

MEEKS BAY RESTORATION PROJECT
Public Workshop #1 | August 19, 2020 (5:30 – 7:30 pm)
Engagement Summary & Input Received

Meeting Purpose:

- Introduce the project and planning process
- Describe history and the need for restoration
- Introduce alternative themes and solicit input on alternative considerations

Participation Summary:

- Workshop was held virtually as a Zoom webinar
- 103 registered participants
- 71 attended
- # Questions Asked: 108

Presentation Overview:

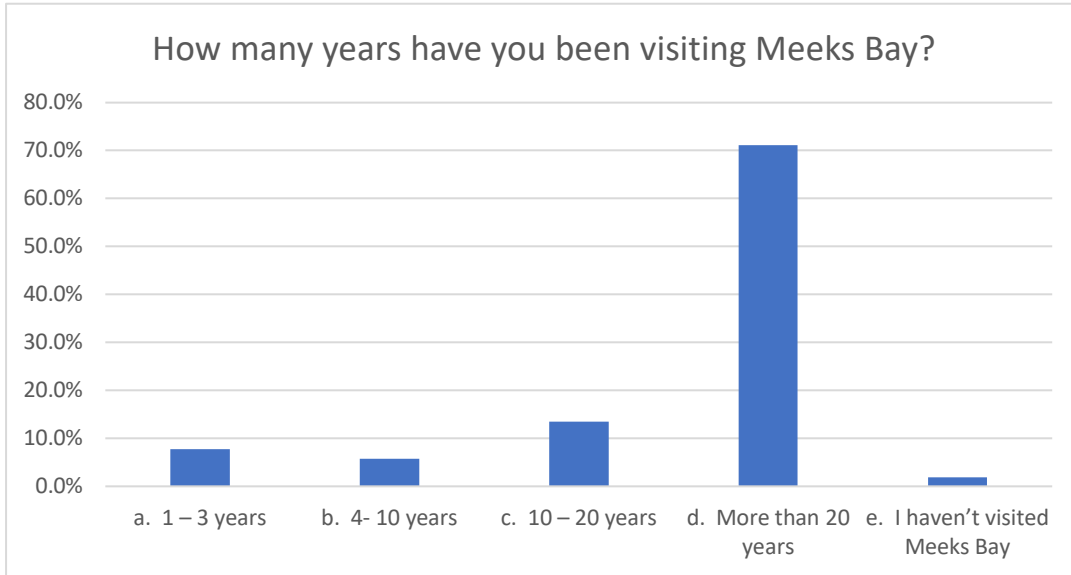
After introductions from the Project Development Team (PDT) members, Ashley Sibr (US Forest Service) provided a brief history of Meeks Bay and described the proposed project's purpose and need. The presentation covered the site history, need for restoration, project goals and an overview of the proposed action that was publicly released in 2018.

Then, Rebecca Cremeen (Tahoe Regional Planning Agency) described the roles of the agencies represented on the PDT and the various consultants assisting with the project. The overall planning process, anticipated schedule, role of a Stakeholder Forum that has been convened and the opportunities for public involvement were all covered.

