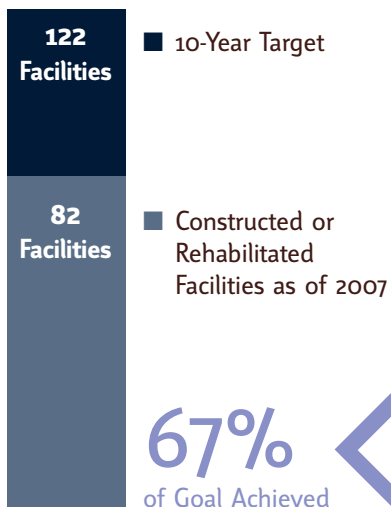




## RECREATION & SCENIC RESOURCES

LAKE TAHOE'S MAJESTIC BEAUTY, PROXIMITY TO URBAN AREAS, and renowned recreational opportunities attract more than three million visitors annually. From enjoying Lake access on shorelines to world-class skiing to the solitude of back-country trails, residents and visitors from around the world enjoy Lake Tahoe's diverse recreational offerings. The EIP Recreation and Scenic Programs will protect and improve these opportunities for generations to come.

### RECREATION PROJECTS



During the first 10 years of the EIP, programs focused on the acquisition of land, access to the Lake, and retrofitting recreation facilities to enhance the public's recreational experiences and to help achieve and maintain recreation environmental thresholds.

EIP funds have brought additional acres of natural lands and miles of Tahoe's shoreline into public ownership and enabled the implementation of new Lake access, developed facilities, and recreational trails. These programs have helped protect Tahoe's fragile natural resources from overuse and protected its unique scenic resources.

# Recreation

## RECREATION PROGRAM



The Bi-State Compact emphasizes protecting, preserving, and enhancing the nationally significant recreational values of the Tahoe Basin, with an emphasis on increasing public access to Lake Tahoe and its shoreline. Lake Tahoe’s abundant recreational opportunities serve residents and visitors from around the world, and provide for a \$1.5 billion annual visitor-serving economy. Well-planned, designed, and coordinated recreation facilities are needed to provide high-quality visitor experiences while protecting Tahoe’s unique natural resources.

The EIP has focused on bringing additional acres of natural lands and miles of Tahoe’s shoreline into public ownership and enabled the implementation of new beach access, developed and retro-fitted facilities, and recreational trails. However, public access and recreation facilities are overcrowded in many areas and remain limited in others creating a strain on fragile natural resources.

### Primary Threshold Categories Improved by Program Objectives

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fisheries and Wildlife |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soil Conservation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scenic Quality    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vegetation             |

### Program Elements

The primary elements of the EIP Recreation Program include:

- Improving Lake Access
- Developing a Comprehensive Trail System
- Improving Recreation Facilities
- Improving Educational Programs and Interpretive Facilities.

### Adapting to Climate Change

Public access and recreation projects are the foundation of the Basin’s green economy. To support Lake Tahoe’s increased focus on eco-tourism, EIP recreation projects may enhance overcrowded recreation facilities, increase public access to the Lake, improve educational and interpretative facilities, and enhance the scenic quality of roadways and shoreline. These and other initiatives will help create a sustainable environment and economy in the Tahoe Basin.



## IMPROVING LAKE ACCESS

### PRIMARY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

California Tahoe Conservancy, Local Government Jurisdictions and Utility Districts, US Forest Service

Public access to Lake Tahoe’s shoreline represents one of the Basin’s most significant recreational opportunities. The public’s ability to access the Lake Tahoe shoreline is constrained by the limited number of facilities and beach opportunities which operate at or above capacity during summer peak periods. Historic development patterns around the Lake have concentrated population centers on the north and south shores, privatizing much of the shoreline in these areas. Population density, number of overnight lodging facilities, and easy access for day users from nearby urban areas concentrates demand in these areas. Beach access often insufficiently accommodates demand. With growing populations inside and outside of the Tahoe Basin, demand for access shows no sign of waning.



Keeping the Lake shoreline open and accessible to the public is a top priority for the Recreation Program.

### Goal

To improve public access to lakefront recreational activities.

