies have worked together for several years on this collaborative effort, and that it is inherently difficult to balance the competing needs of various parties. We strongly support Alternative 4 because its project components best minimize adverse effects while achieving project objectives. Please see the following comments to assist the U.S. Forest Service in preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision.

Environmental Justice

According to the Draft EIS, all action alternatives would include installing educational and interpretative opportunities to “highlight the restored condition of the creek, the history of Meeks Bay, Washoe Tribe cultural heritage, or other appropriate natural or cultural history themes relevant to the site” (p. 2-16). The project would also use temporary signage regarding anticipated construction activities and any temporary closures (Appendix A, p. A-8). The Draft EIS does not describe the percentage of visitors that would be non-English speakers and if these informative project elements would be translated.

With approximately 43.9 percent of California households speaking a language other than English,¹ the EPA highlights the opportunity of providing fair treatment and experiences for all visitors by translating interpretative content, designs of interpretative elements, and temporary signage to languages reflective of the community and visitors. As design space may be limited, we suggest that including a QR code linking to translation for a variety of languages – including, but not limited to, Spanish, standard Chinese, and Vietnamese – on a Forest Service website may be effective. If accepted, include this measure in the Final EIS and commit to it in the ROD.

Air Quality

We appreciate that the Forest Service will implement the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District-Approved Fugitive Dust Control Plan as well as the EDCAQMD Rule 223-1 Best Management Practices (p. 3.18-18). We also recommend committing to the following measures:

Mobile and Stationary Source Controls:

- Reduce unnecessary idling from heavy equipment.
- Prohibit engine tampering to increase horsepower, except when meeting manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Lease or buy newer, cleaner equipment using the best available emissions control technologies.
 - Use lower-emitting engines and fuels, including electric, liquified gas, hydrogen fuel cells, and/or alternative diesel formulations, if feasible.
 - *On-Highway Vehicles* - On-highway vehicles should meet, or exceed, the U.S. EPA exhaust emissions standards for model year 2010 and newer heavy-duty on-highway compression-ignition engines (e.g., drayage trucks, long haul trucks, refuse haulers, shuttle buses, etc.).²
 - *Nonroad Vehicles & Equipment* - Nonroad vehicles and equipment should meet, or exceed, the U.S. EPA Tier 4 exhaust emissions standards for heavy-duty nonroad compression-ignition engines (e.g., nonroad trucks, construction equipment, cargo handlers, etc.).³

Administrative Controls:

- Locate diesel engines, motors, and equipment staging areas as far as possible from residential areas and other sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, daycare centers, hospitals, senior centers, etc.).
- Prepare an inventory of all equipment prior to construction and identify the suitability of add-on emission controls for each piece of equipment before groundbreaking.⁴
- Reduce construction-related trips of workers and equipment, including trucks.
- Develop a construction traffic and parking management plan that minimizes traffic interference and maintains traffic flow.
- Identify where implementation of mitigation measures is rejected based on economic infeasibility.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. July 2021. American Community Survey: Languages Spoken at Home [Electronic Database]. Available at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=spanish%20speakers%20in%20california&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S1601>

² See <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi?Dockey=P10009ZZ.pdf>.

³ See <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi?Dockey=P1000A05.pdf>.

⁴ Suitability of control devices is based on whether there is reduced normal availability of the construction equipment due to increased downtime and/or power output, whether there may be significant damage caused to the construction equipment engine, or whether there may be a significant risk to nearby workers or the public.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Draft EIS. When the Final EIS is released for public review, please email to samples.sarah@epa.gov. If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 947-4167, or Sarah Samples, the lead reviewer for this project, at (415) 972-3961.

Sincerely,

Jean Prijatel
Manager, Environmental Review Branch

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/4/2022 5:05:10 PM

First name: Edward

Last name: Miller

Organization: Meeks Bay Fire District

Title:

Comments: Meeks Bay and North Tahoe Fire Districts would like to emphasize that the community would benefit greatly from the placement of a Public Safety (Fire/Rescue) watercraft in the area, if a pier is built. Our combined Districts, (which are in the process of consolidation), are the only Fire Districts at the Lake without a watercraft. It's ironic since we cover more shoreline than any other District.

There have already been two drownings this summer here on the West Shore. Marine Safety Officer Heather Carlquist with the South Lake Tahoe Police Department says, "It is the third most deadly body of water in the state of California".

Meeks Bay is in close proximity to Meeks Bay Fire Station 67 and watercraft could be easily accessed for water rescue or for lakeside structure or wild land fires. Other locations are not as geographically fitting, and local marinas have quoted mooring fees which are beyond affordable.

The vessel would be about the size of current USCG and Law Enforcement marine units.

We understand the concerns of some local residents about a pier, and/or a "fire boat". We just want to have input and say that if a pier is constructed, we would like the Fire Service to be considered in the picture. Our only goal is to provide safety and protection to Lake Tahoe residents and visitors, and the environment.

In light of recent conflagrations and drownings, it is not hard to see what an asset a locally stationed public safety vessel would be.

Thank you for the opportunity to give our input and for your consideration.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 3:23:47 PM

First name: Scott

Last name: Carey

Organization: Nevada State Clearinghouse

Title:

Comments: USFS,

Thank you for sending the notice for the Meeks Bay Restoration (#52971) to the Nevada State Clearinghouse. The Nevada State Clearinghouse is the single point of contact (SPOC) for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) proposals for the State of Nevada. Pursuant to NEPA, federal agencies must consult with the State and other agencies whenever project or policy initiative is proposed on public lands.

The Nevada State Clearinghouse posted this project as E2022-427 for a 60 day period from June 10th to August 9th. After posting and sending out this notice our distribution list, the Nevada State Clearinghouse did not receive any comments on this project.

Thank You,

Scott H. Carey, AICP

State Lands Planner

Nevada Division of State Lands

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

901 S. Stewart Street, Suite 5003

Carson City, NV 89701

scarey@lands.nv.gov

(O) 775-684-2723 | (F) 775-684-2721

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 6:03:04 PM

First name: Jason

Last name: Ramos

Organization: CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

Title:

Comments: Dear Lead Agency Representatives:

The California State Lands Commission (Commission) staff has reviewed the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS for the Project, which is being prepared by the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB), and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). The LTBMU, as the public agency proposing to carry out the Project, is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.); LRWQCB is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.); TRPA is the lead agency pursuant to Articles 4 and 6 of the TRPA Rules of Procedure for preparation of a TRPA EIS. The Commission is a trustee agency for projects that could directly or indirectly affect State sovereign land and their accompanying Public Trust resources or uses. Additionally, because the Project involves work on State sovereign land, the Commission will act as a responsible agency.

Commission Jurisdiction and Public Trust Lands

The Commission has jurisdiction and management authority over all ungranted tidelands, submerged lands, and the beds of navigable lakes and waterways. All tidelands and submerged lands, as well as navigable lakes and waterways, are subject to the protections of the common law Public Trust Doctrine.

As general background, the State of California acquired sovereign ownership of all tidelands and submerged lands and beds of navigable lakes and waterways upon its admission to the United States in 1850. The state holds these lands for the benefit of all people of the state for statewide Public Trust purposes, which include but are not limited to waterborne commerce, navigation, fisheries, water-related recreation, habitat preservation, and open space. On navigable non-tidal waterways, including lakes, the state holds fee ownership of the bed of the waterway landward to the ordinary low-water mark (OLWM) and a Public Trust easement landward to the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM), except where the boundary has been fixed by agreement or a court of proper jurisdiction. Such boundaries may not be readily apparent from present day site inspections. The easement may be limited to the extent necessary to protect sensitive species, identified cultural or historic resources, or safety of the general public, provided that the interference with public access is limited to the minimum extent and time necessary to accomplish the public purpose.

Portions of the Project located in Lake Tahoe at and below elevation 6,223 feet, Lake Tahoe Datum (LTD), will be located on State sovereign land under the jurisdiction of the Commission. This elevation also serves as the OLWM for Lake Tahoe. As a result, formal authorization for use of State sovereign land will be required from the Commission for any portion of the Project encroaching on State sovereign land.

Project Description

The Project area occurs on LTBMU land inclusive of Meeks Creek and marina, Meeks Bay Resort, and the campground and day use beach area on the south side of the Project area. Project objectives include restoration of Meeks Creek for water quality and channel morphology, control of aquatic invasive species, and recreation improvements. Proposed activities on State sovereign land vary among the action alternatives, but could include a new pier, removal of bulkhead walls and restoration of the creek mouth, a non-motorized watercraft launch structure, and removal and new construction of shoreline stabilization structures.

Environmental Review

Commission staff requests that the lead agencies consider the following comments on the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS.

1. Project Description: Identify elevation lines for the OHWM and OLWM of Lake Tahoe for all proposed work, inclusive of new pier construction, construction activities at the mouth of Meeks Creek, non-motorized watercraft launch structure, and removal and new construction of shoreline stabilization structures.

2. Day Use Beach Access and Parking: With all the action alternatives, parking capacity is generally described as available parking. Commission staff recommends further description of the potential range of uses that available parking could serve, such as day use beach access, campground parking, hiking, picnicking, etc. Specifically, identify the location and number of parking spaces that will primarily serve day use beach access. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 4) promotes an increase in parking on the south side of the project area, but does not specify if the increased parking will primarily serve day use beach access, or if this parking area is also intended for overflow campground parking and other uses.

3. Public Access Restrictions: For all construction phases of the Project, the EIS/EIR/EIS should provide a detailed description of any temporary restrictions on shoreline access, and for navigation within the lake. Potential mitigation measures could include public notices and posting of signs at the Project area to inform the public of temporary access restrictions.

4. Lake Tahoe Shoreline and Nearshore Restoration: The Draft EIS/EIR/EIS promotes a range of restoration improvements to Meeks Creek, including floodplain restoration, sediment retention, hydrologic and geomorphic function, aquatic invasive species, fish habitat and passage, enhanced water quality, etc. However, these benefits are primarily promoted for Meeks Creek. The Draft EIS/EIR/EIS should provide further description for how these restoration improvements will improve and affect shoreline and nearshore conditions for the lake environment surrounding the mouth of Meeks Creek.

The Hydrology/Water Quality section should provide further analysis and description for how creek restoration improvements will affect shoreline, hydrologic, geologic, water quality, and fish habitat conditions for the nearshore environment surrounding the mouth of Meeks Creek. Alterations or improvements to the lake environment could include changes to stream mouth morphology and meandering, hydrology and sediment discharge, littoral cell and drift conditions, lake bottom bathymetry, water quality and clarity conditions, nearshore lake bottom substrate and fish habitat conditions, discharge of organic matter and debris, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS for the Project. Please provide noticing for project approval hearings and certification of the EIS/EIR/EIS, or if recirculation of the document occurs. Application for a lease with the Commission will require submittal of the certified EIS/EIR/EIS, Mitigation Monitoring Program, approving resolution, findings and statement of overriding consideration, and Notice of Determination. Please note that federal and state laws require all government entities to improve accessibility of information technology and content by complying with established accessibility requirements. (29 U.S.C. § 794d; 36 C.F.R. § 1194.1 et seq.; Gov. Code, § 7405.) California State law prohibits State agencies from publishing on their websites content that does not comply with accessibility requirements. (Gov. Code, § 115467.) Therefore, any documents submitted to Commission staff during the processing of a lease or permit, including all CEQA documentation, must meet accessibility requirements for Commission staff to place the application on the Commission agenda.

Please refer questions concerning environmental review to Jason Ramos, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (916) 574-1814 or Jason.Ramos@slc.ca.gov. For questions concerning Commission leasing jurisdiction, please contact Cheryl Hudson, Public Land Manager, at (916) 574-0732 or cheryl.hudson@slc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Eric Gillies, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental Planning
and Management

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

100 Howe Avenue, Suite 100-South
Sacramento, CA 95825-8202



Established in 1938

JENNIFER LUCCHESI, Executive Officer

(916) 574-1800

TTY CA Relay Service: 711 or Phone 800.735.2922

from Voice Phone 800.735.2929

or for Spanish 800.855.3000

Contact Phone: (916) 574-1890

August 9, 2022

File Ref: SCH# 2018092031

Ashley Sibr

U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

35 College Drive

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Ashley.Sibr@usda.gov

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/ltbmu/meeksrestoration/comment>

Brian Judge

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Brian.Judge@waterboards.ca.gov

Rebecca Cremeen

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

P.O. Box 5310

128 Market Street

Stateline, NV 89449-5310

rcremeen@trpa.org

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/EIR/EIS) for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project (Project), El Dorado County

Dear Lead Agency Representatives:

The California State Lands Commission (Commission) staff has reviewed the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS for the Project, which is being prepared by the U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB), and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). The LTBMU, as the public agency proposing to carry out the Project, is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.); LRWQCB is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality

Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.); TRPA is the lead agency pursuant to Articles 4 and 6 of the TRPA Rules of Procedure for preparation of a TRPA EIS. The Commission is a trustee agency for projects that could directly or indirectly affect State sovereign land and their accompanying Public Trust resources or uses. Additionally, because the Project involves work on State sovereign land, the Commission will act as a responsible agency.

Commission Jurisdiction and Public Trust Lands

The Commission has jurisdiction and management authority over all ungranted tidelands, submerged lands, and the beds of navigable lakes and waterways. All tidelands and submerged lands, as well as navigable lakes and waterways, are subject to the protections of the common law Public Trust Doctrine.

As general background, the State of California acquired sovereign ownership of all tidelands and submerged lands and beds of navigable lakes and waterways upon its admission to the United States in 1850. The state holds these lands for the benefit of all people of the state for statewide Public Trust purposes, which include but are not limited to waterborne commerce, navigation, fisheries, water-related recreation, habitat preservation, and open space. On navigable non-tidal waterways, including lakes, the state holds fee ownership of the bed of the waterway landward to the ordinary low-water mark (OLWM) and a Public Trust easement landward to the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM), except where the boundary has been fixed by agreement or a court of proper jurisdiction. Such boundaries may not be readily apparent from present day site inspections. The easement may be limited to the extent necessary to protect sensitive species, identified cultural or historic resources, or safety of the general public, provided that the interference with public access is limited to the minimum extent and time necessary to accomplish the public purpose.

Portions of the Project located in Lake Tahoe at and below elevation 6,223 feet, Lake Tahoe Datum (LTD), will be located on State sovereign land under the jurisdiction of the Commission. This elevation also serves as the OLWM for Lake Tahoe. As a result, formal authorization for use of State sovereign land will be required from the Commission for any portion of the Project encroaching on State sovereign land.

Project Description

The Project area occurs on LTBMU land inclusive of Meeks Creek and marina, Meeks Bay Resort, and the campground and day use beach area on the south side of the Project area. Project objectives include restoration of Meeks Creek for water quality and channel morphology, control of aquatic invasive species, and recreation improvements. Proposed activities on State sovereign land vary among the action alternatives, but could include a new pier, removal of

bulkhead walls and restoration of the creek mouth, a non-motorized watercraft launch structure, and removal and new construction of shoreline stabilization structures.

Environmental Review

Commission staff requests that the lead agencies consider the following comments on the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS.

1. Project Description: Identify elevation lines for the OHWM and OLWM of Lake Tahoe for all proposed work, inclusive of new pier construction, construction activities at the mouth of Meeks Creek, non-motorized watercraft launch structure, and removal and new construction of shoreline stabilization structures.
2. Day Use Beach Access and Parking: With all the action alternatives, parking capacity is generally described as available parking. Commission staff recommends further description of the potential range of uses that available parking could serve, such as day use beach access, campground parking, hiking, picnicking, etc. Specifically, identify the location and number of parking spaces that will primarily serve day use beach access. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 4) promotes an increase in parking on the south side of the project area, but does not specify if the increased parking will primarily serve day use beach access, or if this parking area is also intended for overflow campground parking and other uses.
3. Public Access Restrictions: For all construction phases of the Project, the EIS/EIR/EIS should provide a detailed description of any temporary restrictions on shoreline access, and for navigation within the lake. Potential mitigation measures could include public notices and posting of signs at the Project area to inform the public of temporary access restrictions.
4. Lake Tahoe Shoreline and Nearshore Restoration: The Draft EIS/EIR/EIS promotes a range of restoration improvements to Meeks Creek, including floodplain restoration, sediment retention, hydrologic and geomorphic function, aquatic invasive species, fish habitat and passage, enhanced water quality, etc. However, these benefits are primarily promoted for Meeks Creek. The Draft EIS/EIR/EIS should provide further description for how these restoration improvements will improve and affect shoreline and nearshore conditions for the lake environment surrounding the mouth of Meeks Creek.

The Hydrology/Water Quality section should provide further analysis and description for how creek restoration improvements will affect shoreline, hydrologic, geologic, water quality, and fish habitat conditions for the nearshore environment surrounding the mouth of Meeks Creek. Alterations or improvements to the lake environment could include changes to stream

mouth morphology and meandering, hydrology and sediment discharge, littoral cell and drift conditions, lake bottom bathymetry, water quality and clarity conditions, nearshore lake bottom substrate and fish habitat conditions, discharge of organic matter and debris, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS/EIR/EIS for the Project. Please provide noticing for project approval hearings and certification of the EIS/EIR/EIS, or if recirculation of the document occurs. Application for a lease with the Commission will require submittal of the certified EIS/EIR/EIS, Mitigation Monitoring Program, approving resolution, findings and statement of overriding consideration, and Notice of Determination. Please note that federal and state laws require all government entities to improve accessibility of information technology and content by complying with established accessibility requirements. (29 U.S.C. § 794d; 36 C.F.R. § 1194.1 et seq.; Gov. Code, § 7405.) California State law prohibits State agencies from publishing on their websites content that does not comply with accessibility requirements. (Gov. Code, § 115467.) Therefore, any documents submitted to Commission staff during the processing of a lease or permit, including all CEQA documentation, must meet accessibility requirements for Commission staff to place the application on the Commission agenda.

Please refer questions concerning environmental review to Jason Ramos, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (916) 574-1814 or Jason.Ramos@slc.ca.gov. For questions concerning Commission leasing jurisdiction, please contact Cheryl Hudson, Public Land Manager, at (916) 574-0732 or cheryl.hudson@slc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Eric Gillies, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental Planning
and Management

cc: Office of Planning and Research
J. Ramos, Commission
C. Hudson, Commission

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 7:26:36 PM

First name: Matthew

Last name: Homolka

Organization: Tahoe City Public Utility District

Title:

Comments: On behalf of the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD), I am submitting the following comments on the EIS/EIS/EIR for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. The project is located within the TCPUD's service area. TCPUD provides domestic water service, sewer collection service, and parks and recreation services within our boundaries.

Within the Project Area, the TCPUD:

* Owns, operates, and maintains the Meeks Bay Sewer Pump Station (MBSPPS), which is located on a separately owned parcel of the TCPUD.

