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Date: August 3, 1998

Dear Interested Citizen:

Enclosed is the Final Study Report/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Eastside Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study for lands within and adjacent to the Tahoe National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Due to the long period between issuance of the Draft document and the Final document a 30-day comment period has been provided before a Record of Decision is completed and signed.

The purpose of this Study report/FEIS is to evaluate eight rivers and streams within the Truckee River drainage for possible addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

The Forest Service has identified Alternative E as the Preferred Alternative. Alternative E recommends Wild and Scenic River designation for the Upper Truckee River (with a wild classification) and Sagehen Creek (with a scenic classification). Independence Creek is recommended for a Special Interest Area (SIA) that would emphasize management for Lahontan Cutthroat trout. Sagehen Basin is recommended for further study as an SIA.

Formal Wild and Scenic river designation requires an act of Congress that names individual rivers as additions to the National Wild and Scenic River System. Development of a Management Plan is required within three years of passage of a Wild and Scenic River and would be done in accordance with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which includes extensive public involvement.

You can assist us by providing information regarding this proposal if it is new or different than existing comments displayed in Appendix E. Because of extensive prior public involvement, during this final 30-day period we are interested in receiving only NEW facts or data pertinent to the alternatives or recommendations. We need your comments postmarked by Sept. 8, 1998. If you have any NEW information, please send your comments to Lisa O'Daly, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, 870 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

Sincerely,

JUDIE L. TARTAGLIA  
Acting Forest Supervisor  
Tahoe National Forest (TNF)

For JUAN M. PALMA  
Forest Supervisor  
Lake Tahoe Basin  
Management Unit  
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Tahoe  
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Lake Tahoe Basin  
Management Unit



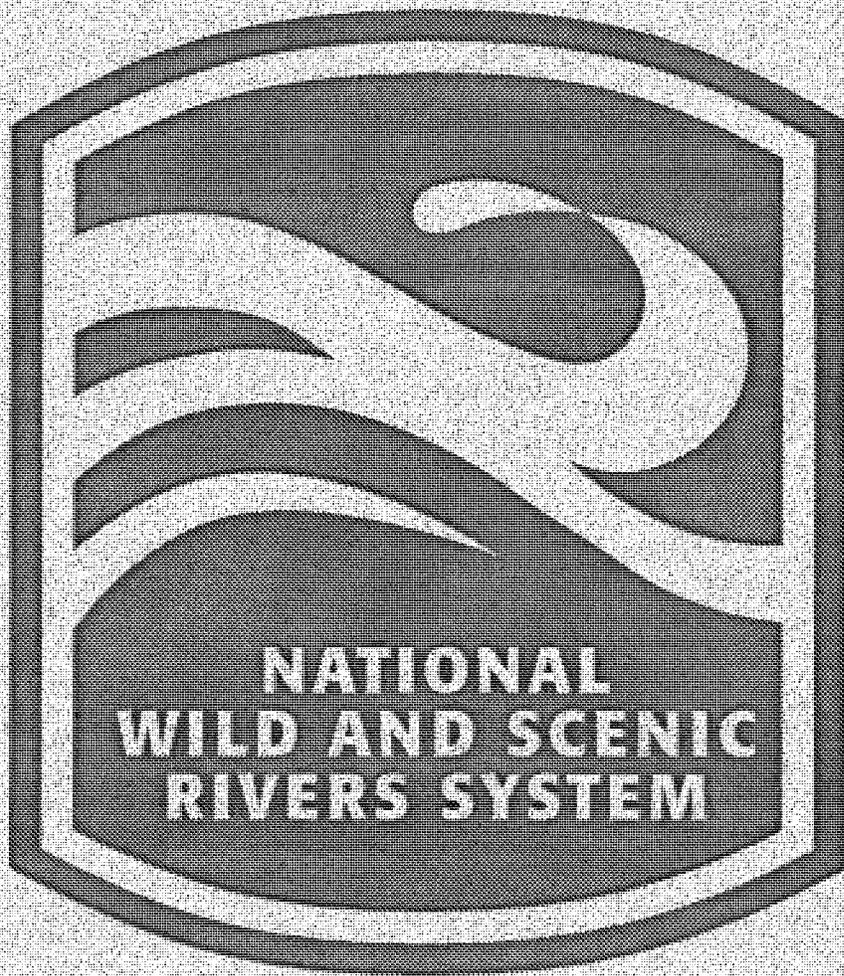
# **Eight Eastside Rivers**

## **Wild and Scenic River Study Report**

### **And Final Environmental Impact Statement**

## **Tahoe National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**

**July 1998**



**TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST**  
and  
**LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT**

**Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Report**  
and  
**Final Environmental Impact Statement**

Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada and Sierra Counties, California

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service

Responsible Official: Dan Glickman  
Secretary of Agriculture  
(Responsible for recommendation to Congress)

Judie L. Tartaglia, Acting Forest Supervisor  
Tahoe National Forest  
and  
Juan Palma, Forest Supervisor  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
(Responsible for completion of the Suitability Study)

Type of Environmental  
Impact Statement: Legislative

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**Abstract**

This study report/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) documents the results of an analysis of eight rivers to determine their suitability for inclusion into the National Wild and

Scenic Rivers System. The study area is located in Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, and Sierra counties, California. The eight rivers studied are the Truckee River from Tahoe City to the town of Truckee and seven tributaries to the main stem of the Truckee River including: the Upper Truckee River, Cold Stream, Alder Creek, Sagehen Creek, the Little Truckee River, Upper Independence Creek, and Perazzo Creek. The action alternatives considered are: A) Designate all eight rivers; B) Designate no rivers (No Action); C) Designate those rivers with the most extensive outstandingly remarkable characteristics; D) Designate rivers with the greatest amount of public recreation use directly associated with the river; E) Designate rivers that make the best contribution to a National System of Rivers; F) Designate rivers that would minimize impacts on other resource uses such as timber management, water and power development, and minimizes impacts on state and local governments ability to utilize existing utility and transportation corridors; G) Designates those rivers identified to have the greatest botanical and ecological values as related to the river environment.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative E), which recommends designation of the Upper Truckee River as a National Wild River, Sagehen Creek as a National Scenic River, and recommends the Forest Service designate Upper Independence Creek as a Special Interest Area (SIA), is consistent with the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the Lake Tahoe Basin Land and Resource Management Plan. Alternative E also recommends that the Forest Service study the remaining portion of Sagehen Basin, outside the scenic river corridor, for possible SIA designation in a separate site-specific study.

Reviewers should provide the Forest Service with comments during the designated 30 day review period of the study report/FEIS. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments in the final record of decision (ROD) process. Comments on the study report/DEIS should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).

Comments to be received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments should be sent to:

Lisa O'Daly  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
870 Emerald Bay Road  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

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# CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Summary</b>	S.1
<b>Chapter I. Purpose and Need for Action</b>	I.1
<b>Chapter II. Alternatives including the Proposed Action</b>	II.1
Development of Alternatives	II.1
Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Study	II.2
Direction Common to all Alternatives	II.3
Alternatives Considered in Detail	II.5
Mangement Requirements	II.8
<b>Chapter III. Findings of Eligibility and Classification</b>	III.1
Introduction	III.1
Eligibility	III.1
Classification	III.5
<b>Chapter IV. Affected Environment</b>	IV.1
Location	IV.1
Climate	IV.1
Landforms	IV.1
Soils	IV.2
Floodplains, Wetlands, and Riparian Areas	IV.2
Minerals	IV.3
Streamflow	IV.3
Water Quality	IV.4
Fish and Wildlife	IV.4
Vegetation	IV.5
Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species	IV.6
Scenic and Visual Resources	IV.9
Recreation	IV.10
Grazing Management	IV.10
Social and Economic	IV.11
Wild and Scenic rivers in the Region	IV.12
Landowners and Land Use	IV.15
Cultural and Historic Resources	IV.15
Timber Mangement	IV.16

	<b>Page</b>
Description of Eligible Rivers	IV.17
Truckee River	IV.17
Sagehen Creek	IV.20
Upper Independence Creek	IV.22
Little Truckee River	IV.23
Perazzo Creek	IV.25
Upper Truckee River	IV.27
Cold Stream	IV.29
Alder Creek	IV.30
<b>Chapter V Environmental Consequences</b>	V.1
Private Lands	V.2
Alternative A	V.3
Alternative B	V.13
Alternative C	V.17
Alternative D	V.18
Alternative E	V.19
Alternative F	V.20
Alternative G	V.20
Other Environmental Consequences	V.21
Adverse Effects That Cannot be Avoided	
Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and	
Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity	V.21
Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources	V.22
Other Effects	V.22
Compatibility with Local Government Plans and Policies	V.22
<b>Chapter VI. List of Preparers</b>	VI.1
<b>Chapter VII. References Cited</b>	VII.1
<b>Chapter VIII. Distribution of the Report</b>	VIII.1
<b>Chapter IX. Index</b>	IX.1

## APPENDICES

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Appendix A.</b> Management Guidelines for Wild, Scenic, and Recreation River Corridors	A.1
<b>Appendix B.</b> Determination of Eligibility	B.1
<b>Appendix C.</b> Special Interest Areas and Management Area Amendment Language for SIA.	C.1
<b>Appendix D.</b> Sagehen National Scenic River Management Standards	D.1
<b>Appendix E.</b> Public Participation and response to comments	E.1

## TABLES

<b>Table 2.1</b> - Rivers by Alternative	II.9
<b>Table 2.2</b> - Land Status within river Corridors by Alternative	II.10
<b>Table 2.3</b> - Summary of Environmental Consequences from Wild and Scenic River Designation	II.11
<b>Table 2.4</b> - Summary Comparison of Suitability Factors Considered for Each River	II.14
<b>Table 3.1</b> - Outstandingly Remarkable Values	III.6
<b>Table 3.2</b> - Potential Classification Based on Eligibility Determination	III.6
<b>Table 4.1</b> - Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within Sierra Nevada Province	IV.13
<b>Table 4.2</b> - Wild and Scenic Rivers - Rivers Identified for Future Study with Sierra Nevada Province (East Slope Rivers Only)	IV.14
<b>Table 4.3</b> - Eligible Rivers by Ownership	IV.32
<b>Table 4.4</b> - Summary of U.S. Geological Survey Flow Data	IV.33
<b>Table 5.1</b> - Effects on Timber Outputs from Wild and Scenic River Designation	V.23

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Table 5.2 - Cost of Designation</b>	V.24

## **MAPS**

<b>Map A - Wild and Scenic river Study - Map of 8 Eastside Rivers</b>	I.5
<b>Map B - Proposed Independence Creek Special Interest Area</b>	II.12
<b>Map C - Potential Little Truckee River Storage above Stampede Reservoir</b>	IV.34
<b>Map D - Truckee river and Cold Stream</b>	IV.35
<b>Map E - Alder Creek, Sagehen Creek, Upper Independence Creek, Little Truckee River and Perazzo Creek</b>	IV.36
<b>Map F - Upper Truckee River</b>	IV.37
<b>Map G - Management Area 35 Independence</b>	C.7

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AF	Acre Feet
AUM	Animal Unit Month
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CASPO	California Spotted Owl Guidelines
CFG	California Fish and Game
cfs	Cubic Feet per Second
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FS	Forest Service
FSH	Forest Service Handbook
HCRS	Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
LCT	Lahontan cutthroat trout
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
LTBMU	Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
LWD	Large woody debris
M&I water	Municipal and Industrial water
MA	Management Area
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NRI	National Rivers Inventory
OHV	Off Highway Vehicle
OR value	Outstandingly Remarkable Value
PR	Visual Quality Objective of Partial Retention
PS	Park Service
R	Visual Quality Objective of Retention
S&G	Forestwide Standards and Guidelines
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SIA	Special Interest Area
SO	Forest Supervisors Office
SPPCo	Sierra Pacific Power Company
SYRCL	South Yuba River Citizens League
T&E	Threatened and Endangered
TES	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive
TNF	Tahoe National Forest
TROA	Truckee River Operating Agreement

List of Abbreviations/Acronyms continued.

USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDI	United States Department of Interior
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VQO	Visual Quality Objective

# **SUMMARY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Wild and Scenic River Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Study Report analyzes the suitability of eight rivers within the Truckee River Basin for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The FEIS/Study Report further evaluates the environmental consequences of such designation on the human environment.

During the course of developing the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's (LTBMU) Land and Resource Management Plans, the public pointed out that the National Forests had not adequately inventoried their respective rivers for possible Wild and Scenic River classification. A subsequent inventory was conducted and nine rivers within the Truckee River Basin were identified as potentially eligible for study.

One river, Martis Creek, although eligible is not evaluated in this FEIS/Study Report. Martis Creek flows mostly through private lands, with only 10 percent of the river flowing through the Tahoe National Forest. The National Forest lands are located on the upper end of one fork of the stream. Martis Creek is a small stream consisting of four separate branches. Additionally, the outstandingly remarkable values are the cultural resources that are located entirely on private lands. The eligibility information has been provided to state and local governments for use in their respective planning.

The eight rivers selected for study are located within the Truckee River drainage, mostly within the boundaries of the TNF and the LTBMU on the east slope of the Sierra Nevada. All eligible rivers are within the state of California and are located in Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, and Sierra counties. Cold Stream is located primarily on State and private lands. The rivers studied have a total miliage of 58.8 miles of perennial streams. The main stem of the Truckee River is a relatively short river, only about 120 miles in length from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake, and the watershed drains an area of 2,720 square miles.

This FEIS/Study Report summarizes and incorporates by reference the findings of the eligibility study and focuses on the classification and suitability of eligible segments for inclusion in the National Rivers System and provides an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives under consideration.

The FEIS/Study Report is tiered to the final EISs for the TNF and LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plans and the actions are consistent with the direction contained within these plans. After completion of the review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Secretary of Agriculture may recommend that all or some of the Study Rivers be designated as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. If the rivers are found to be not suitable, the final EIS/Study Report will not go further than the Chief of the Forest Service. Congress has final authority for designating Wild and Scenic rivers.

## **POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RISKS TO THE FREE FLOWING CHARACTER OF THE RIVERS**

All the rivers are free flowing and currently there are no active proposals for any water or power development projects that might threaten their free flowing status. Sierra Pacific Power Company (SPPCo), a utility company that provides municipal and industrial (M&I) water to the Reno/Sparks Nevada area, has identified a potential dam and reservoir site on the Little Truckee River. However, this project is only one of a number of possible options to provide additional M&I water needed for future development. No proposals have been submitted for actual development of the project as there are more feasible options currently being pursued by SPPCo. The utility company does want to retain the option in the event additional upstream storage is needed in the future.

### **ELIGIBLE RIVERS**

A TNF and LTBMU Interdisciplinary Team developed a preliminary classification for each of the rivers as part of the eligibility process. This determination was based on the level of development at the time of the study and was completed in accordance with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification, and Management of River Areas (47 FR 39454; September 7, 1982).

#### **Wild Classification**

Upper Independence Creek (2.0 miles)

Upper Truckee River (7.0 miles) \*Was initially inventoried as Scenic

#### **Scenic Classification**

Sagehen Creek (8.0 miles)

Perazzo Creek (3.2 miles)

#### **Recreational Classification**

Truckee River (13.0 miles)

Cold Stream (5.2 miles)

Alder Creek (6.4 miles)

Little Truckee River (14.0 miles)

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Initial issues and concerns were developed during a scoping period before the publication of the DEIS Study/Report. Over 400 letters were received commenting on the DEIS Study Report. The substantive comments from these letters were used to help review the individual rivers and alternatives to arrive at a final preferred alternative for this FEIS Study Report. In addition, these comments prompted many changes in the text from small editorial errors to changes in concepts. Appendix E provides a detailed summary of the public involvement along with the comments and Forest Service responses.

## **SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES**

The Study Report/FEIS documents the results of an analysis of eight rivers to determine their suitability for Wild and Scenic River designation. Seven alternatives are considered, including: A) No Action; B) designation of all eight rivers; C) designation of those rivers with the most extensive outstandingly remarkable characteristics; D) designation of those rivers receiving the greatest amount of public recreation use as related to the river; E) designation of rivers that make the best contribution to the National System of Wild and Scenic Rivers; F) designation of those rivers that would minimize impacts on other resource uses such as timber management, water and power development, and local government's ability to use the corridors for existing and future utility and transportation corridors; G) designation of those rivers identified to have the greatest botanical and ecological values as related to the river corridors.

These alternatives were developed in response to issues raised during the scoping process for this study. Principal issues raised included concern over the possible effects of designation on the ability to maintain existing water and power developments and future developments; the possible effects on private lands; the effects of designation on existing occupancies and uses along the rivers, such as summer homes, campgrounds, and transportation needs along the river corridors; and the need to protect the free-flowing characteristics and the outstandingly remarkable characteristics identified for each river.

## **SPECIAL INTEREST AREA DESIGNATION**

The study also considers alternative ways to protect the outstanding remarkable characteristics in lieu of Wild and Scenic River designation. The study evaluates the impacts of possible Special Interest Area (SIA), a Forest Service administrative designation for Upper Independence Creek. SIA designation is a Regional Forester decision. For Wild and Scenic Rivers, the Forest Service role is to recommend designation to the Secretary of Agriculture. Actual designation is a Congressional action.

## **PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

The Forest Service has selected Alternative E as the preferred alternative. Alternative E recommends Wild River designation for the Upper Truckee River and Scenic River designation for Sagehen Creek. Alternative E also recommends that the Forest Service designate Upper Independence Creek as a SIA and recommends the Forest Service study the remaining portion of Sagehen Creek, outside the Scenic River Corridor, for possible SIA designation.

Table S.1 "Rivers by Alternative" describes the rivers evaluated by alternative; Table S.2 "Summary of Environmental Consequences" from Wild and Scenic River designation; and Table S.3 "Summary comparison of Suitability Factors considered for each river" describe the environmental consequences associated with each river and alternative.

**TABLE S.1  
Rivers by Alternative**

	<b>Miles of River by Alternative</b>						
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
Truckee River	13.0		13.0	13.0			
Cold Stream <sup>1</sup>	5.2						
Alder Creek	6.4						
Independence Creek	2.0		*	*	*	*	*
Little Truckee River	14.0		14.0				14.0
Perazzo Creek	3.2		3.2				3.2
Sagehen Creek	8.0 ***		8.0 ***	**	8.0 ***	**	8.0 ***
Upper Truckee River	7.0		7.0		7.0	7.0	7.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>32.2</b>

\* Independence Creek is recommended for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service.

\*\* Sagehen Creek is recommended to be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

\*\*\* The Sagehen Basin outside the Scenic River corridor is recommended to be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

<sup>1</sup> Cold Stream flows mostly through private and State Lands managed by the California State Department of Parks.

TABLE S.2

**SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES  
from Wild and Scenic River Designation**

<b>RIVER</b>	<b>Private Land</b>	<b>Visual Quality</b>	<b>T/E/S species Veg/Ecological</b>
Truckee River	Potential impacts are low. Land ownership is mixed.	Minimal impacts as area managed for Retention (R) and Partial Retention (PR).	No impact on TES species. No change on other wildlife habitat.
Cold Stream	Very low impacts. Some small & large blocks of private lands.	Minimal. Area has been logged. Meets standards for recreation river.	No impacts.
Alder Creek	Very low. Upper 40% is privately owned, subdivision lots. Lower end is National Forest.	Low. Private lands are fully developed. National Forest lands are managed for R & PR.	No impacts.
Independence Creek	Very low. 300 feet of stream flows through private lands. Remainder is on National Forest.	Visual quality would change from PR to Preservation.	Wild River or SIA designation would protect the Lahontan cutthroat trout & watchlist plants.
Little Truckee River	Low impact. Large blocks of private lands along the river.	No impact. Lands currently managed for R and PR.	Designation would protect riparian habitats from dam.
Perazzo Creek	Very low impact. The upper 0.4 mile are private timber lands.	Change from Modification & PR to Retention.	Some additional protection to meadows and willow habitats.
Sagehen Creek	No impacts. River flows totally through National Forest lands.	Change from Modification & PR to Retention.	Some additional protection to meadows and willow habitats.
Upper Truckee River	No impacts. River flows totally through National Forest lands.	No impacts.	Some additional protection to the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Table S.2 (Continued)

River	Recreation	Cultural Resources	Minerals
Truckee River	Designation would require management plan. Use would be restricted to carrying capacity.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Cold Stream	Would increase some public interest in the Emigrant Trail.	Same as recreation. Trail on public lands is currently protected under National Trail legislation.	No impacts anticipated.
Alder Creek	Some short-term increase in use. No change in long-term.	No impact. Donner Archeological Site is currently protected.	No impacts anticipated.
Independence Creek	Some short-term increase in use. No change in long-term.	No impacts.	No impacts are anticipated. No existing claims.
Little Truckee River	Same as Alder Creek.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Perazzo Creek	Same as Alder Creek.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Sagehen Creek	Some short-term and slight long term increase in use.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Upper Truckee River	Some short-term and long-term increase in use due to the publicity.	Some increase in the potential for vandalism due to the increased public use.	No impacts anticipated.

**TABLE S.2 (Continued)**

River	Social/Economic Impacts	Research	Timber (See Table V.1)
Truckee River	Current lifestyles would remain the same. Designation should not change existing economic conditions.	No impacts.	A small reduction in timber volume is expected. Administration cost would not change.
Cold Stream	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impact on National Forest.
Alder Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impacts.
Independence Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impact. Timber would be non-regulated.
Little Truckee River	Potential impacts on current grazing use. Could affect the local ranchers if grazing is modified or reduced.	No impacts.	Some reduction in timber volume would occur. Administration costs would be higher to protect scenic values.
Perazzo Creek	Same as Little Truckee River.	No impacts.	Some reduction in timber volume and administration cost would increase.
Sagehen Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impact. Research programs are compatible with Scenic River designation & will continue.	Some reduction in timber volume and administration cost would increase.
Upper Truckee River	Same as Little Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impacts.

### TABLE S.3

**Summary comparison of Suitability factors considered for each river**

Factors to Consider	Rivers			
	Upper Truckee River	Sagehen Creek	Independence Creek	Little Truckee River
Degree to which area makes a worthy addition to National system	High	High	High	Moderate
The reasonably foreseeable uses foreclosed, or curtailed w/ designation	None	Low	None	Low
Reasonably foreseeable uses enhanced w/ design	High	High	High	Moderate/high
Public interest in design Local govt. interest	High	Moderate Truckee supports	Moderate Truckee supports SIA	Moderate Sierra Co. opposed
Cost of admin. - 5 years	\$ 50,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 43,000
The degree OR values will be protected if not designated & how	High LRMP allocation	High/Mod LRMP S&G	High SIA allocation	Moderate LRMP S&G
Current amount of Federal land ownership	2,153 Acres 100%	2,451 Acres 100%	644 Acres 89%	3,709 Acres 65%
Complexity of management/ river designation	Low	Low	Low	Low
Water projects proposed Potential for proposal	None Low	None Low	None Low	Conceptual Mod/High
OR Values that would contribute something new to Nat'l Wild and Scenic River System	High LC Trout Historic	High Ecol/Bot Research Historic	High LC Trout	Moderate Historic Ecological/ Botanical

This summary chart is provided for comparison purposes. For a complete understanding this chart should be used in context with text in Chapters II, III, IV, V, and appendices.

**TABLE S.3** continued  
**Summary comparison of Suitability factors considered for each river**

Factors to Consider	Rivers			
	Truckee River	Perazzo Creek	Coldstream / Emigrant Cyn	Alder Creek
Degree to which area makes a worthy addition to National system	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
The reasonably foreseeable uses foreclosed, or curtailed w/designation	Moderate	Low	None	Very Low
Reasonably foreseeable uses enhanced w/desgn	Moderate/High	Moderate	Low/Moderate	Low/Moderate
Public interest in desgn local govt. interest	High Truckee opposed	Moderate Sierra Co. opposed	Moderate/Lo Truckee opposed	Moderate/Lo Truckee opposed
Cost of admin. -5 years	\$ 150,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 40,000
The degree OR values will be protected if not designated now	High/Mod LRMP S&G	Moderate LRMP S&G	High/Mod SIA S&G/laws	High LRMP S&G/laws
Current amount of Federal land ownership	2,637 Acres 72%	913 Acres 77%	153 Acres 9%	1,273 Acres 54%
Complexity of management/ river designation	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Water projects proposed Potential for proposal	None Low/Mod	None Low	None Low	None Low
O R Values that would contribute something new to Nat'l Wild and Scenic River System.	High Historic	Moderate Ecological/- Botany	Moderate Historic	Moderate Historic

This summary chart is provided for comparison purposes. For a complete understanding this chart should be used in context with text in Chapters II, III, IV, V, and appendices.

# CHAPTER I

## PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

### BACKGROUND

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and Public Law 88-29 authorized the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI), which was initiated in 1975 by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (USDI), continued by the United States Department of Interior (USDI) Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) and is now maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). An initial listing for all states (except Montana and Alaska) was published by the NPS in 1982 and a major update in 1984. Listing on the NRI is not a close-ended process and the list has expanded dramatically as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have identified potentially eligible rivers. The NRI is an inventory of those rivers and river segments which are relatively natural or undeveloped. To be eligible for possible inclusion in the National Rivers System, a river must be free-flowing and, with its adjacent land area, must possess one or more "outstandingly remarkable" values. These values are: scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other values, including ecological values. The intent of the National Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968 (PL 90-542) is to preserve some of the Nation's free-flowing rivers and immediate environments for present and future generations.

During the course of developing the Tahoe National Forest's (TNF) and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's (LTBMU) Land and Resource Management Plans, the public pointed out that the National Forests had not adequately inventoried their respective rivers for possible Wild and Scenic River eligibility. A subsequent inventory was conducted and a number of rivers within the National Forest boundaries were found eligible for study. Potential outstandingly remarkable values were identified for each river.

### PURPOSE AND NEED OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine the suitability of the eight eligible streams and tributaries within the Truckee River drainage for inclusion in the National Rivers System. A separate Suitability Study by the TNF is being conducted to analyze the remaining 22 eligible streams on the TNF located on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada. This study report/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is tiered to the final EISs for the TNF and LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plans, and the actions are consistent with the direction contained within the TNF and LTBMU Forest Plans. The USDA Forest Service is the lead agency in conducting this environmental analysis and preparing the FEIS/Study report.

## **DECISIONS TO BE MADE**

Based on the information and recommendations for Wild and Scenic River designation documented in the study report, the Secretary of Agriculture, as the responsible official, will transmit his recommendations to Congress. The final study report will be distributed to the public when the Secretary's recommendations are sent to the Congress. Legislative action to designate any river as a part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System is the responsibility of Congress.

The Regional Forester has the authority to establish Special Interest Areas (SIA) which is a Forest Service administrative designation. This FEIS/Study Report also provides an analysis of the impacts that would be expected if Upper Independence Creek is designated a SIA.

## **OTHER RELEVANT STUDIES**

A concurrent study on the Truckee River is underway by the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of California (represented by the Department of Water Resources) to develop a Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) in accordance with Public Law 101-618. The TROA study and Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) is evaluating options for managing the reservoirs and river system to enhance the threatened and endangered fish species in Pyramid Lake and to provide a drought supply of municipal and industrial water for the Reno/Sparks Nevada, area. Although the TROA alternatives do not contain any proposed water impoundments or changes to the river channels, concern over the effects on future Wild and Scenic River designation was identified as an issue for the TROA study. The Truckee River, from Tahoe City to Truckee, and the Little Truckee River, from its confluence with Independence Creek to Stampede Reservoir, are eligible rivers and current management of flows in the rivers potentially could be changed by the TROA. The remaining eligible rivers including the headwaters of the Little Truckee River are unregulated, are located above the reservoirs managed under the TROA, are essentially free flowing, and are not affected by the TROA decisions.

