Lake Tahoe

Federal Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2016 – 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Donald W. Reynolds Nonprofit Community Center, Meiling Training Room
948 Incline Way, Incline Village, Nevada

Committee Members:

- Darcie Collins, Steve Teshara, Bob Cook, Lon Rusk, Bob Hassett, Alan Heyvaert, Heather Bacon, Joanne Marchetta, John Pang, Natalie Yanish, Douglas Martin, Amy Berry, Katherine Hill, Charlie Donahue (Acting for State of Nevada Representative), Peter Kraatz (via teleconference)

Agency Representatives:

- Jeff Marsolais, Designated Federal Official (DFO); Karen Kuentz, Winnifer Simmons

Public Attendees:

- Mike Vollmer, Erica Imato Nagano

Opening Comments, Review of the Agenda – Darcie Collins

- Darcie – the current agenda is a continuation of topics from the last meeting. The bulk of today's meeting is to talk about what we want this committee to undertake moving forward.
    - Implementation of a strategy.
    - Continued conversation above and beyond the charter.
    - Setting some goals.
    - Figuring out what our schedule should look like.
    - Setting some objectives on where we want to be a year from now.
- Jeff – The agenda for a LTFAC meeting has to be submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture for review 45 days in advance of each meeting.

Review of Environmental Improvement Plan – Mike Vollmer, TRPA – Environmental Improvement Program Manager

- Mike provided an overview of the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) using a Power Point Presentation:
    - <u>5-Year List and EIP Tracker Updates: Preparation and Eligibility Requirements</u> – prepare a priority list of projects, setting programs that are anticipated for progressive threshold attainment. At a minimum, TRPA updates the list annually. This year TRPA is cleaning the list up.
    - <u>Eligibility for Inclusion</u> – threshold attainment, goals and policies, consistent with priorities and schedules of the EIP, and 5G findings.

- EIP 5-Year List Cleanup – had a very successful 2015 on the project update process. All the implementers were logging in to update their own projects. After the project reporting process, was the beginning of the 5-year cleanup. Genevieve Villemaire worked on this for the LTBMU. In November 2015, we had 438 projects on the 5-year list and as of yesterday we have 281 projects on the list.
- EIP Project Yearly Cycle: November 1st to January 15th – the 5-year list review is in February and March. In April, a call is being put out to implement proposed projects. In May, the new cleaned up list and proposed projects will be presented to the TIE Steering Committee.
- EIP Tracker Updates Project Proposal Feature: Screenshots from the Tool – we asked for action priority, the project name, project description, the total cost of the project, what the secured funding is, etc.
- Polygons in a Pull-Down Menu – place a pin anywhere your project may be on the map around the Lake.
- Performance Measures – series of pull down menus for you to choose from.
- Thresholds – what thresholds are you going to improve? There's a check box but you also have to fill in an explanation.
- LakeTahoeInfo.Org - includes Sustainability Indicators, EIP Project Tracker Tool, Commodities Tracker, and Data Center (Under Construction).

- Natalie – how does the multiple jurisdictions working on EIP get managed?
- Mike – there's a lead implementer that gets the update call.
- Joanne – it makes everything on the 5-year list transparent. Any piece of information that you want is self-help ready.
- Jeff – are there any jurisdictions not using this tracker?
- Mike – there have been no resisters. Once we got people trained and started using it, it has been really intuitive.
- Heather – are there requirements that something must be listed in the EIP Tracker?
- Mike – there are eligibility requirements. If you are going to have an EIP number, than it's required to report on that project.
- Joanne – it's the entry date for funding. You can't go after funding without an EIP number.
- Mike – they are cleaning up the list on projects that didn't get funded.
- Darcie – can you give indication as to the majority of those projects on the list that are completed and taken off the list?
- Mike – a small number were completed. Some of the projects have been deferred and keeps the data in the tool. A small number have been deleted mostly through combining projects. If the project has been deferred, it's not on the 5-year list.
- Darcie – what do you foresee is the trend on new projects added to the list?
- Mike – right now 20 projects are being proposed. On average it's 25 to 30 projects a year and depends on funding.
- Darcie – do you see that funding component being an issue in the quality or the planning of the programs?
- Mike – there are working groups for the different focus areas that do a prioritization process for the projects. A lot of times the box is created by a funder.
- Darcie – I'm trying to figure out what role this committee can play in helping to support the program.
- Joanne – there's an existing government structure for EIP. All the funding sectors of EIP came together through a representative. The TIE Steering Committee is going through a series of

