

Charter
Tahoe Sustainable Recreation Collaborative

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1. Purpose of this Charter	2
2. Goal and Objectives.....	2
3. Problem Statement.....	3
4. Guiding Concept and Vision	3
5. Focus Areas.....	4
6. Project Phases	5
7. Structure and Representation	5
8. Governance	6
9. Roles and Responsibilities	6
10. Authority and Decision-Making	7
11. Consensus-Seeking Process	8
12. Public Participation in Stakeholder Committee Meetings	9
13. Monitoring, Performance Measurement, and Improvement.....	9
14. Coordination with Related Initiatives	10
15. Funding	10
16. Meeting Documentation.....	10
17. Meeting Ground Rules	10
18. Meeting Frequency	11
19. Review and Amendment.....	11
20. Disengaging from the Collaborative	11
21. Signatories.....	12
22. References.....	13

1. Purpose of this Charter

This charter outlines the goal and objectives, structure and representation, roles and responsibilities, and operating procedures of the Tahoe Sustainable Recreation Collaborative (the Collaborative).

2. Goal and Objectives

The Collaborative is a multi-sector working group of conservation and recreation professionals, private and nonprofit partners, and recreation stakeholders. The primary goal, and ultimate desired outcome, is to provide high-quality outdoor recreation experiences, while preserving and restoring the outstanding natural and cultural resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin (the Basin).

To that end, the Collaborative works to achieve five primary objectives:

1. **Increase coordination among recreation managers in the Basin**, including public land managers and local jurisdictions, while enhancing engagement with non-profits, the private sector, recreation stakeholders, and user communities.
2. **Integrate recreation management considerations into planning and implementation** processes at local and regional scales (i.e. local and regional plans, forest plans, transportation plans, corridor plans).
3. **Develop a Basin-wide sustainable recreation strategic plan** that includes decision support tools, policies, management strategies, funding, project recommendations, and implementation support to achieve desired conditions.
4. **Establish Basin-wide recreation indicators, thresholds, and monitoring protocols** and acquire consistent and quality recreation data (i.e. site-specific user experience, recreational usage, socio-economic impacts, and natural resource and recreation facility conditions).
5. **Identify, prioritize, and address ongoing sustainable recreation topics** (i.e. regionally significant “hot-spot” issues, funding needs, project development, stewardship messaging) and foster positive outcomes that apply at local and regional scales.

To achieve these objectives, the Collaborative serves as a forum for multidisciplinary professionals and recreation stakeholders to build capacity, leverage partnerships, and harness funding required to address persistent management challenges at the interface of conservation and outdoor recreation; defined here as recreational activities undertaken for pleasure that occur in nature-based environments outdoors.¹

3. Problem Statement

As a nationally recognized recreation destination and world-renowned natural treasure, the Basin offers an unparalleled diversity of opportunities for outdoor recreation. From wilderness areas and undeveloped shoreline, to developed resorts, marinas, and ski areas, the Basin offers outdoor experiences that are accessible to all.

The Basin is also increasingly popular. Visits to the National Forest in the Basin^{2,3} have increased by more than 30%, from 5.78 million in 2010 to more than 7.72 million in 2015 while the total public land base remained nearly static over the same period. Cell phone data suggests the Basin receives 24 million visits and 9.6 million visitor vehicles annually.⁴ Further, outdoor recreation is now a primary driver of the Basin's nearly \$5 billion-dollar economy.⁵

Current and projected demand for recreational experiences in the Basin is unsustainable for three primary reasons:

- 1) While public demand for recreation has increased, recreation funding for many public land managers has declined or remained static, limiting their ability to provide high-quality recreational opportunities while protecting natural and cultural resources.
- 2) In peak seasons, visitation levels often overwhelm recreation and transportation infrastructure in both managed and unmanaged areas, resulting in negative effects to natural resources, user experiences and safety, and local businesses.
- 3) The Basin is a complex multijurisdictional landscape. Yet relative to other focal management topics, little coordination and engagement among agencies, recreation providers, and user communities has occurred, resulting in the lack of a unified recreation vision and cohesive management strategies.

Without a coordinated response from a coalition of partners and recreation stakeholders, interagency recreation managers in the Basin will not be able to provide high quality recreational opportunities for visitors and residents *and* preserve the natural and cultural resources that underpin recreational experiences.