* Owns, operates, and maintains a gravity sewer transmission main which collects all sewage south of the Project Area extending down to D.L. Bliss State Park. This facility occupies an easement to the benefit of TCPUD crossing the Project Area.

* Owns, operates, and maintains sewage collection facilities which serve the campgrounds and facilities within the Project Area. These facilities occupy easements to the benefit of the TCPUD.

* Operates and maintains the existing multi-use trail (Sugarpine to Meeks Bay Bike Trail) located along the north portion of the Project Area under a Special Use Permit from the USFS.

Our comments on the EIS/EIS/EIR are as follows:

1. Section 1.4.2 - The TCPUD should be listed as a Responsible Agency. The TCPUD will likely have discretionary actions related to potential modifications to its utility facilities and related to modifications to the multi-use trail system, including the TCPUD's extent of operations and maintenance responsibilities for the system.
2. Section 1.7 - We note, without objection, that Public Services and Utilities are excluded from detailed review in this EIS/EIS/EIR and agree that the Project would not have an appreciable impact on water or sewer demands.
3. Section 2.5.5 - Utility Infrastructure - This section contains a reference to burying (lower elevation) or relocating to the new bridge (higher elevation) the TCPUD's existing sewer main which crosses Meeks Creek (second bullet above). The sewer transmission main referenced is a 24-inch diameter gravity sewer main at a very flat gradient, which includes a concrete cap at the Meeks Creek channel. Changing its elevation profile (lowering or raising) is not feasible while maintaining gravity flow. The statement that it could be lowered or raised should be deleted. We would encourage the Project proponents to consider not modifying this facility and instead designing the stream and lagoon restoration element to account for its current alignment and profile. Depending on the stream and lagoon restoration design, additional concrete capping of the existing pipe may be required. The text in this section should be modified to state the existing sewer facility will remain and be protected during construction and that additional concrete capping may be required depending on final stream and lagoon restoration design. Minor realignment of this pipe is feasible (but significant in scope), however, changing the elevation profile of the pipe is not. If there is a desire for this type of realignment, then the project description should be modified to include the work associated and any impacts analyzed.

Please contact Matt Homolka/Assistant General Manager at the email provided for any questions or clarifications related to our comments.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 6:05:57 PM

First name: Rhiana

Last name: Jones

Organization: Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Title:

Comments:

Table 2.1 The preferred alternative is the best choice considering this is a restoration project. My only issue is the paddleboard storage. This doesn't seem to be an existing issue at the resort and I think the less storage facilities on the beach the better. Also in Table 2.1 there is mention of AIS control, Washoe Environmental has some funding to work on and monitor AIS and would like to assist with AIS in this area.

P-09-005224 - Mayala Wata under section 3.3.2 states Mayala Wata was a summer camp, would prefer if language said summer home. Since Washoe People returned to the site every year for thousands of years it should be considered a home site. A camp site indicates something more temporary and again feel it diminishes the role of the Washoe Tribe in the area.

Overall The Preferred alternative appears to be the best choice for the restoration project, it address infrastructure that needs improvement while still keeping the focus on the environmental needs of the project. The main goal of the Washoe Environmental Protection department is to manage and protect our traditional homelands, so much of which has been taken away, especially in the Tahoe Basin. The preferred alternative will benefit everyone involved from Meeks Bay resort, Tribal Members, and visitors who wish for a less hectic and more peaceful beach setting.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/10/2022 5:17:35 PM

First name: Gina

Last name: Thompson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for considering alternatives that maintain motorized boater access to this historic site. Especially valuable to us, is our access for day use at this site. Temporary mooring is needed to access resort services and to protect the shoreline and lake environment. My family appreciates an inclusive approach to recreation use and management of this very popular National Forest site. As long time users of this site, we look forward to and support the improvements planned for this site. This is a good place to invest our resources and funds.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/10/2022 10:31:41 PM

First name: Joann

Last name: Helmus

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have attended past public meetings and also reviewed the Meeks Bay Restoration Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement documents and maps. I am especially pleased to find the agencies involved have chosen Option #4 as the preferred choice. I believe that the return of this portion of Lake Tahoe to a more sustainable area for wildlife and native flora habitats is of the most vital importance. Restoration will be achieved by this endeavor.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/10/2022 10:55:25 PM

First name: Marc

Last name: Roos

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom it May Concern: If you allow a public pier, it will invite increased boat traffic into Meeks Bay, which will destroy the peace and tranquility of the area where campers like to swim, paddleboard and enjoy the amazing setting. If you do allow a pier, it should be for recreational use only, such as a place to jump in the water or launch your paddleboard, but not for boat usage. There are many other wonderful places to boat, but Meeks Bay should be preserved as a quiet and peaceful escape from it all, and it should also strive to preserve the natural habitat that you are trying to protect. Thank you for your time. Marc Roos

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/16/2022 7:42:58 PM

First name: Robin

Last name: Albee-Kesich

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I heartily oppose the construction of a pier. This endangers swimmers and those in non motorized crafts.

I own property in Tahoma. I enjoy walking and biking on the new trail from Sugarpine Point State Park to Meeks Bay.

I especially enjoy the beach and swimming. Adding more fast motorized vehicles into the swimming area and non motorized craft area.

Notwithstanding the huge negative visual impact on the beauty and natural curve of the Bay.

This project is totally against all those things that make Tahoe special.

This is not stewardship of the Lake. It is an abomination!

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/17/2022 4:14:59 PM

First name: Kathy

Last name: Astromoff

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As owners of a vacation home in Chamberlands, we support restoring Meeks Bay to a condition that maximizes recovery of the natural ecosystem while enabling low-impact, non-motorized recreation. Specifically, we favor bicycle and transit access over cars, and kayak/SUP access instead of motorboats and jet skis. We particularly oppose anything that encourages motorboat or jet ski access to Meeks Bay, whether by land or by lake. There is literally no place on the west shore where the lake can be enjoyed without the incursion of noisy and polluting engine-based watercraft. You've already closed down the marina - now is the chance to ban motor watercraft entirely.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/17/2022 11:04:28 PM

First name: Michael

Last name: Bosse

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to comment on the Meeks Bay Restoration EIS

I live near Meeks Bay and regularly use the area for recreation year round. We have been visiting Meeks bay for many years.

I strongly prefer the preferred option for the following reasons:

- no motorized pier ensures that there is not an increase of boat traffic and accompanying boat launch and retrieval impacts. Boaters have many existing facilities and there is significant visitation pressure on Meeks Bay. By focusing on non-motorized use it allows better sharing of Meeks Bay among users as non-motorized users have less impact (noise, parking space, impact to other users, user conflicts) than motorized users. Adding specific facilities for SUP and Kayak is a uniquely valuable addition that is not available at other public sites on the west shore.
- relocation of the motel units allows more of the beach to be available to share

One additional comments:

1. The SR89 corridor plan includes a goal of developing a bus stop at Meeks Bay but a bus stop is not addressed in this EIS which appears to be an oversight and contrary to the goals of the EIS of reducing visitation impacts (which could be achieved by encouraging visitor arrivals by bus). Please include options for bus stop placement in the final plans to ensure this is properly considered.

I would also like to ensure that the Washoe tribe has been properly consulted given their historical use and stewardship of this place for many centuries before the 1800s and the important integration between this project and the Meeks Meadow restoration.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/21/2022 2:13:26 PM

First name: whitney

Last name: Foehl

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a 32 year local, my friends and family camp at Meeks Bay almost every summer. Like everything in Tahoe, we have seen the crowds grow, the littering and noise increase, and the availability of sites go fast. We accept this growth and understand it needs to be managed. We respect your efforts to update Meeks Bay. What we do not accept is the boat pier. Meeks is filled with swimmers, recreating beach goers, and lots of human powered small crafts like paddle boards, kayaks, and blow-ups. Adding motor crafts/boats to the mix is unacceptable. It will change the whole scene by making it louder, more dangerously crowded, and take away the state park vibe to the place. Also, it is unnecessary. People go to Meeks to connect with nature and appreciate it, not to be listening to motor boats coming and going all day. Motor boats can still enjoy Meeks, they can just do it from the water, at a safe distance. These would be the same reasons we would be against a boat launching ramp. We would like to save Meeks Bay from the masses and their boats. There are hundreds of people a day as it is. Mixing in motors boats is a bad idea. Update Meeks with one of your alternatives that doesn't include a boat pier, launch, or more buoys. Thank you for your consideration.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/22/2022 9:19:40 PM

First name: Harold

Last name: Appleton

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Providing fish passage under the Highway 89 bridge over Meeks creek should be a critical part of restoration. Care must be taken to ensure that the creek grade is not destabilized.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/22/2022 10:32:30 PM

First name: doris

Last name: healy

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am interested that there be a bridge of some kind across the creek on the lake side of the highway to get from US Campground and beach to the Meeks Bay Resort Beach. With no bridge it is now dangerous to walk the highway with children. It requires more of the neighboring areas to take cars rather than walk which adds to the parking congestion without some bridge other than the highway. There was a bridge during the early years of the Kehlet owned Resort and during the Marina era, one could walk with children across boat docking ramps. Now we must go to highway, too dangerous for families so necessitate a car when it is easily walking distance. Inconvenient, dangerous, ecologically poor with added cars without a simple pedestrian bridge or even incorporate it with eventual bike path. Bridge PLEASE!!!

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/25/2022 2:02:39 AM

First name: Maureen

Last name: Montgomery

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Resident of Glenridge neighborhood since 1997, the Preferred Alternative to the Meeks Bay Restoration Project that was presented by USFS is the one I vote for. We do not need a pier, marina, boat launch, just the sandy beach and the beautiful safe and clean bay for swimming in.

Thank you

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/27/2022 8:10:47 PM

First name: Dr. Owen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: This project is a health and safety disaster that must be stopped.

I am a local resident and a MIT/UCSF trained doctor. This project will have a dramatically negative impact on me, my family, and all who visit Meeks Bay. This project will substantially increase the mosquito population here - potentially resulting in life threatening mosquito borne disease, and certainly decreasing the quality of life here. I am a frequent hiker into the beautiful Meeks Bay meadows. But while Meeks Bay meadows is beautiful, its wet-lands nature gives it a terrible mosquito, tick and other biting insect problem. Bringing a wet-lands corridor right to the lake will also bring the mosquitos. The exact same mosquito problem is present in every other wetlands encroachment on the lake. Global warming and high population density has brought a rapid increase in exotic and terrible insect borne illness. In California, mosquito borne diseases including Zika, Chikungunya, Dengue, Filariasis (canine and feline heartworm), Malaria, Saint Louis encephalitis (SLE), West Nile virus (WNV), Western Equine encephalitis (WEE), and Yellow fever are a health crisis. This project will hurt and kill people. Please do not hurt us just to appease your ecological misconceptions.

Beyond the harmful health impacts this project will bring the people who visit Meeks Bay, this project is also likely to increase the bear problems Meeks Bay suffers. This project will create a wildlife corridor funneling the bear population of Meeks Bay Meadows and Desolation Wilderness right down to the lakeside campers and residents. Every year, tens of thousands of dollars of damage is done to lake area residences by bears. Worse, these problem bears must be euthanized to forestall worse damage and injury. This project must be stopped before it worsens the bear problem plaguing the area.

Finally, I plead for social justice. Tahoe is becoming ever more segregated between the haves, and the have-not's. Meeks Bay is one of the very few areas on the lake where middle and lower income families can come, stay, and enjoy the lake. Plans to reduce camping and public use options should not part of Meeks Bay's future.

In short, this plan for Meeks Bay will worsen the exploding California mosquito borne health crisis, lead to increased bear euthanization, and decrease affordable fun recreational options for the great majority of Californians that aren't financially privileged. This project is a health and safety disaster that must be stopped.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 1:41:34 AM

First name: Owen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: There is NO mention of bears in the entire EIS.

The area has a bad bear issue and this project would make it much worse as it creates a corridor from Meeks Bay Meadows and Desolation Wilderness right down to the lakeside campers and residents.

The bears cause property damage and may cause significant human injury.

This is a significant environmental effect!

Why is bear and wildlife introduction impact not part of the EIS?

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 1:41:34 AM

First name: Owen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The only mention of "mosquito" in the entire EIS is on page 3.9-7 and only acknowledges that mosquitoes carry diseases but does not evaluate the impact of the project on the population at Meeks Bay.

It is clear that this project would massively increase the mosquito population of Meeks Bay to that close the the infestations in Meeks Bay meadows and all the other wetlands encroachments on the lake.

This is a significant environmental effect!

Why is mosquito and disease impact not part of the EIS?

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 1:41:34 AM

First name: Owen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: With no mention of impact of ticks, mosquitoes, or bears, this EIS is clearly a one sided sham that only presents issues that support the project, or false straw-men objections that also essentially support the project. Who wrote this EIS?

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 4:33:17 PM

First name: William

Last name: Lyons, Jr.

Organization: Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners Association

Title:

Comments: I am the President of the Meeks Bay Vista Property Owners Association (MBVPOA), a volunteer association comprised of approximately 100 property owners whose lands are either adjacent to, or in very close proximity to the proposed Meeks Bay Restoration Project. MBVPOA has been very engaged in this project/process from the beginning (submitting comments, participating in the public process, etc.); primarily represented by Board Member Dr. David Coward, Vice-President Tony Evans, and Secretary Bill Magrath.

The MBVPOA Board applauds the Lead Agencies for putting forth and recommending the "Preferred Alternative #4", and fully supports and respectfully suggests that Alternative #4 as proposed be selected and adopted by the TRPA Board and other jurisdictional agencies. The adoption of Alternative #4 will allow for the full restoration of the creek and lagoon, the replacement of the SR89 bridge, and installation of non-motorized lake access features for the public to enjoy (paddle boarding, kayaking, etc.). Alternative #4 also allows for improvements to the upland facilities that will result in better traffic circulation, expanded parking, and relocation of the two "hotel-style cabins". Additionally, Alternative #4 removes the obtrusive 300' pier to provide access and tie-ups for motorized boats in Meeks Bay. Said pier and facilities for motorized watercraft would have destroyed the uniqueness and tranquility of the family-oriented (and currently non-motorized watercraft) Meeks Bay, one of the most beautiful and safe bays/beaches on Lake Tahoe. The ability for swimmers, paddle boarders, kayakers and families to enjoy the beach and bay safely and without the interruption and noise of motorized watercraft simply cannot be understated.

The MBVPOA Board of Directors strongly opposes any alternative that allows for commercial motorized concessions (boats, jet skis, etc.) and/or the installation of buoy fields in the Meeks Bay. We urge the TRPA and other Lead Agencies to support and adopt Alternative #4, and publicly support that no motorized watercraft concessions and/or buoy fields should be allowed or permitted.

On behalf of the MBVPOA and our members, we thank you for your time, effort and consideration. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 7:07:17 PM

First name: kimberly

Last name: enzensperger

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I really do not want a pier. I am a beach pass holder and have been for many years. We have had our 2nd home here since 1967, people that have been coming to Tahoe in the last few years are very disrespectful of the area in terms of boating, garbage, etc. As along term resident, I think we need to keep a bit of old Tahoe.

I know there used to be a pier in the past , I have a pic in my house, but with the boat launch at Obexers, not too far away, and the fire Dept right next to the beach, for problems and safety.

we have had so many crazy tourists in the past three years trashing our beloved Meeks Bay with garbage and so many other things, and I believe this may just make it worse with a pier.

I know you will all make the right choice for our beloved area.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/28/2022 9:34:13 PM

First name: CONNIE

Last name: SPENCER

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for your efforts and for considering the following:

Having attended the Zoom presentations and workshops, I have the following comments and suggestions:

1. Provide better rapid emergency vehicles' access including a heliport
2. There are NOT enough GENERAL PUBLIC buoys near Meeks Bay. Most are managed by local homeowners' associations.
3. There are not enough boat launching sites on the West Shore.
4. Provide better and safer access from one area to another.
5. Provide numerous bear-proof garbage disposal sites.
6. Provide regular personnel to enforce resort, camp site, beach rules.
7. Stipulate a proposed budget and funding sources for the project before final approval.
8. Provide fire hydrants throughout the project.
9. Eliminate Highway 89 parking.
10. Create adequate camp site parking for trailers with boats as well as motor homes.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/29/2022 7:17:02 PM

First name: Dana

Last name: Schneider

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the preferred alternative, with no pier, non motorized option and restoration of the creek and lagoon. Meeks Bay is a treasure and should not be spoiled by a pier in the middle of this Lake Tahoe Gem.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/30/2022 1:54:32 AM

First name: Donna

Last name: Reid

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The alternative w a boat pier is NOT advantageous to the main goals of the project. We don't need more boat traffic coming into the bay where the beaches are already crowded and many people are swimming and doing human powered activities. Any of the other alternatives seem viable. Thank you in your efforts to improve the campground, the roads are terrible.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/4/2022 11:23:04 PM

First name: Judith

Last name: Tornese

Organization: Friends of the West Shore

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Sibr:

The Friends of the West Shore (FOWS) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Meeks Bay Restoration Project Draft EIS/R. FOWS mission is to work toward the preservation, protection, and conservation of the West Shore, our watersheds, wildlife, and rural quality of life, for today and future generations. FOWS represents community interests from Emerald Bay to south of Tahoe City.

FOWS would like to express our support for the Preferred Alternative. As the DEIS/R concludes, this Alternative will provide significant environmental benefits associated with restoration of the lagoon and other improvements, in addition to enhancing opportunities for and enjoyment of non-motorized recreational uses and preserving the unique scenic beauty of Meeks Bay.

Specifically, in response to public feedback during the multi-year process, the Preferred Alternative:

- Results in beneficial impacts related to recreational user access (and beneficial impacts to non-motorized recreational uses, although this is not evaluated as a separate significance criteria);
- Avoids any significant impact to scenic quality from all viewpoints - in fact, we believe the impact conclusion should be beneficial due to removal of the marina sheet piles and preservation of the views of the remaining Bay;
- Results in beneficial environmental impacts associated with air and water quality and reductions in boat noise from removal of the boating infrastructure;
- Retains the existing location for south beach day use parking, which provides for the most convenient access for day users of the beach;
- Excludes the opportunity-based proposal for a fire boat that would degrade the beneficial impacts noted above and instead has led to a separate analysis regarding the most appropriate location for a fire boat along the West Shore.