The two studies are related in that decisions on river operations will be made in the TROA EIS/EIR, while recommendations for Wild and Scenic River designation is the purpose of this Wild and Scenic River FEIS/Study Report. Although some changes in management of the river system are anticipated under TROA, there should be no significant effect on any Wild and Scenic River designation proposed under this study. The changes in river operations proposed under TROA are limited to managing the releases of flows from the existing six reservoirs on the Truckee River. No additional storage reservoirs or changes to the river channels are planned, and the TROA EIS/EIR will describe and evaluate any impacts on future wild and scenic river designation. Conversely, the action to designate any or all of the eligible rivers is not expected to impact actions planned under TROA, although designation could have long-term impacts on future water development. These potential long-term impacts are described in this FEIS/Study Report.

The Forest Service is a cooperating agency for the TROA, while Reclamation is cooperating on the Wild and Scenic River Study. The objective of the cooperation is to provide coordination between the two studies.

## **ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

Appendix B provides documentation of the Determination of Eligibility and proposes potential classifications for the rivers. These classifications were identified through an Interdisciplinary Team process. There are three classes of wild and scenic rivers: a) wild, b) scenic, and c) recreational. Classification is based upon the condition of the river and adjacent lands at the time of the study.

Following the completion of the eligibility determinations, an interdisciplinary study team was assigned to study the eight rivers to determine whether or not they are suitable for recommendation to the Congress for designation as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Factors which are considered when determining suitability include:

- Which characteristics would make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System;
- Current status of land ownership and use in the area;
- Reasonably foreseeable potential uses of resources that can be enhanced, and resource uses that are foreclosed or curtailed if designated;
- Public, state, and local government interest in designation of the river, and any other concerns raised during the study. The level of interest by the State or its political subdivisions in participating in the preservation and administration of the river should it be proposed for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system;
- Estimated cost to the United States of acquiring necessary lands and interests in land and administration of the area should it be added to the system; and
- Other management options to protect the outstandingly remarkable characteristics.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PLANNING ISSUES**

The Interdisciplinary Study Team identified several issues identified by the public and by agency personnel. These issues were identified as a result of news releases, mailings, and public and individual meetings. The major issues are:

1. The possible effect of classification on the ability to maintain existing water and power developments on the rivers.
2. The effects from designation on private lands.
3. The effects from designation on existing occupancies and uses along the rivers, such as summer homes, campgrounds, and transportation needs along the river corridors.

Significant concern was expressed by local landowners over the possible effects of designation on private property rights. The general perception of many landowners is that designation would seriously impact their rights, even though the Forest Service as a general principle of land management has no authority on private land. In addition, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Section 6(b) and 6(c) limits condemnation where 50 percent of the land is already owned by Federal, State, and local governments; and where local governments have in place valid zoning ordinances which are consistent with purposes of the Act. Designation may have an influence on State and local government land use decisions affecting private land because the Forest Service would encourage zoning ordinances to be consistent with appropriate wild and scenic river guidelines. Chapter V - Environmental Consequences describes the potential impacts of designation on private lands.

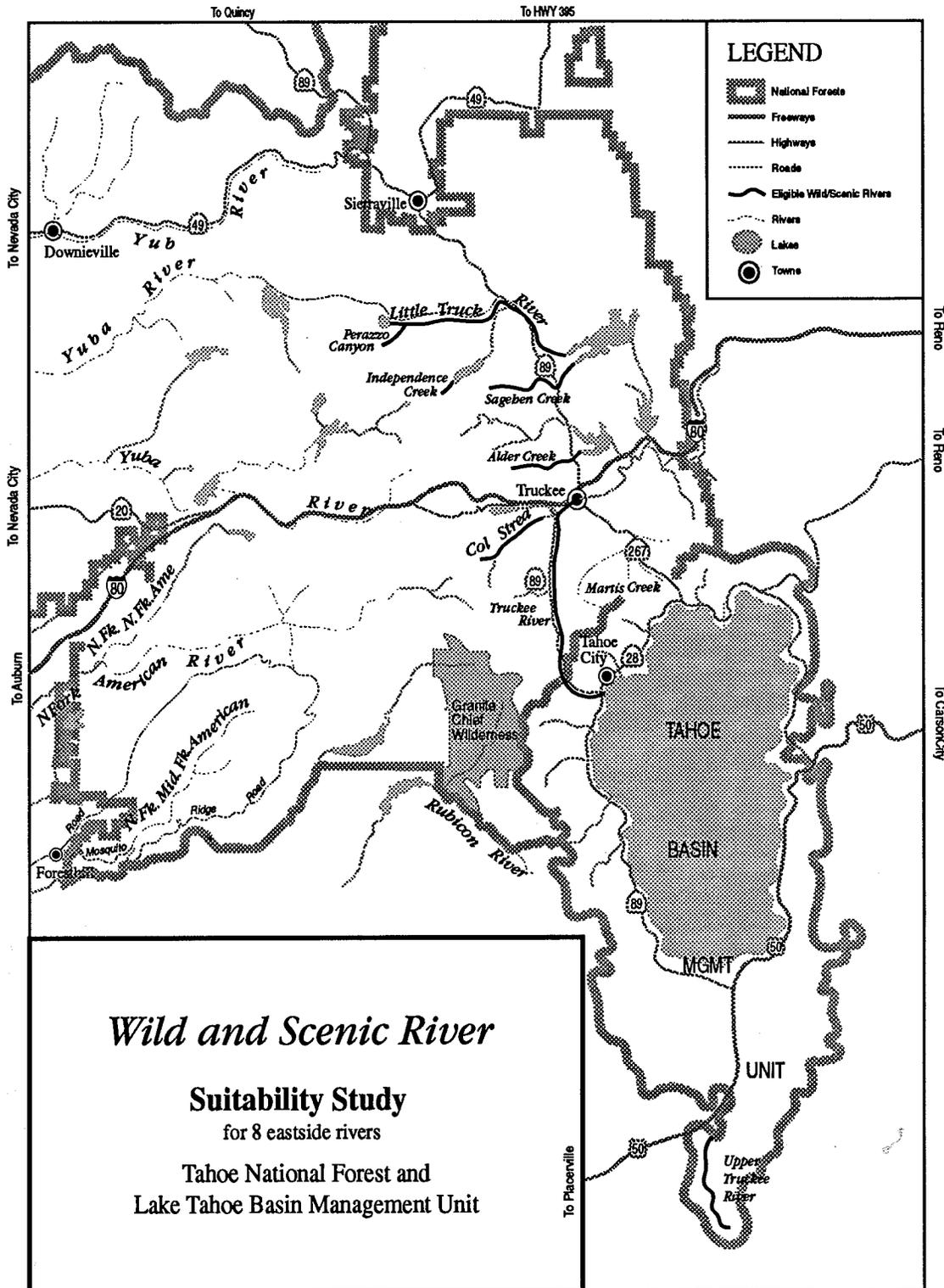
None of the eight rivers were originally identified on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory maintained by the National Park Service. All the eligible rivers were identified through the Interdisciplinary Team process. Cold Stream, identified by the Interdisciplinary Team as having at least one outstandingly remarkable value, is located primarily on private lands and state lands.

Although there is one potential water impoundment project identified on the Little Truckee River above Stampede Reservoir, a site-specific study of this water impoundment project is beyond the scope of this study and is not addressed in the study report.

Issues identified by the public and the cooperating agencies were crucial in the development of the seven alternatives analyzed in this study. Determination of suitability involved the analysis of these alternatives as prescribed in United States Department of Interior (USDI) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) jointly issued Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification, and Management of River Areas. (See 47 Federal Register 34457, September 7, 1982.) A more detailed description of public involvement is provided in Appendix E. In addition Appendix E provides all the key comments from the public and responses to these comments. The comments which came from over 400 letters were used to help reevaluate each of the rivers and the alternatives from the DEIS and develop a preferred alternative for this FEIS.

# MAP A

## Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study



## **CHAPTER II**

### **ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION**

This study has developed and analyzed seven alternatives which included the suitability or unsuitability of including eight rivers in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Implementation of Alternative A would mean that all the rivers would be found suitable for designation, and management would be similar to the standards described in Appendix A. Alternative B is the No Action Alternative and designates none of the eligible rivers as suitable. Management under the No Action Alternative would be in accordance with the existing local County Plans on private lands, and Land and Resource Management Plans or Land Use Plans on State and Federal lands. The other alternatives range in numbers of and designates various combinations of the eligible rivers. Table 2.1 shows which rivers were evaluated under each alternative and compares the number of miles of river by alternative. Table 2.2 compares the number of acres within each river corridor by alternative. A 1/4-mile wide corridor from each river bank was used to determine the study area. The total area is considered a 1/2 mile corridor.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES**

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act [section 4(a)] requires the consideration of a number of factors in evaluating the suitability of a river for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. These factors help to define the scope of the FEIS/Study Report and include: (1) which characteristics would make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System; (2) the reasonably foreseeable uses of the land and water that would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the area were included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; (3) the values that may be foreclosed or diminished if the area is not protected as part of the system; (4) public, State, and local interest in the designation; (5) the cost of the area's acquisition and administration if it is added to the system; (6) the current status of landownership, including the amount of private land within and adjacent to the study area; and (7) other issues and concerns raised during scoping. The Summary of Environmental Consequences, Table 2.3, and the Summary Comparison of Suitability Factors, Table 2.4, provide an overview of how the alternatives and individual rivers were evaluated. Evaluating individual rivers was a significant part of the process in evaluating the alternatives.

To respond to these issues regarding recommendations of suitability, the Forest Service Guidelines (FSH 1509.15) suggest consideration of the following types of alternatives: (1) national designation of all eligible segments; (2) protection of eligible segments by some means other than national designation (such as State designation); (3) nondesignation of all or portions of the

eligible segments; (4) designation of segments with alternative classifications; and (5) continuing current management (or no action).

Some possible alternatives such as State designation and further segmenting the rivers were not considered in the DEIS because no interest had been expressed during scoping. In developing alternatives, the Forest Service considered all relevant issues raised by the public and Interdisciplinary Study Team during the scoping process. Comments received on the DEIS suggested the idea of ending the Truckee River at Donner Creek because this is the location of the city boundary. Please see the discussion on the subject in the next section, Alternatives Eliminated From Detailed Study. Each eligible river was retained in its entirety as described in the eligibility determination. Additionally, the preliminary classification identified by the Interdisciplinary Study Team was maintained for formulation of all the alternatives in the DEIS. In this FEIS, the Upper Truckee River classification was changed from Scenic to Wild in several alternatives.

Alternatives were developed to respond to issues raised by the public or the Interdisciplinary Study Team. Alternative E was developed to identify the rivers that make the best contribution to a National Wild and Scenic River System, when considering the best Outstandingly Remarkable values. Alternative F was developed in response to some publics wanting to minimize impacts on natural resources, minimize impacts on potential water development projects, and to avoid private lands. Alternatives C and G address the rivers with OR characteristics that are dependent upon the river environment, and Alternative D is responsive to those that believe highly-used recreation rivers should receive priority for designation.

Although Martis Creek was determined eligible for possible Recreational designation, the suitability of Martis Creek is not evaluated in this FEIS/Study Report. Martis Creek flows primarily through private lands (over 90%) with National Forest lands at the extreme upper end of one of the forks of the creek. Additionally, the OR characteristics, which are historical features, are located entirely on private lands. The eligibility information has been provided to the State and County for use in their respective planning. The existing character of the portion of Martis Creek on National Forest lands will be protected.

## **ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY**

An alternative suggested during scoping was to change classification of the rivers to a higher or more restrictive level. As an example, the suggestion was to move Recreation rivers to Scenic, and Scenic to Wild. The basis for preliminary classification is the degree of naturalness, or stated conversely, the degree of evidence of man's activity in the river area. The most natural rivers will be classified Wild; those somewhat less natural, Scenic; and those least natural, Recreational. Determination of classification is a professional judgment based on the criteria described in the USDA/USDI guidelines described in Chapter I and Appendix B.

The Interdisciplinary Study Team reviewed the level of development and naturalness for each river and classified each river to the highest or most natural level. Therefore, a Recreational river would not qualify for Scenic or Wild status based on the level of development currently existing. Many comments from the public on the DEIS suggested reconsidering Upper Truckee River for Wild Classification. This river was reevaluated and a determination was made that it be classified Wild. This was brought forward to alternatives considered in detail. Alternative F left the Upper Truckee River as a Scenic River.0

On the other hand, alternatives of changing classification downward, from Wild to Scenic, and from Scenic to Recreational were considered but not carried forward in detail as alternatives. No issues or suggestions were raised by the public in the initial scoping that indicates a need to consider these types of alternatives in detail.

Comments on the DEIS suggested a new segment for the Truckee River that would end at Donner Creek. This alternative segment would end where the City of Truckee boundary begins. In addition, the Barberry plants located in the heart of Truckee has been dropped from the T&E Species list and therefore is not an OR value. The location of these plants was one of the factors that set the end of the river segment at the Highway 267 bridge. The IDTeam considered this alternative segment, but decided to stay with the existing segment end point. The ID Team determined that the city setting was consistent with a recreation classification and that the Highway 267 Bridge was a more logical ending place.

## **DIRECTION COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES**

The objectives and management direction for designation of one or more rivers include the following:

Designation forecloses possible impoundment of these rivers for water supply or other uses. This prohibition would protect native and sensitive fish species which require free-flowing waters for their survival and would prevent the inundation of Federal or State listed endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant species within the river corridors.

All rivers would be managed to the standards prescribed for the respective classification as described in Appendix A. Private landowners along the classified rivers would be encouraged to continue current land uses in order to preserve the rural atmosphere surrounding the rivers. Landowners are encouraged to use the standard in Appendix A to guide future land uses and developments. Timber harvest on private lands is guided by the regulations developed to implement the California Forest Practices Act. Wild and Scenic River corridors (200 feet on each side of the river) are considered "Special Treatment Areas" under the regulations. The intent of this determination is to manage the 200-foot corridor in a manner that is compatible with the

objective for establishing the Special Treatment Area. The regulations do not prohibit the harvest of timber within the area, but require modified practices to protect the wild and scenic river values within the corridor

Ongoing regular uses of private lands, particularly those existing at the time that a river is designated, are not directly affected. The Federal government has no authority to zone private lands. Zoning is a power of state and local governments. There are provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that call upon the Federal agencies to encourage local land use planning by issuing guidelines for local and state governments for consideration in protecting river corridors. These guidelines are not binding on local governments nor can the Federal government force the local governments to adopt them. Landowners are encouraged to maintain the existing environment along the river corridors, on private lands, under every action alternative evaluated in this study.

The University of California, Berkeley research program in Sagehen Creek is recommended to continue in all alternatives. Appendix D provides suggested legislative language for Scenic River designation that provides for continuance of research if designated.

The California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail in Cold Stream has been designated as a National Historic Trail by Congress. The California National Historic Trail was designated as a component of the National Trails System by Public Law 102-328, dated August 3, 1992. The Historic Trail is the Outstandingly Remarkable (OR) value identified for Cold Stream during the eligibility determination process for the Wild and Scenic River study. This designation is included as part of all alternatives, including the No Action Alternative. Historical designation provides for protection of the trail and the OR value on public lands.

The Forest Service maintains a system of SIAs. SIAs are established to protect and where appropriate, foster public use, study, and enjoyment of areas with scientific, scenic, historical, geological, botanical, zoological, paleontological, or other special characteristics. Management activities can vary, but are intended to protect and/or enhance the values for which the area was classified. As an example, roads, trails, and recreation or interpretive facilities may be built within an SIA to facilitate public use. Vegetative management may occur to the extent that it is compatible with the SIA purpose and management objectives. SIA designation in some cases may be a more appropriate method to protect the Outstandingly Remarkable values for a stream than protection under Wild and Scenic River designation. Some of the alternatives will include recommendation of SIA designation as in the case of Upper Independence Creek, or to study an area for possible designation, as in the case of Sagehen Creek.

All alternatives, except Alternative B, would amend the appropriate Land and Resources Management Plan, for either the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit or the Tahoe National Forest, to provide interim protection for the specific rivers recommended for designation. The

specific language for interim protection is provided in Alternative E, the preferred alternative. Similar language would apply to the other alternatives if they became the preferred alternative.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL**

### **1. Alternative A.** Recommend designating all eligible rivers.

Alternative A provides that all eight study rivers be recommended for designation into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

#### **Wild Designation**

Upper Independence Creek from its headwaters to Independence Lake.

Upper Truckee River from its headwaters to just south of the South Upper Truckee Road.

#### **Scenic Designation**

Perazzo Creek from its headwaters to the Little Truckee River; Sagehen Creek from its headwaters to Stampede Reservoir high water mark. The Sagehen Basin, outside of the Scenic River corridor, would be recommended to be analyzed for suitability as a SIA by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

#### **Recreational Designation**

Truckee River from the dam at Lake Tahoe to the Highway 267 bridge in the town of Truckee; Cold Stream from its headwaters in Emigrant Canyon to the section line between sections 17 and 20, T. 17 N., R. 16 E.; Alder Creek from its headwaters to Prosser Creek Reservoir; the Little Truckee River from Webber Lake to Stampede Reservoir.

### **2. Alternative B. (No Action).** Recommend designation of no rivers.

Alternative B would not recommend any rivers for designation and is the No Action Alternative. This would result in all rivers being found unsuitable, with the OR values being protected and maintained under management requirements of the US Forest Service, the California State Parks, local County plans, and National Historic Trail management requirements for the California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail in Cold Stream Canyon.

**3. Alternative C.** Recommend designating rivers with the most extensive OR value as related to the river environment. These OR values include recreational, scenic, historical and cultural, biological and ecological, and wildlife and fisheries values.

Alternative C would recommend the Truckee River for designation as a National Recreational River; the Little Truckee River as a Recreational River; Sagehen Creek as a Scenic River; the Upper Truckee River as a Wild River; and Perazzo Creek as a Scenic River. Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a SIA by the Forest Service. The Sagehen Basin outside of the Scenic River corridor would be recommended to be analyzed for suitability as a SIA by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. On the remaining rivers the specific OR values would be protected and maintained under management requirements of the US Forest Service, the California State Parks, local County plans, and National Trail management requirements.

**4. Alternative D.** Recommend designation of river(s) that receive the greatest amount of public recreation use that is directly associated with the river.

Alternative D would recommend designation of the Truckee River as a Recreational River from the dam at Tahoe City to the bridge on Highway 267 within the community of Truckee. The Truckee River has sufficient flows and access to provide for a variety of recreation activities. Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a SIA. Sagehen Creek would be recommended to be analyzed for suitability as a Special Interest Area by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. On the remaining rivers the specific OR values would be protected and maintained under management requirements of the US Forest Service, the California State Parks, local County plans, and National Trail management requirements.

**5. Alternative E.** Recommend designating those rivers that make the best contributions to a National Wild and Scenic River System when considering the best OR values. This is considered the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative E would recommend designation of the Upper Truckee River as a Wild River, Sagehen Creek as a Scenic River, and Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a SIA. The Sagehen Basin outside of the Scenic River corridor would be recommended to be analyzed for suitability as a SIA by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. On the remaining rivers, the specific OR values would be protected and maintained under management requirements of the US Forest Service, the California State Department of Parks, or local County plans and National Trail management requirements.

As part of the Preferred Alternative, Alternative E amends the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and EIS (1990) for the Tahoe National Forest and is consistent with language in the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan for the LTBMU. The amendment language provides for interim protection of the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek as follows:

1. To the extent the Forest Service is authorized under law to control stream impoundments and diversions, the free-flowing characteristics of the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek will not be modified
2. Outstandingly remarkable values for the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek shall be protected, and or enhanced, to the extent practicable.
3. Control management and development of Public lands on the Upper Truckee and Sagehen Creek within in the 1/2 mile corridors. Protect these corridors from modification to the degree that eligibility and classification would be affected based on the inventory classification.

This direction will be added to the goals and desired conditions of the Forest Plan as an additional element for Wild and Scenic Rivers. In addition, there will be specific language in each appropriate management area under resource management emphasis that provides for interim protection of each river recommended.

The wording is: Provide interim Wild and Scenic River protection for Sagehen Creek according to Forest Service handbook direction Chapter 8 and the direction provided in the Goals and desired future condition section of this Forest Plan. This wording will be applied to Management Area (MA) 19 Eighty Nine, MA 32 Stampede Boca, MA 36 Sagehen Basin, MA 38 Billy, and MA 43 Sagehen Station. Interim protection direction will continue until Congress denies or approves designation of the recommended rivers and management plans are developed.

Upper Independence Creek, a recommended Special Interest Area, also amends the Forest Plan. The Special Interest Area name is Upper Independence Creek, the new Management Area is Independence, and the Management Area wording is located in Appendix C page C.4 and C.5.

**6. Alternative F.** Recommend designation of those rivers where designation would have minimum adverse impacts on other resources uses such as timber management and water and power development and would minimize impacts on local and state government's ability to utilize existing utility and transportation corridors.

Alternative F would recommend designation of the Upper Truckee River as a Scenic River and Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a SIA. Sagehen Creek would be recommended to be analyzed for suitability as a SIA by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. On the remaining rivers, the specific OR values would be protected by the US Forest Service or local County plans and National Trail management requirements.

**7. Alternative G.** Recommend designation of those rivers identified to have the greatest botanical and ecological outstandingly remarkable values as related to the river environment.

Alternative G would recommend designation of the Upper Truckee River as a Wild River, Sagehen Creek and Perazzo Creek as Scenic Rivers, and the Little Truckee River as a Recreational River. Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a SIA by the Forest Service. The alternative recommends the Forest Service evaluate the Sagehen Basin, outside of the Scenic River corridor, for suitability for designation as a SIA by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. On the remaining rivers, the specific outstandingly remarkable values would be protected by the US Forest Service or local County plans and National Trail management requirements.

## **MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Specific management requirements for designated rivers will be developed in management plans after designation, but will be similar to standards described in Appendix A. Management requirements for Upper Independence Creek SIA are listed in Appendix C.

## **TABLES AND MAP INFORMATION**

On the following pages of chapter II are several tables showing an overview of river information, environmental consequences, evaluation of individual rivers and a map of the proposed SIA as follows: Table 2.1 Rivers by Alternative displays the river miles for each river by Alternative. Table 2.2 Eligible Rivers by Ownership, describes the land ownership adjacent to the eligible rivers within each river corridor. Table 2.3 Summary of Environmental Consequences describes the consequences for each Alternative. Table 2.4 Summary comparison of Suitability factors considered for each river describes how each river was evaluated for suitability. Map B displays the boundaries and land ownership for the recommended Upper Independence Creek SIA.

**TABLE 2.1**  
**Rivers by Alternative**

	Miles of River by Alternative						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Truckee River	13.0		13.0	13.0			
Cold Stream <sup>1</sup>	5.2						
Alder Creek	6.4						
Independence Creek	2.0		*	*	*	*	*
Little Truckee River	14.0		14.0				14.0
Perazzo Creek	3.2		3.2				3.2
Sagehen Creek	8.0 ***		8.0 ***	**	8.0 ***	**	8.0 ***
Upper Truckee River	7.0		7.0		7.0	7.0	7.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>32.2</b>

\* Independence Creek is recommended for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service.

\*\* Sagehen Creek is recommended to be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

\*\*\* The Sagehen Basin outside the Scenic River corridor is recommended to be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

1. Cold Stream flows mostly through private and State Lands managed by the California State Department of Parks.

**TABLE 2.2**  
**Land Status within River Corridors by Alternative**

	Acres by Alternative						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Truckee River							
Federal	2,637		2,637	2,637			
Private	1,010		1,010	1,010			
Total	3,647		3,647	3,647			
Cold Stream							
Federal	153						
Private	1,581						
Total	1,734						
Alder Creek							
Federal	1,273						
Private	1,057						
Total	2,330						
Independence Creek							
Federal	644						
Private	80						
Total	724						
Little Truckee River							
Federal	3,709		3,709				3,709
Private	1,963		1,963				1,963
Total	5,672		5,672				5,672
Perazzo Creek							
Federal	913		913				913
Private	272		272				272
Total	1,185		1,185				1,185
Sagehen Creek							
Federal	2,451		2,451		2,451		2,451
Private	0		0		0		0
Total	2,451		2,451		2,451		2,451
Upper Truckee River							
Federal	2,153		2,153		2,153	2,153	2,153
Private	0		0		0	0	0
Total	2,153		2,153		2,153	2,153	2,153
<b>TOTALS</b>							
Federal	13,466		11,396	2,637	4,604	2,153	8,759
Private	6,430		3,712	1,010	0	0	2,702
Total	19,896		15,108	3,647	4,604	2,153	11,461

## TABLE 2.3

### SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES from Wild and Scenic River Designation

<b>RIVER</b>	<b>Private Land</b>	<b>Visual Quality</b>	<b>T/E/S species Veg/Ecological</b>
Truckee River	Potential impacts are low. Land ownership is mixed.	Minimal impacts as area managed for Retention (R) and Partial Retention (PR).	No impact on TES species. No change on other wildlife habitat.
Cold Stream	Very low impacts. Some small & large blocks of private lands.	Minimal. Area has been logged. Meets standards for recreation river.	No impacts.
Alder Creek	Very low. Upper 40% is privately owned, subdivision lots. Lower end is National Forest.	Low. Private lands are fully developed. National Forest lands are managed for R & PR.	No impacts.
Independence Creek	Very low. 300 feet of stream flows through private lands. Remainder is on National Forest.	Visual quality would change from PR to Preservation.	Wild River or SIA designation would protect the Lahontan cutthroat trout & watchlist plants.
Little Truckee River	Low impact. Large blocks of private lands along the river.	No impact. Lands currently managed for R and PR.	Designation would protect riparian habitats from dam.
Perazzo Creek	Very low impact. The upper 0.4 mile are private timber lands.	Change from Modification & PR to Retention.	Some additional protection to meadows and willow habitats.
Sagehen Creek	No impacts. River flows totally through National Forest lands.	Change from Modification & PR to Retention.	Some additional protection to meadows and willow habitats.
Upper Truckee River	No impacts. River flows totally through National Forest lands.	No impacts.	Some additional protection to the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

**Table 2.3 (Continued)**

River	Recreation	Cultural Resources	Minerals
Truckee River	Designation would require management plan. Use would be restricted to carrying capacity.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Cold Stream	Would increase some public interest in the Emigrant Trail.	Same as recreation. Trail on public lands is currently protected under National Trail legislation.	No impacts anticipated.
Alder Creek	Some short-term increase in use. No change in long-term.	No impact. Donner Archeological Site is currently protected.	No impacts anticipated.
Independence Creek	Some short-term increase in use. No change in long-term.	No impacts.	No impacts are anticipated. No existing claims.
Little Truckee River	Same as Alder Creek.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Perazzo Creek	Same as Alder Creek.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Sagehen Creek	Some short-term and slight long term increase in use.	No impacts.	No impacts anticipated.
Upper Truckee River	Some short-term and long-term increase in use due to the publicity.	Some increase in the potential for vandalism due to the increased public use.	No impacts anticipated.

**TABLE 2.3 (Continued)**

River	Social/Economic Impacts	Research	Timber (See Table V.1)
Truckee River	Current lifestyles would remain the same. Designation should not change existing economic conditions.	No impacts.	A small reduction in timber volume is expected. Administration cost would not change.
Cold Stream	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impact on National Forest.
Alder Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impacts.
Independence Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impact. Timber would be non-regulated.
Little Truckee River	Potential impacts on current grazing use. Could affect the local ranchers if grazing is modified or reduced.	No impacts.	Some reduction in timber volume would occur. Administration costs would be higher to protect scenic values.
Perazzo Creek	Same as Little Truckee River.	No impacts.	Some reduction in timber volume and administration cost would increase.
Sagehen Creek	Same as Truckee River.	No impact. Research programs are compatible with Scenic River designation & will continue.	Some reduction in timber volume and administration cost would increase.
Upper Truckee River	Same as Little Truckee River.	No impacts.	No impacts.