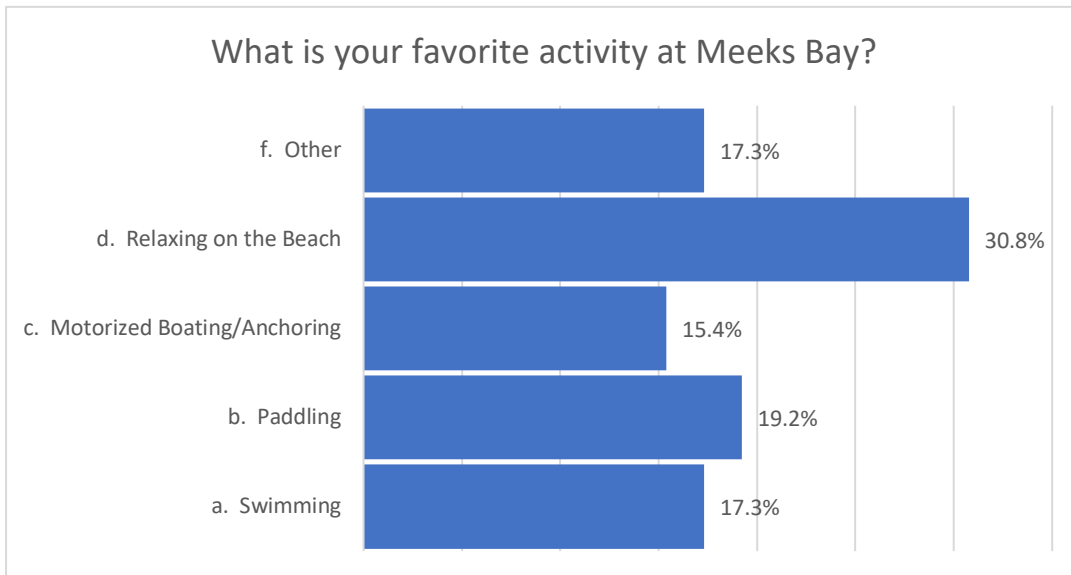
Lastly, the project's lead consultant, Adam Lewandowski (Ascent Environmental), described the process for developing the project alternatives and how the environmental review will be conducted. The preliminary alternative themes were presented, and the remainder of the meeting was used to solicit and respond to as many questions and comments as the time allowed. The workshop recording will be posted to the project website (www.meeksbayproject.org).

Poll Questions:

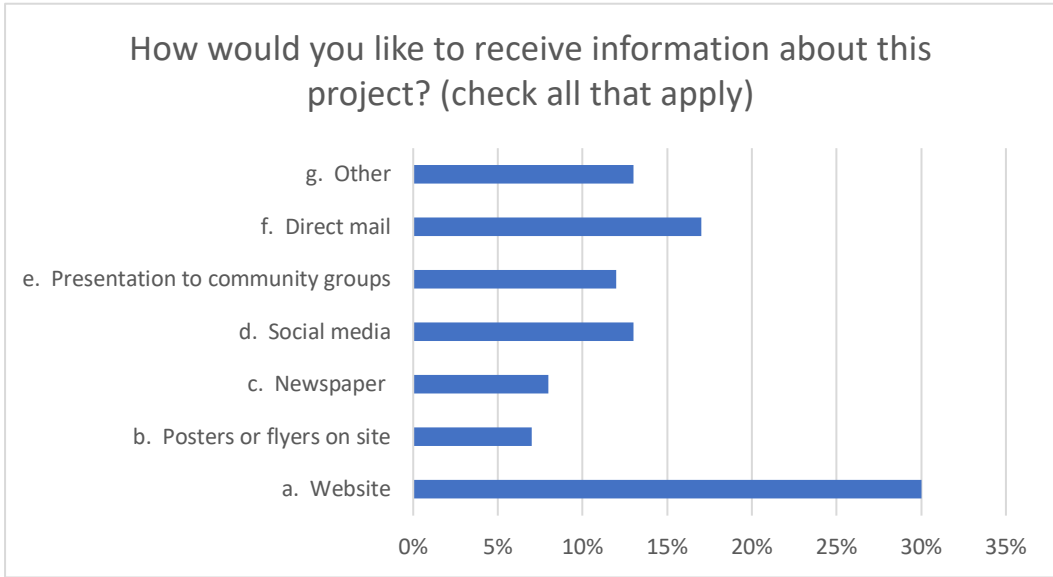
During the various presentations, a number of polls were taken which allowed attendees to express their opinion on relevant questions. The questions and results are shown below.