meetings where we are beginning to look at this topic of prioritization within Nevada's EIP programs.

- Jeff – we are in a place very different than at the beginning of SNPLMA. What we are trying to do right now is restore the connections with the Federal Partnership and bring them here to the LTFAC. There could be a role shift for LTFAC. The TREX in interested in where does the LTFAC fit.
- Charlie – I see this as a powerful tool to inform everybody.
- Mike – you can also see the unfunded need on the list. Cleanup is really important.
- Heather – is it better for a group to put the project into the EIP tool before any sources of money is there or does that approach clutter it up?
- Mike – there's power in showing the unfunded projects on the list.
- Jeff – trying to make a consorted effort to have folks doing work alongside TRPA. Our first effort is making sure what's in the tool is accurate. The TREX has the authority to take the Secretarial approved list and move it forward. I talked to Robert Wandel from BLM on the role the LTFAC can play in reviewing the secondary project list. It gives us the opportunity to bring all the federal agencies back to this group and have them start walking through what's on the list. It gives us a current opportunity to bring back project by project. If there are priorities the LTFAC sees out of that list, we don't know if there's going to be money coming back into the big SNPLMA pot to fund that. If there is funding, the TREX would love the perspective of the LTFAC. ***In future agenda items, there's an opportunity to invite federal agencies to come back and bring you up to speed on all the projects that still live on the list yet to be funded and get your feedback.***
- Jeff – outside of the secondary project list the Forest Service is starting to look at large landscape, West Shore, and Prop 1 funding.

Committee's Future Implementation Strategy – Darcie Collins & Steve Teshara

- Darcie – I want to make sure we are being cognizant of our time and actually creating meaningful advice or products. The LTFAC is here to provide advice to the interagency partnerships. The role this committee provides should be unique and helpful. I would like the committee to think about who we would like to invite here as guests to give presentations, our ultimate goals, do they want the opportunity to create subcommittees, and we do have representation on the TIE Steering Committee so to make sure there are good outcomes from this committee to bring forward.
- Steve – it has always been the intent and purpose of this committee to advise the Federal Partnership. If we use this committee appropriately we can invite the head of the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers at the Regional level to reestablish Lake Tahoe as a priority. This group has a unique opportunity to restore the relationships. Steve said the role of the TIE Steering Committee is critical and encouraged LTFAC members to attend a TIE-SC meeting. Steve noted LTFAC is specifically named in the LTRA because we are different than any of the other organization listed. This is the only group that has citizens from the community. We have to remember the point of the EIP and thresholds is that the EIP is intended to help achieve and maintain thresholds. One thing this group can add to the whole process of decision making is prioritization. Setting aside the money issue for the moment, let's think about what would be the most important projects to really make a giant leap forward on threshold attainment.
- Amy – The Tahoe Fund has a grant from the Conservancy to look at mission planning for different environmental interpretive centers, museums, and science centers. We have a serious

stewardship issue in this Region. It's going to be multi-jurisdictional and going to require major policy changes. It's a community issue.