We appreciate the comprehensive effort that went into the environmental analysis, including researching user information, analyzing the number of people who participate in non-motorized vs. motorized recreation and making that distinction in the DEIS/R, and other informational requests that were included in our comments on the NOP. As members of the Stakeholder Forum, FOWS has been pleased to see the USFS and partners put extensive time and energy toward engaging the public and adjusting the alternatives to reflect feedback throughout the public process. Brief comments regarding the scenic analysis are attached.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Judith Tornese,
President

Enclosure: Annotated Viewpoint Figure

Additional comments regarding Scenic Analysis:

The DEIS/R analysis of the impacts of the Views of Lake Tahoe from the Project Area (Impact 3.2-2) relies on

just two Viewpoints (VP); VP 1 is based on looking toward Meeks Bay from 0.25 mile offshore and VP 2 is based on a lateral view looking south across the Bay from an area on the northern end (Figure 3.2-8). The DEIS/R states that:

"Figure 3.2-11 shows the existing and future views under Alternative 1 from Viewpoint 2 on the northern end of Meeks Bay facing south toward southern Meeks Bay and Lake Tahoe. While visitors experience views of Lake Tahoe from multiple points along the beach, this viewpoint provides for a representative assessment of changes in views affecting all viewers along the beach. This viewpoint provides views of the majority of the beach and the major features that would be visible from the beach; it provides a view of the proposed pier at an appropriate distance to view the entire structure and its visual context; and it is within the TRPA-designated scenic recreation area for Meeks Bay Resort." [emphasis added]. (p. 3.2-28)

However, as the DEIS/R notes, most beach users will be located along the beach and will view Lake Tahoe by looking east toward the lake and north/south along the Bay from these locations (not from the location of VP 2). Without a pier, views from these other locations would include natural beaches and the lake uninterrupted by development. As a result, the scenic analysis fails to include locations representing what most users will see and value. We request the FEIS/R include an analysis of impacts to additional viewpoints which represent the views toward Lake Tahoe and other portions of Meeks Bay as will be seen from the north and south beaches where most users will recreate. An annotated Figure 3.2-8 showing proposed viewpoint locations will be uploaded as an attachment to this submittal. We believe this analysis will show unavoidable scenic impacts as a result of Alt. 2. Viewpoints for the other alternatives should also be updated to include the recommended lateral beach-goer viewpoints so the public and decision-makers can adequately compare the alternatives and weigh the benefits and consequences of each.



Source: Prepared by Ascent Environmental in 2021.

Figure 3.2-8 Viewpoint Locations

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/6/2022 6:05:09 AM

First name: Walter

Last name: mirczak

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am in favor of Alternative 4, the "proposed action" for purposes of NEPA and the "project" for purposes of CEQA and TRPA. It's removal of Meeks Bay Marina; restoration of Meeks Creek and associated wetland/lagoon habitat; eradication of AIS; reconfiguration or construction of pedestrian and vehicle circulation and parking areas, and reconfiguration of the campgrounds; installation of utility infrastructure and best management practices (BMPs), shoreline stabilization, habitat enhancement, and resource protection features all meet project needs and objectives.

The project, implemented as Alternative 4, moves the Meeks Creek stream channel and wetland/lagoon below the State Route (SR) 89 to a more natural condition supporting a functioning ecosystem while continuing to support sustainable recreation opportunities.

Alternative 4 improves the hydrologic function and processes of Meeks Creek, Meeks lagoon, and associated floodplain. It restores degraded aquatic, riparian, and wetland habitats and barrier beaches, and improve fish passage and flood flow conveyance through the SR 89 stream crossing promoting the Tahoe yellowcress and Lahontan cutthroat trout.

All the preceding environmental improvements are achieved while enhancing access to Lake Tahoe and National Forest System lands. Sustainable recreation opportunities are identified that are consistent with the proposed functioning ecosystem.

In addition there are Enhanced educational and interpretive opportunities.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/6/2022 4:32:51 PM

First name: Michael

Last name: Henriques

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support alternative 4. The uniqueness, beauty, history and native culture of Meeks Bay is best preserved for generations to come, without motorized boating and manmade piers.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/6/2022 5:17:55 PM

First name: Lori

Last name: Krumrei

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support "Alternative 4" the Preferred Alternative. This option focuses on preserving the Bay's scenic beauty and supporting non-motorized beach and lake recreation, while providing the environmental benefits of restoring the lagoon. Increased traffic is also a concern.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/7/2022 1:03:40 PM

First name: gerald

Last name: meral

Organization: Natural Heritage Institute

Title:

Comments: The Natural Heritage Institute endorses the selection of the preferred alternative. Very little of the Lake Tahoe shoreline is preserved in anything like a natural state. The preferred alternative will return as much as possible of Meeks Bay to a more natural state, while preserving and enhancing low impact recreational opportunities.

Thank you for considering our views in this matter.

Gerald H. Meral, Ph.D.

California Water Director

Natural Heritage Institute

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/19/2022 8:07:42 PM

First name: John

Last name: Dayberry

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I recommend that one of the project Goals be that the Washoe Tribe maintain a presence at Meeks Bay.

Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) needs to be incorporated into the restoration project.

Meeks Bay should include tribal employee housing in order to have a holistic restoration project that is inclusive. I would like people to be living and working on site to reconnect to the area.

We should use this opportunity to involve the Washoe Tribe - they should be present at the Lake and not just tourists.

Interpretation should include ethnobotanical knowledge. International language access should be incorporated into interpretive information systems.

Please use this opportunity when replacing the bridge to include a stream profile

I support the preferred alternative compared to the others

I'm excited about the restoration of the northwest side of the Bay. I'm supportive of removing cabins and gabion walls to restore the Bay.

There is Tahoe yellow cress near the marina. Restoration will help provide habitat.

I like the preferred alternative because there is no pier and no motorized or gas watercraft access.

An amphibious vehicle for the fire district could provide emergency access from the beach.

Relocated cabins is a good idea and this could also be an opportunity to provide employee housing. The other old cabins should also be removed.

I recommend that the Forest Service develop the water system infrastructure to function year round into the winter. This would apply to the utilities replaced during the bridge reconstruction and lagoon restoration. This would allow Meeks Bay to be a year round destination for tribal members and to provide winter recreation opportunities. This would also provide economic benefits.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/28/2022 12:24:50 AM

First name: David

Last name: Coward

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/28/2022 12:33:01 AM

First name: David

Last name: `Coward

Organization:

Title:

Comments: You should have received a letter from the President of the Meeks Bay Property Owner's Association, Mr. William "Bill" Lyons. Bill's letter, on behalf of the MBVPOA, expressed the unequivocal support our association has for alternative 4 of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. I am personally writing a letter, as my family and I own a home on Lake Tahoe in very close proximity to Meeks Bay. Our property would have experienced the most significant visual and physical impact of the Restoration Project, which compels me to write this letter. I personally look at the pristine Meeks Bay every day and admire the peacefulness and tranquility of Meeks Bay. The Bay is a haven for nonmotorized watercraft activities including swimming, stand-up boarding, kayaking and canoeing. The proposed alternative 4 will allow for these nonmotorized activities to continue unabated in the future. The ability for stand-up paddle boarders, kayakers, swimmers, canoers and their families to enjoy Meeks Bay without the intrusion of motorized watercraft is an invaluable resource for the Lake Tahoe Region. The integration of the remainder of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project has been accomplished very admirably and skillfully with alternative 4, including most importantly, the restoration of Meeks Creek and Lagoon. I applaud your combined efforts and can only hope the various agencies involved will agree with your recommendations and accept alternative 4 as the preferred pathway for the future of Meeks Bay, Meeks creel and Meeks Lagoon.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

David B. Coward

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

Attention: Rebecca Cremeen

PO Box 5310

Stateline, NV 89449

Dear Rebecca,

You should have received a letter from the President of the Meeks Bay Vista Property Owner's Association, Mr. William "Bill" Lyons. Bill's letter, on behalf of MBVPOA, expressed the full unequivocal support our association has for alternative 4 of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. I am personally writing a letter, as my family and I own the first private property South of the proposed Meeks Bay Restoration Project at 8189 Meeks Bay Avenue. Our property would have experienced the most significant visual and physical impact of the Restoration Project, which compels me to send this letter. I look at the pristine Meeks Bay every day and admire the peacefulness and tranquility of Meeks Bay. It is a haven for nonmotorized watercraft, including swimming, stand up paddle boarding, canoeing, and kayaking. The proposed alternative 4 will allow for these nonmotorized activities to continue unabated in the future. The ability for stand-up paddle boarders, kayakers, canoers, swimmers, and their families to enjoy Meeks Bay without the intrusion of motorized watercraft is an invaluable resource for the Lake Tahoe Region. The integration of the remainder of the Restoration Project has been accomplished very admirably with alternative 4, most importantly, the restoration of Meeks Creek and lagoon.

I applaud your combined efforts and can only hope the various agencies involved will agree with your recommendation and accept alternative 4 as the preferred pathway for the future of Meeks Bay, Meeks Creek and Meeks Lagoon.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

David B. Coward

8189 Meeks Bay Avenue

Meeks Bay, CA 96142

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/3/2022 12:17:32 PM

First name: gerald

Last name: meral

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the proposed alternative. This is a rare opportunity to maintain a quiet recreation area in a natural setting. To the greatest extent possible, the selected project should restore the estuary of Meek's Creek, and should include the removal of as many man-made infrastructure elements as is feasible. This includes the sheet pile and other parts of the former Marina, and any fill associated with it.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/3/2022 4:28:56 PM

First name: Belinda

Last name: Breyer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As more and more people visit the Lake every year the impact on existing resources and lake access are strained to the breaking point. It is important to maintain and replace current facilities to ease the strain on other access points. The Meeks Bay Marina and pier have been in place for many decades and is part of the reason we bought our home in Glendridge, as did many other boat owners in Glenridge. Without a launch ramp, trailer parking and marina the only options for West Shore boat owners are to haul their boats and trailers to Obexers on one end or around Emerald Bay to Camp Richardson on the other. We impact street parking and traffic congestion in the Obexers neighborhood while driving around with trucks and trailers trying to find a place to park. While the off street parking at Meeks Bay Resort has never been a problem in the decades of our boat use there since the 1960s. I respect the environmental concerns, however, I don't feel that our area should be penalized when there are other launch ramps, marinas, piers etc. Also of note is the current natural creek setting that runs through adjacent Sugar Pine Point park which provides habitat and a natural environment for wildlife. I feel our property value has diminished considerably without the use of the marina and boat ramp. I also think this facility would be a money making opportunity that the Forest Service would not want to lose given the price of boat slips, moorings, and launch fees.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/4/2022 7:20:28 PM

First name: Marilyn

Last name: Henriques

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Meeks Bay Restoration #52971

I support the alternative without a pier. Leave this beautiful bay open for site lines in all directions. Keep noise levels minimized without boat motors.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/4/2022 7:20:26 PM

First name: Katie

Last name: Roos

Organization:

Title:

Comments: In my opinion, there is no reason to have a pier. Meeks Bay should be a peaceful area in which to enjoy Lake Tahoe with as limited boat traffic as humanly possible. People enjoy paddle boarding, swimming, kayaking and the tranquility there. A pier will only allow significantly increased boat traffic to Meeks Bay, resulting in increased engine noise and it will destroy the peaceful quality of the area. Ever since the boat marina has been removed, Meeks Bay has taken on a new quality of life, with the peaceful sounds of people relaxing, kids playing and enjoying the tranquility of the lake. Please do everything you can to restrict motor boat access to the area, so that all can enjoy the amazing peaceful setting it offers.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/4/2022 9:35:35 PM

First name: Jason

Last name: Steves

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support "Alternative 4 - Preferred Alternative" which does not include the boat or pedestrian pier. The pier would degrade the scenic quality of the view from the beach and would introduce boat noise to the relatively quiet beach area. The additional boats would also pose a hazard to swimmers and paddlers in the area. The south beach parking area should remain in it's current location to make beach day-use more functional. The proposed driveway and drop-off area in Alt-3 would be a permanent traffic jam during peak summer days. The campground capacity should not be increased, since there is limited space at the site.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/5/2022 5:44:42 AM

First name: Jeanne

Last name: Baker

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Jeanne Robinson Baker, and I have been coming to Meeks Bay since 1955. My great-great-grandfather was LeRoy F. Herrick. Dr. Herrick owned 190 acres on the west side of the highway, and this included the Meadow Park Resort. Along with two brothers, I own his original cabin, located by the creek, across the highway from the Meeks Bay Fire Department. I am the 5th generation of my family to use the cabin; my children the 6th, and my grandchildren are the 7th generation. Within 2 hours of arriving at the cabin from out-of-state, for her first visit, my 3-year-old granddaughter asked if the cabin could be hers one day. Our goal is to preserve our cabin and Meeks Bay so that when the time comes, my grandchildren will have a place to bring their children and grandchildren.

I appreciate and applaud the choice of the Preferred Alternative as it is proposed.

One of the changes that I have most appreciated in the last seven years has been the lack of motorized recreation use at Meeks Bay. I am a distance swimmer and a kayaker, and have loved the peace and lack of wakes while I am in or on the water. I consider non-motorized recreation use to be a very important criteria in the restoration project.

I walk past, or kayak through, the marina/lagoon all summer long. Not having the gross algae and other plants hanging off the now-removed docks has been fabulous. I look forward to the restoration of a much more natural lagoon, with the sheet metal pilings removed, and boulders (or whatever is appropriate) is brought in. For those not wanting to get wet, or walk all the way back to the road, the return of a pedestrian bridge will be very helpful. I have advocated for the "no pier" option. I believe any kind of pier will degrade the beach experience from both a visual and auditory (as well as safety) perspective. A picture taken from the beach looking out on the lake has been my Zoom background for the last two years. It would be spoiled with a pier. When evaluating the impacts of various alternatives, please use the current baseline of no motorized boats/jet skis in Meeks Bay.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/6/2022 4:05:52 PM

First name: Jerry

Last name: Winters

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Absolutely opposed to any Pier construction on either side of Meeks Bay. Leave it like it is!

NO BOAT HARBOR. Just restore the area of the former Boat Harbor.

If a replacement for the Bridge is still being debated--It is not necessary! The existing Historic Bridge is still totally functional, and it is not necessary to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to replace it.

Additional Safety Buoys for swimming area are necessary.

For the most part, Meeks Bay doesn't need draconian changes to make it better---it has served attendees well for decades and only minor improvements are necessary.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/7/2022 12:57:55 AM

First name: Peggy

Last name: McKee

Organization: Tahoe Area Group, Sierra Club

Title:

Comments: The Tahoe Area Group is very pleased in general with the plan to restore the Meeks Creek channel, wetlands, lagoon, and barrier beach. We wholeheartedly support the removal of the marina. We would be in favor of either the preferred alternative or alternative #3.

We would be opposed to any kind of pier, whether it be for pedestrians or for motorized vehicles. There are plenty of piers around the lake that can be used by those who prefer piers. We support a recreation area that maintains as natural an area as is possible.

There are many areas around the lake that cater to motorized vehicles. It is not necessary that all beaches be accessible to motorized vehicles.

We want to thank the staff for putting together this excellent plan to restore the area as close as possible back to the wetlands/lagoons that will be instrumental in controlling and eventually eliminating invasive aquatic weeds. This will allow native species of wildlife, fish, land vegetation and natural aquatic vegetation to prosper.

Sincerely,

Peggy McKee, Tahoe Area Group, Sierra Club

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/8/2022 8:59:38 PM

First name: Judith

Last name: Tornese

Organization: Friends of the West Shore

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Sibr,

The following comments are being provided in addition to Friends of the West Shore (FOWS) comments that were submitted on 7/4/2022. As noted in those comments, FOWS supports the Preferred Alternative (4), as proposed. Below are additional comments regarding the technical analysis and conclusions in the DEIS/R.

Recreation Impact Analysis:

The Recreation impact analysis concludes no increase in user conflicts from any alternatives. However, Alt. 1 (300' boat pier) would increase motorized boat use in the area compared to existing conditions because it would provide continuous access for motorized boats, unlike the existing marina, which only provided access during high water level years (and has been closed for seven years). This would likely increase conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users and may result in a Significant and Unavoidable Impact.

* Further, because the marina has been closed for seven years, the EIS/R should analyze the impacts of all alternatives against the existing baseline. The public has adapted to the current non-motorized condition and introducing motorized boat uses to an area that has been non-motorized for seven years would introduce a new use to the area and those impacts must be appropriately analyzed.

* The proposed pier in both Alternatives 1 (300') and 2 (100') will also fragment the beach and impact non-motorized users such as kayakers and paddlers who will have to go around the structures. The EIS/R needs to analyze this conflict.

Public Safety Impact Analysis:

* The same situation occurs with the analysis of Public Safety and Hazard Impacts - the EIS/R should assess the impacts compared to existing conditions, which do not include facilities for motorized boat use.

Other general comments:

* The proposed piers in Alt. 1 and Alt. 2 do not meet the stated Purpose and Need of the project.

* The Purpose and Need do not include providing a pier to accommodate a fire boat (or water taxi), for which the 300' pier in Alt. 1 would support. Further, according to TRPA staff during their June 22 Board meeting, Meeks Bay has been ruled out as an appropriate location for a fire boat and separate analysis regarding the most appropriate location serving the West Shore is underway.

* The DEIR/S notes that the pier would accommodate a water taxi, although this is not proposed as part of this project. A water taxi would introduce a new use and more people to the location, which is already at capacity on peak days. Given Alt. 1, as proposed, would provide the infrastructure for a water taxi, use of the pier for a water taxi is a reasonably foreseeable impact of the project. The DEIR/S must analyze the impacts of bringing in more people on the natural resources of the area, public health and safety, transportation/circulation, fire/evacuation access, and sustainability of the Resort's resources and infrastructure.

* As noted above, the EIS/R should evaluate impacts to all resources with the current baseline being the closed marina (no motorized boat use).

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/8/2022 8:54:34 PM

First name: Bill

Last name: Ray

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Our family has owned a home in Tahoma for over 20 years. We frequently visit the Meeks Bay beaches from May through December. We enjoy the beautiful unobstructed views of Lake Tahoe from the beach and the opportunities for swimming and use of kayaks. In fact it is the scenic beauty and quiet atmosphere that keeps us returning to Meeks Bay. We became aware of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project in the fall of 2018. We attended the first meeting at the Resort and Forestry property, have followed the development of the EIR/S and reviewed the four proposed alternatives. We have concerns about adding any kind of pier and expanding the Forestry campground to facilitate large RVs.

The two piers, as proposed in alternatives 1 and 2, have nothing to do with the stated objectives of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. In fact, the piers are contrary to the overall purpose of the project, which is to return Meeks Creek and Meeks Bay to a natural functioning ecosystem. Any piers will fragment the pristine beach line and negatively impact the scenic beauty of the bay, as viewed from beach goers. The 300 foot pier for day use boaters has several negative impacts. Increased traffic from motorized watercraft represent a substantial safety risk to SUPs, kayakers and swimmers. The project proposal falsely claims that the beach is only busy on weekends and holidays. However, many weekdays this summer has seen the parking lot at full capacity and many cars parked on Highway 89. The boat pier will add to further crowding by people coming in via the lake. This overcrowding combined with a conflict between motorized and non-motorized recreational users will seriously degrade the historically quiet recreational opportunities of the bay. While the project is proposing to enhance the environment, the boat pier actually adds to increased pollution in the form of noise and air pollution, (boat exhaust).