4. Guiding Concept and Vision

A guiding concept for the Collaborative is sustainable recreation, defined here as the *range of outdoor recreation settings, opportunities, and access on both public and private lands that are ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable for present and future generations.*⁶

Managing for sustainable recreation means maintaining and enhancing recreation settings, while balancing impacts to ecological, social, economic and cultural resources. It means providing outstanding recreation opportunities and access for user communities that derive personal well-being, economic vitality, and community identity from shared outdoor experiences in the Basin.

The Collaborative envisions a future in which the Basin is both a world-class recreation destination and a global leader in environmental stewardship.

The Basin of the future will include coordinated education and outreach programs that promote a culture of stewardship, increased focus on the acquisition of social and ecological data to inform management actions, improved public access and user experience, and enhanced multi-modal transit linkages between town centers and recreation sites that reduces dependence on private vehicles to access recreation opportunities.

5. Focus Areas

The Collaborative will address five primary focus areas, either wholly, or in part.

- 1. Visitor Use Management:** Proactive visitor use management will help to achieve desired conditions for recreation experiences and natural resource conditions. Potential strategies include modifying visitor behavior, the spatial distribution of use, and increasing the resilience of developed recreation sites.
- 2. Transportation:** Users will be transported to and from recreational opportunities using modes other than personal automobiles. Potential strategies include enhancing multi-modal transportation linkages between town centers and recreation sites, expanding trail networks, managing private vehicle parking, and coordinating with ongoing transportation planning, projects, and implementation activities.
- 3. Stewardship:** Land managers and recreation providers will actively promote unified public outreach to create a culture of stewardship that maintains the desired conditions. Potential strategies include developing shared recreation values, principles, messaging, signage and wayfinding, and supporting Basin-wide stewardship programs (i.e. Take Care Tahoe, Leave No Trace).
- 4. Data Collection and Monitoring:** User impacts on desired conditions for recreation experiences and natural resource conditions will be measured and inform management decisions. Potential strategies include developing recreation indicators and thresholds based on impacts to social, economic, and ecological metrics and linking desired

conditions to measurable attributes that can be tracked consistently across the Basin.

- 5. Funding:** Existing and new recreation assets and infrastructure will be financially sustained over time. Potential strategies include increased funding coordination and resource sharing, creating innovative funding strategies, and leveraging private-public partnerships.

6. Project Phases

Development of the Basin-wide sustainable recreation strategic plan will be guided by four phases outlined in the Visitor Use Management Framework,⁷ including:

Phase 1: Build the Foundation

Phase 2: Define Visitor Use Management Direction

Phase 3: Identify Management Strategies

Phase 4: Implement, Monitor, Evaluate, and Adjust

7. Structure and Representation

The structure of the Collaborative is composed of three elements; (A) agency co-chairs, (B) an interagency working group, and, if formed, (C) a stakeholder committee.

A. Agency Co-Chairs

Co-chairs from two public agencies share responsibility for convening and facilitating the Collaborative, as well as upward reporting of progress and work products.

- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
- US Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU)

B. Interagency Working Group

Six public agencies and five organizations currently share responsibility for organizing, staffing, and pursuing funding for the Collaborative. Working group membership may be expanded based on need.

- TRPA
- US Forest Service, LTBMU
- California State Parks
- Nevada Division of State Lands/Nevada State Parks
- City of South Lake Tahoe
- Tahoe City Public Utility District
- South Shore Chamber of Commerce / Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority
- Tahoe Fund
- League to Save Lake Tahoe
- North Lake Tahoe Resort Association

C. Stakeholder Committee

The interagency working group will consider forming a stakeholder committee that includes representatives from organizations, businesses, user communities, and a tribal government that reflect the varied recreational interests in the Basin. Further, the sustainable recreation strategic plan will include methods for stakeholder and community outreach.

8. Governance

The governance of the collaborative consists of five elements:

1. Tahoe Interagency Executive Steering Committee (TIE SC)
2. Environmental Improvement Program Coordinating Committee (EIPCC)
3. Agency Co-Chairs
4. Interagency Working Group
5. Stakeholder Committee



9. Roles and Responsibilities

Tahoe Interagency Executive Steering Committee: Consists of executives that represent each sector of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). Success of the Collaborative depends on active sponsorship from the TIE SC, which oversees implementation of the EIP and has responsibility for providing guidance to all EIP Working Groups. In turn, the Collaborative serves in a recreation advisory role to the TIE SC and submits recommendations as requested.