## TABLE 2.4

**Summary comparison of Suitability factors considered for each river**

Factors to Consider	Rivers			
	Upper Truckee River	Sagehen Creek	Independence Creek	Little Truckee River
Degree to which area makes a worthy addition to National system	High	High	High	Moderate
The reasonably foreseeable uses foreclosed, or curtailed w/ designation	None	Low	None	Low
Reasonably foreseeable uses enhanced w/ design	High	High	High	Moderate/high
Public interest in design Local govt. interest	High	Moderate Truckee supports	Moderate Truckee supports SIA	Moderate Sierra Co. opposed
Cost of admin. - 5 years	\$ 50,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 43,000
The degree OR values will be protected if not designated & how	High LRMP allocation	High/Mod LRMP S&G	High SIA allocation	Moderate LRMP S&G
Current amount of Federal land ownership	2,153 Acres 100%	2,451 Acres 100%	644 Acres 89%	3,709 Acres 65%
Complexity of management/ river designation	Low	Low	Low	Low
Water projects proposed Potential for proposal	None Low	None Low	None Low	Conceptual Mod/High
OR Values that would contribute something new to Nat'l Wild and Scenic River System	High LC Trout Historic	High Ecol/Bot Research Historic	High LC Trout	Moderate Historic Ecological/ Botanical

This summary chart is provided for comparison purposes. For a complete understanding this chart should be used in context with text in Chapters II, III, IV, V, and appendices.

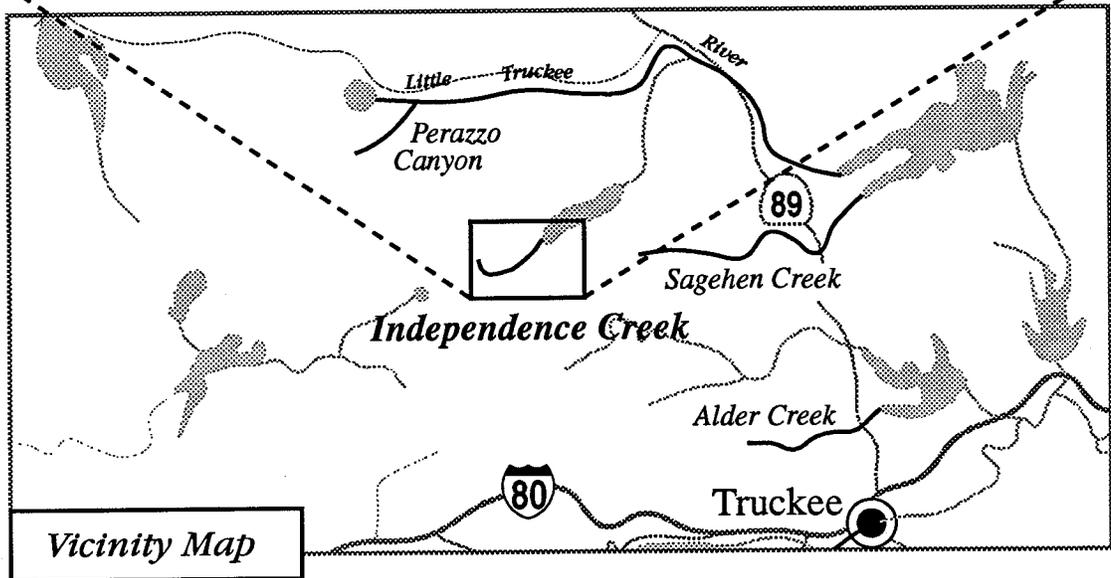
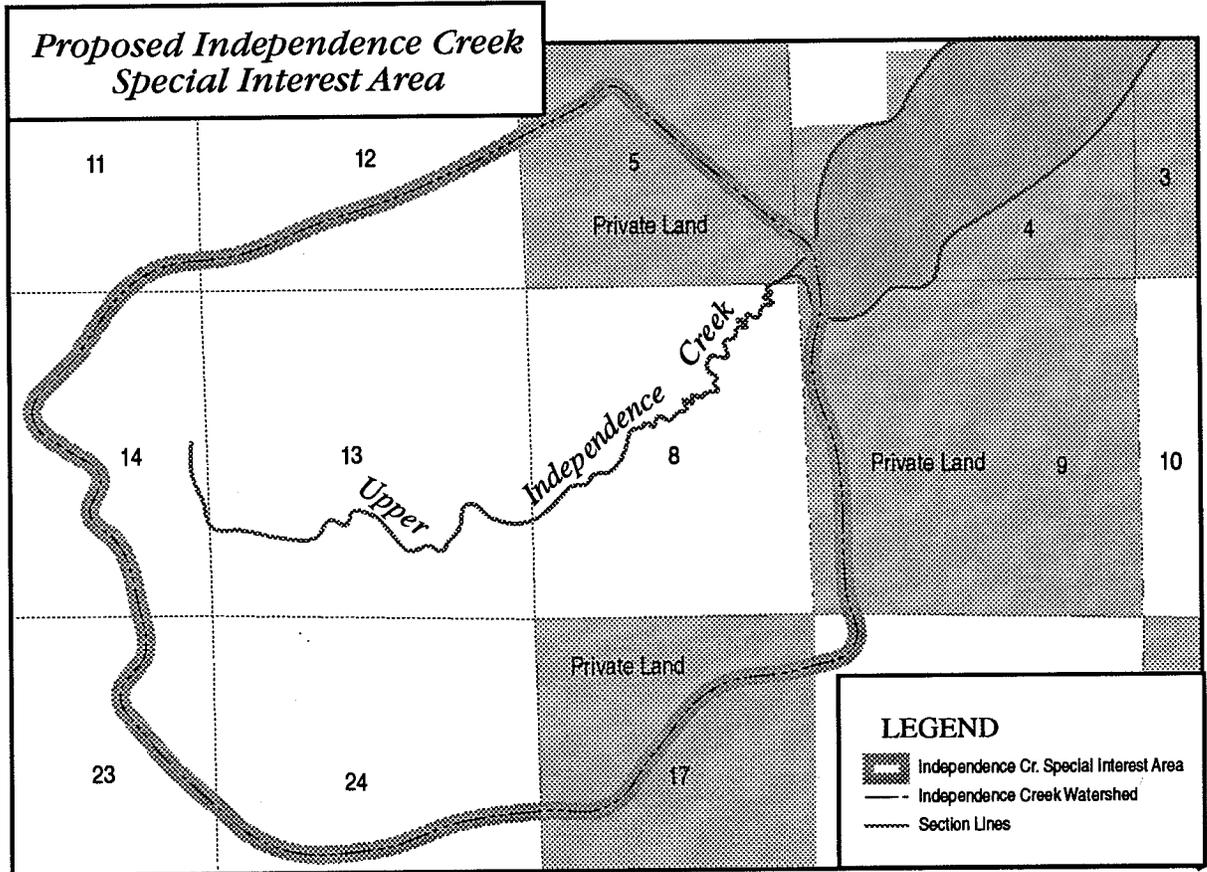
**TABLE 2.4** continued  
**Summary comparison of Suitability factors considered for each river**

Factors to Consider	Rivers			
	Truckee River	Perazzo Creek	Coldstream/ Emigrant Cyn	Alder Creek
Degree to which area makes a worthy addition to National system	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
The reasonably foreseeable uses foreclosed, or curtailed w/designation	Moderate	Low	None	Very Low
Reasonably foreseeable uses enhanced w/desgn	Moderate/ High	Moderate	Low/ Moderate	Low/ Moderate
Public interest in desgn local govt. interest	High Truckee opposed	Moderate Sierra Co. opposed	Moderate/Lo Truckee opposed	Moderate/Lo Truckee opposed
Cost of admin. -5 years	\$ 150,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 40,000
The degree OR values will be protected if not designated now	High/Mod LRMP S&G	Moderate LRMP S&G	High/Mod SIA S&G/laws	High LRMP S&G/laws
Current amount of Federal land ownership	2,637 Acres 72%	913 Acres 77%	1,273 Acres 9%	153 Acres 54%
Complexity of management/ river designation	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Water projects proposed Potential for proposal	None Low/Mod	None Low	None Low	None Low
O R Values that would contribute something new to Nat'l Wild and Scenic River System.	High Historic	Moderate Ecological/ Botany	Moderate Historic	Moderate Historic

This summary chart is provided for comparison purposes. For a complete understanding this chart should be used in context with text in Chapters II, III, IV, V, and appendices.

# MAP B

## Proposed Independence Creek Special Interest Area



# CHAPTER III

## FINDINGS OF ELIGIBILITY AND CLASSIFICATION

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a summary of the findings of eligibility for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. See Appendix B for the actual findings documented by the Interdisciplinary Team. Following is a summary of the OR characteristics for each river and the determination of Wild, Scenic, or Recreational classification.

### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for inclusion under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, a river or portion of a river must be free-flowing and, with its adjacent land area, must possess one or more of the following Outstanding Remarkable (OR) values: scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or ecological. The eight rivers evaluated in this FEIS/Study Report are eligible for designation based on the findings by the Interdisciplinary Team that each of the eight rivers are free flowing and contain at least one OR characteristic.

The USDA and USDI Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification, and Management of River Areas (47 FR 39454; September 7, 1982) indicate that a river segment flowing between impoundments is not necessarily precluded from designation if it meets eligibility criteria. The definition of "free flowing" from Section 16 (b) of the Act that follows helps clarify this issue: (b) "Free-flowing", as applied to any river or section of a river, means existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence, however, of low dams, diversion works, and other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system shall not automatically bar its consideration for such inclusion: Provided, That this shall not be construed to authorized, intend, or encouraged future construction of such structures within components of the national wild and scenic rivers system". There are several small improvements along the eligible rivers including retaining walls and an irrigation diversion on the Little Truckee River. None of these developments significantly affect the free-flowing characteristics of the streams.

In addition to being free-flowing, a river must have at least one OR resource value. The following is a summary of the findings of the Interdisciplinary Team. (See Appendix B for the full report)

**1) Truckee River** - OR values on the Truckee River include recreation, and cultural resource values. Botanical values were originally considered outstandingly remarkable because of the

presence of the Truckee barberry. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has dropped the plant from the Federal T&E list based on new taxonomy information. Other botanical resources are not considered to have OR values.

The Truckee River is heavily used by the general public for hiking, biking, fishing, kayaking, rafting, swimming, camping, picnicking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, snowplay, and skiing. The ease of access and proximity to Lake Tahoe add to the area's attractiveness as a recreation corridor. The ready access along with the intensity and diversity of recreational uses along the Truckee River combine to make recreation an outstanding recreation value.

Several prehistoric sites along the Truckee River qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as they contain data for investigating regional research questions. These sites are large, contain complex stratigraphy, and contain evidence for the earliest human use of this region within the Sierra Nevada. One of these sites, CA-PLA-164, provided the oldest known Carbon 14 date of 8,130 B.P. (before present) for an archaeological site in the region. This date was obtained from small chunks of charcoal, which were associated with the partially fossilized wing bone of a large bird, and two basalt tools. The significance of this is stated in The Archaeology of the Tahoe Reach of the Truckee River: "Sites with components of this age are known in the Great Basin, but they are not at all common and sites with buried 8,000 year old components are definitely rare." It has been noted that OR prehistoric values may be rare and represent an area where a culture or cultural period was first identified or described.

**2) Sagehen Creek** - OR values on Sagehen Creek include botanical/ecological values, cultural and historical resources, fish and wildlife, and geological/hydrological values.

Sagehen Creek hosts numerous interrelated outstandingly remarkable values that are best identified as ecosystem values. The stream is also considered highly representative of eastside Sierra Nevada stream ecology for native fisheries. The interdependence of values increases its level of significance including the broader biodiversity of species. The geology provides the hydrology necessary to support the unique fens (best examples and the most extensive on the Forest) and is also likely to be involved in supporting two Class I (threatened and endangered) invertebrates in the stream. This ecological significance supports the stream with hydrology, geology, wildlife, fisheries, and plants being considered outstandingly remarkable. Fisheries by itself is considered unique and outstandingly remarkable due to the natural assemblage of native fish. (See Chapter IV, Section IX for a description of the fish). The University of California Research Station has provided numerous reports, papers, and research on the natural resources of Sagehen Creek and Basin. This research is considered a complementary OR value.

The historic sites within the Sagehen Creek basin are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The majority of these sites and associated features represent an intact railroad-based logging system. Additionally, an early sawmill and associated animal-based transportation system are also represented as well as depression-era sites which have received very little research to date. Sagehen Creek was not an integral part of these past logging operations.

**3) Upper Independence Creek** - OR values on Upper Independence Creek include botanical/ecological values, scenic, and fisheries.

Upper Independence Creek supports a fisheries of national importance primarily because it is the only stream that supports a continuously self-supporting Lahontan cutthroat trout population that has not had to have re-introduction of the species. The scenic values are of regional significance due to the classic "U" shaped valley configuration and the dramatic spatial definition of the valley. The plant values are of regional significance due to the existence of fens, which are rare in the Sierra Nevada and known to occur only in Nevada, Sierra, and El Dorado Counties.

**4) The Little Truckee River** - OR values on the Little Truckee River include botanical, wildlife, and cultural resource values.

The vegetation values are considered outstandingly remarkable because of the fens, which are rare in the Sierra Nevada. There are numerous fens but they are not as extensive as Sagehen Creek. The wildlife values are considered outstandingly remarkable due to the presence of bald eagle nesting sites and the presence of habitat for the willow fly-catcher. Cultural resources were identified as outstandingly remarkable because the Henness Pass road and the associated support service sites, such as stage stations, are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. However, the Little Truckee River was not an integral part of the development and use of the Henness Pass road.

**5) Perazzo Creek** - OR values on Perazzo Creek include the botanical/ecological associations and the broad diversity of wildlife habitat, including habitat for the willow flycatcher.

The fens are considered rare for plant values. The fens along with dry meadows, wet meadows, aspen, and a wide range of wild flowers and forbs provide a very diverse and unique plant community. This diverse plant community provides an extensive riparian community supporting many riparian-dependent species including the willow flycatcher. The Perazzo meadow complex and the Little Truckee River (Perazzo flows into the Little Truckee River) provide habitat for the second largest population of willow fly-catcher in California, indicating a highly valuable wildlife resource. The old-growth timber in the area adds to the biodiversity in the area and provides valuable habitat for old-growth dependent species.

**6) Upper Truckee River** - OR values on the Upper Truckee River include cultural resources, fisheries, wildlife, recreation and scenic values.

The Meiss cabin and barn complex are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, indicating an OR characteristic. The recreation (scenic) values are based on the exceptional recreation opportunities providing the visitor with a non-motorized backcountry experience. Access is provided by an extensive trail system, including the Pacific Crest Trail (a National Scenic Trail), to the Upper Truckee River and lakes in the area. Recreation use is extensive throughout the area. Recreation uses include hiking, horseback riding, fishing, camping, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing. Scenic values include a dramatic backdrop scenery which include broad meadows and shallow lakes providing unobstructed views of the high alpine ridges to the east and west. Foreground views include the massive volcanic Round Lake Butte. A self-sustaining population of Lahontan cutthroat trout, the only native trout to the area, provide an outstandingly remarkable value and are a federally listed "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Wildlife values include habitat for sensitive species such as willow flycatchers, goshawk and the endangered peregrine falcons as well as the pileated woodpeckers a LTBMU Management Indicator Species. The critical summer habitat designation for mule deer leads to an outstandingly remarkable wildlife value for the area.

**7) Cold Stream** - The OR value on Cold Stream is the National Historical Overland Emigrant Trail.

The Emigrant trail along Cold Stream is one component of the California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail. This trail, one of several routes utilized to access California and incorporated into the California National Historic Trail, recently achieved National Trail System status. The route follows the stream in order to access two separate Sierra Nevada crossings: Roller Pass and Cold Stream Pass. These passes were easier to approach than Donner Pass and carried the bulk of traffic on the Truckee route until 1864 when the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Wagon Road was built. The trail is located adjacent to the stream for a portion of the route due to the ease of travel. Essentially, the pioneers followed the water course because of the favorable gradient for travel until the stream channel become too steep and rugged for wagon travel. The stream did not play any other role in the emigrant trail history.

**8) Alder Creek** - The OR value on Alder Creek is the historical Donner Camp- site.

The OR value on Alder Creek is the Donner Camp site which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The George and Jacob Donner families camped at this location during the winter of 1846-47, becoming one of the most famous and tragic symbols of the westward migration along the Overland Emigrant Trail. The remainder of the wagon

party occupied three cabins in the vicinity of Donner Lake near Donner Memorial State Park. Alder Creek was not considered an essential element in the location of the Donner Campsite.

## **CLASSIFICATION**

After a river or portion of a river has been determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National System, the potential classification (Wild, Scenic, or Recreational) is determined. Classification is based on the level of development along the river and adjacent lands, and access to the river as it exists at the time of the study. Classification is not based on anticipated development or other changes along the river corridor; those are an aspect of evaluating suitability.

These terms can be misleading. For example, a "Recreational" river may have been designated for reasons other than recreation. The level of development along the river could preclude Wild or Scenic classification, but the same level of development would be allowable under the "Recreational" classification, whether or not the river is heavily used for recreation. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act defines the following classification criteria:

1. **Wild River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and are generally inaccessible, essentially primitive, and the waters are unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.
2. **Scenic River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but they may be accessible in places by roads.
3. **Recreational River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

Using these criteria, each eligible river was measured against the standards for each classification category. However, while the classification criteria provide uniform guidance for professional judgement, they are only guidelines and not absolute requirements. It is not possible to formulate criteria so as to mechanically or automatically classify river areas. The eligible rivers were preliminarily classified as follows:

**Wild Rivers** - Upper Independence Creek, and Upper Truckee River

**Scenic Rivers** - Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek (Upper Truckee River re-classified wild)

**Recreational Rivers** - Truckee River, Cold Stream, Alder Creek, and the Little Truckee River

**TABLE 3.1**

**Outstandingly Remarkable Values**

	Veg/ Ecol	Rec	Scenic	Cult- ural	Fish	Geo- logy	Hydro- logy	Wild- life
Truckee River		X		X				
Cold Stream				X				
Alder Creek				X				
Independence Creek	X		X		X			
Ltl Truckee River	X			X				X
Perazzo Creek	X							X
Sagehen Creek	X			X	X	X	X	X
Upper Truckee River		X	X	X	X			X

**TABLE 3.2**

**Potential Classification Based on Eligibility Determination  
Wild, Scenic and Recreational Miles by River**

	Wild	Scenic	Recreational
Truckee River			13.0
Cold Stream			5.2
Alder Creek			6.4
Independence Creek	2.0		
Little Truckee River			14.0
Perazzo Creek		3.2	
Sagehen Creek		8.0	
Upper Truckee River	7.0		

# CHAPTER IV

## AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### I. LOCATION

The **eight** rivers eligible for additional study are located within the Truckee River drainage, mostly within the boundaries of the Tahoe National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) on the east slope of the Sierra Nevada. All eligible rivers are within the state of California and are located in Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, and/or Sierra counties. The rivers studied comprise a total of 58.8 miles of perennial streams. The main stem of the Truckee River is a relatively short river, only about 120 miles in length from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake, and the watershed drains a total area of 2,720 square miles. The location of the study rivers is shown on the map on Page I-5.

### II. CLIMATE

Elevations in the upper watershed typically range from 9,000 to 10,000 feet in the Sierra on the western end of the Truckee watershed, to 4,000 to 5,000 in the valleys in Western Nevada. The eligible rivers are all within the upper watersheds. The area's climate is characterized by long, cold winters and by short, moderate-to-warm summers. Precipitation follows a seasonal pattern, primarily occurring from late October through early May. Summer thunderstorms are common in the region, but seldom produce significant amounts of precipitation over a wide area. Winter precipitation above 5,000 feet is normally in the form of snow. The spring runoff season lasts longer than is normal for watersheds at lower elevations, extending into July, as the snowpack at the highest elevations melts late in the season.

Temperature varies widely, but the coldest areas are around Truckee and Lake Tahoe; extreme lows can reach from -15 to -30 degrees Fahrenheit with maximums in the 90 degree range. The coldest spot in California is the townsite of Boca. Precipitation at the Sierra crest is 60-70 inches annually and drops sharply as one moves to the east and lower elevations, where it is less than 10 inches in the Reno/Sparks area.

### III. LANDFORMS

Many of the higher slopes and peaks along the Sierra crest have been glaciated, exposing the hard underlying rock materials with glacial moraines formed along the adjacent slopes and valleys. Lake Tahoe occupies what geologists call a "graben", a rather steeply sided valley formed when faulting caused a block-shaped area to drop relative to the surrounding terrain. Martis Valley, where the town of Truckee is located, is a large, high mountain valley at approximately 6,000 feet

in elevation. From Martis Valley, the Truckee River falls sharply through a canyon into Western Nevada, ultimately terminating in Pyramid Lake.

#### **IV. SOILS**

Soils in the upper watershed occur on gentle to steep slopes and in broad valleys (i.e. Martis Valley). These soils have developed from rhyolitic and granitic bedrock and from alluvial deposits. Low precipitation is a major limitation to productivity. Soils at higher elevations (5,500 to 9,500 feet) along the crest of the Sierra have developed from volcanic, metasedimentary, and granitic rocks, and from glacial-alluvial deposits. Steep slopes and shallow, rocky soils limit productivity over much of the area.

#### **V. FLOODPLAINS, WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN AREAS**

Annual floodplains are the lowlands and relatively flat areas adjoining the rivers that are subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in a given year. There is a history of flooding from the Truckee River in the Reno/Sparks area from high spring run-off and "rain-on-snow" events during late winter. The Army Corps of Engineers have mapped an extensive floodplain in the Truckee Meadows area (Reno/Sparks) and have developed a series of levees along the river through Reno and Sparks.

Wetlands are areas regularly wet or flooded where the water table stands at or above the land surface for at least part of the year. There are large acreage of wetlands near the town of Truckee and in the Reno/Sparks area. A number of the tributaries of the Truckee River contain "fens", the largest of which is called the Mason Fen is within Sagehen Creek. Fens are unique ecosystem and plant communities with distinguishing characteristics. They are scattered in the Sierra Nevada in cold, permanently waterlogged soils. Subsurface hydrology is extremely important in their formation and continuation. California fens do not resemble fens that occur in the eastern states (Thorne, 1976). Some of the largest, most well-preserved, and best-studied fens in the Sierra Nevada are located in the Sagehen Creek Basin. Fens are very similar to a sphagnum bog, but with a richer flora including larger shrubs. Some may have a peat accumulation. Fens are rare in the state of California with fewer than ten known in El Dorado and Nevada Counties. There are fens along Sagehen Creek, Perazzo Creek, and the Little Truckee River.

Riparian areas are transition areas between aquatic ecosystems and their adjacent terrestrial ecosystem. They have distinctive soil characteristics and plant communities that require free or unbound water. Riparian areas function in providing fish and wildlife habitat, erosion control, forage, late season streamflow, and water quality. Riparian vegetation and areas are an important component along the entire length of the main stem of the Truckee River and its tributaries.

Vernal pools are generally small, poorly drained depressions in relatively flat areas. California vernal pools are well known for their unique flora. Vernal pools are the most threatened wetland ecosystem in California (Stone, 1990). There are known vernal pools along Sagehen Creek and Perazzo Creek.

## **VI. MINERALS**

Minerals can be defined in three categories: Locatables (i.e. gold/silver), leasables (i.e. gas/oil/coal), and common variety minerals such as sand and gravel. Generally, Federal lands within the Truckee River watershed are open to mining under the general mining laws, although there are some areas withdrawn from mining such as existing dam sites. There is very little commercial or recreational mining along the study rivers. The majority of the mining activity in the river corridors are for sand and gravel operations, mostly in support of highway and other construction projects.

## **VII. STREAMFLOW**

The entire Truckee River system is controlled by a series of dams and reservoirs. Flows in the eligible portions of the Truckee and Little Truckee Rivers are controlled by the dams on Lake Tahoe and Independence Lake, respectively. The other eligible rivers are located above the dams and flow into the reservoirs.

Historical flows including average daily flow and maximum and minimum flows are described in Table 4.4.

Instream flows in all the rivers are extremely variable due to the variation in annual precipitation. The flows in the Truckee River from Lake Tahoe to Truckee are augmented by the Prosser Exchange Agreement, a procedure that allows the use of water stored in Prosser Reservoir to maintain instream flows below the dam at Tahoe City. Minimum flows for the Truckee River between Tahoe City and Truckee are established by the Exchange Agreement at 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the winter and 70 cfs over the summer period. There is a 2 cfs minimum instream flow requirement on Independence Creek, which flows into the Little Truckee River, and a 3-5 cfs flow on the Little Truckee River below the Sierra Valley Diversion. Instream flow requirements are currently being studied through the TROA EIS/EIR and are expected to be increased over current levels. Flows in all other study rivers are uncontrolled and maintained by natural flows.

Current in-stream flow arrangements include (these are not legal requirements, but generally accepted by water users):

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| a. Truckee River (Tahoe City to Truckee)  | 70 cfs in summer<br>50 cfs in winter |
| b. Little Truckee River (Based on 1952 Settlement)<br>(Below Sierra Valley Diversion) |                                      |
| 7/1 to 10/15  | 3 cfs                                |
| 10/16 to 3/15   | 4 cfs                                |
| 3/16 to 6/30  | 5 cfs                                |
| c. Independence Creek (below reservoir)   | 2 cfs                                |

The State of California has rights to 10,000 acre feet of surface water as a result of Public Law 101-618. California does not have storage capacity at this time, but will need reservoir storage in order to exercise these rights. Possible storage options include the use of one or a combination of the six existing reservoirs. Another option is the construction of a new reservoir, although no dam sites have been identified. This issue is being evaluated as part of the TROA EIS/EIR and there are no proposals for storage by California at this time.

### **VIII. WATER QUALITY**

Water quality in all the study rivers is considered good although some historical practices of rapidly releasing water from Lake Tahoe and Independence Lake has resulted in some channel scouring and sedimentation. Aside from the historical impacts, there are some minor water quality problems in some of the study rivers at the current time. Lahontan Regional Quality Control Board has identified several water quality shortcomings on the Upper Truckee, Truckee, Sagehen, and Little Truckee Rivers. The water quality problems are associated with roads, timber harvests, grazing, recreation use, and urbanization. They range from sedimentation concerns, and impacts from heavy recreation use, to high levels of heavy metals. More detailed water quality information is available in the planning files. The quality of the water in all of the study rivers meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards.

### **IX. FISH AND WILDLIFE**

The Federal agencies in cooperation with the California State Department of Fish and Game, manage the fish and wildlife resources and habitats within the area drained by the study rivers.

All the rivers considered in this suitability study are coolwater rivers. Significant game fish species include rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, mountain white fish, and the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT). The Truckee River system also provides important habitat for native non-game species including: Lahontan reddsides, speckled dace, Tahoe sucker, mountain sucker, Paiute sculpin, and Lahontan tui chub. All seven tributaries to the main stem of the

Truckee are considered excellent fisheries. The main stem of the Truckee is classed as fair for fisheries due to the alteration of the river channels and low instream flows.

Almost all river corridors are open to hunting and fishing, with deer being the most popular big game animal pursued during the fall hunt. A portion of the Upper Truckee River near the Meiss cabin is closed to fishing to protect populations of the reintroduced LCT.

## **X. VEGETATION**

More than 500 species of native plants and at least 160 introduced species may be found in the Truckee Basin (study area). Vegetation has considerable diversity because life-zones range from the semi-arid sagebrush steppe to alpine conditions. In most areas the timber was logged extensively during the 19th century to support the mining activities in Virginia City. Most of the stands of timber consist of trees that are between 90 and 120 years of age. The true "old-growth" timber is limited and found on steep, rocky slopes that was too difficult to cut by early logging methods. An exception exists in the Upper Truckee River Basin, which was not logged historically. Typical plant associations include Jeffrey pine, mixed conifer, riparian-deciduous, chaparral, meadow, aquatic-emergent, and alpine associations.