Alternative 3 which includes expanding the Forestry campground is also not consistent with the overall Meeks experience or the restoration of Meeks Creek. The existing campground provides one of the few opportunities for tent camping and smaller camping vehicles, and is well suited for the Meeks Bay quiet experience. In addition, the proposed campground expansion includes decreasing parking, and/or moving parking further away from convenient beach access. If anything, more parking is needed to help eliminate dangerous parking on highway 89.

We understand the need to return Meeks Creek to a more natural condition. However, adding the proposed piers and expanding the Forestry campground has nothing to do with the purpose of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. Furthermore, these proposals substantially degrade the historically quiet experience and delicate environmental balance of Meeks Bay, which past and current beach goers have grown accustomed to.

Respectfully,

Bill and Kathy Ray

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/8/2022 11:36:26 PM

First name: David

Last name: Coglizer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My Grandparents and my father started staying at Meeks Bay in 1949 when the Kehlet Family owned this beautiful bay. I first started camping in Meeks Bay in 1965 and then my folks bought our family home in Rubicon Bay in 1984. My family and I have always been awed by Meeks Bay's raw beauty and walk or kayak to the beach almost every day in the Summer.

I am writing to let you know that I support the Preferred Alternative plan (Alt. 4) as proposed because Tahoe needs more areas that are friendly to kayaking, swimming, and beaching where motorized boats are NOT encouraged as they are noisy, polluting and a threat to swimmers.

I also support the removal of invasive species and the slips in the marina and restoring it to its natural use. I STRONGLY believe that a pier SHOULD NOT be placed on this magnificent beach. It would impede the continuous scenic beauty and frankly be an eyesore. Tahoe already has way too many piers. Piers also impede the walkability on Lake Tahoe's shores and make the beaching experience much worse.

Thank you,
David Coglizer

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/8/2022 7:00:25 PM

First name: Owen

Last name: Hughes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Meeks Bay Restoration Project will be a public health disaster. The Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Meeks Bay restoration project is criminally incomplete, inaccurate, and misleading. I am a MIT and UCSF trained environmental scientist and doctor. The proposed Meeks Bay restoration project will cause sickness and death. The EIS/EIR does not consider, or even mention, any of the most relevant and immediate impacts of the project on humans and the environment. Specifically:

1) There is no mention in the entire Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR of its effect on the mosquito population.

The proposed Meeks Bay restoration project will cause explosive growth of the lakeside mosquito population. During the public hearings, the effect of restoring Meeks Creek to a "natural" wetland creek-to-lake transitions was incorrectly presented as decreasing the mosquito population. This misleading supposition was made without evidence.

There is clear and immediate evidence of the effect the Restoration Project will have on the lakeside mosquito population. A) Meeks Bay Meadows, just inland from the beach, is plagued by massive amounts of mosquitos. Extending the grassy wetland transition of Meeks Creek to the lake will bring this massive mosquito population to the lakeside. B) The nearby Sugar Pine Point wetland transition of General Creek into Lake Tahoe is similarly burdened by a very heavy mosquito population. Indeed, at the four wetland creek to lake transitions areas that I have data on (General Creek of Sugar Pine Point, Taylor Creek and Tallac Creek in the Baldwin Beach area, and North Canyon Creek in the Slaughterhouse Canyon area) all have very bad problems with mosquitos. Mosquito populations in these areas are 12 to 40 fold higher than the average lakeside mosquito density.

Meeks Bay will not just have a bad problem with mosquitos if the marina is turned into a grassy wetland transition, it has the potential to be a mosquito disaster. The unique combination of wind sheltered canyon with a large flat marshy wetland will make Meeks Bay a perfect mosquito habitat. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project will bring the Meeks Bay Meadows mosquito population to the lake - ruining one of the few sandy beach recreation areas at Lake Tahoe.

2) There is no mention in the entire Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR of its effect on Human Health.

Mosquito Bourn Illnesses: California is facing a public health emergency from mosquito bourn illnesses. The state is taking massive efforts to reduce the disease impact of mosquitos. Global warming and high population density has brought a rapid increase in exotic and terrible insect borne illness. In California, mosquito borne diseases including Zika, Chikungunya, Dengue, Filariasis (canine and feline heartworm), Malaria, Saint Louis encephalitis (SLE), West Nile virus (WNV), Western Equine encephalitis (WEE), and Yellow fever are a health crisis. This project will hurt and kill people.

Tick Bourn Illnesses: Bringing a wildlife corridor right to the lake will also increase human exposure to Lyme disease. In contrast to common belief, Lyme disease is very common in California wilderness areas. In California, Lyme disease transmission is mainly mediated through the bite of western blacklegged deer tick (*Ixodes pacificus*) found in Meeks Bay Meadows and Desolation Wilderness. Wildlife including squirrels, deer and bears will bring infected ticks to Meeks Bay.

The Black Plague: Last year, a South Lake Tahoe resident tested positive for plague. The resident had been infected after being bitten by a flea from a hike. As mentioned above, the Meeks Bay Restoration Project will increase human exposure to wildlife bourn illnesses. Chipmunks and squirrels in the Tahoe area (especially those in wetland areas such as Taylor Creek wetland where the resident was infected) carry fleas infected with bubonic plague. Bringing a wetland creek to a lakeside recreation area is a recipe for disaster.

3) There is no mention in the entire Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR of its effect on the Desolation Wilderness / Meeks Bay Meadows Bear population and its interaction with humans.

Beyond the harmful health impacts this project will bring the people who visit Meeks Bay, this project is also likely to increase the bear problems Meeks Bay suffers. This project will create a wildlife corridor funneling the bear population of Meeks Bay Meadows and Desolation Wilderness right down to the lakeside campers and residents. Every year, tens of thousands of dollars of damage is done to lake area residences by bears. Worse, these problem bears must be euthanized to forestall worse damage and injury. This project must be stopped before it worsens the bear problem plaguing the area.

4) The Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR does not accurately portray the reduction of recreational beach that will result from the Meeks Bay Restoration Project.

There are very few sandy beaches along Tahoe that are available to be enjoyed by the public - largely because they are indeed not "natural". The Meeks Bay Beach was developed by removing vegetation, rock, and channeling the Meeks Bay Creek outlet. Almost every weekend, Meeks Bay Beach is completely full of families enjoying the beach. This project will significantly reduce "Beach" area and replace it with marshy vegetated and "protected" wetland with a scrub and native grassy interface. Native grass sounds all nice and ecologically friendly, but the reality is that it is sharp edged and incompatible with human presence. Large portions of the beach will be fenced off to protect the "native grasses", and where they have established will become unpleasant for walking or laying down a towel to enjoy a day at the beach. This process has already started with large areas to the south of the Meeks Bay channel that are already fenced off to protect its revegetation. I plead for social justice. Tahoe is becoming ever more segregated between the haves, and the have-not's. Meeks Bay is one of the very few areas on the lake where middle and lower income families can come, stay, and enjoy the beach and the lake. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project will reduce or eliminate Meeks Bay beach and recreational use - and should not part of Meeks Bay's future.

So yes - this is a great project if you hate humans. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project is fantastic if you want dead and sick children. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project will be a great way to get rid of the low income "surplus population" wrecking our pristine habitats.

This project is great if you want more bear damage, more dead bears, and much fewer visitors to Meeks Bay beach and campground.

But if you want to go for a walk down the beach in the evening without putting on long cloths and bug spray, this project must be stopped.

The proposed Meeks Bay restoration project is a health, safety, and public use disaster.

The "Meeks Bay Restoration Project" is an ill conceived plan by non-residents that does not care for human enjoyment of Meeks Bay. It must be stopped.

The Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR is criminally incomplete, inaccurate, and misleading.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 3:30:59 AM

First name: Dennis

Last name: Kuzak

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Why is Meeks Bay important to me.

I am a vacation home owner with property immediately above Meeks Bay, on Sunnyview Dr. I have co-owned this property since 2003 and enjoy the recreational opportunities that exist in the Bay. Kayaking, swimming, SUP, walking along the beach, and winter activities such as cross country skiing and snowshoeing along the beach and adjacent campground. And the view of the lake is awesome. While there is boating noise from the cigarette power boats on the lake, the Bay has no motorized boat traffic. Noise pollution is minimal.

Comments the DEIR Preferred Alternative #4 (as proposed)

1. This alternative provides for non-motorized use of the Bay. Given the many other motorized use options available on the Lake, this alternative provides for a unique natural, quiet, non polluting environment commensurate with restoration of the Meeks Creek drainage.
2. This alternative is beneficial since it removes the ugly and dangerous sheet piling in the old Marina and preserves the unobstructed lake views from all locations along the sandy beach bay from north to south.
3. No boating piers either in the center or south side of the Bay provide an unobstructed view of almost half of Lake Tahoe, including the Nevada side to South Lake Tahoe. Building the large pier in the center of the Bay is analogous to the Cal Trans plan to build a bridge across Emerald Bay. While not as dramatic as that proposal, it would forever tarnish the beauty of Meeks Bay.
4. Construction of piers creates a significant water safety risk with the high density of non motorized users such as SUP's, kayaks, canoes, swimmers, and personal flotation devices.
5. Other alternatives providing piers do not address the safety issues with motorized and non motorized vessels.
6. Alternate 4 is fully supportive of the plans to restore the lower Meeks Creek drainage to a natural pre 1940 condition. This alternative creates a fully natural Meeks Creek watershed starting at Phipps Pass in the Desolation Wilderness and ending at Meeks Bay.

Summary: Alternate #4 provides the best solution consistent with environmental goals of reducing air, water and noise pollution. It gives recreation users an opportunity to enjoy the Lake as enjoyed by the Washoe people of 150 years ago, as well as those Washoe currently residing in the area.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 3:45:51 AM

First name: Robert

Last name: Tolin

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Meeks Bay restoration project fails to maintain in all of its alternatives a safe harbor for vessels using Lake Tahoe. Removing the Marina at Meeks Bay precludes vessels from sheltering off the lake between Emerald bay and Tahoe City, a distance of approximately 15 miles.

If no marina is going to be proposed a useful and more economic proposal would be to build a short pedestrian pier on the south side of the current marina opening. This shorter pier would allow for visitor access to the lake for viewing and still maintain the currently more quiet non-motorized activity along the shoreline.

Building a 300 foot long pier would destroy the current view shed for the bay and forever alter the image of Meeks Bay. Allowing motorized vessel access to a proposed 300 foot pier would create violations of harbor and navigation codes as there would likely be interactions between non motorized and motorized use in a hazardous way.

I am a licensed merchant marine officer, retired state park supervising peace officer and current ocean lifeguard, foresee problems if a 300 foot pier were to be installed at Meeks Bay

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 4:18:42 AM

First name: Patricia

Last name: Ferguson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. Our family has vacationed at Lake Tahoe for the past 30+ years. For many years we stayed in Cabin #4 at Meeks Bay Resort each summer with our two daughters. We came to love the area so much that we eventually purchased a second home in Tahoe City so that we could visit more often. We spend as many of our days as possible at Meeks Bay and now our grandchildren love it as much as we always have. It's impossible to overstate how much we love this beautiful peaceful place; the clear water, the pristine sand, the way the trees cast their shadows over the beach in the late afternoon. Our children and grandchildren have loved swimming, playing in the sand, paddling our canoes, climbing on the boulders, chasing the geese, looking for crawdads. We love the rustic and unspoiled facilities of the resort. It's all been a precious part of our lives and we care so much about how this project will unfold.

We support the Preferred Alternative as proposed. We wholeheartedly support removing the marina and restoring the creek. We are strongly opposed to any kind of pier, which would completely destroy the natural beauty of this place. We are opposed to any motorized recreation in Meeks Bay and believe that it should be for swimming, floating and paddling only. We understand that this alternative includes relocating the two motel style cabins away from the shoreline, and we'll be sad to see them go. We hope that nothing else much will need to change about the resort; we love the rock breakwater, the dirt roads, the snack bar, little store and casual parking under the trees. We honor the stewardship of the Washoe Tribe for this place and are grateful to be able to spend as much time there as possible.

Thank you for your attention and for considering our input.

Sincerely, Patricia Ferguson and Ron Lopez

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 5:16:59 PM

First name: Linnea

Last name: Kehlet Hull

Organization:

Title:

Comments: We are retirees living on Alice Lane in Meeks Bay Vista. Our property line is located on the east side of Highway 89 at Silvertip Road. We are concerned about the creation of a bike trail crossing behind our home and hope TRPA will consider the following when determining the final bike route plan.

1. Safety - the distance between the edge of pavement and the west side of our home is approximately 70 feet. If the bike crossing were located as proposed, a motorist or cyclist could veer off the road. Based on the proximity to our home, it is likely one would land in our backyard and possibly collide with our propane tank and/or our home. (Attachments 1-3 are views from bedrooms)
2. Noise - Because sound carries, we can hear road cyclists' music and conversations. We hear motorist and cyclist coming and going behind our home. Working in my own backyard, I have been greeted and even verbally abuse by passing cyclists.
3. When marathons or bike races are conducted on 89, Silvertip Road becomes a staging area for supporters. Huge speakers play loud music, cow bells are rung and throughout the night, blaring lights light up the windows on the west side of our home. Numerous times we have had to climb up the steep slope to ask them to turn down the music and adjust the light away from our windows. Once, an apologetic supporter said, "Oh, sorry. We didn't know people lived down there."
4. Property value - Having a public, well-used bike path in our backyard will diminish the value of our home.
5. There is only one route between the "Y" and Tahoe City. We expect heavy traffic in the summer. If the bike crossing is situated behind our home, it will dramatically increase noise as cars slow, stop, accelerate, and perhaps skid.
6. Hazard lights - If the crossing includes solar flashing lights as some do, it will be a constant nuisance to us and our family.
7. The decision to locate the bike crossing behind our home, made by stakeholders will impact the quality of life for us now and for our will be children and grandchildren in the future. WE are stakeholders!
8. There are 3 summer residences to the north that agree this is not the proper location for a bike crossing. They too will suffer the same consequences of the bike path crossing.

We would like the TRPA and stakeholder to consider moving the crossing to the south of our property. There are two large lots owned by the USFS and Tahoe Conservancy. These two properties comprise a total of 300 feet on HWY 89. A crossing there would eliminate the safety issue, reduce noise and nuisance for property owners. (Please see the attached mark up on your map.)

Thank you for the opportunity to convey our concerns.