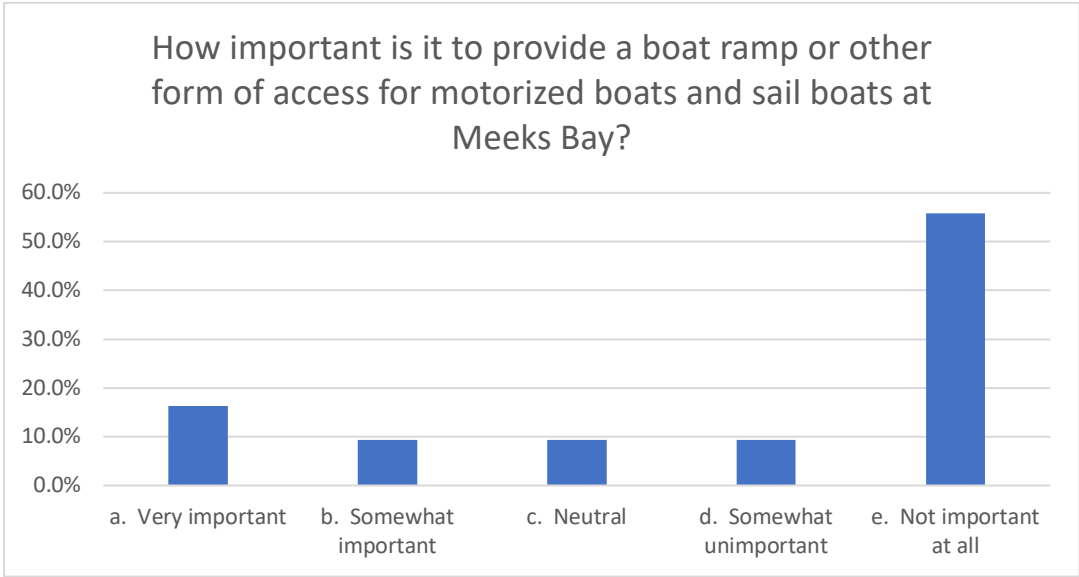
Total respondents: 52



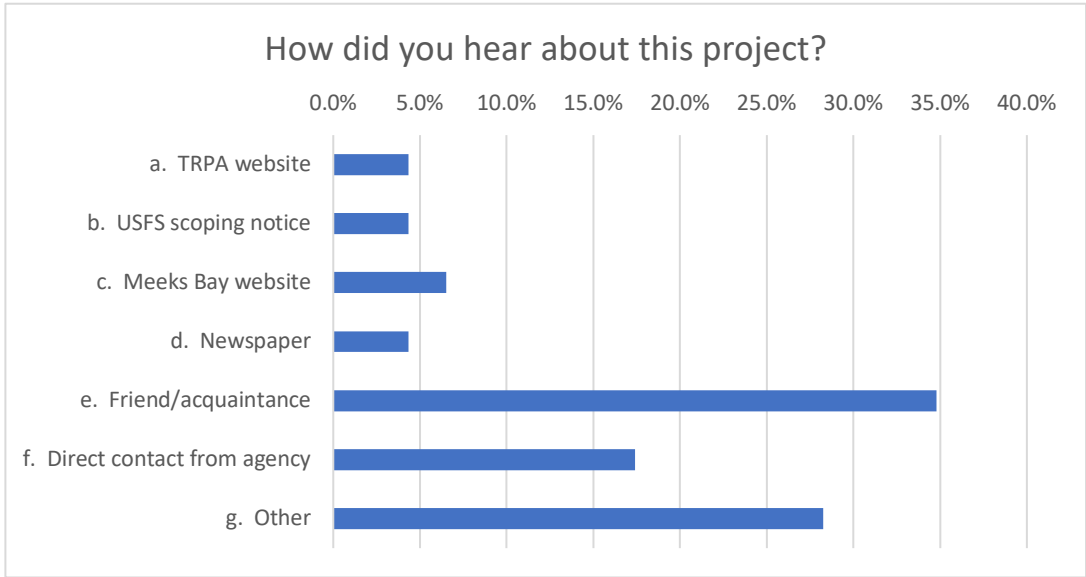
Total respondents: 52



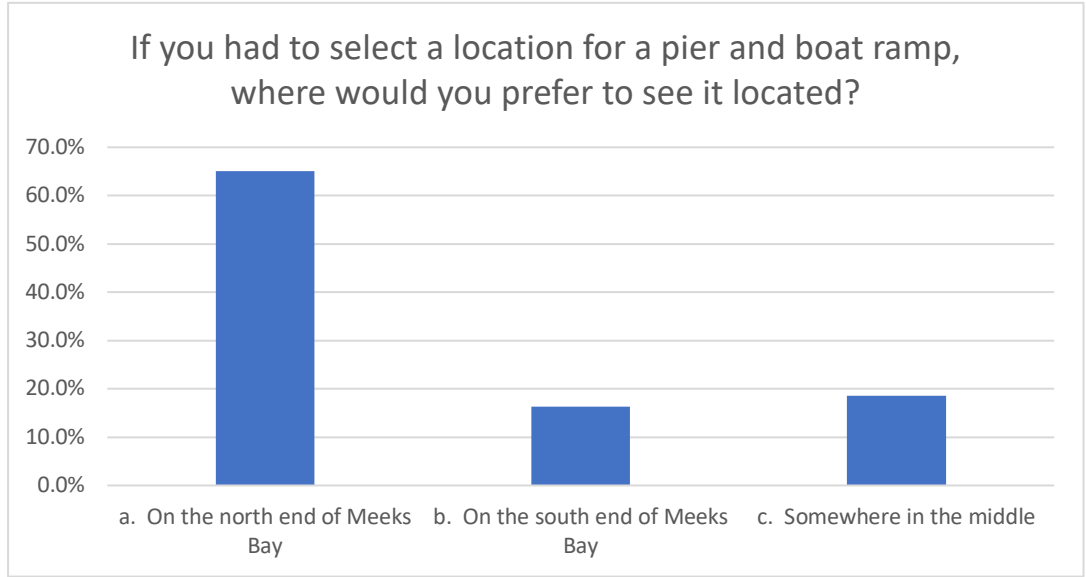
Total respondents: 100



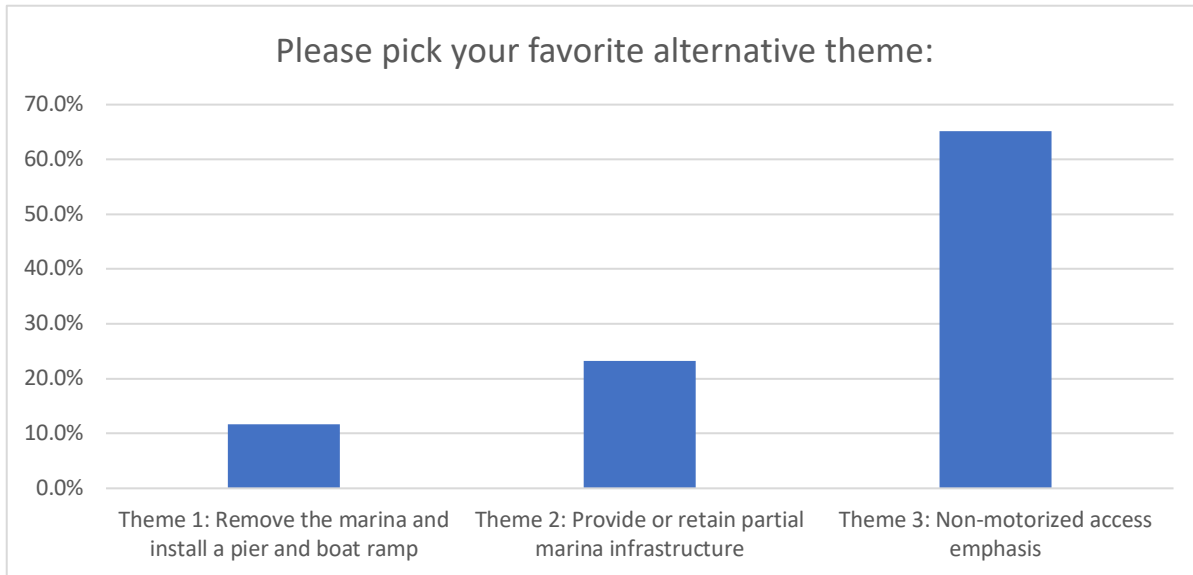
Total respondents: 43



Total respondents: 46



Total respondents: 43



Total respondents: 43

Question & Comments Raised:

With nearly 110 individuals submitting questions/comments in the Zoom chat dialogue, the input is sorted into the following categories:

- Project Site Conditions
- General Project Related
- Other Relevant Projects
- Project Alternatives Development
- Sediment/Hydrology Related
- Wildlife & Habitat Related Impacts
- Mosquito Concerns
- Invasive Species
- Marina / Pier / Boat Ramp Related
- Beach/Water Access & Recreation Related
- Public Engagement

Project Site Conditions

- Who planted the Aspens? Or are they native?
- The 1960 photo in your slide show is VERY misleading. It is obvious that picture was taken when the lake was at or near the legal limit. That is not a marsh! It is an artifact of the dam. Before the dam was built, Meeks was a creek very much like General Creek. Why do you think it would be responsible to create something there that did not exist in any form before the dam was built?
- How many campsites does Meeks Bay currently have and how many will there be after the restoration project?