- Joanne – there are a number of planning initiatives that are underway. We may find an opportunity to weigh in on these different planning initiatives.
- Steve – suggested a presentation from the Forest Service or collaborators on sustainable recreation.
- Joanne – we are entering into some new 22nd century territory on reexamining the Basin's commodity system and how that works. Commodities, shoreline, threshold update, and planning initiatives are all currently moving forward.
- Heather – suggested working in conjunction with another meetings where representatives from multiple agencies happen to be in this area. If we could somehow get those representatives to be involved in one of our future LTFAC meetings.
- Amy – we could request an agency executive come for tour of their Tahoe projects.
- Natalie – it would be great to have a communication or education committee to strategically look at the stakeholder groups we would like to reach out to and how to communicate with them.
- Steve – suggested there could be a smaller group (e.g., LTFAC subcommittee) to work on messaging.
- Charlie – we want to have those relations established when LTRA reauthorization is approved by Congress.
- Jeff – the Forest Service and TRPA are the only Basin-wide agencies. There's an opportunity to expand into some of these things like a mission of public education and stewardship. Remember the vehicle has to be through the Federal Partnership. There's very little in regulation of what subcommittees can or can't do, but any subcommittee LTFAC convenes can't seek to influence the federal agencies directly.
- Darcie – summarization of the conversation on LTFAC goals to focus on:
    - Guidance for the EIP.
        - Help identify funding needs and help push the funding in the right direction.
        - How to help identify priorities whether their threshold-based or how prior use occurs through the project listing process.
        - Bring in the Federal Partnership to understand the projects they are doing and to advise through that partnership.
        - Making sure representatives from that partnership are getting support from their agencies to spend more time in Tahoe.
    - Community values and how we can help encourage or advise the Federal Partnership.
    - Feedback on the major planning initiatives that are currently underway. Examples included shoreline initiative, commodities, etc.
    - Contributing to the conversation of sustainable recreation as it moves forward.
- Darcie – for our calendar moving forward we can tackle a lot of these topics by bringing in a speaker or organizing a presentation. Following each of the presentations, we can then decide if there's a role for us. ***Would like to keep as a consistent agenda item the EIP and our involvement with the program.*** We have the opportunity to help inform the priorities that may not already be on the list and help advise on where limited funding might be able to go.
- Darcie – ***one of the first things to put on the next agenda is to prioritize each of these topics we just decided we wanted to cover.***
- Darcie – committee members should attend a TIE Steering Committee meeting which are the first Thursdays of the month at 1:00 p.m. alternating between TRPA and the Forest Service

office. Suggested someone from the TIE Steering Committee to give a presentation to LTFAC on a quick 101 about the group (e.g., adopted TIE-SC Vision and Operating Charter).

Update on Status of the LTRA & SNPLMA – Steve Teshara

- Steve – the LTFAC cannot lobby. If we had an opinion about the LTRA, then we can channel our views through the Forest Service.
- Jeff – if the chiefs or the other agencies executives were asked to testify, there could be a vehicle to provide them information.
- Steve – those of us as individual citizens can get engaged under the Lake Tahoe Partnership. That's the group we use to advocate. We started negotiating the Restoration Act reauthorization in 2007. We didn't get our original goal of securing reauthorization before the first act expired. This is the third time we have gone through the two-year cycle of Congress. Prior to this cycle, we weren't able to get any traction in the House of Representatives. The difference this year is there is a bill in the House of Representatives. This gives us a better chance of getting a final bill approved by Congress, The House Bill is H.R. 3382 and is sponsored by Congressman McClintock. The Senate Bill is S. 1724 and is sponsored by all four of our senators. It has a $415 million authorization level. Now we are down to the second year of a two-year Congress and there has been some discussion between the members of the House and the Senate. We get regular updates and briefings. Julie Reagan from TRPA is in Washington right now. Anybody is welcome to attend and participate in the Lake Tahoe Partnership meetings where we go more into the details.
- Amy – August 30th is this year's Lake Tahoe Summit, the 20th annual.
- Steve – The deadline for submitted project nominations for the expedited Round 16 of SNPLMA is coming up. This year the SNPLMA Execs decided they wanted to push out another round of SNPLMA before this Administration is finished in office. The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT) has been busy working on what they are going to submit; submittals are due by the end of the month.
- Jeff – there was a TFFT retreat held in Virginia City for all the member entities including local, state, and federal agencies. Key discussions centered around how to better position the Basin. We will learn of that strategy and it may be grounds for this committee to understand how everyone works together. There may be advice LTFAC can provide in this process. This body may be able to inform the Partnership through TIE.
- Steve – ***would like to see this group get a presentation from the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team.***