Greg & Linnea Hull

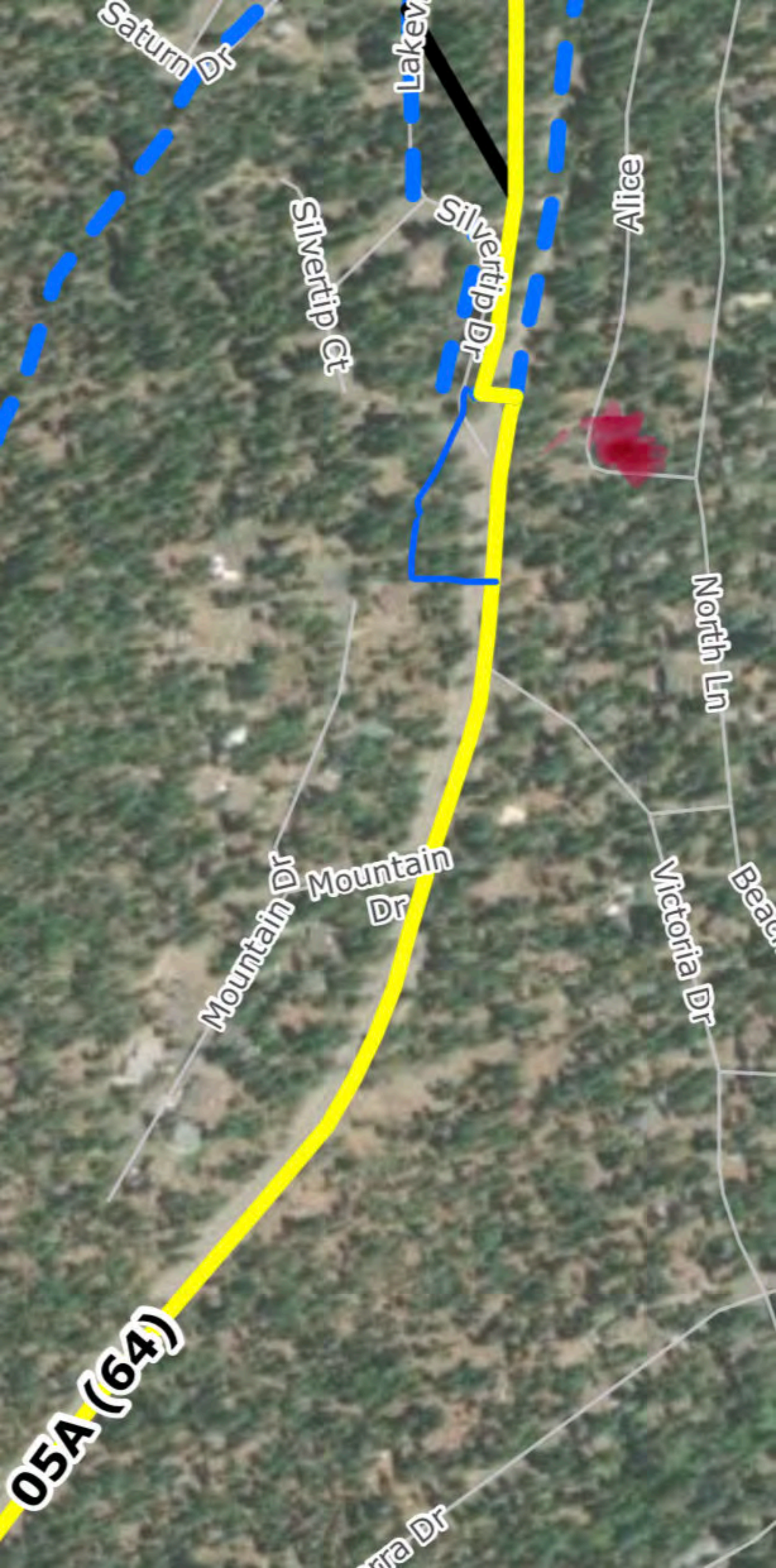












Saturn Dr

Lakeview

Silvertip Ct

Silvertip Dr

Alice

North Ln

Mountain Dr

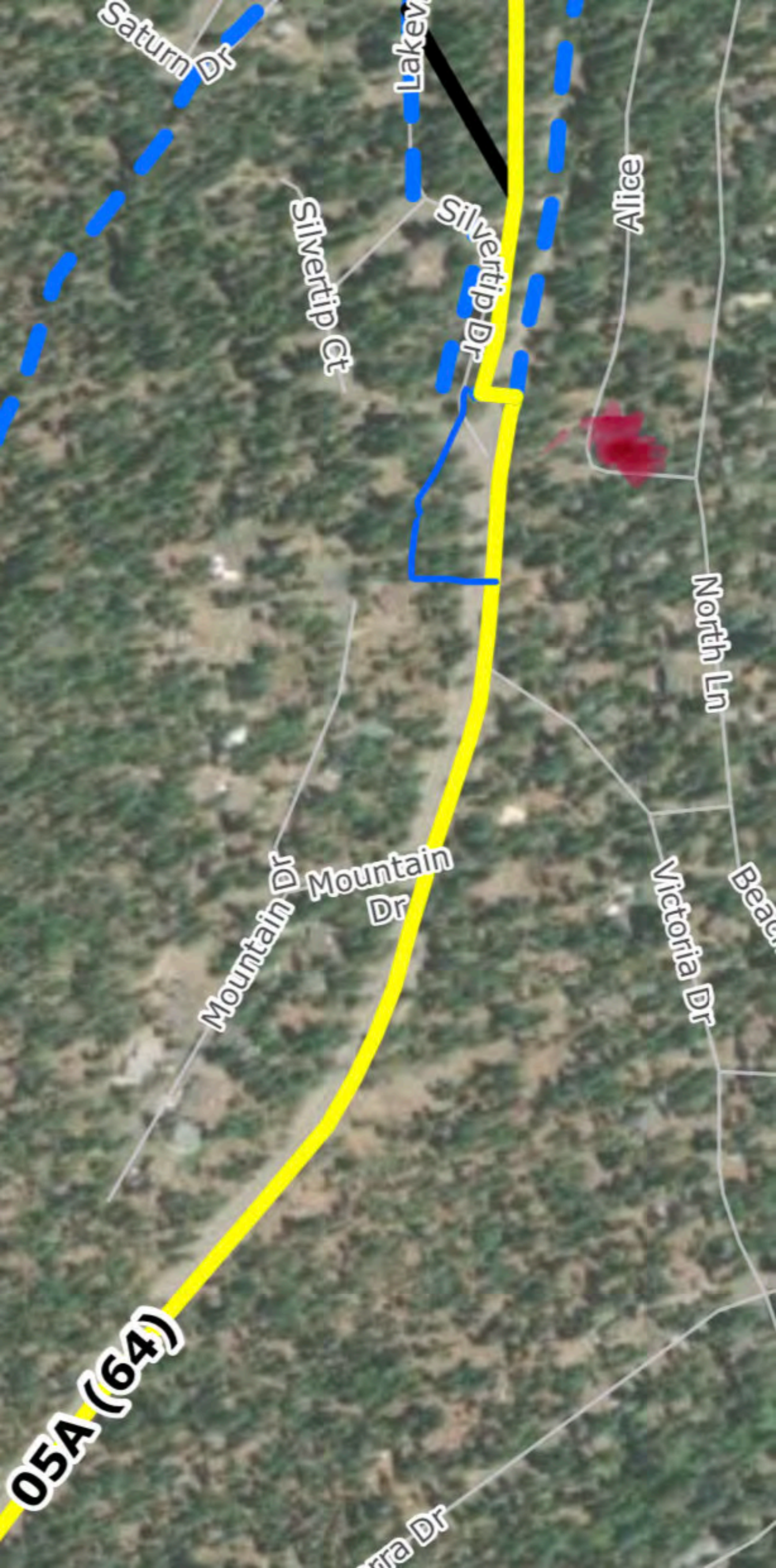
Mountain Dr

Victoria Dr

Beach

05A (64)

ra Dr



Saturn Dr

Lakeview

Silvertip Ct

Silvertip Dr

Alice

North Ln

Mountain Dr

Mountain Dr

Victoria Dr

Beach

05A (64)

tra Dr

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 10:36:39 PM

First name: Judith

Last name: Tornese

Organization: Friends of the West Shore

Title:

Comments: August 9, 2022

Sent via Forest Service database and to individual TRPA APC & Governing Board members

Dear Ms. Sibr,

I am writing to comment on the draft EIS/R for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project. My family have been homeowners in Tahoma since 1968 and using Meeks Bay in the summer months about twice a week. First of all, I want to commend the project team on its thorough involvement of the public in this process and, more importantly, listening to the public input and using it in the draft EIS/EIR. Several public surveys indicated that approximately 65 - 70% of respondents support a non-motorized recreational alternative.

The Meeks Bay beaches, both north and south, are very heavily used in the summer by beach-goers, swimmers and non-motorized watercraft. We support the Preferred Alternative (#4) as proposed in the draft EIS/EIR, which provides a non-motorized recreational focus with protection of the unique scenic values of Meeks Bay and its currently pristine, quiet atmosphere.

Following are comments regarding the Draft EIS/R:

1. Table ES-1, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This table indicates there is no mitigation required for most of the impacts. Contrary to what is provided in the Table, the comparisons should be made to the existing baseline condition (without the marina, which has been closed for 7 years). The existing baseline would generate impacts and require mitigation or avoidance, especially various impacts for Recreation (3.1), Scenic Resources (3.2), Public Safety and Hazards (3.10) and Noise (3.11).

2. Reiterate support for non-motorized recreational use only

* Increase in non-motorized recreational visitors

My family gets a Day Use pass every summer for the south beach at Meeks Bay and visit it frequently for kayaking, swimming and beach barbecues. I have seen the number of non-motorized recreational visitors dramatically increase every year and anticipate that, with more visitors to Lake Tahoe (encouraged by internet recommendations), the numbers will continue to increase. Please consider that the visitor data in the EIS/R (Table 3.1-7 on page 3.1-14, in Section 3.1 Recreation) may be underestimated for August and September 2020 if the beach closures due to fires in 2020 & 2021 have not been considered.

* Capacity Limits/Crowding

Both beaches are frequently at capacity limits, particularly during mid-summer and even in the early evening (see attached photo of lots of non-motorized users at 6 pm on a summer evening in 2021 at South Beach). The photo shows many people in the water swimming, floating, paddle boarding, kayaking and generally enjoying the waters of Lake Tahoe. Meeks Bay north and South beaches are a haven for families, residents, divers, campers and other visitors where they have a very safe bay to recreate. Any change in the existing recreational opportunities (considering that the actual existing conditions do not include the marina) would diminish this enjoyment and could cause significant public health and safety concerns. This is the one major beach on the West Shore which provides outstanding non-motorized recreation and makes it a public priority.

* Restricted designated swimming areas.

Under Recreation, Figures 3.1-3 (Existing Conditions for Swim Areas), 3.1-4, 3.1-5 and 3.1-6 indicate proposed

restricted swim areas. This could potentially leave the remaining water area for boat access, mooring of boats and a reduction of safe swim and non-motorized uses. It is important that, at a minimum, the current and existing swim area boundaries are not reduced or altered in any way. The entire beach from both extreme ends is heavily used by swimmers & other users and can get very crowded so any additional swim area would be extremely beneficial. If possible, the swim areas should be expanded to the entire length of the beach, to allow for less crowding & more access to visitors during the summer. Without piers or other distractions along the beach, people can use the entire beach for swimming and other permitted non-motorized recreational use. This is highly recommended and would be another advantage of the proposed Preferred Alternative (#4).

3. The proposed piers in Alternative 1 (300 ft) and Alternative 2 (100 ft)

* Would impede non-motorized recreational access and enjoyment

The proposed piers (300 ft and 100 ft), under Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 respectively, do not meet the stated purpose & need for the project. The 300 ft pier does not replace the boat marina (which no longer exists). There is no pier now so it introduces new uses & conflicts with existing uses, particularly between motorized and non-motorized users. Any pier would impede access along both beaches and in the water and interfere with non-motorized recreational users, including beach users, swimmers, paddleboarders, kayakers and others. These recreational users will have to go around or under any pier structure. This would substantially degrade the quality of the recreational non-motorized experience and include safety hazards. Without piers or other distractions along the beach, people can use the entire beach for swimming and other permitted non-motorized recreational use. For Alternatives 1 and 2, these conflicts between motorized and non-motorized use should be addressed & analyzed in the Final EIS/R to avoid conflicts with existing non-motorized recreational users. This should also be recognized as a significant impact.

* Use existing condition as baseline for pier comparisons

The Marina was closed in 2015 and all of the docks, slips and infrastructure were removed in 2016. There is no Marina except for the walls at the mouth and the old boat launch. Boating is not an existing use and has not been a use since 2015 and thus should not be the baseline condition. The existing condition is what's in use when the EIS/R is prepared, which is all non-motorized. Any addition of a pier that provides motorized boating or watercraft would be adding in a new use to the bay and diminishing existing use and enjoyment. With the elimination of the marina and boating uses, and the related noise, exhaust, fuel and oil in the water, beach goers are more likely to enjoy the safe and peaceful beach and water experience.

* Visual/aesthetic impact analysis/Scenic Resources - should include many views of the beach/water from many angles

The public values the scenic views of and from the beach and has expressed support for the exclusion of any pier that could detract from the view. Views should be preserved, uninterrupted by development by/on the water. This insures unobstructed beach and water views and allows the beach to remain pristine and not be fragmented by any pier. A pier in the Bay (Alternatives 1 & 2, Recreation discussion on p 3.1-17 to 3.1-20) would detract from the continuous beach & would break up the views of the beach. The EIS/R does not adequately address the visual impairment the pier would have from the water and the shore and from all angles and viewpoints. The analysis is based on just TWO viewpoints that do not capture views from the beach areas where most people will be viewing the lake. The final EIS/R needs to include more viewpoints from multiple areas along North & South beaches where most people will actually be located & look at the views. In particular, a 300 ft pier would especially destroy the aesthetic quality of Meeks Bay. The EIS/R does conclude significant impacts for the 300 ft pier but not for the 100 ft. pier. If realistic viewpoints were used, the impacts from the 100 ft pier should also be significant.

4. Public Safety Boat

It is appropriate to consider the purpose and need for a public safety boat and its potential location as a separate project and analysis.

5. Water Taxi stop at Meeks Bay

While water taxis are not proposed as part of the project alternatives, a 300 ft boating pier under Alternative 1 could accommodate a water taxi. This would make a water taxi reasonably foreseeable and should be analyzed in the cumulative impacts sections.

6. Day-use parking at South Beach

The proposed Preferred Alternative (#4) retains the existing location for south beach day use parking and provides the most convenient access for beach day users. Please retain this parking arrangement.

7. Existing Baseline and Public Safety and Hazard Impact Analysis

Further, because the marina has been closed for seven years, the EIR/S should analyze the impacts of all alternatives against existing baseline conditions, which do not include facilities for motorized boat use. The public has adapted to the current non-motorized condition and introducing motorized boat uses to an area that has been non-motorized for seven years would introduce a new use to the area and those impacts must be appropriately analyzed.

8. Removal of the motel style Lodge cabins

Table 3.2-6 Shoreline Structures under Alternative 4 show a reduction in cabins and square footage for visitor accommodations. If possible, the cabins should be replaced by lodge style units with the same capacity for the number of people as is currently provided, in order to maintain visitor lodgings for the public

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments on this important project that impacts residents and visitors to Meeks Bay.

Sincerely,

Judith Tornese,

Homeowner in Tahoma at Lake Tahoe

Copies to :

TRPA Governing Board:

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Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 1:35:22 AM

First name: Doug

Last name: Welch

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

To: Forest Service

8 August 2022

From: Doug and Valerie Welch

Re: Meeks Bay Restoration Project

My father purchased our vacation home in Meeks Bay in the 1970s. During many trips to Tahoe and Meeks Bay we hiked most of the mountains in the basin, my children and some of their friends who joined us for vacation in Tahoe learned to ski at Homewood, and endless summers were spent on the beach at Meeks Bay. After my parents passed, my wife and I have continued to vacation at Meeks Bay where our daughter has now taught her sons to ski at Homewood, has taken her boys to the tops of many of the mountains in the basin and regularly made use of the beach at Meeks Bay swimming, kayaking and playing games at the sandy beach. We have even hosted a couple of cousin reunions (attended by 50+ cousins from as far away as the East Coast and Guam) featuring BBQs at our Meeks Bay vacation home as well as swimming, games and kayak adventures at the Meeks Bay beach. It is from this perspective that we write to support a Meeks Bay Restoration Project plan that excludes a pier in this magnificent bay.

Meeks Bay is a treasure. It includes beautiful sandy beaches, exquisite views across the lake, one of the few streams into the lake, a forest setting up to the beach, convenient parking for families who often bring lunches, kayaks, floats and other inflatables, beach balls, umbrellas, towels and many other items with them. Few sites around Tahoe are blessed with such an available and attractive setting. SCUBA classes often make use of this beach and the lake to practice open water diving in the mornings. Floats are frequently seen in the summer months with children diving from them or just relaxing in the summer sun on the lake. Paddle boarders regularly practice their sport in the deeper waters along with kayakers and a few more adventurous swimmers.

The marina has been closed since about 2015, and with it has been a substantially decreased traffic of motorized watercraft. One of the many blessings of Meeks Bay beach is the location of H89. Unlike many areas (e.g. Homewood) the highway wends its way a significant distance from the beach thus reducing traffic noise. Meeks Bay enjoys a relatively quiet setting buffered from the traffic by the campground. Now with the removal of the marina and motorized boats Meeks has truly become a far more peaceful setting. What a treat to visit Tahoe, enjoy the awesome views and escape the engine noise of the city.

Motorized craft should have access to the lake and they do. They are not barred from the lake. It is important too, though, that there remain areas of the lake where serenity and family oriented pleasure still be available without the intrusion of the combustion engine. Additionally, the combustion engine drags along with it not only noise pollution but water pollution in the form of oil and gas deposits. It would seem to be counter productive to attempt to return the local stream to its more pristine condition so as to reduce the pollution of the marina and to repopulate the stream with fish and then take steps to encourage motorized craft by building a pier into lake.

Whether the pier is long or short, we feel it need not be in Meeks Bay. There is a pier, for example, just a couple of miles north at Ehrman Mansion and a couple of miles north of that boats may be launched at Obexers. Huge numbers of buoys line the west side of the lake. Some area of the lake should be set aside for more peaceful activities, especially activities that minimally impact the condition of the lake. The beach **as it exists now** is a testament to its popularity with visitors. During the summer the parking

lot fills early and dozens and dozens of cars park along H89 to gain access to this most beautiful part of the lake. Retain its beauty, enhance its more pristine nature and allow this precious piece of gold to be enjoyed without a pier and without encouraging motorcraft as outlined in Alternative 4.

Thank you for allowing us to share our thoughts with you.

Doug and Valerie Welch
304 Valley View
Meeks Bay

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 10:23:53 PM

First name: Jan

Last name: Brisco

Organization: Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association

Title:

Comments: Please see Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association comment letter.



TAHOE LAKEFRONT OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

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Rubicon

Executive Director
Jan Brisco

COMMENTS

DRAFT EIS/EIS/EIR – Meeks Bay Restoration Project

The Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association (TLOA) provides the following comments for the above-referenced project.

There is a considerable amount of information that is not provided related to the alternatives and the scenic component. While visual simulations and the explanations are helpful, full scoring sheets for the upland and shorezone are required for a complete analysis of the impacts and how the proposed alternatives will, or will not, meet the necessary criteria for project approval. Of course, detailed plans of the proposed pier structure, boat specifications, and other components such as lighting, and accessory structures will be necessary before findings can be made.

The analysis regarding the creek mouth meander because of the marina decommissioning and gabion removal needs to be addressed in more depth and context, especially considering the impacts to littoral drift. Impacts to the removal of long-established structures often warrants additional environmental review and consideration. Impacts to the beach, issues created by barrier beach and impounded water course need to be analyzed appropriately. This is especially important due to previous USFS facilities that have been removed in the past with no environmental impact, specifically, around the mouth of McKinney Creek near Chambers Landing pier. Impacts to safety deserve to be addressed as this dynamic sandy beach area will be prone to significant sand migration after the harbor entrance is removed.

Water quality concerns should also be addressed in the event water is impacted or impounded because of a barrier beach condition.

TLOA supports Alternative 4 currently. We do not support any alternative that includes a pier for motorized boating as the safety considerations, winter access for emergency personnel, and scenic impacts make the other alternatives 2 and 3 undesirable, and the environmental findings do not support these proposed alternatives.

Sincerely,

Jan Brisco
Executive Director

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 11:06:34 PM

First name: Susan

Last name: Hacker

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have lived in Meeks Bay for 23 years full-time and raised two boys here. We visit Meeks Bay Beach on a regular basis and value the quiet and beauty the area has to offer. I support the Preferred Alternative (Alt. 4), as proposed. Keeping the beach as a non-motorized recreation access and use area will maintain the quiet, beauty and safety for those swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, etc. Preferred Alternative (Alt. 4) as proposed, avoids any significant impact to scenic quality from all viewpoints and will improve views by removing the marina walls. By excluding any type of pier Preferred Alternative (Alt. 4) as proposed, will ensure that both beaches and water views remain unspoiled and will not interfere with the safety of non-motorized recreational users. It also will have beneficial environmental impacts on air and water quality and will keep boat noise away.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 5:16:59 PM

First name: Linnea

Last name: Kehlet Hull

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My great grandfather Oswald Kehlet purchased Meeks Bay in 1919. For the next 50 years, the resort offered recreational activities and accommodations to middle income families. To understand how important the resort was to thousands of visitors over the years, a Facebook page named Meeks Bay Memories Then and Now features posts and photographs of unforgettable summers to so many families.

Boating Pier - The culture and history of Tahoe includes boating. A pier would allow visitors to drop off people off and then anchor off shore. Between Camp Richardson and Sugar Pine State Park, that opportunity does not exist.

Pedestrian Bridge - Connecting the Resort side and USFS campground would improve the Meeks experience. Currently, pedestrians must cross on the narrow highway bridge.

Launch Ramp - It would greatly benefit boaters. Obexers is the next closest ramp and it very congested.

Lagoon Restoration - My brothers and sisters played in the willows and grasses along Meeks Creek before the Marina was built. It's unclear to me if, once restored, a barrier would be placed around it to prevent access. Would non-motorized water craft be allowed to explore?

We all want to protect the Lake. However, it is sad to see middle income families squeezed out by rising home prices, affordable housing for locals and limits to lake access by the removal of marinas and buoys.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 10:57:02 PM

First name: Kirk

Last name: Robinson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Who am I and what is my connection to Meeks Bay? I am Kirk Robinson, and I am the great-grandson of Dr. LeRoy F. Herrick. In the early 1920's, Dr. Herrick bought significant acreage south of Meeks Creek and west of what is now Highway 89. After failing to establish a silver fox farm, he established the Meadow Park Resort, of which the last building was razed just over three years ago. He built his cabin just south of the creek. It is still standing and is still in the family, owned by my sister, brother, and me.

I have been coming to Meeks Bay since I was about six months old, some 68 years ago. While I cherish my family history at Meeks Bay, I look forward to a future Meeks Bay that better reflects its natural history, but still provides a place for families of all ages and economic status to enjoy one of the great natural treasures bestowed on western North America.