Environmental Improvement Program Coordinating Committee: The EIPCC is primarily responsible for coordination of EIP programs. The EIPCC is responsible for

coordinating with EIP Working Groups (including the Collaborative) and communicating with the TIE SC.

Agency Co-Chairs: The co-chairs are responsible for convening, facilitating, and aiding the working group and stakeholder committee. Co-chairs aid the working group in developing concepts, information, and analyses for project phases and coordinate closely with the EIPCC. Responsibility includes coordinating achievement of working group objectives, tracking action items, and ensuring timely preparation, revision, and completion of project phases and work products.

Interagency Working Group: Consists of executives, managers and subject matter experts from local agencies and organizations, as well as the co-chairs. The working group has responsibility for developing the concepts, information, and analyses that constitute project phases. It has responsibility for working closely with the co-chairs to plan, seek input on, coordinate, and manage all parts of the Collaborative, including each of the governance elements.

Stakeholder Committee: May consist of designated representatives of organizations, businesses, public agencies, tribal governments, and user groups who represent a range of recreational interests in the Basin. Core stakeholder responsibilities may include engaging with the co-chairs, working group, and other governance elements as needed, to provide review, feedback, and input on project phases, work products, and overall process.

10. Authority and Decision-Making

This Charter does not grant one agency authority over another.

Tahoe Interagency Executive Steering Committee: Serves as the principal advisory board of the Collaborative, including:

1. Charter and objectives
2. Work plan and products
3. Focus areas, priority projects, and issues

Environmental Improvement Program Coordinating Committee: Provides guidance to the TIE SC and recommendations to co-chairs and working group including, but are not limited to:

1. Project phases
2. Current and desired future conditions
3. Indicators and thresholds

4. Management and monitoring strategies
5. Implementation
6. Communication materials
7. Financing
8. Logistics and other work products
9. Operational decisions needed to advance the work of the Collaborative

Agency Co-Chairs: Provides recommendations to the TIE SC on primary decisions. Seeks consensus on secondary decisions among the EIPCC and working group (consensus seeking process outlined in Section 11).

Interagency Working Group: Provides recommendations to the TIE SC on primary decisions via the co-chairs. Seeks consensus on secondary decisions among themselves and co-chairs.

Stakeholder Committee: May seek consensus on review, feedback, and input provided to co-chairs and working group. The stakeholder committee may provide review, feedback, and input on a variety of topics based on need and importance.

11. Consensus-Seeking Process

As full and equal partners, members of the working group, agree to use a consensus-seeking process. Actions requiring consensus are only taken on issues or items listed on the meeting agenda unless otherwise agreed to by all group members present.

For the purpose of the working group, consensus means that everyone agrees that they can live with the final proposal after every effort has been made to meet any outstanding interests. This is not the same as unanimity, where all parties agree. The consensus gauge below will be used to indicate the degree of agreement of any member. If all members are in the range of 1 through 4, the group shall be considered in consensus and no further discussion is needed. If several individuals are at 4, then additional discussion may be needed. Further discussion is required if more than one member is at 5 or 6.

Consensus Gauge

1. Proposed decision is fully acceptable. Support the working group's decision or recommendation.
2. Proposed decision is acceptable with minor reservations. Support the working group's decision or recommendation.

3. Proposed decision is acceptable, even with major reservations, but it is the best decision at this time. Support the working group's decision or recommendation.
4. Stand aside/abstain; won't block but cannot offer support.
5. Need more information (must be able to identify the information needed).
6. Cannot live with the decision (must be able to offer an alternative).

Each working group member or designated alternate representative present will be polled to determine if consensus has been achieved. Alternate representatives are empowered to act on behalf of the members they represent. Working group members must be fully informed of the issue to register their level of consensus. There is no absentee participation in the consensus process, but participation via teleconferencing is permissible. Meeting agenda will include notification of any items requiring consensus. As this is a non-binding charter, any consensus achieved will not supersede any member agency's policies, regulations, or other guiding documents.

12. Public Participation in Stakeholder Committee Meetings

With the exception of an initial stakeholder workshop, stakeholder committee meetings will be open to the public. Interested parties are welcome to attend and observe. Interested parties may ask questions and make comments during times denoted on meeting agendas, and at the end of agenda items, time permitting. The intent of this provision is to ensure that members of the stakeholder committee and working group members at these meetings can complete their work and discussions in a timely fashion. Interested parties do not participate in decision-making.