- The current issues in the area with bears is untenable. Won't your plans increase bear activity in the area?
- The mouth of General Creek just to the north provides a good example of a similar scaled creek drainage with a more or less functional lagoon ecosystem, with an active beaver presence.
- Re: Hwy 89 What can be done to end the hazardous parking situation along the entrance to Meeks Bay Resort and along Emerald Bay? It's becoming extremely dangerous and I fear that road rage incidents are imminent.

General Project Related

- What are Ashly's qualifications to make the statements she is making. As an attorney, I would love to have the opportunity to cross-examine her on many of the things she has said.
- What are the projected costs of alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5?
- Your goal is to "restore" Meeks bay to a nasty marshy mosquito ridden barrier beach.
- This is a terrible plan. I do not support it and I will do everything I can to resist it.
- Our goal should not be to remake the earth as if humans didn't exist. It seems your optimal goal would be to eliminate all human activity from the Tahoe area. If that's your goal, please just go away. We've lived here for more than 40 years and love the area. You are going to wreck it!
- Your alternative of a barrier beach is a gross and unlivable environment over-run with mosquitos and other pests.
- A large marshy wetland transition will massively increase health hazards. Your plan will inevitably cause serious health risks to people – though that is clearly not your concern.
- Is motorized recreation really even sustainable in general in light of the climate crisis? how will this look in a couple few decades?
- How do we get included in the stakeholder forum if we are property owners there?
- By the end of the program will we be informed of how to submit comments and critiques of the plan? I also would like to present an idea for mitigation for the project that should help the environment and maintain access for the public. Will I be able to do that or is this plan already set-up and cannot be revised?
- funding sources?
- The audience seems very skewed this evening. As you know, this project area is a key segment of the West Shore Class 1 trail from its current terminus at Meeks Bay to the south. Also, this is an important area of the West Shore for emergency first responder access to fire/rescues on the West Shore. Those who live along this area of the West Shore area not adequately aware of how removed they area from the ability of first responders to actual respond in a timely manner, whether from land, water or air.
- Please stop planning to ruin our beautiful Meeks Bay! GO AWAY!
- Is your major concern environmental restoration to pre-human conditions?
- Why is important to return species of importance to the Washoe tribe?