First, and foremost, I fully support the key elements of Alternative 4, as proposed. For me the key elements of the alternative are:

- * Full restoration of the Creek/Beach/Lagoon habitat of Meeks Creek within the entire project area.
- * Replacement of the box culvert bridge on SR-89 over Meeks Creek. This is a key element of creek restoration as the waterfall effect of the culvert will likely negate the benefits of the downstream restoration by limiting fish passage above the SR-89 crossing.
- * Restoring the natural beach habitat along the north shore of Meeks Bay by removing the current motel units along the shore and building an equal number of new units further from the shore. While not directly connected to restoration of the creek, there may be a tangential connection as the retaining walls and gabion wall interfere with the natural process of beach replenishment and may affect inshore habitat of young fish. (Where I live - in the Puget Sound region of the State of Washington - this is a real issue with shore reinforcement destroying the near shore habitat where young salmon forage. And Cutthroat Trout are salmonids.)
- * Please DO NOT build a pier in Meeks Bay. It has no relationship to the purpose of the project. Its impact is likely to be negative from an environmental perspective. It will create a negative view across the bay. And the idea of any pier was actively discouraged by a vast majority of participants in the Stakeholder Forum and the public meetings. There has not been a pier at Meeks Bay for a long time (20-30 years?) and nobody seems to have missed it.

There are other elements that are addressed in different ways under each option, including parking, campgrounds, day use areas, and the "business" route of the Tahoe Trail, also referred to as the "upland" elements of the project. These upland elements of the overall project are almost completely independent of the purpose of the project - restoring the natural functions of Meeks Creek from upstream of the current SR89 crossing and into Meeks Bay. The only upland element that will have some impact on the restoration is the location of a pedestrian bridge across the creek, which incidentally is in the same location in each alternative and coincidentally in the same location as the bridge that connected the north and south areas of the original Meeks Bay resort. I believe the four items addressed above are the positive steps needed to meet that goal and can be done without addressing the other items. I realize that the restoration project offers an opportunity to evaluate the upland elements of the Resort area, but it is not necessary. Restore the natural functions of the area - creek, lagoon, inshore habitat, and maybe build a pedestrian bridge while completing the lagoon restoration - and leave it at that. Since we are addressing upland elements of the resort area in this project, I would suggest that the layout could include other variations or combinations of ideas reflected in the alternatives

that might create other options to consider. For example:

* Parking - Use the general parking layout of Alternative 1. The single adjustment I would make is to move the parking area south of the creek a bit south to allow a wide walking corridor to the beach adjacent to the lagoon. This is currently how most folks in the campground or who park along the highway access the beach.

* Campgrounds - Use the campground layouts of Alternatives 1, 2, & 4 (they are described as essentially the same). The one thing that participants noted is that they would prefer the north side campground be the RV campground and the south campground be a tent only campground. I would suggest that the south campground would not provide electricity, water, or sewer to individual sites. I would also suggest that addition of yurts or hard sided cabins should occur only in the north campground,

* Day Use Areas - the day use area locations under alternatives 1, 3, & 4 are roughly the same in that they right behind the beach. I don't understand the wrap around under option 2. As I noted above, it would be nice to have a wide walking corridor along the south side of the lagoon for those who walk to the beach from the highway or the campground.

* Tahoe Trail - No one knows where the Tahoe Trail Meeks Bay bypass will be located as yet, much less which side of SR89 the bypass will be located. The assumption here is that the bypass will be on the east side of SR89. The tricky part of this alignment is how the Tahoe Trail exits the Meeks Bay segment of the trail. Generally, the alignments of the business route laid out in alternatives 2, 3, & 4 follow the same route until it comes toward a meet up with the bypass route. Alternative 4 has it right in that there needs to be a switchback to meet up with the bypass. I would have the switchback go to the west, not the east due to the lay of the land in that area. (I have personally scouted it.)

Added note: if the business Tahoe Trail alignment is on the east (Lake) side of SR-89, I believe it should be routed behind the fire house and not across the driveway for safety purposes in emergency situations. This should be planned for in the redesign of the campground. Thought should also be given to route the trail inside the wall of the resort to preserve highway parking for the trailhead and the beach.

Some other miscellaneous comments related to the project:

Creek Restoration

* One of the goal of the creek restoration is to possibly restore Cutthroat Trout spawning to Meeks Creek. I am curious as to how much of a stream reach is necessary for Cutthroat spawning as there is a major beaver dam around 100 yards upstream (within the project area) that would likely block spawning upstream of that point.

* Bridge work noise. Our family cabin is the closest residence to the SR89 bridge. We have no concerns with the temporary construction noise that will be generated by the replacement of the box culvert/bridge. We will deal with any noise to get the culvert replaced with a true bridge. We do understand that there still will noise impacts on the users of the campgrounds on either side of the creek.

Pier

* Scenic Views. I believe the photographic exhibits in the EIS relating to scenic views are a bit deceiving as it appears most all the photos have a wide angle bias to them. This results in objects and landmarks appearing either smaller and/or further away than they really are. Two photos are attached to show how the original pier appeared. The color photo is taken with a telephoto lens (with its bias) and shows how the pier fits into the bay. The black & white photo was taken from near the entrance to the marina.

* Figures 3.1-4-6. I believe the 600' wake zones are reversed. Higher lake levels mean that the 600' zone would come into the bay further at high tides. The water moves west as the lake level rises.

* A 300' pier brings power boats and their noise pollution, air quality, and water quality issues into the inner portion of Meeks Bay. Is that a slippery slope to be encouraged?

* Point of Clarity (Page 3.1.5 - SR-89 Corridor Management Plan) Beginning at the bottom of the page the EIS notes the following:

The Meeks Bay Restoration Project is included in the SR 89 Corridor Plan, which also identifies the following projects within the Meeks Bay segment of SR 89:

??develop Tahoe Trail segment within Meeks Bay with grade-separated crossing, if needed; underground powerlines and co-locate technology infrastructure;

??develop bus stop at Meeks Bay;

??relocate roadside parking when alternative access is provided through transit and bike options;

??replace Caltrans bridge and incorporate capacity for wildlife crossing and pedestrian/bike use;

??formalize emergency turnouts;

??provide winter recreation access parking;

??increase technology infrastructure; and

??provide a water taxi stop at Meeks Bay.

Please note the last item. Nowhere in the Final Corridor Plan narrative does it state that a water taxi stop is included in the Meeks Bay segment of the plan. Please see pages 106 and 107 of the Corridor Plan. There is, however, a water taxi stop included in the Sugar Pine Point segment of the plan (pages 108 and 109). (There are two misleading maps (pages xiii, and 91) which one might infer that a water taxi might be included at Meeks Bay. This was discussed during one of the meetings and was explained that it was a mistake, but it was a general map. The discussion left me believing that there would not be a water taxi stop in Meeks Bay in the plan.)

* Section 4.4 includes the following statement:

??Commitment of shorezone to pier construction would permanently transfer area within the shorezone to this use. Commitment of shorezone to an accessible watercraft launch facility would also permanently transfer area within the shorezone to this use.

The EIS describes the accessible watercraft launch facility as a floating platform that could be relocated as needed (Section 2.8.1). How does this launch facility that can be relocated "permanently" transfer the area to this specific use? I think the second sentence needs to be deleted as it is in conflict with the description of the facility.

While this project is centered on restoration of Meeks Creek and its beach/lagoon interface with Lake Tahoe I believe decisions on other elements of the project should consider the changes that have occurred in the last 6-7 years that the marina has been shut down due to environmental pollution and AIS concerns. Meeks Bay has really become a haven for non-motorized aquatic recreation including paddlecraft, swimming, playing on the beach, and just enjoying the beach without having to listen to or deal with power boats. This is one of the few, if not the only area, on the Lake that currently has that distinction. While there are folks that would love to bring the power boats back to Meeks Bay, let us remember that power boats can pretty much go anywhere else on the lake. What we all need to consider is what Meeks Bay can become, not what it was (that ship sailed - motored away? - about 50 years ago when both the Meeks Bay Resort and the Meadow Park Resort were sold to developers. Fortunately for many of us, the fates that befell the developers has allowed the Meeks Bay area to move into the future in the public domain and allow discussion of its future use.

Let us not miss this opportunity.





Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 11:49:15 PM

First name: Julie

Last name: Hutchinson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am pleased to submit the following review of the Meeks Bay Restoration Project EIS/EIR document. Please incorporate these comments into the official record for this project.

My family and I are long-time summer residents of Lake Tahoe's west shore. I have firsthand knowledge of the Meeks Bay Resort and Campground and recreate there almost every day throughout the summer. I care deeply about the Lake, the rich history of the west shore and Meeks Bay for both Washoe people and those, like me, who live and recreate here.

Because I care deeply about this place and the people who use it, I have been active in the Meeks Bay Restoration scoping process and have participated as a forum member. I am attaching the scoping letter that I have previously submitted in this process.

Overview

The EIS/EIR document is lengthy and covers many issues. Upon a careful review of the document components, including purpose and need for the project, and the sections addressing impacts, mitigation, assumptions, and alternatives, I found many areas of significant concern that I wanted to bring to your attention. Many of the issues addressed in the EIS/EIR have not been fully vetted or considered and many of the baseline assumptions in this document are inaccurate or misleading.

The interagency process on this project is very confusing and there are potential conflicts between the interests of the cooperating agencies. The agency-specific information made the document hard to follow and confusing for the public. It is even difficult to determine which agency has the overriding authority as the decision maker and how conflicts will be handled between agencies. For example, it is not clear whether the USFS, as the land manager, will be the agency responsible for making the final decision on this project or whether it will attempt to reach a consensus position with the other cooperating agencies.

From forum comments as recent as June comments by lead agencies made comments that conflicts between lead agencies were being handled outside the public process. This response made it clear that the public will not have sufficient visibility into the decision-making processes that will follow completion of this EIS/EIR.

I should also note that little, if any, of the impactful policy information that directly impacts the alternatives and the public's perception has been discussed or disclosed with the forum group as the agencies were guiding our decisions and outcomes to come up with the alternatives. Based on the EIS/EIR document it appears there was information available only to the agency representatives participating in the forum group and that substantial information was never disclosed and may very well have had a significant impact on forum discussions and proposed options.

To me, this EIS/EIR reads a little like an eye test for glasses, to decide which choice is better A or B or C or D. While selecting among choices may be an important part of the process, we have not been given the background for how the alternatives were selected. This clouds my experience on the forum as certain elements should have included a more thorough disclosure of land use, impacts by the lead agencies which I will cover those concerns below. I am a firm believer that agencies should give people the information they need to make an informed decision; I do not think this document or the forum information exchange from the lead agencies has accomplished this goal.

Purpose and Need

Since the start of this process in 2018, we were led to believe that restoration of the creek was the overriding purposes of this project and that this purpose was critical to protect Lake Tahoe as Meeks is the second greatest

threat to the Lake Tahoe second only to the issues arising at the Tahoe Keys. This EIS/EIR seems to confuse the purpose and need for this project by adding in additional objectives to the purpose and need beyond the river restoration.

While maintenance of recreation opportunities, public safety, etc. are critically important topics that must be analyzed in the EIS/EIR, this project should not, first and foremost, be seen as a recreation project. To this end, I believe that the EIS/EIR missed a critical alternative that must be analyzed: restoration of the river without any other changes to recreational use as it exists today. The absence of this alternative illustrates the concern that I have. It feels as though this document is attempting to take the true purpose and need (restoration of the river) and then shoe-horn additional projects on top of that purpose.

Baseline

One critical flaw in this EIS/EIR is that it confuses the baseline condition existing today with the prior condition that existed when the marina was operational eight years ago prior to its removal in 2015. The baseline conditions of existing recreation should not reflect operation of a motorized boating facility (Marina and launch ramp) as the marina and boat launch were closed in 2015 and all boat slips and docks removed and auctioned off. Boating activities do not take place in Meeks Bay and have not since 2015. There is no marina or significant motorized use of this area today. The no-action alternative must recognize that fact. If the Forest Service wishes to restore the marina, that should be analyzed through one of the action alternatives.

An example of this fatal flaw in this EIS/EIR document is the photo used in Figure 3.1-3 Swim Area, No Wake Zone, Boat Traffic Under Existing Conditions. This photo shows the marina with all slips, docks, and boats and indicates it is from 2021. This is incorrect and misleading to the public. It suggests that the baseline includes significant motorized use of this area when, in fact, it does not. Figure 3.1-4 Alternative 1 Boating Piers Designated Swim Area and No wake Zone is misleading Swim Area, No Wake Zone, Boat Traffic Under Existing Conditions

Any consideration of adding boating into Meeks Bay must be considered a new use as it is not part of the current baseline conditions. This new use of adding motorized boating activity into Meeks Bay Project Area is also not consistent with the purpose and need of the project and would significantly affect the quality of recreational opportunities for the existing users of Meeks Bay including swimmers, beach goers, divers, stand up paddle boarders, kayakers, hikers, bicyclist, and residents adjacent to the recreational area.

The EIS/EIR does not analyze and consider this new use of motorized boating as the existing baseline conditions were never included in the analysis or included in the evaluation which would clearly change the assumptions, impacts, mitigation and outcomes necessary under this review. There is also no plan that has been analyzed to resurrect the marina which would require some level of environmental review as the baseline conditions have been changed when the marina and ramp became inoperable and boating activities ceased in Meeks Bay.

The only place in the EIS/EIR that even identifies that the marina is not operable is found in section 3.5 Aquatic Biological Resources which concedes that the marina was "temporarily closed into 2015 (including removal of with docks and supporting infrastructure)." This clearly indicates that there has been no boat use in Meeks Bay since 2015 or for 7-8 years.

This section of the document also claims that, under the no action alternative, the marina and boat ramp would be reinstalled. This ignores the clear intent of NEPA and CEQA. The existing environmental condition of this area does not include motorized boat use and a marina. The no-action alternative and all impacts analysis should stem from that baseline. Any suggestion of restoring the marina should be analyzed in one of the action alternatives. Further, any impacts assessed from new motorized use or installation of a pier should be evaluated against the current baseline condition that does not include significant motorized use.

Had the agencies plan on reinstalling the marina, the docks and supporting infrastructure of slips etc would have been stored for future use and not auctioned off and removed. Under a no-action alternative, it would be illegal to

build a new marina absent a full environmental analysis of that proposal.

The removal of this facility and closing the area to motorized boating led the public to completely believe that motorized boating was no longer appropriate in Meeks Bay. This has created a new and robust safe non-motorized recreation area. Intended or not, the existing baseline conditions were changed in 2015 and Meeks Bay adapted and transformed in the last seven to eight years to the existing non-motorized conditions. During Forum Meetings we were repeatedly advised by agency personnel that the marina was closed and would not be coming back. Motorist boating interest should not outweigh and diminish existing and non-motorized recreation.

This leads to the assumptions that were evaluated based on an incorrect existing baseline condition for the Meeks Bay Project Area which pertain items included in the proposed alternatives including but not limited to; motorized pier, pedestrian pier, paddle craft launch pier (not designated as motorized or non-motorized), crowding, number of visitors to project area, parking, scenic and visual impacts, aesthetic impacts, overall sustainable recreation, removing lodges (motel style cabins) and inclusion of a public safety or fireboat boat lift on the pier. I will address a few of these issues and concerns predicated on I don't feel they should be included as the existing baseline conditions were not considered while analyzing these components.

In regards to 3.1 Recreation in the EIS/EIR document, I am concerned that the many of the recreation components being proposed in the alternatives are activities that will be added to the current baseline and existing conditions and uses at Meeks Bay. The baseline and existing conditions are critically relevant and required under NEPA and CEQA at a minimum to review alternatives, impacts and mitigations for a project of this complexity.

Motorized Pier- Since no motorized boating activity exists in the project area (since 2015) the addition of a pier for motorized boats would be adding a new type of recreation into the project and simply not replacing an existing use. The addition of a pier would not meet the purpose and need of the restoration project. Adding in new motorized boats and water taxi use (per State Route 89 Recreation Corridor Plan - maps) that would pose a significant conflict and safety threat with existing robust non-motorized uses and would significantly affect the quality of recreational opportunities for existing users. How will the 600 foot wake zone be enforced to prevent conflicts in the water? How was the wake zone analyzed and determined to mitigate these significant life safety impacts? Is this considered an appropriate mitigation without any enforcement or regulation?

The proposed pier would significantly reduce the existing safe and protected beach wide swim and non-motorized water recreation areas while introducing new uses of motorized boat traffic, noise, exhaust and safety conflicts and would have a detrimental effect on existing uses and the baseline recreation in the project area. The pier would be permanent and would forever alter the view of the beaches, Kehlet House, Sugar Pine Point and the mountains around the bay and across the lake. The aesthetic impact of adding the pier would permanently divide views of the bay by obscuring views to the North and South and of these identifiable features on the lake, remove the unique visual quality as a bay, disturb the overall aesthetics and degrade enjoyment of those views of the lake and of this very special and serene little bay.

The representations in the EIS/EIR of the visual impacts of the pier do not fairly represent any of the views from the beaches and only include a shot perpendicular to the proposed pier at the farthest point north and away from the proposed pier. The rendered view of the proposed pier from the lake does not locate the pier as proposed as it is set further south in the rendering which is not a fair representation. Why were additional viewpoints of the pier from the beaches where people actually would view the pier and its visual and aesthetic impact not analyzed or provided in the document? Absence this information how can a decision be made with regards to the visual and aesthetic impacts? The pier will forever dramatically change the visual and aesthetic impact of this portion of the lake and the evaluation is not complete or representative of those who will be viewing the pier from the lake.

There is a concern over section 4.4 Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitment of Resources that any

commitment of shoreline to a pier construction would permanently transfer the area within the shoreline to this pier use. This is critical information that is not fully explained for a lay person to understand. What does this mean? Can lead agencies modify the pier design from motorized to pedestrian to public safety or vice versa once a pier is placed? Does this affect the whole project area shoreline for the placement of a pier (meaning could a pier designation affect the whole shoreline in the project area and designate it as pier? Does the discussion of a paddle craft launch "pier" indicate another pier could be put in its place? I would like it on the record that during 2018 scoping on this project the pier on the south side of the beach was removed from consideration due to all the concern from residents and the community that lives near or recreates at Meeks Bay. If the project team's suggestion of a paddle craft launch on the south side of the beach (exactly where the original 300' pier was proposed in scoping) in any way exposes this area to further pier options or opportunities it should be removed as a pier option in the alternatives. If the permanent pier location can be enlarged or use changes this is a bait and switch kind of action as not disclosed to the public. Could you please provide clear information on this? Is a paddle craft launch considered a permanent pier? This could have very serious ramifications far into the future if we do not understand what this means.