**Jeffrey Pine Association:** This type is found on the lower and drier slopes of the study area and includes pure Jeffrey pine stands in association with sagebrush, bitterbrush, and mountain mahogany. Elevation ranges from 6,000 feet to about 6,800 feet in elevation.

**Mixed Conifer Forest:** This type is found above the Jeffrey pine forest extending up to an elevation above 9,000 feet. Key species found in this type include: California red fir, whitebark pine, sugar pine, lodgepole pine, white fir, incense cedar, juniper, and at the highest elevations, western white pine and mountain hemlock. Jeffrey pine and ponderosa pine are found throughout the zone mixed with other species on the drier sites. Percentages of these species on a given site varies enormously.

**Wetlands and Riparian:** These plant communities are found on the moist soils adjacent to streams and lakes. Rich soils and available water provide for a wide variety of species. These areas have particular value as habitats for a variety of wildlife. Key species found in these areas include alder, willow, quaking aspen, and black cottonwood. There are wetlands near the town of Truckee. A number of tributaries of the Truckee River contain fens. Riparian vegetation and areas are found along the entire length of the main stem of the Truckee River and its tributaries.

**Chaparral Association:** These plant communities are found primarily on dry and south-facing slopes. Dominant species include tobacco brush, greenleaf manzanita, pinemat manzanita, basin sagebrush, bitterbrush, and rabbitbrush.

**Meadow Association:** This is an important component on the east slope of the Sierra and includes a number of high elevation meadows. Meadows comprise only 10 percent of the total land area of the Sierra Nevada. The study area contains extensive meadow complexes; both dry and wet meadows are found throughout the study area and provide important habitats for a variety of wildlife and some support cattle grazing. Perazzo meadow is a wide, flat valley that is about 1.5 miles long. The botanical diversity of the Perazzo and Independence Creek meadows is high, having plants common to the Great Basin and the Sierra Nevada. In addition, the meadows associated with Independence Creek are relatively undisturbed from management activities such as grazing. There are also meadows along Alder Creek, the Little Truckee River, and Sagehen Creek.

**Alpine:** These plant communities are high in elevation and usually do not support trees. These areas are usually on steep slopes covered with rocks and gravel, with small plants scattered in the relatively stable areas.

**Old-Growth Areas:** Important biological values of old growth include habitat for a variety of animal and plant species, biodiversity and pools of genetic resources, and long-term biological records of climate (Kaufmann, Moir, and Covington). The amount of old-growth forest that currently exists on the TNF and LTBMU is unknown although the amount of old growth that exists today is substantially less than what existed in the past. The importance of these old-growth communities centered on watercourses was pointed out in the TNF recommendations for fish and late-seral stage wildlife (Chapel, et al., 1992).

Older forests along rivers and streams provide recruitment of large, woody debris (LWD) to stream environments. LWD provides nutrients, shapes the stream channel, traps sediments, creates structural complexity and rearing habitat for fish, etc. There are known old-growth communities along Independence and Perazzo Creeks.

## **XI. THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES**

This section identifies species of plants and animals that are currently listed on the Federal endangered or threatened list; species that are on a list of Sensitive Species maintained by either the Forest Service or the State; or species listed as being of Special Interest by the state. Category 1 indicate species where there is sufficient information for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make a determination whether to include the species on the Federal list. Category 2 are those species where there is insufficient information to make a determination for listing.

A few of these species could be potentially affected by river designation, which should be primarily beneficial. However, most species would not have habitat directly affected by the action of designation.

### **A. Threatened/Endangered Species**

<b>Fish and Wildlife</b>	<b>Source</b>
Lahontan cutthroat trout - threatened species	Fed/CA
American bald eagle - endangered species	Fed/CA
American peregrine falcon - endangered species	Fed/CA
California Red Legged frog	Fed
Sagehen Creek goeracean caddisfly - Category 1 species	Fed

**B. Species of Special Interest** - These are species that have been identified as being of special interest and listed as Category 2 by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mt. Lyell salamander	Fed
Wolverine	Fed
Mono Basin mountain beaver	Fed
Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare	Fed
Cold Spring caddisfly	Fed
Confusion caddisfly	Fed
Kings Canyon cryptochian caddisfly	Fed

### **C. Sensitive Species**

	<b>Source</b>
Sierra Nevada red fox	FS\CA
spotted owl	FS
Goshawk	FS
Willow flycatcher	FS
Pine marten	FS
Pacific fisher	FS
Great grey owl	FS
Mountain yellow-legged mountain frog	FS
Foothill yellow-legged frog	FS

### **D. Forest Service Region 5 Species of Concern (SC)**

Yuma myotis bat	SC
fringed myotis bat	SC
long-eared myotis bat	SC
long-legged myotis bat	SC
pale Townsend's big-eared bat	SC

## PLANTS

This portion of the vegetation section describes the rare plants (threatened, endangered, sensitive, and watchlist); the plants that are not desired i.e. noxious and invasive-exotic plants; and those plants that are requested from the forest as special forest products.

**Threatened and endangered plants:** No threatened or endangered plant species were expected or known to occur within the analysis area.

**Sensitive plants:** The sensitive plant species: *Arabis rigidissima* var. *demota* (Galena Creek rockcress), *Botrychium ascendens* (Moonwort), *Botrychium crenulatum* (Moonwort), *Botrychium lunaria* (Moonwort), *Botrychium montanum* (Moonwort), *Epilobium howellii* (Subalpine fireweed), *Erigeron miser* (Starved daisy), *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *torreyanum* (Torrey's buckwheat), *Ivesia aperta* var. *aperta* (Sierra Valley Ivesia), *Ivesia aperta* var. *canina* (Dog Valley Ivesia), *Ivesia sericoleuca* (Plumas Ivesia), *Ivesia webberi* (Webber's Ivesia), *Lewisia longipetala* (Long-petaled Lewisia), *Meesia uliginosa* and *M. triquetra* (Mosses), *Pyrrocoma lucida* (Sticky Pyrrocoma), and *Scheuchzeria palustris* var. *americana* (American Scheuchzeria) were suspected to occur along the study rivers and streams. Portions of the potential habitat along identified rivers and streams have been surveyed as parts of other projects. These other surveys identified known occurrences of *Ivesia sericoluca*.

**Watchlist Plants:** Watchlist plants and plant communities are those plants that may become increasingly rare. These plants are in addition to threatened, endangered, and sensitive plant species. The following watchlist plants were identified as having potential habitat within the project area: *Astragalus whitneyi* var. *lenophyllus* (Whitney's milkvetch), *Camissonia tenacetifolia* ssp. *quadriperforata* (Sierra Valley evening primrose), *Darlingtonia californica* (Pitcher Plant), *Drosera anglica* (English Sundew), *Drosera rotundifolia* (Round-leaved Sundew), *Marsilea oligospora* (Nelson's pepperwort), *Pinus albicaulis* (Whitebark pine), *Potamogeton filiformis* (Slender-leaved Pondweed), *Scutellaria galericulata* (Marsh skullcap), *Silene invisa* (Hidden-petal campion), *Tonestus eximus* (Tahoe tonestus), *Trifolium lemmonii* (Lemmon's clover), *Utricularia minor* (Bladder-pod), and *Veronica cusickii* (Cusick's speedwell). Only portions of the potential habitat along the study rivers and streams have been surveyed as parts of other projects. These other surveys identified known occurrences of *Drosera anglica*, *Drosera rotundifolia*, and *Silene invisa*. Fens, aspen groves, and vernal pools are also known to occur along some of the study rivers and streams.

**Noxious and Invasive-exotic weeds ("weeds"):** "Weeds" are generally non-native plants that have been introduced into an area. They can invade an area with or without disturbance but become more readily established after disturbance. Invasive-exotic and noxious weeds can be introduced into an area in a number of ways, however, vehicles provide one of the most frequent sources of movement of plant materials from place to place.

A complete survey for "weeds" has not occurred. The following noxious and/or invasive-exotic weeds are known to occur along some of the study rivers and streams: *Hypericum perforatum* (Klamath Weed), *Euphorbia esula* (leafy spurge), *Lepidium latifolium* (perennial peppergrass), *Centaurea maculosa* (spotted knapweed), *Linaria dalmatica* (Dalmatian toadflax), *Carduus nutans* (Musk thistle), *Hydrilla verticillata* (hydrilla), and *Centaurea solstitialis* (Yellow Star

Thistle). All of these "weeds" are located primarily along roadsides and other disturbed areas such as old landings.

**Special Forest Products:** The study rivers and streams have numerous plants that have been requested for collection from the TNF as special forest products. These include but are not limited to: conifer boughs, firewood, willow cuttings, native plant cuttings, native plant seeds, manzanita branches, mushrooms, pine cones, and plants for medicinal/herbal/aroma/flavoring uses such as *Arnica* sp. (Arnica) and *Chimophila menziesii* (Little Prince's Pine).

## XII. SCENIC AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) for the Truckee River and its tributaries are described in the TNF and LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs). Visual management objectives are described in the following terms:

**Preservation (P)** - Provides for ecological changes only.

**Retention (R)** - Where human activities are not evident to the casual Forest visitor.

**Partial Retention (PR)** - Where human activity may be evident, but must remain subordinate to the characteristic landscape.

**Modification (M)** - Human activity may dominate the characteristic landscape but must, at the same time, follow naturally established form, line, color, and texture.

VQOs for Wild Rivers would be Preservation; Scenic Rivers would be Retention; and Recreational Rivers would be managed for Retention in areas that typify the outstanding values for which the river was designated and areas which receive a large amount of recreation use. The remaining corridor along Recreational Rivers would be managed to meet an objective of Partial Retention. Existing LRMP direction is compatible with the VQO for all the study rivers except for upper Independence Creek, upper Truckee River, Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek. The following describes the changes that would occur if designated per the eligibility determination:

River	Existing VQO	Projected VQO under Designation
Upper Truckee River	R	P
Upper Independence	R	P
Sagehen Creek	M & PR	R
Perazzo	M & PR	R

The section beginning on page IV.17, Section XX describes the VQOs and Scenic values for each eligible river.

### **XIII. RECREATION**

Recreation is a major activity on the Truckee River and its tributaries. The Lake Tahoe area is a magnet drawing visitors world-wide, although the majority of the visitors are from California. The Truckee River and tributaries are an important resource which provide the basis for a wide variety of both summer and winter recreational activities.

Recreation use is particularly high on the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and the community of Truckee. The river is used for a variety of recreation activities and is one of the most heavily used corridors along the east slope of the Sierra. Popular activities during the summer include recreation rafting or floating, bicycling along a developed bike path, fishing, camping and picnicking. A major highway linking Lake Tahoe to Interstate Highway 80 follows the corridor and traffic is heavy, both summer and winter. Current use during the summer often exceeds the capacity of the corridor to provide a quality and safe recreation experience. Conflicts currently exist between local homeowners, the business community, rafters, bicyclers, and other recreation users due to the intensive use of the river.

Of the remaining study river, the Upper Truckee River is the mostly heavily used for on-site recreation. The area was a candidate for Wilderness designation during the development of the California Wilderness Act of 1984. Although the area was not selected for Wilderness classification, the area has many backcountry recreational attributes and has been managed to protect and maintain these values. The area is unroaded and used extensively by hikers looking for a primitive recreation experience without the crowds generally associated with the classified Wilderness areas along the high Sierra.

Although recreation use in the Sierra Nevada is generally high due to the easy access and the large population in California, recreation use of the remaining study rivers is not unusual in comparison to the rest of the Sierra. Of these remaining study rivers, the Little Truckee River is the most popular and the most accessible to a major highway.

The section beginning on page IV.17 describes the recreational activities for each eligible river.

### **XIV. GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

Cattle and sheep grazing is allowed under permit on all the study rivers. Although the Truckee River and Cold Stream are within allotments, the area within the study corridors are generally not used for livestock grazing. Grazing is managed in accordance with LRMP Standards and Guidelines and individual Allotment Management Plans. Although the study river corridors only consist of a 1/2 mile-wide area within the individual grazing allotments, the corridors often provide for a significant amount of the forage due to the meadow and riparian habitats found along

the streams. The following numbers represent the total amount of livestock use within the allotments located along the study rivers.

Allotment	Class of livestock	Numbers	Animal Unit Months
Alder Creek	Sheep	1,167	2,302 AUMs
Perazzo Creek	Cattle	164	644 AUMs
Sagehen Creek			
Sagehen allotment	Sheep	1,400	425 AUMs
Boca allotment	Sheep	1,167	2,302 AUMs
Upper Truckee (Meiss allotme	Cattle	200	766 AUMs
Little Truckee River			
Bickford	Cattle	75	403 AUMs
Webber Lake	Sheep	150	135 AUMs

Note: An Animal Unit Month (AUM) is one cow/calf for one month or 5 sheep for one month.

Grazing is prohibited within the Sagehen Research Station. Perazzo Creek through the lower meadows is currently being fenced to protect the rehabilitation work to restore the stream channel and streambanks (See page IV.27). The remaining areas are managed in accordance with the specific Allotment Management Plans or Annual Plans of Use.

## **XV. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC**

Tourism, including recreation, is the single most important economic segment of the California communities on the Truckee River system. The communities within the Lake Tahoe Basin and Truckee all rely on both summer and winter recreation attractions to draw thousands of visitors to the area. Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River and its tributaries are the primary attractions for people visiting and staying in the area. The beauty of Lake Tahoe is known internationally and draws people to the area, both to enjoy the lake and Truckee River along with the gaming provided by the casinos.

There are ten ski areas within the Lake Tahoe Basin and Truckee River drainage, all within approximately one hour from Reno and 2½ hours from Sacramento. Winter activities provide an important economic boost to the area.

Most of the future development along the Truckee is expected to be related to recreation, tourism, and the development of second or vacation homes. Although tourism and recreation dominate the economy, logging and livestock grazing are still important elements of the economy. There is a large sawmill at Loyalton that processes most of the timber harvested from the Truckee River

Basin and provides significant employment for residents of the Sierra Valley. Additionally there are a number of ranchers who use the Truckee River area for summer pasture for both cattle and sheep.

Another aspect of the economic setting that is pertinent to this study is the existing dam infrastructure. Stampede, Boca, Prosser, Independence, Donner, and Lake Tahoe all have dams that create reservoirs for storing water. This water represents significant water supplies for local towns and cities and a majority of the supply for Reno, Nevada. In addition to drinking water, this is the supply for industrial uses and agriculture in Nevada. As reported previously, this water supply also serves the Indian tribes of Pyramid Lake and provides flows for the threatened or endangered Cui-ui in Pyramid Lake. In addition to these consumptive uses the water is also used to generate electric power and provide flood control. These reservoirs provide a magnet for flatwater recreation activities and attract high numbers of tourists for boating, fishing, and shore related activities. These water supplies represent a foundation for all the subsequent economic activities discussed above.

## **XVI. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

At the present time, there are no Congressionally designated Wild, Scenic or Recreational rivers along the east slope of the Sierra. California has designated the East Fork of the Carson River (10 miles), and the West Fork of the Walker River ( 37 miles), as Wild and Scenic Rivers under the State process. The North Fork of the American River, directly west of the study area and on the west slope of the Sierra, was designated a Wild River by Congress in 1978. Other designated rivers on the west slope in the central Sierra include the Middle Fork of the Feather River, Merced River, Kings River, and the Tuolumne River. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 lists Federally or State designated rivers, or rivers currently identified for study for either Federal or State designation, within Nevada and California.

**TABLE 4.1**

**Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers  
within  
Sierra Nevada Province**

<b>Federal Agency* Status</b>	<b>River Name</b>	
Congress (FS)	North Fork American River	Wild
Congress (FS, PS)	North Fork Kern	Wild, Rec
Congress (FS)	South Fork Kern	Scenic, Rec
Congress (FS)	Kings River	Wild
Congress (FS, PS)	South Fork Kings River	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Congress (FS, PS)	Middle Fork Kings River	Wild
Congress (FS, PS, BLM)	Tuolumne River	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Congress (FS, PS, BLM)	Merced	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Congress (FS, PS)	South Fork Merced	Wild
Congress (FS)	Middle Fork Feather	Wild, Scenic, Rec

**California State System - Wild and Scenic Rivers**  
(Public Resources Code, Sections 5093.54-5093.542)

California	East Fork Carson River	Scenic
California	West Fork Walker River	Wild, Scenic
California	No. Fork American River	Wild, Scenic
California	Lower American River	Recreation

\* FS is USDA Forest Service

\* PS is USDI Park Service

\* BLM is USDI Bureau of Land Management

**TABLE 4.2**  
**Wild and Scenic Rivers Identified for Future Study**  
**within**  
**Sierra Nevada Province (East Slope Rivers Only)**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Federal Agency<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>River Name</b>
Toiyabe NF	East Fork Carson River	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Toiyabe NF	West Fork Walker River	Wild and Scenic
Inyo NF	Lundy Canyon (Mill Creek)	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Inyo NF	Lake Canyon (So Fk Mill Creek)	Wild, Scenic
Inyo NF	UpperLeeVining Creek	Wild
Inyo NF	Lower Lee VingCreek	Rec
Inyo NF	BloodyCanyon(Walker Creek)	Wild
Inyo NF	GlassCreek/LowerDeadman/ Upper Owens River	Scenic, Rec
Inyo NF	Laurel Creek	Scenic
Inyo NF	McGee Creek	Wild
Inyo NF	So Fork Bishop Creek	Wild, Rec
Inyo NF	Cottonwood Creek	Scenic
Inyo NF	Lone Pine Creek	Wild, Rec
Inyo NF	Cottonwood Creek	Wild, Scenic, Rec
Inyo NF	Big Pine Creek	Wild, Rec
Inyo NF	Hot Creek	Rec
Inyo NF	Parker Creek	Wild
Inyo NF	Walker Creek	Wild
Inyo NF	Rock Creek	Wild, Rec
Inyo NF	Golden Trout Creek	Wild
Tahoe NF/LTBMU	Truckee River	Rec
Tahoe NF	Cold Stream	Rec
Tahoe NF	Alder Creek	Rec
Tahoe NF	Little Truckee River	Rec
Tahoe NF	Sagehen Creek	Scenic
Tahoe NF	Independence Creek	Wild
Tahoe NF	Perazzo Creek	Scenic
LTBMU	Upper Truckee River	14Scenic

<sup>1</sup> NF is National Forest; BLM is USDI Bureau of Land Management; LTBMU is the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, a Forest Service Administrative Unit.

## **XVII. LANDOWNERSHIP AND LAND USE**

Private lands within the study area include large ownerships managed for timber production and grazing, and numerous small tracts currently developed for housing, recreational purposes or held for future development. There are four major ski areas within the Truckee River watershed, outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Sierra Pacific Industries (a timber company), Sierra Pacific Power Company, and the Southern Pacific Railroad are the major landowners. A major utility corridor follows Interstate 80 and includes major power and gas lines and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The utilities follow the Truckee River from east of Reno through the community of Truckee and on west over Donner Pass.

Public lands within the river study areas are managed primarily by two National Forests (Tahoe National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit), the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers. The State of California manages State lands for recreation and wildlife purposes. Parts of the Desolation and Mount Rose Wilderness areas are located within the Truckee watershed.

The University of California at Berkeley has a long-term research station and program on National Forest System lands in Sagehen Creek. The primary objective of the research station is studying eastside Sierra ecosystem components including, but not limited to: vegetation, wildlife, and fisheries.

## **XVIII. CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Knowledge of the time period preceding the coming of the first Euro-American settlers comes primarily from archaeological studies and ethnographic descriptions of the Native American groups. Archaeological studies indicate that people began to live in the study area about 8,000 years ago. With changing environmental conditions, the economic base for these hunters and gatherers required diversification such that by the time of Euro-American contact, the Washoe were dependent upon the wealth of fish resources found throughout the Truckee River and Lake Tahoe basins.

Historic occupation of the area began with the use of the Emigrant Trail by Euro-American settlers enroute to California from the east. The first wagon party to utilize the route along the Truckee River Canyon to Donner Pass was the Stephens Party of 1844. The tragic Donner Party followed in 1846-47.

Emigrant trails through the Tahoe Basin were created across a few strategic passes, such as Carson Pass and Luther Pass, beginning in the late 1840s.

The opening of the Comstock in Virginia City, Nevada in 1859 brought about an expansion of industry throughout the Truckee River drainage system including: establishment of transportation networks such as the Henness Pass Road and the Tahoe-Truckee Toll Road, both completed in 1860; the harvesting of ice for the Pacific Fruit Exchange, but also to cool the deep mine shaft temperatures; cattle and sheep grazing; dairying; and the manufacturing of charcoal by the Chinese which fueled the bellows used in the smelting process.

The first permanent settlement in the Truckee area was founded by Joe Grey in 1863. Grey established a cabin at the end of the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Wagon Road. This road was built in advance of the Central Pacific Railroad for hauling supplies. Grey's Station, the name for this settlement, served as a stage station for travelers and railroad construction crews. A second settler, a man by the name of Coburn, built additional buildings and the town became known as Coburn's Station. In 1868 the town burned; it was rebuilt and renamed Truckee.

The dominant industry of the area was logging. These operations supplied all construction elements for the railroads, wooden support beams for mine shafts, lumber for local construction, and fuel for steam-powered engines. These logging industries continued to expand at the turn of the century as the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 opened up more distant markets for consumption of wood products. The primary lumber company in the Truckee area was the Truckee Lumber Company (1867-1916), which established their first sawmill at Coburn's Station (Truckee).

## **XIX. TIMBER MANAGEMENT**

The direction for timber management within the study area on the TNF and LTBMU, has changed since the approval of their respective Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs). Timber management practices are currently guided by the Interim Guidelines for the California Spotted Owl (CASPO). These are interim guidelines. Several initiatives are being developed for management of the California spotted owl and if approved will again amend LRMPs. The direction for timber management could change significantly once the guidelines are finalized.

Although land allocation remains as described in each LRMP, as amended, the silvicultural practices must be in conformance with the spotted owl guidelines. Generally, past timber management practices such as clear-cutting, seed tree cutting, and heavy shelterwood cutting are no longer used. Timber harvest prescriptions are used that protect and/or develop habitat for spotted owls and other animals requiring old forest habitats. These practices leave the larger trees, maintain a multiple forest canopy, leave a number of snags and down logs, and provide greater protection to riparian areas. The overall effect of these practices is a harvest that cuts fewer and smaller trees per acre, resulting in less volume per acre than originally projected in the LRMPs.

The drought of the late 80's and early 90's has resulted in significant mortality of the forest in the Lake Tahoe Basin and along some of the other river corridors. There has been an effort made to salvage the dead and dying trees which has resulted in a "one-time" increase in timber harvest over that projected in the LTBMU's and TNF's LRMP. It is expected that once the salvage effort is completed, the volume of timber removed will drop back to the level described in the LTBMU and TNF's LRMP. Both harvest of green and dead trees are guided by the CASPO Guidelines.

## **XX. DESCRIPTION OF ELIGIBLE RIVERS**

### **A. Truckee River**

This eligible river originates from the waters of Lake Tahoe at 6,240 feet and drops to about 5,780 feet over 11 miles near the town of Truckee. The river is within Placer and Nevada counties, California. The surrounding slopes are covered with a conifer forest. In the corridor itself, mixed conifer occur on the east side and true fir on the west side. Highway 89 borders the entire segment, offering numerous access points. This level of accessibility helps define the river's character as a type of linear park. Frequent pullouts along the roadway enable people to park and unload their picnic and camp equipment and carry them to the shoreline. The first four miles between Tahoe City dam and the River Ranch is also paralleled by a bike path constructed and maintained by the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD). The bike path extends beyond the River Ranch approximately 1/2 mile to the Midway Bridge. Possible extension of the bikepath to Truckee is currently being studied. Public access to the river is currently provided from the developed Forest Service recreation sites north of the River Ranch and river access points near the Tahoe City dam.

The corridor is heavily developed with numerous private homesites, mostly used as vacation homes. The Forest Service administers through special use permits, three campgrounds, a picnic area, a summer home tract, several water transmission lines, a portion of the Sierra Crest Grazing Allotment, water tanks, road special-use permits, power and telephone transmission lines, and a sewer transmission line between Lake Tahoe and the treatment plant in Truckee. Traffic frequently exceeds the capacity of the highway, particularly during the winter ski season. The California Department of Transportation (Cal Trans) is currently studying alternatives to reduce vehicle traffic to Lake Tahoe. Satellite parking in the Truckee area with shuttle buses, and renewal of rail service to the Tahoe Basin, are some of the items being considered.

A summertime use that became popular, and somewhat controversial, in the 1970s is rafting or floating the river and other general water sports. The Truckee River between Tahoe City and the River Ranch is a very placid reach of water and is popular for water sports, including floating with rafts, inner tubes, and air mattresses. Placer County regulates commercial rentals along the river in this section between the dam at Tahoe City and the River Ranch. Noncommercial use has increased and the TCPUD has developed a public launch facility and parking area near the "Y" at

Tahoe City. Adequate flows for water sports can be maintained throughout the summer, except under drought conditions.

The Truckee River is Lake Tahoe's only outlet. A dam built in 1865 controls the release of Tahoe's waters, the top six feet of which (regulating up to 745,000 acre feet of water) is operated as a reservoir that ultimately drains into Pyramid Lake. The natural level of the outlet from the lake is 6,223 feet. However, depending upon the quantity of inflow and operation of the gates, the Tahoe City dam can store about six feet or up to a maximum level of 6,229 feet. There are no current proposals for any additional water or power improvements along the Truckee corridor.

Existing flows are controlled by the dam at Tahoe City and are managed within two management constraints. Current minimum in-stream flow requirement is 50 cfs in the winter and 70 cfs during the summer period in order to maintain fish habitat. Flows are coordinated with releases from other reservoirs within the Truckee River Basin to maintain a flow of 500 cfs near the California/Nevada State line, known as the Floriston rates. In a normal year, the average release from the Tahoe City dam is 250 to 350 cfs. A flow of 125 cfs is considered the minimum flow needed to float the river. The water rights associated with these flows as well as the coordination and timing of these flows are a very complex subject that has been the subject of numerous administrative processes and court cases. The Truckee River is known as one of the most adjudicated rivers in America.

The Truckee River flows mostly through land managed by the LTBMU and the TNF, although there are some small parcels of private land within the river corridor. There are 2,637 acres of National Forest System lands and 1,010 acres of private lands within the 1/2-mile wide study corridor. The status of the National Forest lands (commonly called the Lanfar Deed lands) along the corridor is complex and not totally resolved. Both the Forest Service and Sierra Pacific Power Company claimed ownership of a 100-foot-wide strip on each side of the meander line of the Truckee River. A District Court Judgment by the Eastern District of California filed on May 24, 1985 determined "that the United States owns the fee to the disputed 100 foot strips and that Sierra Pacific Power Company has an easement thereon." The easement is for power purposes only.

The river bed up to the high water mark is claimed by the State of California and the status of the National Forest lands (Lanfar Deed lands) beyond the 100 foot strip have the same legal questions as the 100-foot strip. The issues related to the Lanfar Deed lands beyond the 100-foot-wide strip have not been contested in court; therefore, no legal determination has been made to date.

This special status of the public lands along the Truckee River create some of the same concerns or potential issues that private lands provide for designation. A recommendation for designation will need to consider the effects of the power easement and possible impacts to the free-flowing characteristic if the river is developed for power production.

As mentioned previously, several prehistoric sites along the Truckee River qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as they contain data for investigating regional research questions. These sites are large, contain complex stratigraphy, and contain evidence for the earliest human use of this region within the Sierra Nevada. One of these sites, CA-PLA-164, provided the oldest known Carbon 14 date of 8,130 B.P. (before present) from an archaeological site in this region. This date was obtained from small chunks of charcoal which were associated with the partially fossilized wing bone of a large bird and two basalt tools.