Other Relevant Projects

- Is the goal of the State Route 89 Recreation Corridor Mgt. Plan designed to bring more visitors to the West Shore?
- The Hwy 89 corridor plan already plans for a public safety pier. Meeks Bay (at 1 mile away) would not be necessary.
- the west shore transportation plan involves using the existing pier site at sugar pine point state park just north of Meeks Bay for public safety needs.
- Is the climate crisis being explicitly acknowledged and addressed as a consideration in your planning?

Project Alternatives Development

- Has any thought been given to comparing the cost of restoring the marina to facilitate both a sustainable marina and ecosystem by dredging the marina to allow for a removal of the invasive species as compared to changing the shoreline to accommodate a pier and new boat ramp and removal of the current camping area?
- What is the thinking/need behind the large dock and boat launch? Meeks is currently one of the last pristine bays on the West Shore of Tahoe and it seems inconsistent with the environmental concerns of the lake to build a pier and develop here.
- What do a bunch of new buoys and a long pier have to do with a historical restoration? The buoys and long pier were never there before, and no one wants it now.
- Is there going to be consideration for public safety and sheltering from rough waters of the lake if the marina is removed?
- Is there consideration for the fact the Meeks Bay Marina was the only safe Harbor on the West Shore?
- Why is a new boat ramp being considered with other existing boat ramps (like Obexers) being so close already?
- PLEASE CONSIDER A DUMP STATION AT THE CAMPGROUND.
- I prefer Theme 2 as a way to provide a safe boating harbor, and still allow for streambed restoration.
- Theme 3: non-motorized option. too many piers, buoys, boats and boat pollution as it is. Meeks does not need pier/ramp.
- Theme 3 is clearly better for the environment there, and would be cheaper, now and ongoing
- Theme 3 is the best for the environment and be the least-cost alternative.
- What does a pier and boat ramp have to do with the restoration of Meeks? Seems there are more than enough options for motorized options already. Reason for adding that?
- Wouldn't it be even more effective to completely close Meeks Bay to human activity?

Sediment/Hydrology Related

- My read of your hydraulic report is the bridge creates the largest impediment to erosion control. Why are you compelled to suggest the most draconian "solution" of 4 recommended alternatives to simply eliminating the marina

- I have looked at both Meeks Bay and General Creek on Google Earth. The only time you see sediment running into the lake is during the spring in high water years. Even then, Meeks Creek releases substantially less sediment into the lake than General Creek (which hasn't had any modification). What evidence do you have that more sediment has been released into the lake since the marina was built?
- The marina captures sediment before it reaches the lake. That is probably why more sediment gets into the lake from General Creek than Meeks. Why is that not a good thing?
- Why are you compelled to mess with the marina before you address what seems to be the priority in your hydraulic report ... the CALTRANS bridge.
- With the Meeks Creek water levels being so low due to global warming, how can work to the bridge and creek be justified?
- The creek runs through the marina. What is the evidence distinguishing marina water temperature from lake temperature?
- On a scale from 1-10 10 being the Keys as far as a threat to water clarity, what number would Meeks Bay be?
- If Meeks Bay is contributing to polluting the lake, why is Meeks Bay water so clear?

Wildlife & Habitat Related Impacts

- The marina is 3 acres. It enlarged an area about 1.7 acres in 1960. What evidence do you have that the marina eliminates wildlife habitat in 23 acres? What is your evidence that 23 acres were affected?
- I have seen ducks, geese, trout fry, chipmunks, jays, and virtually every other form of wildlife at Meeks, INCLUDING one or more beavers that built a dam above the marina most years. What actual evidence do you have that ANY wildlife has been displaced by the marina?

Mosquito Concerns

- Will the project create a fund for the treatment of new West Nile cases due to the new marsh land?
- Have you prepared an environmental / health impact study to examine the increase in insect borne diseases due to marshy conditions?
- There is a massive increase in mosquito activity farther back in the meek creek marsh. How could you possibly suggest that moving the marsh to the beach area wouldn't significantly increase mosquito activity at the lake and impact people in the area?
- Isn't it irresponsible to intentionally threaten public safety with increased mosquito habitats?