2016 Schedule of Meetings – Darcie Collins & Steve Teshara

- Darcie – suggested meeting every other month and we should think about having a consistent day.
- Amy – suggested the meeting venues switch from north to south every other meeting.
- Darcie – tentatively put in your calendars the second Thursday, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and a Doodle poll will be sent out on the remainder of the year. ***The next meeting is set for June 9th, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Forest Service office.***
- Jim – suggested a few of the meetings be located at Tahoe City.

Public Comment

- Erica – is a foreign student and would like to know how the funding sources work for the projects.

- Jeff – there are a lot of different funding sources. Much of this committee's role has been around directing funds from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act. In 2003, the Act was amended to include the allocation of $300 million to Lake Tahoe. LTFAC played a central role in making sure the projects being proposed by the federal agencies met the goals of the Environmental Improvement Program and the constituencies were represented across the Lake. The process began as far back as 2006 and was the first official year of project evaluation and happened every year up to 2012. The entire amount of $300 million was allocated to specific projects during that period of time. All the agencies couldn't complete all the work in that amount of time. That reality set forth a program of work that led to each of the federal agencies coming back to this committee and providing updates over time about what projects are complete and what is left to complete. There is other funding available through a variety of sources although not always sources it is the jurisdiction of this committee to weigh on directly. The committee can and does provide feedback to federal agencies operating here in Lake Tahoe on what they should and shouldn't be doing.

Round Robin

- Alan – the newly established Bi-State Tahoe Science Advisory Council is going to meet and a new Executive Director has been selected. This was organized under the office of the California Natural Resources Agency and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. There's an executive group that sits at the head of the council and a working group of scientists and staff to address issues and priorities advocated by the executive group. The first meeting is May 10th.
- Natalie – I would like to talk to anybody who has resources or opinions on the community-wide BMP implementation. It's an issue that's getting some momentum as far as being a better solution than erosion control.
- Doug – the most recent area-wide community project was the Cave Rock Estates. It's been a long-standing goal to merge those two programs.
- Jeff – there's a connection between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and those efforts.
- Amy – NDOT is the lead on the Incline/Sand Harbor Bike Path Project. It is primarily federally funded. It will be under construction sometime in late summer of this year.
- John – the only federal project we are all involved in on the west side is the Fanny Bridge Project (The State Route 89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project in Tahoe City).
- Bob H. – I appreciate Steve's comment on attending a TIE steering committee meeting to try and understand more on how we are going to play a role and who are partners are going to be.
- Lon – would like to compliment everyone on the operation and alignment that exists now and think we can get a lot done.
- Bob C. – would not like us to lose sight of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reintroduction of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.
- Doug – there's a partnership in Nevada including Washoe County, NDOT, and the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District (NTCD) on the coordinating of TMDL compliance and they are working on the reporting tool. The Nevada Legislative Interim Oversight Committee on Lake Tahoe and Marlette Lake has member legislators who review the TRPA, the expenditure of state Tahoe Bond Act funds, and they have a role in the Basin. I heard questions at their meeting yesterday that show a basic lack of knowledge of how things happen at the Lake. I think there is more outreach to be done with legislators. There's a local agreement occurring soon between NDOT

and NTCD on doing right-of-way improvements along Highway 50 and Highway 28. Megan Kelly just took on the role of NTCD District Manager on an interim basis.

- Charlie – all those folks should get the EIP link.
- Jeff – the California drought insect disease tree mortality as of last October was mapped and there are 29 million dead trees in the southern part of the Sierra. The aerial detection program is underway. The mapping is showing the mortality problem is progressing north. I owe this committee a more formal presentation of this issue, maybe at the upcoming meeting.

Adjourned at 4:08 p.m.