The focus of this program is to provide improved Lake access in a variety of forms to meet current and growing demand. In response to this demand, priorities will be placed on increasing acquisitions and retention of existing public access opportunities.

### Priority Projects

- Increasing land and beachfront acquisitions in Kings Beach and the City of South Lake Tahoe, where existing public facilities cannot meet demand
- Linking Lake access facilities with public transportation
- Increasing support services and facilities where appropriate for kayakers along the Lake Tahoe Water Trail’s shoreline.

### Accomplishments to Date

EIP partners have made significant strides in improving public access, particularly in the Tahoe Basin’s developed areas. In Tahoe City, the Tahoe City Public Utility District in partnership with the California Tahoe Conservancy and several EIP partner agencies, planned, constructed, and revitalized Commons Beach providing Lake access, a community gathering place, and a lakefront bike trail that serves as the hub of the town. The nearby Truckee River Outlet project also provided additional Lake access at Lake Tahoe’s outlet structure. Significant water quality benefits resulted from these projects as well.

### Unfunded Need for Improving Lake Access (in millions)

Federal	State of CA	State of NV	Local	Private	Total
\$2.75	\$31.9	n/a	\$3.3	\$.55	<b>\$38.5</b>

Currently the state of Nevada does not have a specific lake access program, however, access is often improved through the implementation of different recreation projects.



## DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL SYSTEM

### PRIMARY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

California Tahoe Conservancy, California and Nevada State Parks, Nevada Division of State Lands, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, US Forest Service

In recent decades, public agencies have made substantial public acquisitions of lands within the Basin to improve recreational opportunities. The completion of the Tahoe Rim Trail represents a cornerstone in the development of a Basin-wide trail system to connect the public to their lands and public lands to our communities. Access to these lands can be improved by developing an effective feeder trail system and supporting facilities. Many

existing trails were not designed for current use patterns and some are not adequately maintained.

### Goal

To improve air quality and reduce the impact of recreation on the environment.

The US Forest Service has prepared Road and Trail Access and Travel Management (Trail ATM) plans since 2002. The purpose of the Road and Trail ATM plans is to establish sustainable, adaptable trail systems that balance environmental concerns with the need for public access. Implementation of these plans will reduce use conflicts, improve recreation access on trails throughout National Forest System lands, reduce resource impacts, reduce long-term maintenance costs, and better meet public needs.

The focus of this program will be on the implementation of the ATM plans by providing facilities that will encourage multiple uses and improve recreation access on trails on public lands while reducing resource impacts.

### Priority Projects

- Trail improvements, including loops, connectors, and crossings; day use support facilities; scenic overlooks and



Connecting trails will enhance the outdoor experience at Tahoe.

vista points; and infrastructure facilities including restrooms, parking, transit, and directional signage

- Trail connections to areas outside the Basin
- Other projects consistent with US Forest Service Road and Trail Access and Travel Management Plans
- Bridges or other well-designed crossings over waterways or stream environment zones.

### Accomplishments to Date

Over the last decade, EIP partners have invested in improving the Basin-wide trail system through consolidation of trails, redesign of existing trails and facilities, including rerouting from sensitive areas, and development of new trails and facilities. The completion of the 155-mile Tahoe Rim Trail marks the most significant accomplishment to date. Other notable facilities include the completion of the 3.75-mile Marlette Lake Trail, Sand Harbor to Memorial Point Trail, Eagle Falls trailhead, Rainbow Trail retrofit, and improvements at Inspiration Point and Memorial Point.

### Unfunded Need for Developing a Comprehensive Trail System (in millions)

Federal	State of CA	State of NV	Local	Private	Total
\$13.76	\$5.58	\$3.44	n/a	\$6	\$28.8

Forest trails are located primarily on public lands.





## IMPROVING RECREATION FACILITIES

### PRIMARY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

California Tahoe Conservancy, California and Nevada State Parks, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Homewood Mountain Resort, Marinas, Local Government Jurisdictions and Utility Districts, US Forest Service

Current recreation facilities in the Basin are in high demand during peak seasons throughout the year. The Forest Service's 2005 National Visitor Use Monitoring analysis forecasts an increase of approximately 50,000 additional visitors each year, for the next 20 years. Some developed recreation sites, such as day use and overnight facilities near Emerald Bay and lakefront campgrounds, are commonly at capacity throughout much of the

summer season while overnight camping facilities are also in short supply at peak periods giving the visitor a low-quality experience.