13. Monitoring, Performance Measurement, and Improvement

Monitoring provides the foundation for determining whether management strategies developed are properly implemented, achieving desired outcomes, and complying with regulatory standards. Multi-party monitoring will involve the participation of multiple agencies, organizations, businesses, and/or tribal governments in the collection and analysis of data.

Performance measurement provides the foundation for assessing how the Collaborative is using its agency resources, including staff, contracts, and funding, to reach targeted results.

14. Coordination with Related Initiatives

To the extent feasible and necessary, the co-chairs will work with other EIP working groups to coordinate information and data, align goals and objectives, and work collaboratively toward shared deliverables and outcomes.

15. Funding

This Charter does not guarantee or obligate funding on behalf of any agency. Each organizing and participating agency agrees to work to the best of its ability to obtain and dedicate adequate funding for its staff to participate, and agrees to coordinate on efforts to obtain external funding. Each organizing agency agrees to work to the best of its ability to obtain and contribute to the funding and external support that all organizing agencies agree is necessary.

16. Meeting Documentation

A. Interagency Working Group Meetings

The co-chairs will capture meeting notes or delegate responsibility to a volunteer note taker. Co-chairs review all action items, decisions, and draft work products before closing a meeting, and request members to note if anything was forgotten, or needs further clarification or specification. Within one week of a meeting, the co-chairs will provide the working group with comprehensive meeting resources, including a meeting summary that includes list of attendees, key takeaways, action items, general notes, as well as any presentation slides and post meeting resources.

B. Stakeholder Committee Meetings

If the working group elects to form a stakeholder committee, the co-chairs will capture stakeholder committee meeting notes or delegate responsibility to a volunteer note taker. The co-chairs will oversee the preparation of stakeholder committee meeting summaries that documents major points of discussion, recommendations, and action items. Co-chairs will circulate a draft meeting summary within two weeks of a meeting, ask committee members to approve the summary at their next meeting, and supply committee members with a final summary.

17. Meeting Ground Rules

The co-chairs will use the following ground rules in all meetings:

1. Electronics courtesy – please turn all devices to silent or off

2. Be comfortable – take personal breaks if needed
3. Honor time – we need to spend some time with each topic on the agenda, please adhere to the guidance provided
4. Humor is welcome – it just should not be at someone else’s expense
5. Common conversational courtesies – do not interrupt others, use profanity, or make it hard to hear by having third-party conversations at the table
6. All ideas and points of view have value – you do not have to agree with your neighbor; if you do not agree with something, propose an alternative that could meet everyone’s interests
7. Treat each other with respect – everyone cares about the work, and brings unique backgrounds, expertise, and insight to the conversation
8. Avoid editorials – avoid judging other people’s motives or the value of their actions; instead explain what you need for your interests to be met and our work to be a success

18. Meeting Frequency

The five governance elements will meet with the co-chairs with the following approximate frequencies, with meeting duration varying based on need:

1. TIE SC: quarterly or as requested
2. EIPCC: bi-monthly
3. Agency Co-Chairs: weekly
4. Interagency Working Group: monthly
5. Stakeholder Committee: as needed if formed

19. Review and Amendment

Working group members commit to set aside meeting time once a year to review work plan, reflect on progress made, discuss any process changes that may be beneficial to the group, and update the Charter as needed.

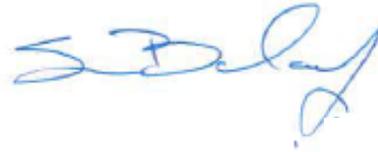
20. Disengaging from the Collaborative

Participation in the Collaborative is voluntary. A member agency or organization that wishes to permanently cease participation in the Collaborative will provide written notification to the co-chairs 30 days prior to leaving.

21. Signatories



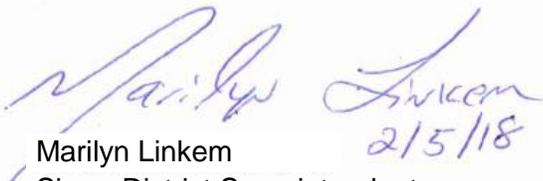
Jeff Marsolais, Forest Supervisor
United States Forest Service,
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



Sean Barclay, General Manager
Tahoe City Public Utility District



Joanne S. Marchetta, Executive Director
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency



Marilyn Linkem
Sierra District Superintendent
California State Parks

North Lake Tahoe Resort Association



Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of
Commerce



Nevada State Parks

Tahoe Fund



Darcie Collins, Executive Director
League to Save Lake Tahoe

22. References

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