Without understanding of the above I would add, regarding the paddle craft launch "pier" it does not meet the purpose and need of the project and is not a significant enhancement to recreation. The analysis does not discuss use of this location and the constraints as this area is in conflict with access to the Washoe House and will require displacing an existing use of this area for a beach where dogs can accompany their owners to the beach to recreate. This is the baseline condition and a change would create an unfavorable impact and experience on existing users of the area. This area also provides the best shading due to tree canopy for visitors who want to avoid the sun but enjoy the beach area and large gatherings and picnics are held here regularly. Removal of the trees and canopy would remove buffering of noise from the highway which would further detract from the quality of recreational experiences. . It does not appear that significant analysis of the location of this paddle craft and displacement of existing uses was evaluated. This combined with the possible permanent pier on the south side of the beach makes this more of a problem as analysis is incomplete.

Since the motorized pier, pedestrian pier and Paddle Craft Launch pier do not meet the purpose and need of the project and they have not been evaluated for impacts based on the existing baseline this analysis is flawed and assumptions are not appropriately identified and needs to be evaluated properly.

As to Visitor capacity and Meeks Bay (page 3.1-13) the data is stale with only partial numbers without sufficient data Meeks Bay Resort does not capture the true number of visitors to the project area. Meeks Bay Campground data does not indicate information on fire closures in 2020 by forest order and actual evacuations in 2021 due to the Caldor Fire that really impact the visitor count as beach and camping was closed. The assumption throughout document that claims Meeks Bay is underutilized other than on weekends and holidays is just not the baseline condition for the project area. As someone who frequents the project area throughout the summer the crowds and visitors has increased exponentially over the last five years and has exploded since the 2020 summer. The beaches are full and at capacity almost everyday during July and August and often full mid-June and early September. In fact, many times there is no parking available inside the project area or on the highway on any day whether weekend or weekday.

This year 2022, with the low water level the beach is more crowded and fuller than ever before. The water is full of non-motorized activity with swimmers, divers, people floating on blow up rafts, paddle boards, and kayaks including rental kayaks on the south side beach. This crowds are concerning as I question what is sustainable recreation? The project area is already beyond capacity with space, parking, restrooms, trash, and very limited oversight from agencies responsible for the area. The trash on the beaches of food wrappers, dirty diapers, cans, bottles, bottle caps, food waste is steadily increasing and is making its way into the lake. I question how sustainable is these high visitor uses are for the environment and for recreation? How will the lead agencies monitor the crowds and limit access when at capacity? Luckily, most visitors are cooperative yet there have been instances where visitors create problems and were out of control which puts the families and visitors at risk due to their behaviors and attitudes. We cannot assume that someone might become enraged our set out to

harm others in a large crowd. With only one El Dorado County Deputy "on the west shore" we have very limited law enforcement so crowds would easily overwhelm local resources. Although pictures of Meeks Bay in the project area and in EIS/EIR always show very few if any people at Meeks Bay which is not a fair representation of the existing baseline. I do have photos that I will try and include with my response that show the actual existing baseline conditions of people recreating in day use areas, on the beach, and in the water. The actual existing and recent visitor numbers need evaluated and the project assumptions based on existing uses and capacity. These numbers should be validated and quantified to accurately reflect that actual existing baseline.

I am concerned about the removal of the motel style lodge cabin as they are existing and were left in the inventory by the USFS while tearing down a significant amount of other and older cabins. I am not sure how the lodges which accommodate 6 people for each of the 12 units can be replaced by just three cabins to maintain same number of accommodations ? Can you clarify this? Removing these lodge cabins affects families who wish to have opportunity to recreate and stay right in the lake which is not always affordable on Lake Tahoe. Removing these could have a socio-economic impact on those that cannot afford a lakefront or for that matter a boat. Tearing down these units and adding in boating to existing baseline there could be a very significant impact on families who cannot afford other options. Have the socio-economic impacts been analyzed for any component of the project alternatives? I also do not see the benefit of the removal of the shoreline protection features because in Hydrology and Water Quality page 3.6-15 because replacement of the existing shoreline protection feature would be negligible.

The Meeks Bay Fire/North Tahoe Fire Protection District fire and rescue response information that is provided identifies that water or lake based emergency responses for fire and medical emergencies is a very small amount of the incident response workload for the first responders. The majority of these water or lake based emergency responses are located on the North portion of Lake Tahoe, within Placer County, and not in El Dorado County areas of Meeks Bay, Rubicon, or Emerald Bay. As the implementation and operation of a fire and rescue boat is a significant fiscal investment, it places an additional unfunded liability (initial funding, re-occurring operations costs, staffing, training, maintenance, and certification) on the tax payers in Meeks Bay, who are currently served by only 2 firefighters at the Fire Station. There is insufficient information provided to support the location and operation of an emergency response boat in Meeks Bay. A comprehensive analysis must be conducted by all Emergency Responder agencies (Fire, Police, Sheriff, Emergency Medical Services Agencies, Emergency Management Agencies, Coast Guard, etc.) to adequately address the location, as well as the purpose and need for this resource at this location. It would be pre-decisional to include this boat lift in the Meeks Bay Restoration project as it does not meet the purpose and need and there is not sufficient analysis on this being the appropriate location.

In reviewing this EIS/EIR I would recommend that additional alternative should be evaluated and analyzed that would include just restoration of the Meeks Creek without any of the other added in projects.

The environmental review process although fairly comprehensive, in some areas has been conducted without recognizing existing baseline conditions which creates a significant flaw in the whole EIS/EIR as alternatives, data, analysis, assumptions, impacts and mitigation are all dependent on starting from existing baseline conditions. Therefore, I would raise concern that the significant components of the EIS/EIR document are flawed and does not provide a fair representation of the project alternatives, significant impacts and mitigations for the public or lead agencies to make an informed decision under NEPA and CEQA at a minimum. The cumulative effects on all aspects of the EIS/EIR of utilizing flawed and inaccurate baseline conditions does not meet the legal intent of identifying the true environmental impacts of this project. I hope that a formal review is conducted and deficiencies are remedied and other alternatives are considered based on existing baseline conditions.

I would like a written response to me letter.

Sincerely,

Julie & Dale Hutchinson
43350 Dunlap Street
Banning, CA 92220
Juliehutch3182@aol.com

October 25, 2018

Jeff Marsolais, Forest Supervisor
USFS- Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Sent via email and Fax

**Re: Public Comments on Scoping of the
Proposed Action for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit thoughts on the scope of the Proposed Action for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project which includes significant new activities not clearly related to the proposed restoration. As background, my family has owned property in Tahoma since the early 1950s. We have all grown up spending our summers on this beautiful lake and at Meeks Bay. We look forward to enjoying this place with our future generations. We care very much about protecting the lake and its resources and we are concerned about this project as it seems intent on drawing larger crowds and more people to this area. We hope that the thoughtful, reasonable, and well-intended comments of the residents and locals provide you with a more focused scope and consideration for what is really needed, and what is not necessary, for this treasured and special area.

The proposed action is focused on Restoration yet a whole new project is included within this proposal which is very misleading and concerning. While I support protecting the lake, its clarity, views, its resources, and I can see the benefit of rehabilitating the creek and watershed across the highway (separate project), but there is much to be considered. New project items such as a 300 foot pier, boat ramps, changes to connectivity of the two very different and very distinct beach areas does not tie into the priority of restoration of the creek. These proposed changes really are a completely new project which will forever alter Meeks Bay and affect the communities, local property owners, residents, and visitors who have recreated here for years. It is a bit disingenuous that the project scope has far exceeded restoration of the creek which most of the public supports, but has added entire new project components that should be considered as a separate project. The Assumptions and Project Summary Narrative don't fully support all the all the proposed actions or the Purpose and Needs for this project.

A need for "Recreation Enhancement" has not been proven or validated to even be necessary at either of the resort or campground, especially since both areas are already at capacity throughout the summer. The proposed actions, which I consider above and beyond restoration, are excessive, unnecessary, and are environmentally and fiscally irresponsible. Alternatives which incorporate existing infrastructure must be considered as a superior alternative with taking "No action" considered as well.

Letter to USFS- LTBMU
Public Comments on Scope of
Proposed Action Meeks Bay Restoration Project
October 25, 2018

Meeks Bay is a special and unique place on what has become a very crowded and overused Lake and Basin resource. This proposal and alternatives must take a very thoughtful process which considers alternatives that use existing infrastructure and holds the land management agency accountable for managing the property and not letting problems exist for years before taking action. USFS records show that the marina was identified as having significant problems with Aquatic Invasive Species as early as 2004 yet NO remediation efforts have taken place even though studies have been done since that time. Why would the forest allow the marina to degrade further and do damage to the lake? Why wasn't action taken sooner? This proposal and alternatives must hold the agency responsible to properly manage the infrastructure, not grant a do-over by allowing new infrastructure to further environmentally impact the lake. It is our opinion that this proposal, without significant reduction in scope, will allow the land management agency to further put the public and lake at risk. Manage what is already there without altering Meeks Bay.

I am further concerned that the TRPA is participating in this and has recently passed their shoreline plan which is clearly developed to increase development and the influx of people to the Tahoe basin which is direct contrast to what is best for the lake. The goals of the TRPA should not determine the appropriate scope of this project.

I agree that an EIS on this specific project, this specific location in Meeks Bay, and especially for all the enhancements and new projects being considered including the pier, ramps, reconfigure parking, and environmental impacts of these new projects. Only with a full EIS can the forest service properly evaluate all of the interconnected and cumulative impacts and threats, unintended consequences, and off site impacts of this unnecessary and expansive project which is well beyond restoration of Meeks Creek.

The following impacts, connected actions, cumulative effects, benefits, and superior alternatives must be studied and considered:

1. The scope of the project should stick to the restoration of a portion of Meeks Creek as this directly impacts the health of Lake Tahoe. This restoration is dependent upon the CalTrans approval of a new bridge and infrastructure for the creek crossing under highway and the feasibility of this must be considered. An alternative should include a modified restoration of the creek or no change if the bridge is not reconstructed.
2. Eradicate the Aquatic Invasive Species: The USFS has allowed this situation to become significant since at least 2004 by not doing anything to manage the problem. The two acre marina/lagoon will need to be treated for the Eurasian Milfoil and other Invasive species which is estimated to take at least 2 years and at significant cost of over \$500,000. A far superior alternative that should be considered is to complete the treatment to eradicate the Invasive Species and then rehab the marina as in #3 below.
3. Most of the Marina infrastructure has already been removed and gone since fall of 2017. A far superior alternative to constructing a new boat ramp and pier would be to rehabilitate the existing marina area , structures, boat ramp, downsize or discontinue any consideration for boat storage slips, pave and secure vehicle and boat trailer parking, install appropriate restroom and trash

facilities, repair seawalls, rip/rap, and other infrastructure. The few remaining items could be rehabilitated and restored while the Aquatic Invasive Species is being eradicated. The existing location of the boat ramp is screened from the lake and highway and doesn't detract from the beautiful vistas of the lake from the shore or from the water. It is neatly tucked away and provides noise reduction, traffic patterns, separates the two distinct beach areas, and has limited impacts to the existing beach recreation activities. The access to the lake has been dredged and the ground already disturbed and resettled. Institute and manage a comprehensive Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan which could include an alternative of alternative years of use and opportunity to control Aquatic Invasive Species in already established and controlled area versus exposing and threatening the entire bay with occupying new areas with boats. Boats seem to be the carrier of the Invasive Species, why spread them to other areas that are equally susceptible to growth of this Aquatic Invasive Species? Keep them where they can be contained with good and proactive management which in this case is the existing marina area and ramp.

4. Construct a pier: This is clearly a new use and new project that has nothing to do with restoration and must be considered as new and be evaluated by a full EIS to fully understand the impacts and make appropriate decisions. This proposed pier in combination with a new boat launch on the southern end of the bay (on the campground side) is what disturbs me the most. One only needs to stand where this pier and ramp are proposed to see how it is not well thought out or a necessary project. This area of the shoreline and bay is very shallow and the pier would have to be 300 feet to reach deep water. One must ask if a 300 foot pier is even necessary. The amount of water disturbance, habitat destruction, shoreline damage that would have to occur to put this new infrastructure in, for just a few month of use a year is not reasonable. To gain ample access to this area for the proposed new pier and ramp, which is very close to the highway (which sits significantly above grade of the lake) would include removal of significant number trees which not only screen the lake area but absorbs the ambient noise of the traffic on the highway and grade area. The view at the beach will change to include seeing the highway and increase in noise. This area also has a flood control basin from the highway that would need rerouted and changed and space is limited. The pier and boat ramp would likely remove recreational use by existing locals and visitors by probably 1/3 of the swimming, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, diving, sunbathing, and dog area of the southern campground beach. This is the only way you could even think to safely allow all recreational activities to happen in the same area including introducing motorized watercraft. These boats pose dangerous and inherent risks to all the other recreational activities that currently occur at this beach. The far superior alternative that must be considered is that NO new project pier or boat ramp be added in Meeks Bay.

As an alternative to insure motorized watercraft activities are still accommodated without overlapping or reducing other recreational uses is to utilize the existing boat ramp and marina on the resort side. The resort has more amenities and a ramp already exists which can be rehabilitated to meet the motorized watercraft needs. Many boaters have already adapted to not having the ramp and marina and downsizing it from present size would still meet the needs. The marina can be treated for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and even size of marina reduced to

allow for proper AIS management in a contained and controlled area that doesn't alter the existing and at capacity uses of Meeks Bay.

We are completely opposed to putting in 300 foot pier and new boat ramp which is completely not necessary in Meeks Bay. Safe harbor can be obtained with existing marina and boat launch without a whole new and unnecessary development of the Southern beach area of the bay. I do not even support a pier or ramp on the Northern end of the resort area as was discussed at the tour. Existing infrastructure can effectively meet the motorized watercraft needs without significantly altering the bay. This part of the proposed action is not consistent with the Purpose and Needs, Assumptions or intent of the restoration proposal and should not be included in the scope of the proposed action.

5. Construct a Boat Launch: First of all there is already a boat launch that has served the needs of boaters in this area for years. In fact, the boaters have been successful at finding alternatives since the marina has been closed since 2015 so we question how necessary is a new boat ramp? As stated above in #4 a boat ramp already exists which is by far a more superior alternative and financially more feasible for the short duration of summer use. The existing boat ramp could be rehabilitated to meet the needs and would have to be better managed. The prevention of Aquatic Invasive Species must be part of a robust and annual program similar to what is being done in Emerald Bay.

The number of buoys and piers on the west shore as well as public ramps meets the need of boaters. Meeks Bay is not an area that can only be accessed by the water and by making boating a priority you diminish the recreational opportunities for the locals and visitors who already fill both the resort and FS campground side of beach to capacity. The noise of a new ramp and boats coming and going would ruin the quiet atmosphere of the beach and campground. The existing marina and ramp area is behind the beach and the ambient noise is absorbed and rarely impacts the beach activities. Most of the boats that have frequented the area want to go to more secluded areas of the lake then stay at the bay. Meeks Bay is accessible to boats with minimal impacts if the existing marina and ramp remain. This action does not support the purpose and needs or assumptions.

6. An increase in motorized watercraft and people will substantially change the character and existing recreational experiences of this already at capacity bay. Alternatives that increase traffic, boats, vehicles, and people into the area and diminish the existing recreational opportunities for locals, families, and visitors must be considered. There are health issues with increased boat traffic and proximity to public beach and swimming areas if the new launch and pier are approved. Boating increases threat of water contamination from fuel and hydrocarbons released in the water not to mention emissions which affect air quality, water quality, and noise. Boat wakes and turbulence will impact the protected area of the Southern end of bay as areas are shallow and sand will be constantly disturbed with boat traffic. It is recommended to keep boating contained to existing Marina and ramp area with appropriate reductions in size and capacity to allow for

recreation access to lake without disturbing and disrupting existing flow and use of entire bay and beach, swim, and dog area. This alternative to use existing infrastructure is more environmentally feasible as well.

7. In an effort to enhance recreation I would recommend some Kayak, paddleboard, bicycle storage at both the resort and the campground side for storage of private non-motorized equipment. Encourage non-motorized recreation that is much more compatible with swimmers and beach goers. Impact is lighter on the land and protects the homeowners, reduces noise, and protects the pristine waters of the bay.
8. Protection of existing Tahoe Yellow Cress which is found on the Campground side of the lake and is well protected. Any alteration would remove or destroy this healthy stand of Yellow Cress which is protected.
9. Leave existing beach areas separate to allow for multiple and different uses. Both beaches have very unique and special characteristics. Combining the two distinct beaches environments would significantly limit the enjoyment of the equally unique users of each beach area. The resort side is very busy, has more amenities, is very crowded, noisy, and is affectionately called "Coney Island". It is difficult to get to the water to swim or kayak. The Campground beach is a crowd made of more locals, campers, and visitors. The day use parking lot is full and beach is busy, yet a quieter crowd, easier handicap access, more relaxing, and has limited amenities (only bathrooms). In the hustle and bustle of a Lake Tahoe summer, having a nice accessible swimming, kayaking, stand up paddle board, diving, and even small dog beach that locals and visitors alike can enjoy cannot be replaced. Any modification of the Southern beach area that limits beach area, access to the water, and less parking will severely limit the space that someone who lives at the lake can enjoy. It is easy for locals to get pushed out of their community and lake areas in the summer. Meeks Bay has always been a haven to enjoy the lake and our home. The Campground beach has accommodated both locals and visitors in a very manageable way.
10. Offsite impacts and appropriate funding from increased recreation opportunities to pay for those impacts and mitigations must be considered. Impacts will include increased traffic and noise on highway through communities, traffic delays, traffic accidents, increased boat trailers and large motorhomes/travel trailers impeding traffic on mountain roads, parking along highway as both parking areas and beaches already at capacity in summer months, increased foot traffic, emergency responses by fire department and sheriff to manage increased vehicles, boats and people, which is funded by the tax payers and homeowners in the county which should be offset by the increased opportunities and fees.
11. One of the safety and offsite impacts we are most concerned about is the intended (or unintended) consequence of drawing more people to the area and the constant threat of a major wildfire or emergency. The west shore and especially Rubicon, Meeks Bay and even Tahoma are like a cul-de-sac with limited emergency exits. In the summer you cannot even get out to the

south with all the Emerald Bay and tourist traffic via the highway to South Shore and especially with motorhomes, trailers or boat trailers. The traffic to Tahoe City and safe exit corridors is also very challenging. Some of the Tahoe City traffic might be mitigated when the by-pass is finished but likely traffic will increase. There are no other safe exit corridors from the West Shore and with numerous visitor and tourists we are already compromised with safe exit out of the area in the event of an emergency. Other lake areas have multiple highways that will provide opportunities to get out of the area. The West Shore does not have the ability to get away from a fire.

As property owners and summer residents in the area for more than 50 years, and career firefighters, we are keenly aware of the problems we would have evacuating the West Shore. Any effort to bring more people and vehicles to this area puts the locals and general public at risk. You cannot mitigate how people will react in an emergency that will occur, and the West Shore is already compromised with limited ways out to safety. Care must be taken to think about how increasing activities and traffic will further compromise the public's safety including residents and visitors. By drawing more people to this cul-de-sac you put residents, homeowners, campers, visitors at an increased risk. Both areas of Meeks Bay are already at capacity during the summer even on weekdays and roads north and south are two lane, slow travel, and already congested.