### Goal

To improve the quality of recreation facilities and the recreation experience.

In order to address increasing and changing demands, the program will focus on long-range planning that must identify new opportunities to increase the availability of overnight recreation facilities.

### Priority Projects

- Replacing outdated recreation infrastructure and expanding overcrowded facilities while meeting accessibility requirements
- Increasing the supply of affordable overnight campground facilities
- Developing Burton Creek and Van Sickle State Parks to provide new day use opportunities.

### Accomplishments to Date

EIP partners have improved existing recreation facilities and acquired new public areas over the last decade to increase public accessibility and the quality of recreational experiences.



A crowded south shore beach during the height of summer illustrates the need for improved recreation facilities.

The North Shore has a network of places where the public can enjoy the Lake at high-quality day use facilities, including Commons Beach, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Kings Beach, and the Truckee River Outlet. Campgrounds at Ed Z'berg-Sugar Pine Point and Emerald Bay State Parks, Meeks Bay Resort, and Zephyr Cove had water quality improvements and visitor enhancements constructed.

EIP projects improved the Lake Forest, El Dorado, and Tahoe Vista boat launches. Modifications to the Eagle Falls Trailhead and Pope Beach enhanced access to the day use facilities.

Other notable new facilities and retrofits include significant enhancements to the visitor experience at Vikingsholm and at the new Sand Harbor Visitor Center. Heavenly, Homewood, and Northstar ski resorts have all made substantial investments in improving their recreation facilities.

### Unfunded Need for Day/Overnight Recreation Facilities (in millions)

Federal	State of CA	State of NV	Local	Private	Total
\$16.5	\$29.72	\$9.9	\$5.5	\$30.8	\$92.42

Recreation facilities require substantial investments from all EIP funding partners.



## IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

### PRIMARY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

California Tahoe Conservancy, California and Nevada State Parks, Local Government Jurisdictions, Private Businesses, US Forest Service

The presence of large numbers of visitors and residents at Lake Tahoe offers outstanding opportunities to increase their understanding of Lake Tahoe's natural environment, how people affect these wild lands, and how forest management activities are employed. Sustaining healthy, productive ecosystems require that people remain socially connected to them and, to be connected, they must understand what it takes to sustain them. Advancing environmental literacy about Lake Tahoe's unique ecosystems is critical to the success of natural resource management and implementation of the EIP.

The focus of this program is to increase visitor information centers, promote environmental literacy and stewardship, improve public understanding of natural resource management and to improve the collaborative capacity for communities to engage in discussion to resolve natural resource issues.

### Goal

To improve visitor centers and implement interpretive and educational programs.

### Priority Projects

- Establishing major visitor information centers at key entry points into the Tahoe Basin to orient and inform visitors
- Developing a Basin-wide interpretive plan to identify interpretive needs for residents and visitors
- Creating a comprehensive, Basin-wide educational program for schools and other target audiences.



At top: US Forest Service staff members educate local school children. At bottom: 3rd graders at an educational field trip in the Angora burn area.

### Accomplishments to Date

EIP partners completed the construction and ongoing maintenance of the Meyers Interim Interagency Visitor Center, Sand Harbor Visitor Center and Explore Tahoe—An Urban Trailhead in the City of South Lake Tahoe.



Projects completed over the last decade include upgrades and installed interpretive signage facilities at Inspiration Point, Eagle Falls, Logan Shoals Vista, Stateline Lookout Overlook and Interpretive Trail, Tallac Historic Site, and the Taylor Creek Visitor Center, including the Stream Profile Chamber, Rainbow Trail, and Lake of the Sky Amphitheater.

### Unfunded Need for Education and Interpretive Programs (in millions)

Federal	State of CA	State of NV	Local	Private	Total
\$4.23	\$8.02	\$.14	\$.14	\$.84	\$13.37

All EIP funding partners incorporate educational programs into project planning to ensure the public is engaged.