The primary lumber company to operate along this portion of the Truckee River was the Truckee Lumber Company (1867-1916). Timber harvesting techniques for this company involved cutting trees on top of the Truckee River canyon, dragging the logs along chutes to the bluff overlooking the Truckee River, and releasing the logs down the slope and into the river to float to the mill at Truckee. Logs were also transported to the chutes by a narrow gauge railroad which was 1½ miles long. The cars were let down by brakes and drawn back up the slope by horses. As easily accessible areas for logging were exhausted, the lumber company expanded into new areas. Following the Tahoe-Truckee Toll Road (1860), a narrow gauge railroad, the Lake Tahoe Railway and Transportation Company, was completed in 1900. This railroad was primarily a tourist line which operated between Truckee and Tahoe City from May 15 through November 15. Freight, in the form of forest products, was hauled for the Truckee Lumber Company. In 1909 the Truckee Lumber Company built a spur into Squaw Valley to access timber harvesting operations there. The railroad bed for the Lake Tahoe Railway and Transportation Company is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The first influx of white settlers into the Squaw Valley area occurred in 1863. The summer of that year witnessed Shannon Knox and John Keiser's discovery of silver deposits. A settlement called Knoxville was located on the east side of the Truckee River while another town, Claraville, was located near the present-day entrance to the valley. By 1864, the towns were abandoned when miners discovered the silver deposits were a hoax.

The Truckee River is within Management Area 069-Truckee River as described in the TNF LRMP. Management direction is to develop and protect the recreation values and to maintain the visual quality and the Truckee River watershed. Timber management activities are limited to providing for stand health and to meet visual and recreation objectives.

The Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) for the foreground view from US Highway 89 South is Retention and in Middleground Partial Retention. There are several scenic rocky bluffs within the corridor. The Truckee River provides a major visual element that enhances the recreation experience within the corridor. The water features are primarily small riffles and rapids along with some meandering stretches of "slow" water.

Management of LTBMU lands are to develop and protect the recreation values; the area is within the Lower Truckee River Management Area as described in the LTBMU LRMP. The Management Area direction acknowledges the need to better coordinate interagency responsibilities along the corridor.

The private lands within the study boundary are in Placer and Nevada Counties and land uses permitted under the County Plans are considered compatible with Recreational river classification.

The OR values identified for the Truckee River include recreation and cultural values. The Truckee River is eligible for Recreational classification.

## **B. Sagehen Creek**

Sagehen Creek is an eight mile segment which flows from its headwaters to Stampede Reservoir. The lands adjacent to the stream are entirely National Forest System lands and are managed by the TNF. The University of California at Berkeley has conducted a variety of research activities on National Forest lands within the Sagehen Basin since 1951. There have been over 130 research publications, films, and theses conducted in the area. Sagehen Creek is entirely within Nevada County, California.

The following is quoted from the Annual Report, Sagehen Creek Field Station (1990) produced by the Department of Forestry and Resource Management, University of California, Berkeley. "The Sagehen Creek Field Station (operated by the University of California at Berkeley) is devoted primarily to natural history research, secondarily to teaching at the university level. Some principal objectives of the research program are:

1. To determine the species composition, spatial distribution, and functional interrelationships of the various ecological communities in Sagehen Basin.
2. To understand the natural history of as many as possible of the individual species of plants and animals that constitute the ecological communities.
3. To study the stream and its tributaries, fens and riparian vegetation with a view to understanding the food chains that support aquatic life.
4. To follow the processes of plant succession following fire and other forms of vegetation disturbance, and to measure the effects on animal populations.
5. To determine the influence of weather, soils, competition, predation, and food and cover needs as they govern trends in animal populations.

The Station encourages basic biological and ecological studies and applied research directed towards solving current problems in the management of wildland resources. One such applied problem is to assess the interrelationships of timber management practices and wildlife and fisheries resources. Long-term experiments are given special consideration."

The Sagehen headwaters are an intact glacial cirque and part of a highly complex ecosystem. The glacial cirque gives rise to fens and bogs which are part of a complex hydrological system and are considered to have significant value for research purposes. The fens and bogs support a unique vegetative community and support over 40 different plant species, including two sundews, *Drosera rotundifolia* and *Drosera angelica*. Some of the largest and best studied fens in the entire Sierra Nevada occur in the Sagehen Creek Basin. There are known occurrences of *Ivesia sericoleuca* and *Silene invisia* in the Basin. Sagehen Creek also provides numerous habitats for wildlife and an endemic Lahontan Basin native fish community.

There are 2,451 acres of National Forest System lands and no acres of private lands with the study corridor.

Flows are unregulated in Sagehen Creek and daily average flow is 12.3 cfs based on about 40 years of data. (See Table 4.4) Sagehen has a large number of small springs that flow yearlong throughout the basin.

Recreation use is dispersed throughout the area, and most of the recreation use results from deer hunting during the fall. There is one small campground within view of the stream.

The VQOs for the majority of Sagehen Creek is Partial Retention with the emphasis on views from US Highway 89. The overall visual quality is mostly low or moderate. The main visual interest in the corridor would be the stream itself and some of the associated bogs and fens.

Logging operations along Sagehen Creek began in 1874. Martin and Leach operated the Banner Mill eight miles from Truckee on Sagehen Creek until 1882. Lonkey and E.R. Smith operated this same mill from 1882 until 1889. A cordwood producer, Abner Week, was also operating in the headwaters of Sagehen Creek.

The primary lumber company which operated in the Sagehen Creek drainage was the Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company (SNW&L) whose operations were centered at Hobart Mills. The SNW&L Company was in operation from 1896 until 1917, at which time the company's assets were turned over to the Hobart Estate. The mill at Hobart Mills continued to operate until 1936.

The historic sites associated with the Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company within the Sagehen Creek basin are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a

historic district. The majority of these sites and associated features represent an intact railroad-based logging system. Additionally, the Banner Mill and associated animal-based transportation system are also represented as well as depression-era sites, which have received very little research to date.

Sagehen is within Management Area (MA) 043-the Sagehen Station and MA 036-the Sagehen Basin as described in the Tahoe LRMP. MA 043 comprises a 350-acre tract containing the Research Station, which has a number of buildings and research activities operating under special use permit. The Mason Fen, the largest fen on the TNF, consists of 30 acres and has been designated a Special Interest Area (SIA) by the Forest Service. Management direction for MA 043 is to maintain and provide for wildland research projects.

Management direction MA 036 includes the rest of the Sagehen Basin. The management emphasis is to manage the timber to "provide two alternative types of stand structure typified by even-aged openings and stands managed to produce and maintain mature forest structure. This will allow the evaluation of the relationships between stand structure, timber yields, wildlife habitat and other resource values." The original direction also anticipated a research objective that would evaluate the effects of the timber program on wildlife. Since the approval of the LRMP in 1990, timber management practices have changed to provide for the California spotted owl and its habitat. Current timber management activities would be in accordance with the Interim California Spotted Owl Guidelines. The primary research emphasis in both Management Areas has been on studying the fish, vegetation, and wildlife resources.

The TNF evaluated possible SIA designation for three sites in the Sagehen Basin during the development of the TNF LRMP. These included the Mason Fen, which was designated as a SIA, the Sagehen Headwaters, which was designated as a SIA, and the Sagehen Basin, which was not selected. Because management emphasis within the Sagehen Basin has changed since issuance of the LRMP, there have been proposals by the TNF's LRMP Interdisciplinary Team to reevaluate the Basin for possible SIA designation.

The OR values for Sagehen Creek include vegetation/ecological values, cultural and historical values, fish and wildlife, geological, and hydrological values. Sagehen is eligible for Scenic classification.

### **C. Upper Independence Creek**

The eligible reach of Upper Independence Creek extends two miles upstream from Independence Lake to its headwaters. Access to Upper Independence Creek is via one of two roads that parallel the north and south sides of the lake. The roads terminate just short of the west end of the lake and access is controlled by the private property surrounding the lake. The stream above the lake is

accessible only by trail and is considered a "pristine" area. The lake shore and lower 300 feet of stream are on private lands. There are 644 acres of National Forest System lands and 80 acres of private lands within the study boundaries. Upper Independence Creek is one of two streams, out of the eight, being evaluated that is classified "Wild". Upper Independence Creek is entirely within Nevada County, California.

Upper Independence Creek has also been identified as a potential SIA by the TNF because of its scenic and ecological values, and Lahontan cutthroat trout fisheries, which is a Federally threatened species. The plant values are of regional significance due to the existence of fens, which are rare in California. See Appendix C for a description of the potential SIA.

Independence Lake is a natural lake where the water level has been raised by construction of a 31-foot-high earthen dam. The dam provides an additional storage of 17,500 acre feet of water that is owned by Sierra Pacific Power Company, a utility that provides municipal and industrial water to Reno and Sparks. Storage capacity of the lake varies between an elevation of 6,921 feet and 6,949 feet. A barrier to fish migrating into Upper Independence Creek develops during the spawning period when the lake drops below an elevation of 6,920 feet. This issue is being evaluated and is expected to be resolved as part of the TROA EIS/EIR.

Upper Independence Creek is within Management Area (MA) 044-Castle as described in the TNF LRMP. Management emphasis for the area is to enhance dispersed recreation use and to maintain the remote qualities that make the area attractive. Management activities should result in a natural-appearing landscape with few user conflicts.

Based on the TNF LRMP direction, the VQO for the area is Partial Retention. The scenic quality is very high due to the dramatic "U" shaped valley, interesting riparian vegetation and glacial formed Independence Lake.

The private land within the study boundary is within Nevada County and land uses permitted under county Planning are not considered compatible with the management objectives for a National Wild River, because roaded access is permitted.

Outstandingly Remarkable values in Upper Independence Creek include vegetation/ecological values, scenic and fisheries. Upper Independence Creek is eligible for Wild classification.

#### **D. Little Truckee River**

The Little Truckee River is 14 miles long from its origin at Webber Lake to Stampede Reservoir. Within that reach, Independence Creek and Perazzo Creek, flow into the main stem of the Little Truckee. Much of the Little Truckee is accessible from either State Highway 89 or the Jackson Meadows Road, both paved highways. About 54 percent of the lands along the Little Truckee are

National Forest System lands managed by the TNF. The remaining lands are in private ownership in the nature of large blocks, and many of the significant meadows that lie along the Little Truckee River are privately owned. There are 3,709 acres of National Forest System lands and 1,963 acres of private lands in the study corridor. The privately owned lands are primarily used for livestock grazing and logging, although there is a major, privately owned recreation complex on Webber Lake. This segment of the Little Truckee River flows through Sierra County, California.

The Sierra Valley Water Users in Plumas and Sierra Counties have rights to divert water from the Little Truckee River just above Independence Creek for agricultural use in Sierra Valley. This is an "out of basin" diversion which has averaged about 6,000 acre feet annually. Although there is a minimum instream flow of about 3-5 cfs, the diversion has a significant impact on river values below the diversion during periods of low flow.

Sierra Pacific Power Company has identified a potential dam and reservoir site on the Little Truckee River above Stampede Reservoir (see Map C at the end of this Chapter). This potential site is one of a number of possible projects identified by the utility company in their 1988 Water Resources Plan. The site is located in Section 33, T. 19 N. R 16 E. and would have a maximum reservoir capacity of 13,000 acre feet which could be expanded to approximately 20,000 acre feet with some relocation of Highway 89. The reservoir would back water up the Little Truckee River to a point just below the lower Little Truckee Campground. No firm proposals have been made by Sierra Pacific Power Company to actually construct a dam and reservoir at this time, but the utility company wants to maintain the option for the project in the event additional upstream storage is needed to provide municipal and industrial water to Reno and Sparks.

The Henness Pass Road was widely used by stagecoach and freight traffic between the Comstock town of Virginia City, the California towns of Nevada City and Marysville, and the Sacramento Valley during the 1860s. In 1850 Henness Pass was the shortest route to the goldfields on the upper Yuba River near Downieville. The road received improvements after two stock companies were formed: the Truckee Turnpike Company and the Henness Pass Turnpike Company. The road was used by stage and freight traffic between 1860 and 1868 after which time the volume of stage and freight traffic dropped because of the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad. However, the wagon road network continued to serve as a regional feeder line for freight between the railroad terminus at Truckee and settlements in Sierra Valley such as Sierraville. Local stage companies also continued to use the roads for passenger transport until the turn of the century. Several way stations were built to service the road during this time period, including hotels, stage stations, and saloons. The Henness Pass Road and associated support service sites are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The vegetative values are considered Outstandingly Remarkable because of the fens. Wildlife values are also outstanding due to the presence of a bald eagle nesting site and the second most extensive population of willow fly- catchers in the state.

The Little Truckee River is within Management Areas (MAs) 019-Eighty-Nine and MA 018-Henness as described in the Tahoe LRMP. MA 019 covers the road and streamside zone along Highway 89 and management direction is to maintain the visual quality with a foreground Retention VQO and middleground Partial Retention VQO. The LRMP also provides direction to restore damaged watersheds from the large wildfires in the area and continue maintenance and construction of facilities for developed and dispersed recreation. There are two developed campgrounds within the area and a parking area for dispersed winter sports on the summit between Cold Stream and the Little Truckee River. Fishing and general dispersed use are the main recreation activities along the river.

MA 018 is a large Management Area and provides direction for the segment of the river from Highway 89 to Webber Lake along the Henness Pass Road. Management direction is generally for timber and range management, although wildlife and watershed values are emphasized when managing streamside zones.

Based on LRMP direction, the VQO is Partial Retention as seen from the Fiberboard road. The overall visual quality is quite high due to the broad open valley, grand vistas, and interesting meander features of the river.

The private land within the study boundary is zoned General Forest by Sierra County and land uses permitted under this zone are considered compatible with the management objectives for a National Recreation River. The Highway 89 corridor has also been designated a Scenic Corridor by Sierra County.

OR values for the Little Truckee River include vegetation/ecological values, wildlife, and cultural resource values.

The Little Truckee River is eligible for Recreational classification.

#### **E. Perazzo Creek**

Perazzo Creek is 3.2 miles long, a tributary of the Little Truckee River, and flows mostly through National Forest System lands managed by the TNF, although 0.4 miles of the river does flow through privately owned lands. There are 913 acres of National Forest System lands and 272 acres of private lands in the study area. Access is provided off the Jackson Meadows road via a rough timber road. The meadow complex and its associated wildlife habitat is the most

outstanding feature associated with Perazzo Creek. Perazzo is mostly within Sierra County with approximately 1/2 mile of the headwaters in Nevada County.

The area supports a number of fens ranging in size from 12 square feet to about one acre separated by dry meadows and forest. All are located between the slightly sloped land between the meadows and the ridges. The fens along with bogs, dry meadows, wet meadows, aspen, and a wide range of wild flowers and forbs provide a very diverse and unique plant community. This diverse plant community provides an extensive riparian community supporting many riparian dependent species including habitat for the willow flycatcher. This canyon and the Little Truckee River support the second largest willow flycatcher population in California. Old-growth timber stands add to the diversity and provide valuable habitat for old-growth dependent species.

Perazzo Creek is a small stream with an average daily flow estimated at 15 to 20 cfs, and it is unregulated and fed by natural flows.

The lower part (80%) of Perazzo Creek is within TNF LRMP Management Area (MA) 018-Henness where the overall management direction is for timber and range management. The direction for the streamside zones and the meadow complex is to enhance wildlife and watershed values.

The upper part of Perazzo Creek (20%) lies within TNF LRMP MA 044-Castle which is to be managed for dispersed recreation, watershed and to maintain a natural appearing landscape.

Based on LRMP direction, the VQO for most of Perazzo Creek is Modification and a small amount of Partial Retention in the headwaters. The overall scenic quality is high particularly in the headwaters although private land logging has diminished much of the natural feeling. Some dramatic rock cliffs still dominate the view. The lower stretch of the stream is part of a broad scenic valley.

The private land within the study boundary is within Sierra County and Nevada County. Land uses permitted under the General Land Use Plans of the Counties, particularly the intensity of timber harvest and road access, are not considered compatible with the management objectives for a National Scenic River. However, they are compatible with Recreational River objectives. As stated previously, the Sierra County Board of Supervisors have passed a Resolution opposing any Wild and Scenic River designations in the County.

Currently, the Forest Service has initiated a major stream and riparian improvement project in Perazzo Meadows with the objective of stabilizing and improving the stream channel for fisheries. The stream channel is being fenced to protect the streambanks from erosion resulting from historic intensive use of cattle and sheep. Willows are being planted to stabilize the streambanks, and logs are being placed in the stream to improve the stream pool/riffle ratio for fish as well as provide a

source of woody material to improve productivity of the stream. Perazzo Creek is identified in the Technical Agency Draft of the Recovery Plan for Lahontan cutthroat trout as a potential LCT recovery site. In addition, the allotment management plan for this area is being revised and the environmental analysis is planned to be completed in the year 2000. These activities are designed to maintain the outstandingly remarkable values in Perazzo Creek.

A timber harvest project designed to improve the health and vigor of the timber on National Forest System lands was sold in December 1993. The contract provides three years to complete the harvest. The sale includes a horse logging unit along the sensitive meadow areas of Perazzo Creek and a single tree/group selection method of marking was used throughout the sale area. Some sanitation and salvage logging is also included. The logging proposed is consistent with the direction for Scenic Rivers described in Appendix A.

The private lands at the headwaters of Perazzo Creek were logged in 1992. Logging roads were constructed adjacent to the stream in a number of areas and remain open, providing road access to the upper reaches of the river. The logging practices on the private land would not be considered compatible with the direction described in Appendix A for a Scenic River. The amount of volume removed per acre and the miles and location of roads constructed are more in line with standards for a Recreational River than a Scenic River. Logging practices along the river corridor has clearly changed the visual characteristics from a natural condition to a managed forest condition. Designation as a National Scenic River could result in a moderate to high level of conflict with management objectives of the private land owners.

OR values found in Perazzo Creek include vegetation/ecological values and wildlife values.

Perazzo Creek is eligible for Scenic classification.

## **F. Upper Truckee River**

The Upper Truckee River is 14.0 miles long. The headwaters of the river is near Carson Pass and flows north into the south end of Lake Tahoe near Tahoe Keys. The eligible part of the river is an approximate 7-mile segment from Carson Pass to south of the Upper Truckee Road. The eligible river is entirely on National Forest System lands. The study river flows through an area that is near natural and was considered for Wilderness designation as part of the California Wilderness Act. The upper Truckee's watershed is about 36,200 acres with 85% in El Dorado County and the remainder in Alpine County. The area remains near pristine, is within the Meiss Management Area as described by the LTBMU LRMP, and is being managed to protect its near natural values.

Land uses permitted under county zoning do not directly affect the study area and wild designation is compatible with county planning and zoning.

The area is an extremely popular area for recreation and provides an alternative to the generally crowded Desolation Wilderness. Dardenelles, Round, Meiss, Showers, Four, and Elbert lakes, mark the Meiss Country as a unique recreation resource. Summer recreation use, accessible through five trailheads located on two National Forests, is estimated at 10,000 persons per year, but may exceed 15,000 persons during a peak year.

Brook trout occur in four of the six lakes in the area: Dardenelles, Elbert, Four, and Showers. Brook trout are present in the Upper Truckee River and its tributaries. Brook trout were introduced in the early to mid-1900s.

The Upper Truckee is the largest tributary to Lake Tahoe and flows throughout the year. Flows average about 95 cfs daily, with a record high flow of 2,740 cfs. The stream supports a recreational fisheries with a variety of trout species including rainbow trout, brown trout, eastern brook trout, and LCT. The Upper Truckee supports the greatest number of migratory and resident fish populations of any Lake Tahoe tributary. There is a potential for an outstanding fisheries on the Upper Truckee, but will require some habitat improvement to reach its potential.

On the Meiss Allotment approximately 200 head of cattle are run for a total of 766 animal unit months. This allotment includes most of the upper Truckee Basin but the river is central to the grazing allotment. The cattle would be managed under a grazing system that will protect the Outstandingly Remarkable characteristics of the area if the river is designated.

The LCT is the only trout native to the Lake Tahoe Basin and the Truckee River system. The Recovery Plan for the LCT identified Meiss Meadow as suitable for the restoration of the fish. Restoration began in 1988 with the removal of non-native salmonids and rotenone application in the Alpine County portion of the upper Truckee River and Meiss Lake. This continued through 1991 and, in the summers and falls of 1990-92, fingerlings and adult Lahontan cutthroat trout were planted in Meiss Lake and the Upper Truckee River. This area is currently closed to fishing to protect the LCT population.

The Meiss cabin and barn complex, built in 1878, are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The cabin is one of the few remaining from the era of upland cattle grazing in the Carson Pass area between 1860 and the early 1900s. It retains remarkable structural integrity and embodies a distinctive frame cabin style which was popular in high country cattle range camps during the 1860s and 1870s. Cattle operators continue to use the cabin today.

Recreation management objectives are to provide a low development setting with minimum regulations or restrictions. Motorized vehicles are prohibited throughout the area.

OR values identified for the Upper Truckee River include recreation, scenic, cultural, and fish and wildlife resource values.

The Upper 7-mile portion of this river from Carson Pass to near the South Upper Truckee Road is eligible for Wild classification.

### **G. Cold Stream**

Cold Stream is 5.2 miles long and flows from a scenic canyon which lies just south of the Donner State Park and Interstate Highway 80. Cold Stream flows into Donner Creek just below or east of the Donner State Park. Much of the land ownership is private, although the California State Parks has recently acquired an additional one-mile of stream frontage between the railroad in the lower canyon. Only 0.6 miles of the stream crosses National Forest System lands, mostly near the head of the canyon. There are 153 acres of National Forest System lands and 1,057 acres of state/private lands within the 1/2-mile wide study area corridor. Much of the private land within the area has been logged or is scheduled for logging. The eligible section of Cold Stream is within Placer County, California.

The California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail extends up Cold Stream Canyon along Cold Stream and Emigrant Canyon. This trail, one of several routes utilized to access California and incorporated into the California National Historic Trail system, was recently given National Trail System status. The route follows the stream in order to access two separate Sierra Nevada crossings, Roller Pass and Cold Stream Pass. These passes are easier to approach than Donner Pass and carried the bulk of traffic on the Truckee route until 1864 when the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Wagon Road was built.

Although much of the original trail bed has been obscured by modern developments, there are many areas where evidence of the original trail can be observed. Recent private logging and road construction have made much of the upper Emigrant Canyon accessible by vehicle. The numerous segments which comprise the California National Historic Trail are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

There are three major forks in Cold Stream Canyon, the South Fork, Cold Stream, and Emigrant Canyon. Flows are unregulated in all three canyons and the total average daily flow at the mouth of Cold Stream is estimated at about 42 cfs. Most of the flows are from the South Fork. Emigrant Canyon, the eligible fork for classification, is a small stream and annual daily flows are estimated at 10 to 15 cfs.

A short part of the trail crosses National Forest System lands located within Management Area (MA) 053-Donner, which is managed for recreation and visual values. Lands within the general MA have been identified for possible exchange due to the scattered federal ownership in the area. The headwaters of Cold Stream is located within MA 071-Tinkers, which is managed for

dispersed recreation and to protect values associated with the Emigrant Trail. The main recreation activities are hiking and some hunting.

Based on the TNF LRMP direction, the primary VQO is Retention with Partial Retention in the headwaters. The headwaters are part of the very scenic Sierra Crest with many dramatic mountains, cliffs, and rock features. The rest of the stream has nice scenic elements until it reaches the lower stretch of the stream where quarry activities have greatly modified the landscape.

The private land within the study boundary is within Placer County and land uses permitted under the General Plan are considered compatible with the management objectives for a National Recreation River.

There are no proposed impoundments or developments proposed for the stream.

The OR value is the Emigrant Trail located in Emigrant Canyon, a fork of Cold Stream. Cold Stream is eligible for Recreational classification.

#### **H. Alder Creek**

Alder Creek is 6.4 miles long with its headwaters just above or west of the Tahoe-Donner development. The stream flows east to Prosser Reservoir. Approximately 60% of the lands adjacent to the stream are managed by the TNF and the remaining 40% are privately owned, with numerous small private land ownerships. There are 1,273 acres of National Forest System lands and 1,057 acres of private lands within the study area. Alder Creek is within Nevada County, California.

Roads parallel both sides of the stream for 90% of its length. Part of the area is within the 1960 Donner Ridge Fire. Tahoe-Donner is a land-development project that has a small downhill ski and cross-county ski area along with a golf course in addition to the subdivision development.

Alder Creek is a small unregulated stream that flows into Prosser Reservoir. Annual daily flows are estimated at about 9 cfs. No water storage projects are proposed on Alder Creek.

The lower end of the stream is within Management Area (MA) 046-Prosser Hill with a management emphasis of intensive timber management, although the plan directs that the area along the Alder Creek road corridor be managed to protect the visual and watershed resources. The adopted VQO is Partial Retention. The upper end of the stream is within MA 053-Donner with a management emphasis to protect visual resources and the adopted VQO is Retention. Scenic Quality is moderate to low with features typical for the Sierra Nevada Province. Most of

the lands on Upper Alder Creek are private. The National Forest parcels have been identified for possible exchange.

Recreation activities are concentrated at the Donner Camp Day Use Site and in the upper watershed on private land. The downhill and cross-country ski areas attract a moderate level of winter use.

The private land within the study boundary are within Nevada County and land uses permitted under the General Plan are considered compatible with the management objectives for a National Recreation River.

Located in the vicinity of Alder Creek is the Donner Camp site which is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The George and Jacob Donner families camped at this location during the winter of 1846-47, becoming one of the most famous and tragic symbols of the westward migration along the Overland Emigrant Trail. The camp, while within the river corridor, had no association with Alder Creek. The Donner families could make no further progress due to an injury and had to set up winter camp where they were. The remainder of the wagon party occupied three cabins near Donner Lake within Donner Memorial State Park.

The Alder Creek drainage was the site of intensive logging for over half a century, from the 1870s through the 1930s. Archival materials indicate that at least four lumber mills operated along Alder Creek, beginning with A. Proctor's Alder Creek Mill established sometime before 1869. This mill operated under Charles E. Roberson and James Machomick from 1869 to 1883 and was operated by Elle Ellen from 1883 to 1901. This mill had a 5-mile long flume to Prosser Creek. I.A. Smith and Scofield operated a small mill on Alder Creek around 1902. At the same time, Llewellyn Davies and Sons built a sawmill on Alder Creek which operated for the 1901-1902 logging seasons. Also, in the summer of 1901 the Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company erected a small mill two miles below Davies' mill. A identified sawmill site on Alder Creek could be the I.A. Smith and Scofield Mill, the Davies and Sons mill, or the Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company mill and was recently determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

OR values in Alder Creek is the Donner Campsite. Alder Creek is eligible for Recreational classification.