12. Motorized watercraft and boating recreation should not have priority over existing recreation and enjoyment of the lake. The overall proposed action places significant benefits to motorized watercraft users while diminishing opportunities and safety of existing recreational uses swimming, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, diving, sun bathing, and dog beach. The project should consider alternatives that utilize the existing marina and boat ramps without further degrading or limiting access to the beach, bay, existing recreation, safety, and impacting water quality.
13. Regarding trailer parking and circulation routes, this should be an option for both the resort and campground areas. Proper paving of roads at the resort side would help protect the creek, small lagoon and reuse of marina and boat ramp. The traffic patterns should all flow smoothly and limit traffic backing up on the roadway. A significant consideration should be for proper staffing of a kiosk for day use that does not impact the camp hosts except for a few hours a day. The hosts should have more time for the campground and to patrol beach and bathrooms. A simple fix would be hiring a kiosk person for 8 hours a day during the summer. The Camp Hosts are often working 16 or more hours a day and it gets exhausting. If the superior alternatives of Not constructing a pier and boat launch are not considered and removed from the scope of this project, then significant staffing increase must occur as significant safety problem and overcrowding will occur at ramp, swim area, and pier that must be supervised. Ideally this proposed pier and ramp will be removed as not consistent with the purpose and needs of restoration.

14. Reconstructing the Meeks Bay Campground to accommodate SOME larger recreational vehicles could be accomplished with minimal impact to the day use and beach uses. I don't think tent and small RV users should be pushed out for the large RV motorhomes. There should be consideration of both uses. I wouldn't want to see many more than a few camping sites added as that impacts traffic, removal of trees, increases noise, and impacts beach recreational use which is fairly balanced now with day use at capacity during the summer. Updating the campground has benefits as long as existing users still have opportunity to use the campground. We recommend that if power hookups are proposed that appropriate septic system is also installed as it seems large RV'ers tend to need to dump their tanks more frequently and often use the dark of night to run grey water onto the ground which would be a serious threat to the lake and an unintended consequence. Every effort must be made to contain any run off from camping activities. The campground will not be properly screened or separated from the beach area if day use parking or campground enlarged and additional trees removed.
15. We would support a small walking bridge roughly as shown in Figure 4 where foot traffic to campground and beach can be filtered and slowed as not a steady flow. This will allow people to walk safely to resort side for amenities such as store and small food vendor. We would not support the pedestrian crossing area being closer to the beach area as it's in the way of parking area and already congested. Bicycles, scooters, razers, electric scooters and the like should not be allowed on the beach or blocking walkways. Appropriate bike racks should be installed away from the beach.
16. We support interpretive opportunities that include historical information on both the Washoe tribe, habitat/environmental education, and the Meeks Bay Resort history as well. The rich history of this area for the Washoe and the Resort should all be equally displayed as all part of the history of this beautiful place. There should also be appropriate signage for no littering, no open fires, and emergency evacuation information.
17. As stated before we recommend the existing Marina, boat ramp, trailer and vehicle parking remain for the continued use of the marina and boat launch. This area should not be converted to day use parking as it will compress the crowds and create significant noise and disruptions for beach goers. Using this area for vehicle and boat trailer parking is an existing use and is a far superior parking area for vehicles and boat trailers allowing use of superior alternative of using existing infrastructure for a properly managed, screened appropriate, and responsible marina and boat launch. Set reasonable and restricted hours for boating activities at ramp and marina.
18. We do not have a clear understanding of what gabion and concrete walls you propose removing and replacing as it was not discussed at tour. If natural retaining structures can provide the same protection and it does not take away beach area it may be an acceptable opportunity. If it includes removing structures or limiting beach access we don't think it is necessary.

19. The Best Management Practices (BMP's) should always be used as that is part of effective managing of the resource. A concessioner should have responsibility to maintain these BMP's as a condition of their authorization to operate on federal lands. New and emerging issues should be addressed immediately and not corrections or modifications not delayed. If Marina and boat ramp are reutilized, which we find as a superior alternative, then an annual maintenance plan should be put into place to manage Aquatic Invasive Species.
20. The Meeks Bay Fire Department which the residents and property owners pay for in special taxes should not be impacted by any reconfiguration or activities without receiving additional funding from the forest or appropriate concessionaire as off-site impacts of increased activities, people, traffic, and emergency and non-emergency call volume.
21. The proposed action seems to increase noise, pollution, aquatic invasive species infiltration to other areas of the bay, traffic impacts both on highway, roadside parking, camping and in parking areas. Downsizing the proposed action to only what is necessary and manageable must be an alternative. Don't forever alter Meeks Bay with an unnecessary pier, new boat ramp, when existing infrastructure already exists, and if properly managed is a far superior alternative that effectively balances recreational needs to protect Lake Tahoe, meets environmental needs recreation activities, and is fiscally responsible. The "wants" for new infrastructure and projects that diminish the Meeks Bays unique and distinctly different beach areas, historic cabins, resort amenities, existing and at capacity recreational uses including swimming, kayaking, paddle boarding, diving, dog area, picnicking, camping areas, views, and enjoyment of Meeks Bay should be removed from the scope of the project as not consistent with the purpose and needs and appropriate existing alternatives considered.
22. Restore Meeks Lagoon: We have concerns about a lagoon being a dangerous and very attractive nuisance for kids without safety constraint and access limited to the lagoon. The stream can be restored (if CalTrans is willing to install new bridge) with a small protected lagoon area which will then merge with a downsized marina and existing boat launch or breech lake separately. Efforts to pave the access to the ramp and marina will eliminate sediment and help with environmental effects. A lagoon and stagnant or standing water or muck in low water flow seasons will significantly increase the existence of mosquitos, meat bees, and other insects that will impact people safely recreating.

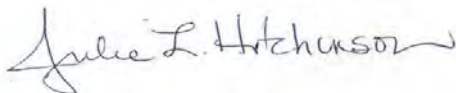
Overall our thoughts on the restoration plan remain mixed, as new infrastructure and projects seem inconsistent with the "Purpose and Needs", Assumptions, and Project Summary Narrative of this proposed action. As to the restoration of the creek and possibly the lagoon we can see value to protecting and preserving the lake with minimal impacts to existing uses if alternatives and technology are used to implement only that part of the restoration. As to all the new infrastructure being proposed we are completely opposed to a 300 foot pier and new boat launch and ramp, as they are completely unnecessary and would just move a environmental problem to another part of the bay and restrict existing uses and

Letter to USFS- LTBMU
Public Comments on Scope of
Proposed Action Meeks Bay Restoration Project
October 25, 2018

create significant noise, traffic, environmental issues and safety hazards. An alternative that considers use of the existing boat ramp and portion of existing Marina area must be considered as a better alternative and scope both environmentally, in support of all existing recreation uses, and fiscally sound. If Meeks Bay was undeveloped and did not already have recreational opportunities that are already at capacity all this new proposal might make sense. That is not the case, and it would be irresponsible and environmentally detrimental to put in a 300 foot pier and new boat launch. This "new project" would limit existing recreational uses and forever alter and ruin Meeks Bay and this pristine and special place. The uses by motorized water craft should not be a priority over other existing uses....a balance must be found and the existing boat ramp and marina can meet that balance without changing the entire vista of Meeks Bay.

I am also concerned that the TRPA is exerting pressure to push their Shoreline Plan which may not be appropriate for Meeks Bay. A thoughtful and very detailed and specific EIS must be completed to consider specific needs and conditions in Meeks Bay. Any decision made will impact us forever and will alter uses for the community, visitors, and neighboring homes. My recommendation is to consider alternatives that limit the scope to the purpose and needs, and take no action on any new infrastructure that is not required or necessary, while utilizing existing infrastructure to meet the recreational needs with appropriate management and mitigation. The whole goal of this is restoration and protection of the lake. I cannot see how these new activities of a pier, boat launch, and other non-essential activities is environmentally sound as a significant disruption of the lake, shoreline, trees, noise, traffic, safety, and existing recreation will all occur. Downsize the scope of this project to be consistent with the Purpose and Needs and to properly mitigate environmental issues and preserve existing recreational without altering Meeks Bay forever.

Sincerely,



Julie L. Hutchinson



Dale A. Hutchinson

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 11:36:35 PM

First name: Mike

Last name: Hacker

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am support of the proposed alternative. My family and I have lived in Meeks Bay for 30 years and my children essentially grew up on the Meeks Bay beach. It was a quiet, very family friendly beach. Over the years as tourism has increased the beach has become more crowded, less family friendly and less safe with more and more boats and other motorized water craft using the area making it louder with more trash and water quality issues with gas and oil sheen floating on the surface of the water that my children swam in. Often times the boats would come into the swim area making it very dangerous for the swimmers, personal watercraft would pull right on up on the swimming beach. We also kayak and paddle board and have had numerous close encounters with boats, almost getting run over or swamped with their wake from their high rate of speed, it got to the point where we went out on only the quietest days. With the marina closed the last several years it has become quieter and less dangerous with fewer boats in the area. I look forward to quieter and safer times to have my grandchildren enjoy the beach as my children have, I know they have a special place in their hearts for Meeks Bay and would love to see it protected for the future.

I do not support any additional development in the area that would increase boat traffic, noise or environmental degradation, including water and air quality or visual or scenic impacts such as piers or other structures.

Thank you for protecting our lake for all of us low impact users, I have a special place in my heart for the Washoe people who used Meeks Bay as their summer home with very little impact on the environment and a philosophy of protecting it for future generations.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/10/2022 12:28:58 AM

First name: Laura

Last name: Patten

Organization: The League to Save Lake Tahoe

Title:

Comments: The purpose of this letter is to express the League to Save Lake Tahoe's (League) support for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project Preferred Alternative advanced by the USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) as detailed in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR.

The League is dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In connection with our mission, we advocate for projects that restore meadows, marshes and the natural hydrologic function of Lake Tahoe's tributaries, which helps to prevent fine sediment, the leading cause of Lake Tahoe's dramatic clarity loss over the past half-century, from entering Lake Tahoe. The League also advocates for stormwater improvement projects, sustainable shoreline planning and control of aquatic invasive species (AIS) - all elements in the Preferred Alternative identified in the Meeks Bay Restoration Project.

The Preferred Alternative, when completed, would restore the only naturally functioning beach-barrier lagoon system in the Tahoe Basin; restore habitat for Threatened and Endangered species (such as Lahontan cutthroat trout and mountain yellow-legged frog); eradicate a significant infestation of the aquatic invasive plant Eurasian watermilfoil; reduce sediment input from erosion and scouring in Meeks Creek and stormwater runoff from the campground and day use areas on the project site; and restore aquatic organism passage upstream under the State Route 89 (SR 89) bridge. This is an unprecedented opportunity to restore sensitive habitat and natural hydrologic function to a beach-barrier lagoon system that has been altered and degraded for over a century.

The League hopes that the lead agencies will adopt the Preferred Alternative, as identified by LTBMU, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan), as it is the only Alternative that fits the purpose and need for this project. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project offers the unique chance to remove a marina and restore the entire Meeks Creek and Meeks Lagoon system, following nearly a century of degradation. If properly implemented, the Project will significantly reduce both fine sediment and nutrient loading to Lake Tahoe. As stipulated in the Draft EIS/EIS/EIR during the scoping period, the LTBMU received over 100 comments on the project, the majority of which were supportive of restoration while being opposed to a new pier or boat ramp at Meeks Bay. The stakeholder meetings in which the League took part also echoed the same sentiment.

The League believes the project goals can be achieved with the Preferred Alternative. We still have concerns regarding the construction of any new pier included in the other Alternatives; reconstruction of trailer parking, new vehicle routes, and the campground and day use parking areas; and implementation of shoreline stabilization measures at the north end of Meeks Bay. To address these concerns, the League submitted a letter to the LTBMU on October 26, 2018, during the Project Scoping process, and provided verbal comments to the TRPA Regional Plan Implementation Committee on January 27, 2021. The League will continue to be involved in the stakeholder engagement process, advocating for full restoration at every opportunity.

The League supports analysis of emergency piers by TRPA in a separate analysis/document. The Meeks Bay Restoration Project should focus on restoration of the Meeks Creek and Lagoon system, as the stakeholders and public support full restoration and no pier as the preferred alternative, which was conveyed clearly during the Project Scoping process. During the TRPA Board meeting on June 22, 2022, staff stipulated that Meeks Bay had been ruled out as an appropriate location for a fire boat/emergency pier. A separate analysis regarding the most appropriate location for a fire boat/emergency pier for public safety on the West Shore should be conducted outside of the ongoing process for Meeks Bay.

In addition to our general comments, the League respectfully submits comments on the following elements:

Cabin Relocation: The League supports the removal and replacement of the gabion walls and concrete wall

along the north end of Meeks Bay with natural retaining structures, such as boulders and willows. The League supports relocating the cabin, if feasible, to support full restoration of the shoreline to a natural beach-barrier lagoon system.

Day Use Areas: The League supports the installation of permanent Best Management Practices (BMP's) in the parking lots, restrooms and roadways to manage stormwater runoff and prevent sediment from reaching Meeks Creek and Lake Tahoe. Even if the day use parking areas are not constructed, BMP's should be an element of the restoration project to ensure that existing parking, restrooms and roadways meet the latest standards in stormwater management.

Piers: The League strongly recommends the no-pier alternative for this element, Alternative 4. Meeks Bay provides a unique opportunity for non-motorized access and recreation within Lake Tahoe, which should be the baseline condition, as the marina has been decommissioned. This no-pier alternative element also provides for the full and complete restoration of Meeks Creek and Meeks Bay. A pier would not only increase traffic and user conflict within Meeks Bay, it would have to be excessively long to accommodate boats, especially within the context of climate change, as Lake elevation continues to decline.

Campgrounds: With any reconstruction of the campground, the League encourages the use of BMP's to minimize stormwater runoff from the campground into Meeks Creek and Meeks Bay. The campground should also accommodate non-motorized users who travel to the campground via the new bike path or the Water Trail by providing secure bicycle and non-motorized watercraft storage. We also suggest providing environmental education and outreach messaging at the campground, including messaging to encourage campers to use Leave No Trace methods and practices, avoid sensitive areas around the Creek and Lagoon, and avoid Tahoe yellow cress habitat.

Bike/Pedestrian PathThe League strongly supports installing pedestrian routes, including a : pedestrian/bike bridge over Meeks Creek and beach access routes that are consistent with the SR 89 Corridor Plan. Such routes, especially the bridge, would partially alleviate the League's concerns with the campground by directing campers and day use visitors away from sensitive areas, including Tahoe yellow cress sites. Concentrating users on specific trails would also help avoid the creation of social trails and subsequent habitat damage and erosion. The League also supports pedestrian and bike trails as a way to reduce traffic around Tahoe and fine sediment loading in the Lake.

In conjunction with protecting onsite resources from human disturbance, the League supports the installation of interpretive signage along the Lagoon, Creek and pedestrian pathways. Specifically, we support signage with educational messaging and information on native and endemic species present at Meeks Bay, the restoration project itself, and the cultural importance of Meeks Bay for the Washoe tribe. The League would be available to help develop educational signage and other outdoor education efforts at the project site as opportunities arise. The League would like to see a "clean, drain and dry" station included in the 2.5.4 description of upland storage facilities to mitigate potential impacts from non-motorized watercraft spreading AIS, in addition to educational components related to AIS prevention. The League also supports water bottle refill stations, as well as signed ADA paddle craft and beach access.

Conclusion

The League feels that the LTBMU shares our goals for this project - to see a fully restored and functioning Meeks Creek and Meeks Lagoon, to the benefit of Lake Tahoe - and looks forward to working with the LTBMU, TRPA, Lahontan and other agencies to see this project brought to fruition.

The League understands the detailed and comprehensive public outreach that went into the environmental analysis, and we ask that the agencies adopt the Preferred Alternative as the alternative that reflects agency, stakeholder and public feedback.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/9/2022 11:22:10 PM

First name: Roberta

Last name: Freeberg

Organization:

Title:

Comments: 1. Regarding impacts to Scenic Quality, under Alternative 2 in the Draft EIR, it states: "Although the presence of the pedestrian pier detracts from the view of Lake Tahoe, because of its small size and low profile design, it does not substantially detract from the view and Lake Tahoe remains the dominate feature in the view shed. Therefore, while it detracts from the scenic quality of the view, it would not reduce the scenic score for TRPA-designated recreation area Meeks Resort and the impact would be less than significant."

Where in the report does it discuss "design" of the floating pier? A permanent floating pier has piles and by code would need signage, i.e., no boat docking, no diving off pier, etc.

Was signage also included in the analysis? Why is the visual rendering in the Draft EIR of the pedestrian pier made to look smaller and much shorter than 100 ft. Why are there not other visual renderings showing this pier from different view points along the beach?

2. Under Public Safety & Hazards it states: "Because the boating pier and designated swim area would be well within the No-Wake Zone that essentially encompass the entire Bay and because the pier would not increase overall boating levels, the changes in navigation for non-motorized watercraft and motorized watercraft would not result a substantial change in conflicts between these recreation users or substantially increase hazards for these recreation users. Thus, the impact from implementing Alternative 1 on navigational hazards to motorized and non motorized boaters would be less than significant."

Are the consultants aware the resort Marina has been closed to all motorized watercraft since 2015?

Do they realize that on busy summer days, not all motorized boats follow the "No-Wake" rule regardless of an operational or non-operational marina? Are they aware of the ongoing injuries that occur during the summer in the Bay due to conflict between motorized boats, nonmotorized watercraft and swimmers?

I have witnessed ongoing "conflict" in this case over many years. It's easy to say conflicts won't happen, but in reality they do.

3. Regarding Alternative 4, please change the wording to say: "No motorized pier and No Pedestrian Pier" instead of "No pier". This is for clarity and transparency"

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/10/2022 1:16:11 AM

First name: Joseph

Last name: Carroll

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I agree with the proposed Preferred Alternative. However, I strongly recommend to construct or place kayak/other paddle boat racks for people to be able to store kayaks/paddle boats on the beach near the proposed paddle launch and cleaning stations. This would allow regular users to not have to load, unload, and carry kayaks/canoes/other paddle boats from their vehicles to the beach every day during the summer months. Meeks Bay Campground and Meeks Bay Resort can charge a reasonable weekly/seasonal rate to users that would generate some extra revenue for Meeks Bay Campground and Meeks Bay Resort areas. I believe they have these kayak/paddle boat racks at the beach near Sunnyside in the Lake Tahoe area. Thank you.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/10/2022 4:22:45 AM

First name: Mimi

Last name: Morris

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the option of

No pier,
restored lagoon,
non motorized crafts; and
the redoing the bridge with the bike path.

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/10/2022 6:26:26 AM

First name: Julie

Last name: Hutchinson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please attach these photos and scoping letter to my submission as they failed to load with my comment letter.