Invasive Species

- Your theory about invasive species seems moot to me. TRPA has mandated boat inspections and "Tahoe only" status for boats entering the lake. What evidence do you have that Meeks would pose a greater risk to introduce invasive species than any other boat ramp?

- How will AIS be treated and what measures will be taken to insure the AIS doesn't spread further into the lake during whatever treatment you use at Meeks?
- I found a milfoil branch floating on the shore out on sugarpine point a mile from the creek mouth, a few days ago

Marina / Boat Ramp Related

- Do you realize how many more buoys are on the west side now compared to when the marina was open? Do you realize you caused that by closing the marina? The marina provides a low profile, user friendly alternative to unsightly buoy fields.
- The marina was a remarkable resource and improvement creating a popular and valuable attraction. It brought massive economic activity and provided a safe harbor for boaters. This safe harbor cannot be underestimated in value to protecting human life during the unpredictable and violent summer storms that are not uncommon here in Meeks Bay.
- Almost ALL marinas are in effluvial settings because of the natural incursion of water into the surrounding land.
- Having a safe harbor and boat ramp is VERY IMPORTANT
- No boat ramps. south side if needed, away from the resort
- Can we assume that at some point in the future, if a pier and a ramp are allowed, that there would also be a gas station or some other way to provide fuel to boats?
- There is no way that you could put a boat ramp and pier at the north end or in the middle. You would ruin all of Meeks Bay resort and beach!!!!
- The driver of eliminating the marina and prior boat ramp and boat slips is concern about the natural environment in and about Meeks Bay. How is constructing a new pier - with possible moorings, and an indisputable increase in boat/car traffic - congruent with those environmental concerns?
- the marina seems incompatible with basic premise of restoring the dynamic creek mouth ecosystem.
- There cannot be any restoration of the marina. That is environmentally and scientifically very clear.
- A pier would likely increase idle boat traffic from the lake, in addition to the day users at the boat launch, compared to the traffic patterns associated with long term moorings in the marina.
- Curious to know in general if the majority of people want a pier on the north side because they want it in the north side, or simply because they DONT want it on the south side (because they don't want a pier at all).
- Are there plans to get info on impact of loss of boat launches sites? there are fewer places to launch a boat with invasive species' inspections as evidenced by the long wait, etc., this summer?
- I hope that when all is said and done with this project that there is a balance between boaters and beach goers. I grew up going to Meeks Bay and we always had our boat with us and kept it in the marina. I really believe that the marina can be saved as well as

a launch ramp. The question is will you try to do the work on the marina or are your minds already made up?

Beach/Water Access & Recreation Related

- Meeks Bay is one of the last places where people can stay directly on the lake at a low cost and it would be a shame to lose any of that accessibility
- With the growing number of visitors to Lake Tahoe and Meeks Bay - how are you going to handle that with reducing parking and camping?
- What about the boaters? There is now not a marina available from Obexers to Camp Rich!
- Is power boating considered sustainable recreation? If so, what is the rationale?
- How many people per day would be allowed to launch, where would they park?
- The north site is quite steep and would require significant excavation for access?
- Pandemic has increased demand and crowding.
- Could you define what you mean by 'sustainable recreation?'"

Public Engagement

- How are the interests of other local residents as well as the general public, who vastly out numbers the lake front homeowners being proportionally represented?
- Boat users represent a small percentage of Tahoe visitors. I'd like to see better representation of "regular" visitors.
- Disappointed you only have ONE landowner (who lives on Hwy 89--the Robinsons) on the stakeholder forum. no one else lives nearby who will be able to understand the traffic and parking effects on Hwy 89 that will come as a result of the recreation changes
- If all parties are "considered" and ignored, please don't insult us with the platitude.
- I think you guys are doing a great job, thanks for your efforts!
- Please go away and pester some other community!