**TABLE 4.3**

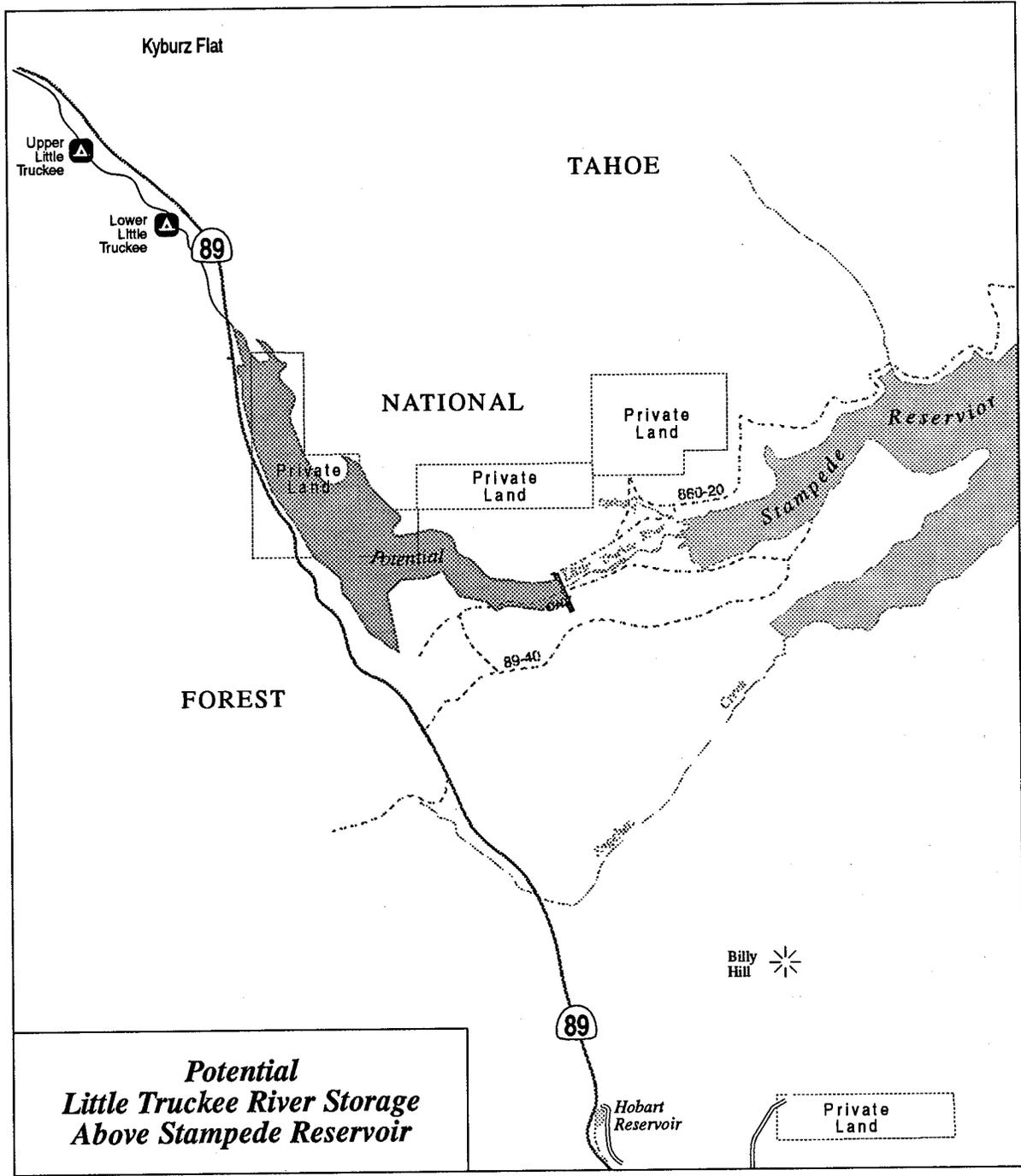
**Eligible Rivers by Ownership**

<b>Eligible Rivers</b>	<b>Total Miles</b>	<b>Wild</b>	<b>Scenic</b>	<b>Recreation</b>
Truckee River <sup>2</sup>				
Federal	10			
Private	3			
<b>Total</b>				13
Cold Stream				
Federal	0.6			
State	1.0			
Private	3.6			
<b>Total</b>				5.2
Alder Creek				
Federal	3.6			
Private	2.8			
<b>Total</b>				6.4
Independence Creek				
Federal	2.0			
Private	0			
<b>Total</b>		2.0		
Little Truckee River				
Federal	9.6			
Private	4.4			
<b>Total</b>				14.0
Perazzo Canyon				
Federal	2.8			
Private	0.4			
<b>Total</b>			3.2	
Sagehen Creek				
Federal	8.0			
Private	0			
<b>Total</b>			8.0	
Upper Truckee River		7.0		
Federal	7.0			
Private	0			
<b>Total</b>		7.0		

<sup>2</sup> Private land parcels along the Truckee River consists of small, scattered tracts. National Forest lands are encumbered by an easement held by Sierra Pacific Power Company for power purposes.

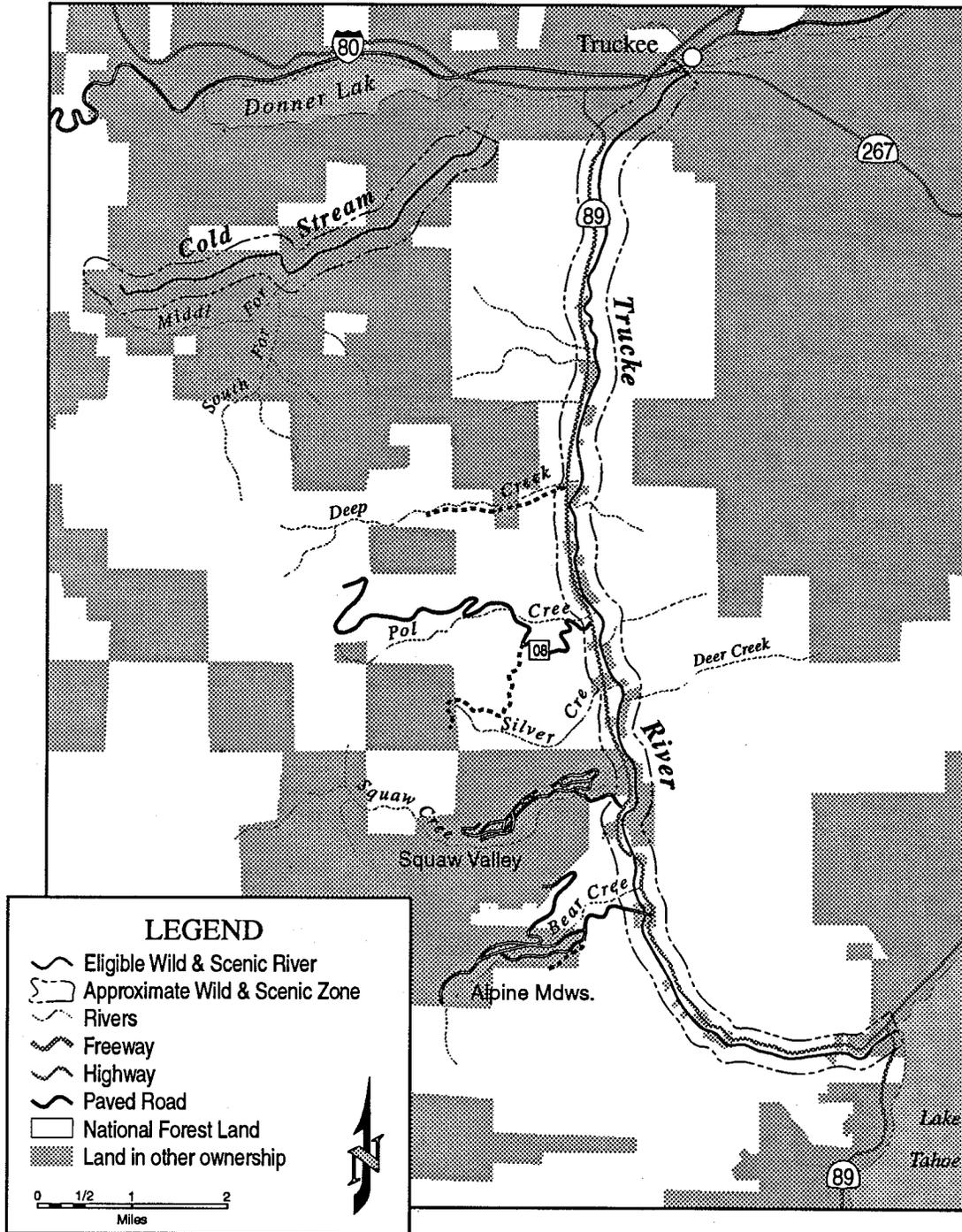


**MAP C**  
**Potential Little Truckee River Storage**



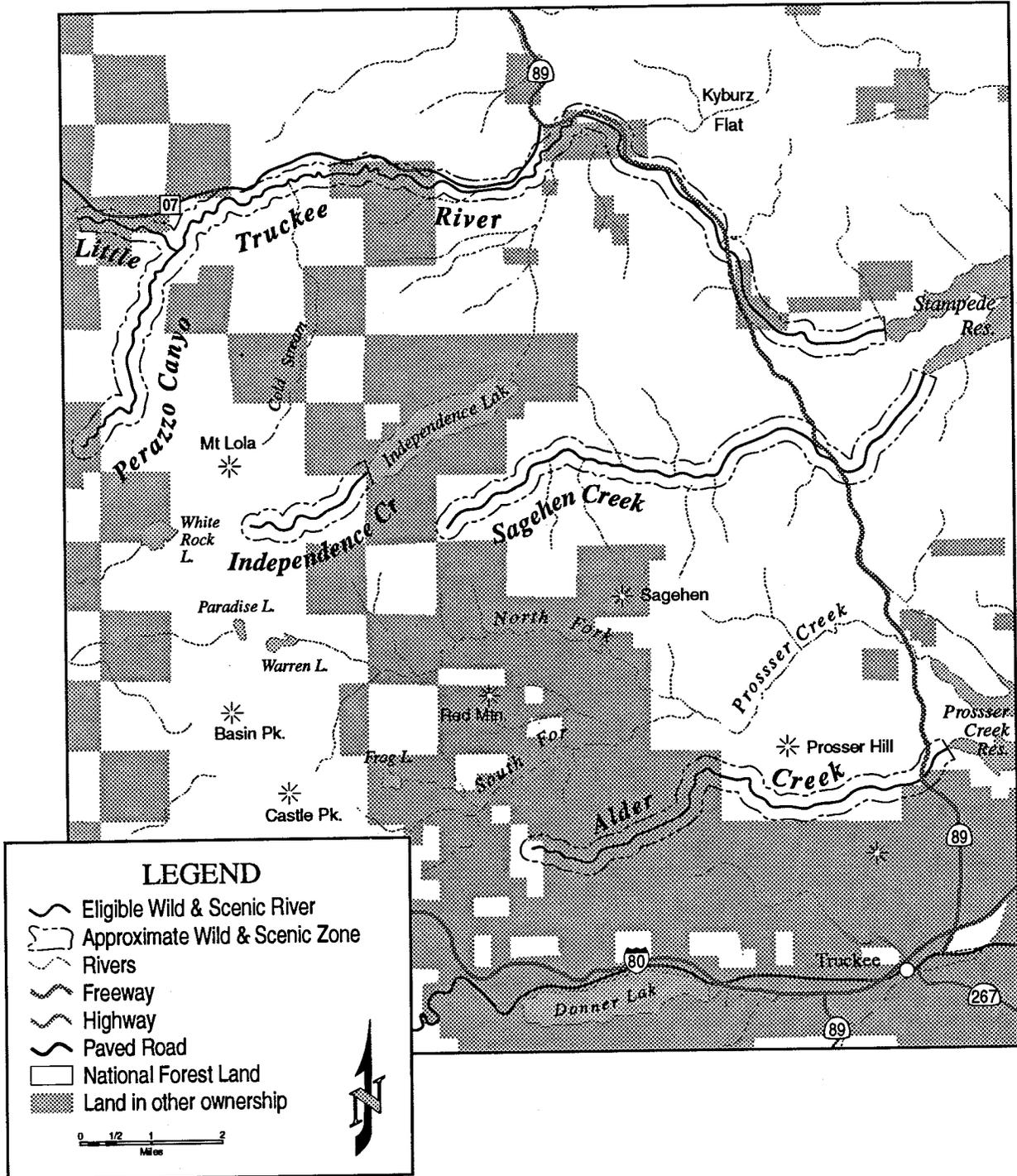
# MAP D

## Eligible Study Rivers Truckee River and Cold Stream

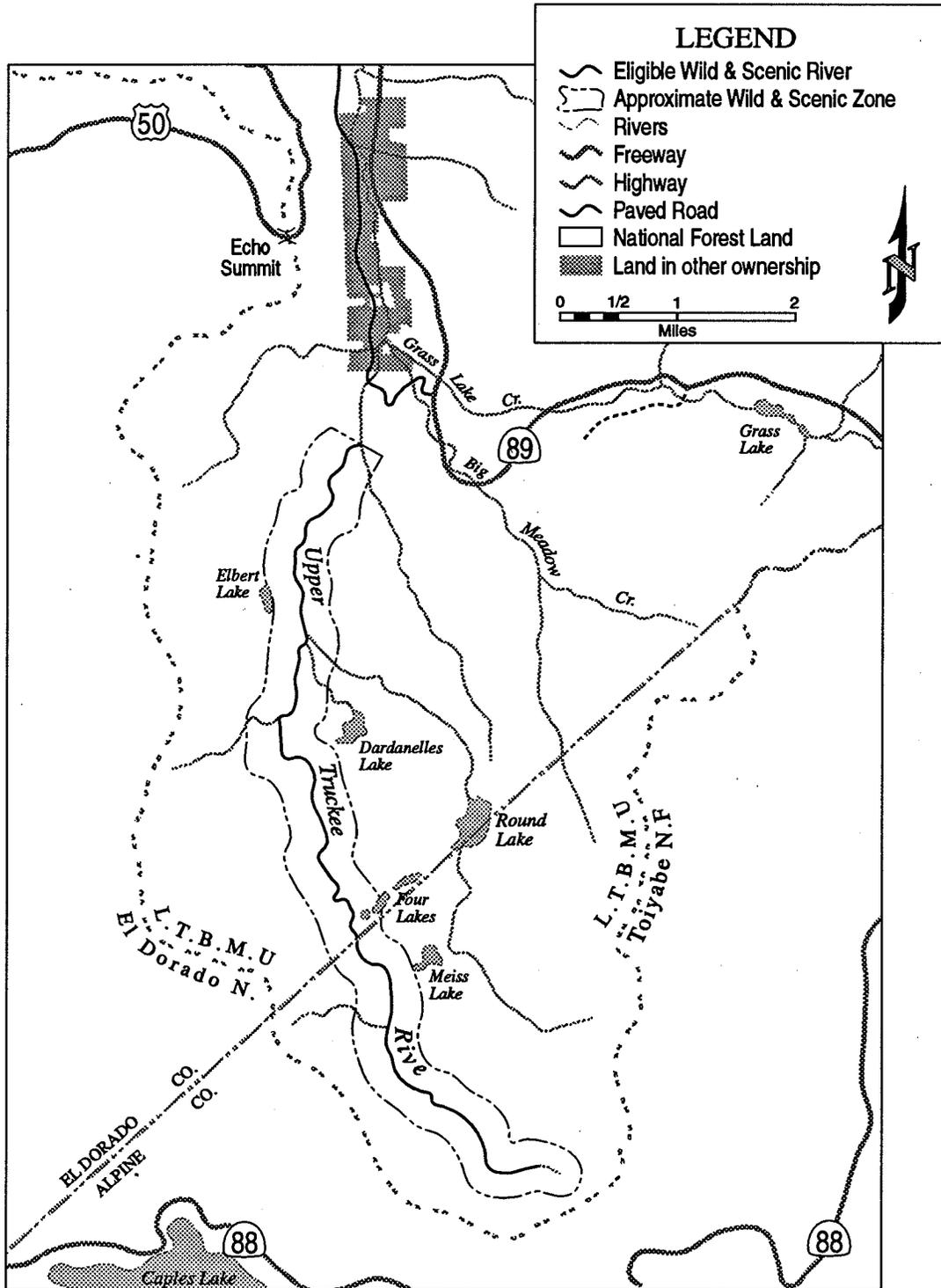


# Map E

## Eligible Study Rivers Alder Creek, Sagehen Creek, Upper Independence Creek, Little Truckee River and Perazzo Creek



**MAP F**  
**Eligible Study River**  
**Upper Truckee River**



# CHAPTER V.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter forms the scientific and analytic basis for comparison of the alternatives. Environmental consequences are the result of activities scheduled to implement the alternative and vary as a result of the area that would be affected by the alternative. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 compare the consequences of implementing each alternative in terms of outputs and costs for management. Table 2.3 compares the consequences of implementing each alternative in terms of environmental changes and outputs.

It is important to note that the effects analyzed in this chapter relate to alternatives developed regarding the suitability of the study rivers for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and not for specific projects within the study areas.

The evaluation generally describes impacts occurring within the 1/2 mile-wide corridor (1/4 mile on each side of the riverbank), except where impacts would occur beyond the corridor. For the following factors, designation or lack of designation of a stream to the National Wild and Scenic River System, would not represent a significant change from the present situation.

- Air Quality
- Access
- Floodplains

Appendix A describes the type and level of activity considered compatible with designation. The effects analysis uses the management standard described in Appendix A as the basis to evaluate the alternatives.

Although guidelines for Wild segments would place restrictions on a number of activities, including timber management, structures, access, and utilities, these restrictions do not represent a significant change from the present situation. The only potential wild segments are upper Independence Creek where the area is currently being managed to protect the Lahontan cutthroat trout, and is unroaded; and upper Truckee River where the area is currently being managed for semi-primitive non-roaded values and is unroaded.

While timber management activities can continue under Scenic and Recreation designations, there would be some minor reduction of timber outputs and additional timber sale preparation and

administration costs in order to manage the timber in a way that is compatible with Scenic and Recreational river objectives.

Other factors which were analyzed and were determined to have an effect upon the human environment are discussed in the remainder of this chapter. Rivers not recommended for designation would be managed and protected under management requirements of the respective management plans for National Forest lands, State Park lands, and local county plans for private lands.

## **PRIVATE LANDS**

Federal condemnation authority has been identified as a major concern of private landowners through public scoping. Since there is considerable private lands within the study boundaries of some of the rivers, it is important that the impact of designation on private lands be discussed.

US Department of Interior and US Department of Agriculture Interagency management guidelines and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act state that all existing uses and development at the time of designation will be allowed to continue. A set of standards, Appendix A, determine activities that are considered compatible with Wild and Scenic designation. Any new activities which are within these standards are generally acceptable. The guiding determination is whether the activity or uses affect the outstanding values of the rivers.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act prohibits the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture from acquiring fee title to private land by condemnation if more than 50 percent of the acreage within a river corridor is owned by the Federal, State, or local government. Condemnation is permitted, however, for clearing title and acquiring Scenic and other easements that are reasonably necessary to provide public access to a river or to protect the outstandingly remarkable (OR) values when they are threatened. The Federal government is allowed, however, to purchase land from willing sellers.

Condemnation for Scenic easements would only be considered when outstanding values are impacted or threatened. Although not required, private landowners would be encouraged to manage their lands in a way that protects the outstanding values of the river corridor. Counties have the responsibility and authority through zoning to regulate and encourage the management and uses on private lands. Because all private landowners would be encouraged to continue present land uses and to use the standards in Appendix A as a guide for future land uses and developments, designation would maintain current land use trends and would maintain present lifestyles.

Designation would place no restrictions on the disposal of private lands. Violations of water quality laws by private landowners are presently the responsibility of local and state governments and this would remain unchanged.

**ALTERNATIVE A.** Recommend designation of all eligible rivers. This Alternative recommends all eligible study rivers for designation (8 rivers)

### **Free Flowing**

Designation into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would protect the free-flowing nature and the outstanding values of all eight study rivers by prohibiting Federal involvement with new water development projects. However, designation of the Truckee River (Tahoe City to Truckee) would be subject to the easement rights held by Sierra Pacific Power Company for power purposes.

### **Scenic or Visual Values**

Scenic values and watershed protection would be the primary management objective for all public lands within the river corridors. Visual or Scenic Management is described by the use of such terms as Preservation, Retention, and Partial Retention. Preservation is intended to only allow ecological changes, Retention is where human activities are not evident to the casual visitor, and Partial Retention is defined where human activity may be evident but must remain subordinate to the characteristic landscape.

Therefore, under these definitions upper Independence Creek and upper Truckee River, designated Wild rivers, would be managed to maintain a natural appearing landscape at a visual quality objective (VQO) of Preservation. Rivers classified as Scenic such as Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek, would be managed for a VQO of Retention. Rivers classified as Recreational would be managed under a VQO of Retention or Partial Retention. The areas managed for Retention would be those places which typify the outstanding values for which the river was designated and areas which receive a large amount of recreation use. Areas managed for Partial Retention would be those areas which do not have outstanding scenic values and which are not normally directly visible to most visitors.

The VQO system is intended to provide an overall direction for visual management and is not intended to be a rigid requirement on every acre. As an example, there could be situations where there is a need to develop off-highway parking and public restroom facilities in order to manage the river. These type of developments would be designed to blend in with the existing visual setting and would be considered to be compatible with the overall visual management objectives.

Designating all eight rivers would put additional emphasis on meeting visual quality objectives set for areas within the river corridors. The general result would be to maintain or improve the scenic quality of the landscape along the eight rivers.

## **Timber Management**

Timber management activities within the river corridors would be secondary to protection and enhancement of other resources. Designation would not change the suitable forest land base, except for rivers classified Wild, (upper Independence Creek and upper Truckee River). The timber in the 1/2-mile-wide river corridor would be removed from the regulated timber base. For those rivers designated as Scenic or Recreational, special emphasis would be placed on protecting and or enhancing recreational, visual, water, and other OR values. Timber management practices would include thinning, sanitation/salvage, and other silvicultural cutting practices. Clear-cutting would not be used except as needed to treat insect/disease or safety problems. All timber management prescriptions would be in accordance with the California Spotted Owl Guidelines (CASPO). The Little Truckee River, Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek contain the greatest available timber resources of the eligible rivers.

The relationship of old-growth to the river corridors has been pointed out in the TNF Recommendations for Fish and Late-Seral Stage Wildlife Report (Chapel et al., 1992). Perazzo Creek and Upper Independence Creek both support old-growth communities along the study corridors. Old-growth timber is currently managed and protected under the Interim CASPO guidelines for timber management and the TNF LRMPs streamside management zone and old-growth guidelines. Designation would protect the old-growth stands from possible inundation. Timber along the river corridor in Perazzo Creek would be managed for recreation and scenic values rather than for intensive timber management as currently described in the TNF LRMP and modified by the CASPO guidelines.

Designation would not significantly change the timber volumes removed from the river corridors over the long run. Table 5.1 describes the changes in outputs associated with each alternative based on the 1990 Forest Plan prescriptions. With current CASPO guidelines there would be little difference in outputs between general forest areas and areas within the alternative Wild and Scenic River corridor proposals.

## **Wildlife, Riparian and Aquatic Species**

Impacts on wildlife in the river corridors should be minimal as there would be no change in habitat conditions. Increased recreation use could have some effect on species that normally

require minimal disturbance from humans. However, any disturbance would normally be limited to localized areas, and overall should not be detrimental to the wildlife populations.

Perazzo Creek, Sagehen Creek, the Upper Truckee River, and the Little Truckee River all have diverse ecological riparian settings with numerous bogs, fens and meadows. The meadow habitats support a large population of willow-flycatcher, a Forest Service Sensitive Species. Designation would help to protect these unique areas for the willow-flycatcher and other riparian dependent species. Designation would also favor fisheries as the rivers would be protected from impoundments.

The only identified impoundment is on the Little Truckee River and is described in the Environmental Consequences Section entitled Water Development or Improvement Projects. Current grazing and timber activities are designed to protect riparian values along the stream. The decision to recommend designation as a Scenic or Recreational river would provide an additional level of protection to the wildlife, riparian, and aquatic OR values from any future impoundments or diversions, although none are anticipated at this time.

#### **Plants(Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Sensitive, Watch-List Plants and Communities)**

##### **Threatened, Endangered, Proposed and Sensitive Plants**

Examination of maps and existing data for each study river and stream was reviewed. The review showed potential for the following threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive plant species: *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *torreyanum* (Torrey's buckwheat), *Ivesia aperta* var. *aperta* (Sierra Valley Ivesia), *Ivesia aperta* var. *canina* (Dog Valley Ivesia), *Ivesia sericoluca* (Plumas Valley Ivesia), *Ivesia webberi* (Webber's Ivesia), *Scheuchzeria palustris* var. *americana* (American Scheuchzeria), *Silene invisia* (Hidden-petal campion), and *Vaccinium coccinium* (Scarlet huckleberry). It is assumed that these plants exist in the identified potential habitat until on-the-ground plant surveys are done. Only portions of the potential habitat along the study rivers and streams have been surveyed. Existing surveys have identified known occurrences of *Ivesia sericoluca* and *Silene invisia*. Current management direction for sensitive plants is to protect or minimally impact (indirect effects such as impacts from dust are permitted) sensitive plant species when discovered. An exception exists for *Silene invisia* where some direct and indirect impacts are allowed on a case-by-case basis. Current management for the endangered species is total protection.

Individual plants of *Silene invisia* could be impacted under current management if they exist within the study area. Although impacts to individual plants could occur, these impacts would not contribute to a trend for listing because it is believed that the current management for this species will maintain the overall viability of the species.

The effects of designation of any of the rivers or streams as wild, scenic, or recreational would have no or minimal effects on the threatened, endangered, or proposed plants as current management is to protect them.

Designation would bring additional attention and emphasis to protection of ecological values and would help protect the sensitive plant species because current management direction does not provide for total protection of sensitive plants in all cases. Current management for the sensitive plants is to protect or minimally impact them from direct and indirect impacts such as timber harvest, trail construction, etc. Increased public use from designation can be expected for a few years which would create the possibility of impacts from illegal collection, trampling, etc., although the overall impacts should be minimal. Designation would provide protection from any possible impoundments of the rivers, although none are proposed at this time.

### **Watchlist Plants and Communities**

Current management direction for the watch-list plants and communities does not protect them from direct and indirect effects. Potential habitats for *Camissonia tanacetifolia* subsp. *quadriperforata* (Sierra Valley evening primrose), *Trifolium lemmonii* (Lemon's clover), *Darlingtonia californica* (pitcher plant), *Drosera rotundifolia* (Round-leaved sundew), *Drosera anglica* (English sundew), and bogs, fens, vernal pools are found within the study river corridors.

Although complete on-the-ground surveys are not available, existing surveys have identified known occurrences of *Drosera rotundifolia*, *Drosera anglica*, fens, and vernal pools. Current management direction for these plants and plant communities is to protect them if they exist in a riparian area that is one acre in size or larger (TNF LRMP direction). Smaller riparian areas are protected if they occur within the stream management zones or within large meadows. Small, isolated occurrences do receive impacts from projects such as timber harvest, off-highway vehicle use, grazing, etc.

Designation of any of the rivers and streams would help protect the watch-list plants and plant community as greater emphasis would be placed on identification and protection within the river corridors. Designation would also protect these plants and communities from inundation resulting from dam and reservoir construction, if proposed.

### **Vernal Pools**

Vernal pools are among the most threatened wetland ecosystems in California (Stone, 1990). Little protection is currently provided for the species requiring vernal pool habitats. Designation would protect vernal pool habitats by putting a greater emphasis on the

importance of these small, isolated habitats. Vernal pools have been identified along Sagehen Creek and Perazzo Creek.

### **Riparian areas**

The impacts on riparian habitats throughout the country has been extensive. Designation of the rivers would provide additional protection from possible inundation of these plant communities beyond that currently provided by LRMP Standards. Although the Forest Plan Streamside Zone Standards provide protection for riparian habitats along perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams, the standards do not specifically provide for protection of small (less than one acre) meadows and isolated wet areas associated with springs. Designation would provide additional emphasis to all riparian areas, including bogs and fens.

### **Meadows**

Meadows comprise only 10 percent of the land area in the Sierra Nevada. These plant communities are of great importance due to their limited numbers and ecological significance. There are meadows along Alder Creek, Sagehen Creek, the Little Truckee River, Perazzo Creek, and upper Truckee River. Several of the meadow complexes are an OR characteristic providing unique habitats for both plants and animals. Designation would protect these meadows from possible inundation and would add additional emphasis in protecting these ecological values as mentioned above.

### **Old-growth**

Although the amount of old-growth forest that currently exists varies depending on the definition, it is substantially less than the amount that existed in the past. The importance of the old-growth communities that exist along watercourses has been clearly described in the TNF Recommendations for fish and late-seral stage wildlife by Chapel et al., 1992. Designation would protect these remaining stands from possible inundation and would add additional emphasis in protecting these ecological values.

### **Recreation**

National designation would increase publicity of the rivers and create more public interest, thereby increasing recreational use in Scenic and Recreational rivers. Recreation use in Independence Creek and Upper Truckee River, potential Wild rivers, would also increase somewhat because of the public attention. At least temporarily, increases in hiking, fishing, picnicking, and camping would be greater than currently projected under existing management plans.

Recreation trends on nationally recognized rivers indicate that recreation use generally increases for a few years, then tapers down and gradually levels off to predesignation conditions. Visitors generally desire a less crowded environment and go elsewhere. Normally, the Recreational rivers receive the greatest increase in use because of their accessibility, although use along the Truckee River is already considered to exceed capacity during the summer. Most of the remaining rivers would attract visitors for an initial visit, but use would rapidly drop off as recreation opportunities are limited on most of the study rivers.

Recreation values and uses on the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and Truckee are extremely high as the river currently provides for a wide variety of recreation activities and is one of the most heavily used recreation corridors along the east slope of the Sierra. Current use generally exceeds the capacity of the river corridor and conflicts exist between private/summerhome owners and the rafters, bicycles, and campers/picnickers that use the area during the summer.

Designation would require the development of a management plan to determine an appropriate level and mix of activities that would protect and enhance the OR characteristics of the river. There are concerns among some private landowners that designation would bring an increase in recreation use and would aggravate an existing problem. Experience on other rivers that have been designated indicate that use increases for a period of time, but drops back to a level compatible with the recreation opportunities. The net affect on recreation on the Truckee River, once a management plan is developed, would most likely be a reduction in total recreation use in order to bring use in balance with the canyon's carrying capacity. However, there should be an increase in the quality of the recreation experience once the plan is completed and implemented.

The Upper Truckee River is within the former Dardanelles Roadless Area and is currently managed for unroaded recreation under the LTBMU's Land and Resource Management Plan. Although the area was not recommended for Wilderness designation, management direction stated within the LTBMU LRMP is to retain a future condition of backcountry that exhibits substantially natural conditions. Wild classification is compatible with existing National Forest management objectives described in the LTBMU LRMP. Within the 1/2 mile corridor, the ROS class would change from SPNM to Primitive and the VQO would change to Preservation.

For all the rivers designated it is expected that there would be more emphasis on recreation management and an overall improvement of the recreation experience for the public using the rivers. While recreation use may increase as discussed above, recreation management emphasis would be to provide for numbers appropriate to the river's classification and values. When needed, recreation carrying capacities could be set in the required management plans.

## **Grazing Management**

Livestock grazing is managed in accordance with TNF and LTBMU LRMP Standards and Guidelines and individual Allotment Management Plans. The objective is develop management strategies that will bring all range lands to satisfactory or better condition. Although current levels of livestock grazing are generally considered compatible with Wild and Scenic River management, designation could result in increased public use for a period as described in the section on Recreation. Additional public use increases the potential for conflicts between livestock grazing and recreation use.

The rivers with the greatest potential for grazing/recreation conflicts are the Upper Truckee River, the Little Truckee River, and Perazzo Creek.

## **Cultural Resources**

Possible effects on cultural and historic resources could result from any increase in visitation. Many of the OR values for a number of the streams are cultural or historical values. Increases in hiking, camping, fishing, and picnicking from designation would increase the probability of vandalism and illegal artifact collection. On the other hand, designation would prohibit potential inundation of any cultural or historic remains and with adequate interpretive signing, random vandalism could be reduced.

Wild and Scenic River designation should not have any significant impact on the cultural and historic resources within the study river corridors.

## **Minerals**

Designation should not have a significant impact on mineral activity in the Truckee River basin as there is not much existing activity in the study area. Section 9 of the Wild and Scenic River Act states that for all Federal lands within Wild, Scenic, and Recreational river corridors, all prospecting, mining, and other activities on claims not perfected prior to inclusion of the river segment into the system are subject to regulation by the administering Secretary. Existing mineral activities would continue to be conducted in a manner that would minimize surface disturbance, sedimentation, and pollution, and degradation of the visual resource. No new mineral activities would be permitted with the Wild rivers (Upper Independence Creek and upper Truckee River). New mineral activity within Scenic and Recreational rivers would be mitigated to protect the outstanding values of the river. Proposals for new mining or prospecting activities on Federal lands would require a site-specific environmental analysis to address the specific proposal.

Private landowners and owners of outstanding mineral rights on lands within the recommended river corridors would be encouraged to conduct activities in a manner consistent with the guidelines in Exhibit A. Cold Stream flows mostly through private and/or state lands and mineral activities would be conducted in accordance with state and local laws and ordinances.

### **Social/Economic**

Overall current lifestyles and employment would not appreciably change as a result of designation. Regional economics and employment, which rely heavily on tourism and recreation, would continue and be enhanced by designation. Employment associated with timber-related activities would not be significantly impacted by designation.

There could be some impacts on individual ranchers or loggers where designation results in changes in the operations of livestock grazing or timber harvest. Although the projected impacts are not expected to be large overall, there could be some impacts on individual operations if changes are needed to resolve conflicts resulting from designation. Probably the greatest impact is the cumulative impacts resulting from a number of changes occurring including increasing concern over riparian areas, needs of threatened and endangered species, including old-growth dependent species, along with Wild and Scenic river designation.

Recreation use and access would continue to be available. Users would still be able to access hunting, fishing, and camping spots.

### **Water Development or Improvement Projects**

Future water resource projects for municipal, agricultural, flood control, power generation, or other uses may be foregone if there is a direct and adverse effect on the free-flowing characteristics of the river. This could result in a future impact on downstream users in Nevada, although the only additional water storage project identified by Sierra Pacific Power Company on the study rivers is a 13,000 to 20,000 acre feet dam and reservoir on the Little Truckee River above Stampede Reservoir. Although the project has been identified as a possible site for additional storage, the likelihood of constructing a new reservoir on the Little Truckee is questionable, as there are presently more economical options available to meet Sierra Pacific's water needs. The impacts of foreclosing this option are unknown at this time, as Sierra Pacific has identified a number of options to meet future demand. Generally, the utilities like to maintain all future options because of the uncertainties associated with the development of any new water supply.

The decision to designate the Little Truckee River would protect the OR values (i.e. vegetation wildlife and cultural) found along the river, including the riparian habitats, from

any potential reservoir. The principal benefit would be to protect the vegetation, as the cultural sites would be avoided. No known T&E or sensitive plants or animals would be affected.

There could be some potential effect on options for the State of California to exercise its water rights for surface flow (10,000 AF) provided under PL 101-618, depending whether California selects to use one of the existing reservoirs or construct a new reservoir. Designation would foreclose possible impoundment of these rivers for water supply or other uses. Specific impacts from designation on California's options are unknown at this time, as California has not decided on how to utilize its water rights.

Section 7. (a) of the Act clearly precludes water development projects on designated Wild and Scenic River segments. This same section also makes it clear that existing and new projects are allowed above or below a designated segment unless these projects would "unreasonably diminish the the scenic, recreationl, and fish and wildlife values present in the area". This part of the act is quoted here to provide the full intent of the Act:

"Sec. 7. (a) The Federal Power Commission shall not license the construction of any dam, water conduit, reservoir, powerhouse, transmission line, or other project works under the Federal Power Act (41 Stat. 1063), as amended (16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.), on or directly affecting any river which is designated in section 3 of this Act as a component of the national wild and scenic rivers system or which is hereafter designated for inclusion in that system, and no department or agency of the United States shall assist by loan, grant, license, or otherwise in the construction of any water resources project that would have a direct and adverse effect on the values for which such river was established, as determined by the Secretary charged with its administration. Nothing contained in the foregoing sentence, however, shall preclude licensing of, or assistance to, developments below or above a wild, scenic, or recreational river area or on any stream tributary thereto which will not invade the area or unreasonably diminish the scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values present in the area on the date of designation of a river as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System".

## **Research**

Sagehen Basin has been intensively studied by the University of California-Berkeley staff and students for over 30 years. Scenic designation of Sagehen Creek should not impact existing research activities and future research in the basin. The recommendation for Scenic River designation provides for the continuance of research as described in Appendix D. Although most of the research currently underway does not include major vegetative manipulation, the University has constructed a weir across the creek and a fish chamber for research and educational purposes. There are a number of other research activities and

facilities in close proximity to the creek, including a stream gage, a weather station, and a number of buildings used by the University.

Future plans for the station include the construction of a dormitory and classroom. All future developments are planned to be within or adjacent to the river corridor just above the flood plain. The existing and proposed developments associated with the research program are considered compatible with Scenic River objectives. Much of the information known about Sagehen Creek is a direct result of the 30 years of research and continuance of the research should provide greater understanding of the ecological values (i.e. one of the OR values) within the Sagehen Basin.

Designation may attract additional public use into the area and could increase the potential to disturb some long-term research sites. However, the potential impacts from some increase in public use should not cause a major impact on research activities.

### **Private Lands**

The effects on private land owners are described previously. There would be some additional Forest Service costs for coordination, including survey and posting of property lines, on those rivers with large amounts of private lands. Generally, those rivers that are mostly on National Forest System lands would be easier and less complex to manage as Wild and Scenic rivers than those rivers with extensive, mixed public/private ownership.

The Truckee River, Cold Stream, Alder Creek, and the Little Truckee River each contain a large percentage of private property, including a number of special land uses. There are a number of developments including highways and a major railroad, along with a variety of utility uses including electrical transmission lines, sewer lines, and gas/oil pipelines located in or adjacent to the river corridors.

Designation could impact local government's ability to utilize the river corridors for their infra-structure needs, including such activities as road improvement projects, and construction of additional electrical, sewer, gas, and oil lines. Costs could increase in order to minimize impacts on the rivers.

### **OR Values**

Alternative A would protect and enhance all OR values by designating all eight rivers. This would significantly increase the number of eastside streams that Congress could consider. Alt. A would protect the best candidate rivers along with rivers that would make less of a contribution, be repetitive of values already represented, or better represented by the best river candidates.

**ALTERNATIVE B. No Action Alternative.** Recommends no rivers for designation.

This alternative does not recommend designation for any of the eight eligible study rivers and is not responsive to public concerns that those rivers with special characteristics or quality should be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Although all eligible rivers have at least one OR characteristic, it is recognized that not all rivers are equally suitable to be a worthy or quality addition to the system.

The No Action alternative would allow the consideration of future impoundments and diversions of any of the rivers. It should be noted that there are no current or active proposals for additional storage or diversions at this time and that this alternative does not imply that any future proposals would be approved. The decision to approve or disapprove any future project would be the subject of a project-specific analysis. This alternative continues existing water use management activities, but does not provide for the permanent long-term preservation of the free-flowing conditions of the rivers.

Even though this study is not the vehicle for making decisions on permitting dams in these study rivers as discussed above, the general impacts to any of these streams can be described if a dam were approved in the future. The immediate impact of a dam would be to eliminate the free-flowing character of the river in question for the distance submerged under water. Stream flow is required to provide habitat needs of native fish and game species. Channel form and function can be impaired if flows are changed significantly as can happen when dams are built. As a result fisheries and wildlife habitat could be detrimentally impacted. Existing private land and public land uses would be precluded under the reservoir and in some of the lands around the reservoir. Existing and future mineral development would be precluded under the reservoir site. Recreation use would change from river and stream activities to flat water activities such as boating, waterskiing, and fishing from boats or shore. If the potential dam was proposed in the potential wild rivers, the dam could eliminate valued semi-primitive motorized or non-motorized lands that are in short supply on the Tahoe NF. Economic benefits to the region would vary with the size of the project and the cost benefits of the individual project. The immediate botanical values under a reservoir site would clearly be lost. Occurrences of sensitive and watchlist plant species could be inundated with possible dam projects. Cultural resource values, both known and unknown, could be inundated and not available for research and public understanding. With any of these resources the merit of a dam project would have to be weighed against the possible impacts to the resources described above.

Old-growth timber is currently managed to provide for the California spotted owl (CASPO Guidelines) and the Forests streamside standards. Old-growth values for other wildlife and visuals are not covered by the CASPO guidelines. Nondesignation would maintain this current situation. Timber management would continue as prescribed in the appropriate LRMP as amended by CASPO and other amendments over time. There would be no immediate new effects on OR

values. However, overtime there could be some cumulative effects on widespread values like wild life habitat or ecological values.

Livestock grazing would continue as directed by LRMP Standards and Guidelines and individual Allotment Management Plans. Emphasis would be to continue to develop individual allotment management plans with an objective of implementing management strategies that will improve all range lands to satisfactory or better condition.

Recreation use would continue as directed by LRMP Standards and Guidelines and the normal budget constraints. In some of the higher concentrated recreation use areas there is the potential for impact to other resources such as plants, wildlife, fisheries, and cultural resources. Prevention or mitigation of these impacts would rely on Standards and Guidelines from the LRMP and standard procedures presently in place.

Nondesignation would have no effect on the threatened, endangered, or proposed plants that occur along the river corridors as current direction is to protect these plants. Potential impacts on sensitive and watch-list plants could be greater without designation, although the potential impacts are not expected to result in a loss of overall viability. Existing management direction for sensitive and watch-list species is to prevent them from becoming candidates for threatened and endangered listing.

Potential impacts to ecologically significant plant communities due to nondesignation (i.e. vernal pools, fens, riparian habitats, and meadows) would be the same as the current situation. The larger or known riparian areas, fens, vernal pools, and meadows would continue to be protected under the Forest Plan Guidelines, with possible impacts to the smaller and unmapped habitats. The overall impact without designation is unknown.

California would retain all options to store their water including use of the existing reservoirs in the system or construction of a new reservoir. The following are anticipated impacts to the OR values identified for each stream under the No Action Alternative.

### **Truckee River**

The Truckee River Canyon is heavily used by local homeowners, campers, picnickers and for bicycling and rafting. The river is paralleled by Highway 89, a major arterial into the North Shore of Lake Tahoe. The combination of traffic and local use in the canyon has resulted in conflicts between uses and presents a public safety problem because of the heavy vehicle and foot traffic along the highway.

Without designation there are no requirements to bring the users, agencies, and homeowners together to resolve the existing conflicts and overuse. Although the development of a management

plan does not require National River classification, designation would result in a management plan development receiving a higher priority.

Under this alternative, over the short term, recreation conflicts would be resolved on a case-by-case basis without the benefit of a coordinated long range plan. On a longer term basis, a coordinated effort would be needed to adequately address the issues.

Current TNF and LTBMU LRMP direction as well as Federal law provides for protection of the cultural values.

### **Cold Stream**

The OR value along Cold Stream is the California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail, a National Historic Trail. The Trail follows along Cold Stream and then turns up into Emigrant Canyon, one of the three forks within the Cold Stream watershed. Scenic values are considered high. A portion of the California Route of the Overland Emigrant Trail is located along the river corridor. There are no proposed impoundments along the river and a decision not to designate Cold Stream would have little effect on the OR value (historic Emigrant Trail) as the management direction provided for National Trails provides adequate protection for the Trail. Additional protection of the Trail has resulted from the recent transfer of some private lands in the area to the California State Parks system.

### **Alder Creek**

The OR value for Alder Creek is the Donner Camp which was the site of a winter camp used by part of the Donner Party. The camp site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Donner Camp is located just above Prosser Reservoir. Since there are no proposals to increase the size of Prosser Reservoir, and no other water developments are planned, there would be no impact on the Donner Camp by the decision not to recommend designation. The camp is protected by existing Federal law and TNF LRMP standards and guidelines, which require total protection of the cultural site.

### **Sagehen Creek**

Sagehen Creek has a variety of OR values including vegetative/ecological values, cultural resources, geological/hydrological and wildlife values. The area also provides habitat for pine marten, a Forest Service and California Sensitive Species, which has been studied by UC Berkeley and other researchers for a number of years. Although significant research has been completed, more work is needed to learn the hydrological/geological relationships which support the fens and meadows.

Current TNF LRMP direction does not provide adequate protection for the smaller fens. The recommendation to study the Sagehen Basin for possible SIA designation is based on the recognition that a change in management direction or Management Area standards and guidelines as described in the TNF LRMP is needed to protect these OR values. The decision to not recommend classification as a scenic river would not change the current situation or level of management protection. There would be no impact on the research programs conducted by the University of California in Sagehen as this alternative would continue the existing program.

### **Upper Truckee River**

The Upper Truckee River OR values include back-country recreation, scenic values, and fisheries values, including habitat for the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. The area contains significant areas of key fawning habitat for mule deer. These values are currently protected under direction of the LTBMU LRMP and the decision to not recommend classification as a Wild river would not impact these OR values.

### **Perazzo Creek**

Perazzo Creek has a diverse ecological setting with numerous bogs, fens, and meadows. The meadow habitat supports a population of willow flycatcher, a Forest Service Sensitive Species. There are a number of small (less than one acre) meadows in the Perazzo Area which are not specifically protected by the TNF LRMP. This will not change under this alternative, although the overall impact is unknown. There are no proposed water impoundments or diversions and TNF LRMP direction for grazing and timber activities provides a sufficient level of protection for the OR values along the stream.

### **Little Truckee River**

The Little Truckee River has several campgrounds and several cultural sites including a historic dairy site, Hobart Estates Logging Camp, the Sierra Valley Diversion Ditch, and the Henness Pass Road and Stage Stations associated with the Henness Pass Road. There is a potential dam site identified by Sierra Pacific Power Company along the Little Truckee River just above Stampede Reservoir.

The potential dam site is approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile above Stampede Reservoir and would back water up to a point just below the Forest Service campgrounds on Highway 89. The reservoir would inundate National Forest lands and Bickford Ranch properties adjacent to the highway. The Bickford Ranch currently is used as a base for their ranching operations and as a family retreat. Recreation use would change from activities associated with a free-flowing stream to "flat water" activities such as boating and swimming.

Although identified as a potential project in Sierra Pacific's water resources planning, the likelihood of a dam and reservoir being constructed is considered slight. Without designation, there is a potential that the OR values (i.e. vegetation and cultural) found along the Little Truckee, including riparian habitats, could be significantly impacted in the event a dam/reservoir is constructed. The principal impact would be on the vegetation, as the known cultural sites are above the reservoir site. *Drosea rotundifolia*, a watch list plant has been inventoried within the proposed reservoir site. *Ivesia sericolueca*, a Forest Service Sensitive plant has been observed just above Stampede Reservoir along the Little Truckee River. No known T&E or Sensitive wildlife species would be affected.

In the absence of water impoundments or diversions, this alternative would have no new effects on private lands, existing visual resources, timber management activities, fish and wildlife, threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, recreation use, cultural and historic resources, or mineral resources.

**ALTERNATIVE C** Recommends designation of those rivers with the most extensive OR values as related to the river environment. These OR values include recreational, scenic, historical and cultural, biological and ecological, wildlife and fisheries values.

Alternative C recommends designation of the Truckee River and the Little Truckee Rivers as National Recreational Rivers; Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek would be recommended as National Scenic Rivers, and the Upper Truckee River would be recommended as a National Wild River. Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation as a Special Interest Area by the Forest Service and the Sagehen Basin, outside of the Scenic River Corridor, would be studied for possible SIA designation. This alternative recommends the rivers determined to have OR values that are most extensive and most closely related to the river environment.

The effects of designation on visual resources, timber management, water resource development and management, research, wildlife, endangered, threatened, and sensitive wildlife and plant species, minerals, private lands, and cultural resources for the Truckee River, Upper Truckee River, Little Truckee River, Perazzo Creek, and Sagehen Creek would be similar to those described in Alternative A. Most OR values would be protected as in Alternative A

The major potential impacts to those rivers not designated would be the potential to impact the OR values identified for each river. The potential effects on the OR values of the streams not designated (Cold Stream and Alder Creek) would be similar to impacts described in Alternative B (No Action).

Upper Independence Creek provides habitat for the LCT, a threatened species on the Federal list, and supports a number of unusual ecological features including fens, meadows, and pristine plant

communities. Upper Independence Creek is recommended for classification as a SIA by the Forest Service, which would provide additional protection for the OR values. The decision not to recommend designation as a wild river would not significantly impact the OR values, as they would be protected under existing management direction and standards in the TNF LRMP and/or by SIA. (See Appendix C for additional information on potential impacts with and without designation.)

**ALTERNATIVE D.** Recommends designation of those rivers that receive the greatest amount of public recreation use that is directly associated with the river.

Alternative D recommends designation of the Truckee River as a National Recreation River. The remaining seven rivers are not recommended for Wild and Scenic river designation. Upper Independence Creek is recommended for designation as a SIA by the Forest Service. Sagehen Creek would be studied for possible SIA designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

The Truckee River has extensive recreation values along the entire stream that closely relate to the river environment. Recreation values and uses on the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and Truckee are extremely high. The river currently provides for a wide variety of recreation activities and is one of the most heavily used recreation corridors along the east slope of the Sierra. This alternative is responsive to public concerns over the need to maintain the Truckee River in a free-flowing state. Protection of the free-flowing character of the river with designation would be subject to the easement rights held by Sierra Pacific Power Company for power purposes. However, designation would prohibit Federal participation in any project that would impact the river's free-flowing character. The effects on recreation from designation of the Truckee River are described in Alternative A.

The effects of designation of the Truckee River on visual resources, timber management, wildlife, endangered, threatened, sensitive species, watch-list plants and communities, private property, water development, minerals, and cultural resources for the Truckee River are also described in Alternative A. Impacts from SIA designation of Upper Independence Creek are described in Alternative C.

The major potential impacts to those rivers not designated would be the potential to impact the OR values identified for each river. The impacts of not recommending designation for Sagehen Creek, Perazzo Creek, the Upper Truckee River, Alder Creek, Coldstream, and the Little Truckee River are the same as described in Alternative B (No Action).

**ALTERNATIVE E.** Recommends designating those rivers that make the best contribution to a National Wild and Scenic River System when considering the OR values.

This Alternative recommends designation of the Upper Truckee River as a National Wild River and Sagehen Creek as National Scenic Rivers and Upper Independence Creek is recommended for designation by the Forest Service as a SIA. The Sagehen Basin, outside the Scenic River corridor, would be studied for possible SIA designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study. The remaining five rivers are not recommended for designation.

The effects of designation of the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek on visual resources, research, timber management, recreation, wildlife, endangered, threatened, and sensitive species, water development, minerals, and cultural resources are described in Alternative A.

Impacts from SIA designation of Upper Independence Creek are described in Alternative C.

The major potential impacts to those rivers not designated would be the potential to impact the OR values identified for each river. These impacts are described in Alternative B (No Action) for each of the non-designated rivers including the Truckee River, Cold Stream, Alder Creek, the Little Truckee River, and Perazzo Creek.

This alternative would recommend the two rivers considered to make the best contribution to the National Wild and Scenic River System in terms of quality OR values and also OR values not well represented in the system. The ecological/botanical, research, and historic values of Sagehen Creek bring unique values to the Wild and Scenic River System that are presently not represented in the system. The Upper Truckee brings unique fisheries and historic values that make new contributions to the W&S River System in a primitive setting that can be enjoyed by many dispersed recreation users. The third best river while not recommended for designation is recommended for SIA status where the OR value (Lahontan cutthroat trout) would be the management emphasis and protection and enhancement would be pursued.

Since all the lands involved are National Forest System lands, the ease and cost of Forest Service administration under the Wild and Scenic River program would be considerably less than for rivers with significant private lands. This is due generally to the reduction of administrative costs needed to coordinate National Forest programs with private land management objectives. Typically, there are additional costs where there are extensive private lands which require additional survey and posting of property boundaries and the need for public access. See Table 5.2 for cost estimates of designation.

**ALTERNATIVE F.** Recommends designation of those rivers that would have minimum adverse impacts on other resource uses such as timber management and water and power development and would minimize impacts on local and state governments' ability to utilize existing utility and transportation corridors.

This Alternative would recommend designation of the Upper Truckee River as a National Scenic River and Upper Independence Creek would be recommended for designation by the Forest Service as a SIA. Sagehen Creek would be studied for possible SIA designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

The effects of designation of the Upper Truckee River on visual resources, recreation, private property, wildlife, endangered, threatened, and sensitive species, water development, minerals, and cultural resources would be similar to those described in Alternative A.

The impacts on timber management would be negligible under this alternative as compared overall to Alternative A as current management direction for the one river recommended for designation is compatible with wild and scenic river objectives. Currently, there are no regulated timber outputs on either Upper Independence Creek (SIA) or the Upper Truckee River. This would not change under this alternative.

Impacts from SIA designation of Upper Independence Creek are described in Alternative C.

The Truckee River, Cold Stream, Little Truckee River, and Alder Creek all contain major highways and power lines. Cold Stream also has a railroad adjacent to the stream in the lower part of the canyon. This alternative would not impact the use or improvement of these existing infrastructure, by state and/or local governments.

Perazzo Creek, Sagehen Creek, and the Little Truckee River contain the largest amount of timber currently available under provisions of the TNF LRMP. Although the overall impacts on the timber resources from designation are considered minor as described in Alternative A, this alternative retains the availability of timber along those rivers with the largest timber resource.

The major potential impacts to those rivers not designated would be the potential to impact the OR values identified for each river. These impacts are described in Alternative B. This alternative recommends one of the best rivers in terms of OR values but does not offer the best contribution for botanical ecological values which are not well represented in the National System.

**ALTERNATIVE G.** Recommends designation of those rivers identified to have the greatest botanical and ecological outstandingly remarkable values as related to the river environment.

This alternative recommends designation of the Upper Truckee River as a National Wild River, Sagehen Creek, and Perazzo Creek as National Scenic Rivers, and the Little Truckee River as a National Recreation River. Upper Independence Creek would be designated by the Forest Service as a SIA and the Sagehen Basin, outside of the Scenic River Corridor, would be studied for possible SIA designation.

The effects of designation of Perazzo Creek, Sagehen Creek, the Upper Truckee River, and Little Truckee River on private lands, visual resources, timber management, recreation, research, wildlife, endangered, threatened and sensitive species, water development, minerals, and cultural resources are described in Alternative A.

The major potential impacts to those rivers not designated would be the potential to impact the OR values identified for each river. These impacts are described in Alternative B. The effects of SIA designation of Upper Independence Creek are described in Alternative C.

## **OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

### **Adverse Effects that Cannot be Avoided**

Some increases in environmental degradation may result from increased recreation use due to designation. Individual river management plans would address mitigation actions to reduce any environmental problems along the designated rivers. Congressionally designated rivers would be under the statutory protection of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Rivers not designated would continue to be managed in accordance with federal, state, and local county plans.

Implementation of any of the alternatives may create some social conflicts between various users, simply because any action or lack of action is acceptable to some people and not acceptable to others.

### **Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity**

Implementation of any alternative would continue to provide opportunities for short-term resource yields. Forest management practiced under either federal or state standards (described in LRMPs and the California Forest Practices Act) ensure that short-term resource activities do not significantly impair the land's long-term productivity. Congressional designation of any alternative, except Alternative B (No Action), would enhance the long-term free-flowing river recreational opportunities on the river(s) included in that alternative.

## **Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources**

An irreversible commitment is one in which nonrenewable resources are permanently lost. None of the alternatives result in use or modification of resources that are considered nonrenewable (e.g. minerals). There would be no irreversible commitment of resources. Designation would protect threatened, endangered or sensitive plants or wildlife species from becoming irreversibly lost due to dam construction.

There could be a loss for potential development of the water resources for municipal/industrial and agricultural water and power generation, or to provide storage for California water rights, although no firm projects or proposals have been identified.

An irretrievable commitment is one in which resource production or use is lost while managing an area for another purpose. Implementation of Alternative A would create some decline in the production of timber, forage, and mineral resources. Any decline in the use of these resources would result in an irretrievable loss of these resources. All alternatives eliminate or reduce the management of some resources while increasing the management opportunities of others.

## **Other Effects**

None of the alternatives would have adverse effects in terms of energy requirements, conservation potential, or urban quality. No conflicts with federal, regional, or state land use plans have been identified.

## **Compatibility with State and Local Plans and Policies**

Sierra County has passed a resolution opposing designation of any rivers into the National Wild and Scenic System within the county. Designation of Perazzo Creek, the lower 1/2 mile of Sagehen Creek and/or the Little Truckee River would be in conflict with the County's resolution. The Town of Truckee did not support designation of the Truckee River, Alder Creek, and Coldstream while it did support designation of Sagehen Creek and recommending Independence Creek for a Special Interest Area(SIA). This information was received in a letter during the formal comment period on the DEIS.

**TABLE 5.1**

**Effects on Timber Outputs from  
Wild and Scenic River Designation  
Annual Outputs  
(Thousands of Board Feet)**

**ALTERNATIVES**

<b>River</b>	<b>Alt B No Action</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>
Truckee River	222.2	219.0	219.0	219.0	222.2	222.2	222.2
Cold Stream	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Alder Creek	192.0	191.2	192.0	192.0	192.0	192.0	192.0
Independence Creek	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Little Truckee River	328.8	316.3	316.3	328.8	328.8	328.8	316.3
Perazzo Creek	149.4	44.5	44.5	149.4	149.4	149.4	44.5
Sagehen Creek	342.6	118.0	118.0	342.6	118.0	342.6	118.0
Upper Truckee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,236.2</b>	<b>890.2</b>	<b>891.0</b>	<b>1,233.0</b>	<b>1,011.6</b>	<b>1,236.2</b>	<b>894.2</b>
<b>Difference<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-346.0</b>	<b>-345.2</b>	<b>-3.2</b>	<b>-224.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-342.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Differences are based on changes from those projected in the current TNF and LTBMU Forest Plans. The outputs in the Forest Plans are the same as projected under Alternative B (No Action).

**TABLE 5.2  
Cost of Designation**

No acquisition of private lands and no recreation or other developments would be proposed for any of the rivers eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. Planning and management costs would increase above current levels. This table lists the additional funding needs for a five-year period for each of the study rivers.

	<b>Implementation Cost</b>	<b>Management Plan</b>	<b>O&amp;M Costs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Truckee River	\$5,000	\$140,000	\$5,000	\$150,000
Cold Stream	\$500	\$11,000	\$500	\$12,000
Alder Creek	\$2,500	\$35,000	\$2,500	\$40,000
Independence Creek	\$2,500	\$7,000	\$500	\$10,000
Ltl Truckee River	\$5,000	\$35,000	\$3,000	\$43,000
Perazzo Creek	\$2,500	\$25,000	\$2,500	\$30,000
Sagehen Creek	\$2,500	\$75,000	\$2,500	\$80,000
Upper Truckee River	\$3,000	\$42,000	\$5,000	\$50,000

# CHAPTER VI

## LIST OF PREPARERS

### MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS

**Judie L. Tartaglia** (Tahoe National Forest Acting Forest Supervisor)

**Joanne Roubique** (Truckee District Ranger, Tahoe National Forest)

**Sam Wilbanks** (Sierraville District Ranger, Tahoe National Forest)

**Pete Brost** (Tahoe National Forest - Public Services Officer)

**Juan Palma** (Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor)

### INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM

**Terry B. Randolph** (Tahoe National Forest - Planning Team Leader)

B.S. Forestry, University of Idaho 1962. Thirty-three years experience at Ranger District and Supervisor's Office level. Twelve years experience as Planning Officer Served in various positions including three years as a District Ranger and as staff assistant in recreation, timber, and fire on five Ranger Districts and four National Forests.

**John Corbett** (Tahoe National Forest - Lands Staff)

John provided expertise in land status, mineral area management and special uses. Received B.S. in Forestry in 1960 from the University of Connecticut. Has completed postgraduate work in real estate and is a professional forester licensed by the State of California.

**Philip Horning** (Tahoe National Forest - Landscape Architect)

Phil provided expertise in recreation, visual management and with Special Interest Areas. He was the Interdisciplinary Team Leader and Wild and Scenic River Coordinator for the Eligibility Determination process. Phil received his Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (1969) from the College of Forestry and Environmental Science at Syracuse, N.Y. He has served on four National Forests, a State Forest in Australia, and the Peace Corps in Iran.

**Kathy Van Zuuk** (Tahoe National Forest - Botanist/Air Quality Coordinator)

Kathy provided expertise in all areas relating to vegetation and ecological management, including threatened and endangered species management for plants. Kathy received a Master of Science Degree in Plant Ecology from Northern Michigan University in 1978. She

has work experience with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and the Tahoe National Forest.

**Laura Browning** (Tahoe National Forest - Recreation Planner)

Laura assisted in the Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Determination forestwide and is presently the ID Team leader for the Westside Wild and Scenic River study. Laura received her B.S. in Natural Resources Planning, Humboldt State University, Arcata, California 1990. Worked seasonally with the National Park Service while completing college.

**Ann Carlson** (Tahoe National Forest - Fisheries Biologist)

Ann provided expertise on fisheries issues for the study, including the management needs for the Federally listed Threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. Ann received her M.S. in Aquatic Ecology from Utah State University in 1989. She has worked for the Tahoe National Forest as a Fish Biologist for eight years.

**Carrie Smith** (Tahoe National Forest - Truckee District Archaeologist)

Carrie provided expertise on cultural and historical resources associated with the study rivers. Carrie received a BA (Anthropology) from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1984 and a MA (Anthropology) from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque in 1988. She has served as the District Archaeologist since June 1990.

**William A. Baker** (Tahoe National Forest - Environmental Coordinator)

Bill provide guidance to the planning process to assure requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act were followed. Bill received his B.S. (Forest Management) from the University of California, Berkeley in 1965 and is a Professional Forester licensed by the State of California. Bill has served on several National Forests and has been the Environmental Coordinator for the Tahoe National Forest for fourteen years.

**Lisa O'Daly** (Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit - Community Planner)

Lisa provided coordination for the study with the LTBMU and was the Team Leader in the eligibility analysis for the Upper Truckee River. Lisa received a BA from the University of California, Davis in 1986 in Public Education. She has worked on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management for ten years as a Community Planner.

# CHAPTER VII

## References

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Washoe County Regional Planning Agency. March 1991. Truckee Meadows Regional Plan.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act dated October 2, 1968 (P.L. 90-542, 82 Stat. 906, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1271(note), 1271-1287)

# CHAPTER VIII

## Distribution List

Copies of the Study Report/FEIS have been sent to, and comments have been requested from the following: Note - Those with an S after their name requested a summary instead of an FEIS.

### **Federal Agencies and Officials**

Army Corps of Engineers  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Eldorado National Forest  
Federal Highway Administration, Region 9  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
The Honorable Harry Reid  
The Honorable Richard Bryan  
The Honorable Barbara Vucanovich  
The Honorable Wally Herger  
The Honorable John Doolittle  
The Honorable Tim Leslie  
The Honorable Bernard Richter  
The Honorable David Knowles  
Toiyabe National Forest  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
US Bureau of Mines (Spokane, Washington)  
US Department of Interior (Washington, D.C.)  
USDA Soil Conservation Service (So Lake Tahoe, Ca)  
USDA Forest Service (Washington Office)  
USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region  
USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs (Carson City, Nv)  
US Department of Transportation (Washington, D.C.)  
USDI Fish and Wildlife Service  
USDI Bureau of Reclamation (Carson City, Nv)  
USDI Geological Survey (Carson City, Nv)

## **State and Local Agencies**

Alpine County Planning Department -S-  
Alpine County Board of Supervisors  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Control  
California Department of Fish and Game  
California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) -S-  
California Department of Water Resources  
California Department of State Parks  
California Office of Planning and Research  
El Dorado County Planning Department  
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors  
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board  
Libraries:  
Douglas County Library - Zephyr Cove  
El Dorado County Library - South Lake Tahoe  
Lake Tahoe Community College - South Lake Tahoe  
Nevada County Library - Grass Valley  
Nevada County Library - Nevada City  
Nevada County Library - Truckee  
Placer County Library - Tahoe City  
Placer County Library - Kings Beach  
Washoe County Library - Reno  
Washoe County Library - Incline Village  
Nevada State Library - Carson City  
Sierra Nevada College Library - Incline Village  
Nevada State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources -S-  
Nevada County Board of Supervisors  
Nevada County Planning Department  
Nevada State Division of State Parks  
Northern Sierra Air Quality District  
North Tahoe Chamber of Commerce  
Placer County Environmental Health  
Placer County Board of Supervisors  
Placer County Planning Department  
Resources Agency of California  
Sierra Valley Water Company  
Sierra County Board of Supervisors  
Sierra County Planning Department  
South Tahoe Public Utilities District  
Tahoe City Public Utility District

Tahoe-Donner Association  
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency  
Town of Truckee  
Truckee Fire Protection District  
Truckee-Donner Public Utilities District  
Truckee-Donner Recreation and Parks District  
University of California, Sagehen Field Station  
University of California, Berkeley  
Washoe County Parks and Recreation  
Washoe County Regional Water Management Agency  
Washoe County Comprehensive Planning

**Indian Tribes**

Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribes  
Native American Heritage Commission  
Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe  
Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California

**Businesses/Organizations**

American Rivers  
California Native Plant Society  
California Forestry Association  
California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs  
Fibreboard  
Friends of the River  
High Sierra Motorcycle Club  
League to Save Lake Tahoe  
North Tahoe Trail Dusters  
Sierra Pacific Power Company  
Sierra Club, Mother Lode Chapter  
Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter  
Sierra Pacific Industries  
Siller Brothers  
South Yuba River Citizens League  
Tahoe Sierra Preservation Council  
Tahoe Donner Historical Society  
Tahoe Donner Association  
The Nature Conservancy

Truckee Chamber of Commerce  
Truckee-Carson Irrigation District  
Wilderness Society  
California Wilderness Coalition

### **Newspapers**

Auburn Journal (Auburn, Ca)  
Union (Grass Valley, Ca)  
Gazette-Journal (Reno, Nv)  
Loyalton Booster (Loyalton, Ca)  
Mountain Messenger (Downieville, Ca)  
Nevada Appeal (Carson City, Nv)  
Record Courier (Douglas County, Nv)  
Sacramento Bee (Sacramento, Ca) -S-  
Sierra Sun (Truckee, Ca)  
Tahoe Daily Tribune (So Lake Tahoe, Ca)  
Tahoe World Newspaper (Tahoe City, Ca)

### **Individuals**

John and Judy Hodge  
Dave Pratt  
Debbie Brayfindley  
Evelyn K. Smith  
James Cuneo  
Joanne Ochs  
Ken Hanig  
Marion Smith  
Michael Jackson  
Ned Robinson -S-  
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# CHAPTER IX

## INDEX

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Adverse Effects That Cannot Be Avoided</b>	V.21
<b>Affected Environment</b>	IV.1-37
<b>Alternatives</b>	
<b>Alternative A</b>	
Description	II.5
Environmental Consequences	V.3-12
<b>Alternative B (No Action)</b>	
Description	II.5
Environmental Consequences	V.13-17
<b>Alternative C</b>	
Description	II.5-6
Environmental Consequences	V.17-18
<b>Alternative D</b>	
Description	II.6
Environmental Consequences	V.18
<b>Alternative E</b>	
Description	II.6-7
Environmental Consequences	V.19
<b>Alternative F</b>	
Description	II.7
Environmental Consequences	V.20
<b>Alternative G</b>	
Description	II.7-8
Environmental Consequences	IV.20-21
<b>Classification</b>	S.2, III.5-6, Appendix B
<b>Climate</b>	IV.1
<b>Comparison of Alternatives</b>	II.9-15
<b>Compatibility with State and Local Government</b>	
<b>Policy and Plans</b>	V.22

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Cultural Resources and Historical Resources</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.15-16
Environmental Consequences	S.6, II.12,V.9
<b>Description of Eligible Rivers</b>	IV.17-31, III.1-5, Appendix B
<b>Distribution List</b>	VIII.1-4
<b>Eligibility</b>	I.3, III.1-5, Appendix B
<b>Environmental Consequences</b>	V.1-22
<b>Fish and Wildlife</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.4-5
Environmental Consequences	V.4-5
<b>Floodplains, Wetlands and Riparian Areas</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.2-3
Environmental Consequences	V.1,V.6-7
<b>Free Flowing Guidelines</b>	V.3
<b>Grazing Management</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.10-11
Environmental Consequences	V.9
<b>Irreversible and Irretrievable</b>	
<b>Commitment of Resources</b>	V.22
<b>Land and Resource Management Plan Direction</b>	IV.17-31
<b>Landforms</b>	IV.1-2
<b>Landowners and Land Uses</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.15
Environmental Consequences	V.2, V.12
<b>Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and</b>	
Maintenance of Long-Term Productivity	V.21
<b>List of Preparers</b>	VI.1-2
<b>Management Guidelines</b>	Appendix A
<b>Maps, List of</b>	ii.3

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Minerals</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.3
Environmental Consequences	S.5, II.10, V.9
<b>Old-Growth Areas</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.6
Environmental Consequences	V.7
<b>Outstanding Remarkable Characteristics</b>	III.1-6, Appendix B
<b>Private Land</b>	S.5, II.10, V.12
<b>Public Involvement and Planning Issues</b>	I.3-4
<b>Purpose and Need</b>	I.1
<b>Recreation</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.10
Environmental Consequences	S.6, II.12, V.7-8
<b>Recreational Designation</b>	III.5, Appendix B
<b>References, List of</b>	VII.1-3
<b>Research</b>	II.4, V.11-12
<b>Riparian Areas</b>	
Affected Environmental	IV.5
Environmental Consequences	V.7
<b>Scenic Designation</b>	III.5, Appendix B
<b>Scenic and Visual Resources</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.9
Environmental Consequences	V.3
<b>Special Interest Area</b>	II.4, IV.22-23, Appendix C
<b>Social and Economic</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.11
Environmental Consequences	S.7, II.13, V.10
<b>Sagehen Wild River - Proposed Management</b>	
Standards and Legislative Language	Appendix D
<b>Soils</b>	IV.2

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Streamflow</b>	IV.34
<b>Suitability</b>	I.1
<b>Summary of Environmental Effects</b>	S.5-9, II.9-15
<b>Tables, List of</b>	ii.3
<b>Threatened and Endangered Species</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.6-8
Environmental Consequences	S.5, II.11, V.5-6
<b>Timber Management</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.16
Environmental Consequences	S.7, II.13, V.23
<b>Vegetation</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.5-6
Environmental Consequences	V.5-7
<b>Visual Quality Objectives</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.9
Environmental Consequences	S.5, II.11, V.3
<b>Water Quality</b>	IV.4
<b>Wild Designation</b>	III.5, Appendix B
<b>Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Region</b>	IV.13-15
<b>Water Developments and Improvement Projects</b>	
Affected Environment	IV.3-4
Environmental Consequences	V.10

# PLAN APPENDICES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix		Page
A	Management Guidelines for Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Corridors	A.1 - A.4
B	Findings of Eligibility and Classification	B.1 - B.23
C	Special Interest Areas	C.1 - C.6
D	Sagehen National Scenic River	D.1 - D.4
E	Public Participation and Response to Comment	E.1 - E.86

# APPENDIX A

## Management Guidelines for Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Corridors

The following guidelines provide general management direction for National Forest lands for recommended and designated Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River corridors and that a more specific Management Plan is developed after Wild and Scenic River designation.

### WILD RIVERS

**Timber Production:** Cutting of trees will not be permitted except when needed in association with a primitive recreation experience (such as clearing for trails and protection of users) or to protect the environment (such as control of fire). Timber outside the boundary but within the visual corridors, will be managed and harvested in a manner to provide special emphasis to visual quality.

**Water Supply:** All water supply dams and major diversions are prohibited.

**Hydroelectric Power:** No development of hydroelectric power facilities would be permitted.

**Flood Control:** No flood control dams, levees, or other works are allowed in the channel or river corridor. The natural appearance and essentially primitive character of the river area must be maintained.

**Mining:** New mining claims and mineral leases are prohibited within 1/4 mile of the river. Valid claims would not be abrogated. Subject to regulations (36 CFR 228) that the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior may prescribe to protect the rivers included in the National System, other existing mining activity would be allowed to continue. Existing mineral activity must be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface disturbance, sedimentation, and visual impairment. Reasonable access will be permitted.

**Road Construction:** No roads or other provisions for overland motorized travel would be permitted within a narrow incised river valley or, if the river valley is broad, within 1/4 mile of the river bank. A few inconspicuous roads leading to the boundary of the river area at the time of study will not disqualify wild river classification. Also, unobtrusive trail bridges could be allowed.

**Agriculture:** Agricultural use is restricted to a limited amount of domestic livestock grazing and hay production to the extent currently practiced. Row crops are prohibited.

**Recreation Development:** Major public-use areas, such as large campground, interpretive centers, or administrative headquarters are located outside the wild river area. Simple comfort

and convenience facilities, such as fireplaces or shelters may be provided as necessary within the river area. These should harmonize with the surroundings.

**Structure:** A few minor existing structures could be allowed assuming such structures are not incompatible with the essentially primitive and natural values of the viewshed. New structures would not be allowed except in rare instances to achieve management objectives (i.e. structures and activities associated with fisheries enhancement programs could be allowed).

**Utilities:** New transmission lines, gas lines, water lines, etc, are discouraged. Where no reasonable alternative exists, additional or new facilities should be restricted to existing rights-of-way. Where new rights-of-way are indicated, the scenic, recreational, and fish and wildlife values must be evaluated in the selection of the site.

**Motorized travel:** Motorized travel on land or water could be permitted, but is generally not compatible with this classification.

## SCENIC RIVERS

**Timber Production:** A wide range of silvicultural practices could be allowed provided that such practices are carried on in such a way that there is no substantial adverse effect on the river and its immediate environment. The river area should be maintained in its near natural environment. Timber outside the boundary but within the visual scene area should be managed and harvested in a manner which provides special emphasis on visual quality.

**Water Supply:** All water supply dams and major diversions are prohibited.

**Hydroelectric Power:** No development of hydroelectric power facilities would be allowed.

**Flood Control:** Flood control dams and levees would be prohibited.

**Mining:** Subject to regulations at 36 CFR 228 that the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior may prescribe to protect the values of rivers included in the National System, new mining claims and mineral leases could be allowed and existing operations allowed to continue. However, mineral activity must be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface disturbance, sedimentation and pollution, and visual impairment.

**Road Construction:** Roads may occasionally bridge the river area and short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous and well-screened roads or screened railroads could be allowed. Consideration will be given to the type of use for which roads are constructed and the type of use that will occur in the river area.

**Agriculture:** A wider range of agricultural uses is permitted to the extent currently practiced. Row crops are not considered as an intrusion of the "largely primitive" nature of scenic corridors as long as there is not a substantial adverse effect on the natural-like appearance of the river area.

**Recreation Development:** Larger scale public use facilities, such as moderate size campgrounds, public information centers, and administrative headquarters are allowed if such structures are screened from the river. Modest and unobtrusive marinas also can be allowed.

**Structures:** Any concentrations of habitations are limited to relatively short reaches of the river corridor. New structures that would have a direct and adverse effect on river values would not be allowed.

**Utilities:** This is the same as for wild rivers.

**Motorized Travel:** Motorized travel on land or water may be permitted, prohibited or restricted to protect the river values.

## RECREATIONAL RIVERS

**Timber Production:** Timber harvesting would be allowed under standard restrictions to protect the immediate river environment, water quality, scenic, fish and wildlife, and other values.

**Water Supply:** Existing low dams, diversion works, rip rap and other minor structures are allowed provided the waterway remains generally natural in appearance. New structures are prohibited.

**Hydroelectric Power:** No development of hydroelectric power facilities is provided.

**Flood Control:** Existing flood control works may be maintained. New structures are prohibited.

**Mining:** Subject to regulations (36 CFR 228) that the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior may prescribe to protect values or rivers included in the National System, new mining claims and mineral leases are allowed and existing operations are allowed to continue. Mineral activity must be conducted in a manner that minimizes surface disturbance, sedimentation and pollution, and visual impairment.

**Road Construction:** Paralleling roads or railroads could be constructed on one or both river banks. There can be several bridge crossings and numerous river access points.

**Agriculture:** Lands may be managed for a full range of agricultural uses, to the extent currently practiced.

**Recreation Development:** Campgrounds and picnic areas may be established in close proximity to the river. However, recreational classification does not require extensive recreation development.

**Structures:** Small Communities as well as dispersed or cluster residential developments are allowed. New structures are allowed for both habitation and for intensive recreation use.

**Utilities:** This is the same as for wild and scenic river classifications.

**Motorized Travel:** Motorized travel on land or water may be permitted, prohibited or restricted. Controls will usually be similar to surrounding lands and waters.

# APPENDIX B

## Findings of Eligibility and Classification

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Final Revised Interagency Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification, and Management of River Areas (47 Federal Register 39454, September 7, 1982) provide direction for determining the eligibility and classification of study rivers.

### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for designation as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, a river must be free flowing which is defined by the Act as: "Sec. 16. (b) "free-flowing", as applied to any river or section of a river, means existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence, however, of low dams, diversion works, and other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system shall not automatically bar its consideration for such inclusion: Provided, That this shall not be construed to authorized, intend, or encouraged future construction of such structures within components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

A river also must possess one or more of the following as outstandingly remarkable values: (1) scenic, (2) recreational, (3) geological, (4) fish and wildlife, (5) historic or cultural (6) other values, including biological or ecological. This is a subjective judgement by the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) to determine whether a feature is outstandingly remarkable. The process requires the study team list all of the special values of the river study area and then assess whether they are very rare or unique within the State(s) or Nation, or are superior examples of values that may be found elsewhere. Another option of the study team is to use the river's physiographic or hydrologic region as the geographic framework for comparison and modify it if necessary to reflect use patterns, etc. For recreation features, the region may be defined based on the population the resource serves, while for archaeological sites, it may be most appropriate to define the region as the area inhabited by the culture involved. Studies conducted in the Pacific Northwest on rivers have recommended going further to include those features that are "exemplary" (common but important types -- things that typify the nations's diversity) as well as rare features.

### CLASSIFICATION

There are three classifications of rivers, or river segments, in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System -- wild, scenic and recreational. Classification is based on the condition of the river and the adjacent lands at the time of the study. Table 3.2 shows the miles of wild, scenic, and recreational segments on each river. The act defines these classifications as follows:

- a) **Wild River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and water unpolluted. These rivers represent vestiges of primitive America.

- b) **Scenic River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- c) **Recreational River.** Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundments or diversion in the past.

## **INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM (IDT) PROCESS FOR ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

### **Background**

In the fall of 1990 the Tahoe National Forest requested potential candidate streams to be listed from all five Ranger Districts, Supervisor's Office resource specialists, and conservation groups. In addition to the names of the streams, resource information about each stream was requested to help identify potential Outstandingly Remarkable (OR) resource values. The specific values under consideration were those identified in handbook direction and the Wild and Scenic River Act. These were described previously. The Supervisor's Office resource specialists were asked to systematically review known resource information for their specialty and identify additional candidate streams. Some specialists reviewed information inventoried on 1:24,000 quad sheets while others referred to lists of resource values such as the list of threatened and endangered species. Based on these reviews and input from the Districts and environmental groups a final list of 70 streams and rivers were identified for formal review by the Forest Wild and Scenic Rivers IDT.

### **Interdisciplinary Team**

The IDT was formed by Supervisor's Office (SO) resource specialists, District personnel with resource knowledge or field knowledge of the streams under consideration, resource officers, some District Rangers, and the ID team leader who was the Wild and Scenic River Coordinator for the Forest. In addition two member of the public served as observers to ensure that a fair and balanced process was being conducted. The Executive Director of the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL), Mary Haughey, and District Manager for Sierra Pacific Timber, Tim Fellers, observed the meetings. In some of the meetings Robert Ingrham represented Tim Fellers. Both citizens brought information forward on certain streams and commented on the process of the team. The IDT meetings were conducted on each District in the late winter and early spring of 1991 to determine the eligible streams.

### **The Process**

1. The first step was to ask the appropriate members of the IDT to provide a general description of the stream being considered. Usually this was a District person familiar with the stream. In some cases additional information was provided by resource specialists who had conducted stream surveys or other field surveys in the vicinity.

2. Based on this discussion the first issue to be determined was whether the stream was free flowing. The answer was yes or no. For some streams there was lively debate on this issue because the definition of free flowing requires interpretation.
3. The third step was to review the known resource values for the stream. Each resource area listed above was described and important values identified. At this point there was purposely no effort to ask specialist whether they thought the resource values were outstandingly remarkable.
4. After all the resource values were objectively described, the team was asked to determine the level of significance for each resource. The team discussed the relative significance of each resource area and based on the discussion assigned a number from zero to 4. Zero indicated no value present, 1 indicated the value was not significant, 2 indicated a resource value of local significance, 3 indicated regionally significant resources, and 4 indicated values of national value. The numbers assigned to each resource represented the discussion and were not used in any mathematical formula that would determine eligibility.
5. The last step of eligibility was making a determination that there were outstandingly remarkable values identified for a river. Generally regional and national values were the key indicators of outstandingly remarkable values. The IDT put a lot of effort into this last step because there were many factors to consider and there was no automatic assumption that if a resource value was regionally or nationally significant that it was eligible. In some cases there were values of national significance identified, but the stream was not considered eligible because the value was not within the stream corridor for any significant length. Each situation was determined on a case by case basis. The final notes for the eligibility determination capture the final determination but do not demonstrate the complexity of discussion and the amount of effort made by the team to reach these conclusions.
6. Seven District meetings were conducted by the IDT to develop a list of streams considered tentatively eligible. A final meeting was conducted in August of 1991 to review the entire list of streams and ensure that from a Forestwide perspective all streams identified as eligible truly met the meaning of outstandingly remarkable. Two or three streams were dropped from the list during this meeting. Duncan Creek on Foresthill District was dropped from the list at a later time when subsequent field work indicated that no rare plants existed within the stream corridor.

### **Classification**

Additional meetings were conducted with each District and the IT leader to finalize the recommended classification for each river determined to be eligible. In some cases additional forest staff were recruited for this task who had field knowledge of road locations, timber management activities, and other kinds of development that affect the classification of river segments. These meetings were conducted in the Fall of 1991 and information finalized in the winter of 1992.

## **Interdisciplinary Team Members:**

### **Supervisors Office**

Philip Horning, ID Team Leader  
Landscape Architect and Recreation  
Kathy Van Zuuk, Forest Botanist  
& ecological values  
Ron Medel, Forest Fisheries Biologist  
Diana Craig, Wildlife Biologist  
Donna Day, Assist Forest Archaeologist  
Ann Boyd, Geologist  
Ann Carlson, Fisheries Biologist

### **Downieville District**

Bill Haire, Resource Officer  
Steve Underwood, Wildlife Biologist  
Dennis Stevens, Archaeologist  
Hank Meals, Archaeologist  
Dick Zembiac, Minerals Officer  
Alan Doer, Forester

### **Foresthill District**

Harlan Hamburger, Resource Officer  
Nolan Smith, Archaeologist  
Matt Triggs, Wildlife Biologist

### **Truckee District**

Rick Maddalena, Recreation Officer  
Fran Herbst, Dispersed Recreation Officer  
Carrie Smith, Archaeologist  
Keith Mickelson, Resource/Lands Officer

### **Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**

Lisa O'Daly, Planner  
Julie Perrochet, Fisheries  
Penny Rucks, Forest Archaeologist  
Kathy Erwin, Wildlife  
Jeff Reiner, Grazing  
Susan Norman, Hydrology  
Lori Alessio, Sensitive Plants

### **Sierraville District**

Steve Bishop, District Ranger  
Fred Kent, Resource Officer  
Michael Baldrice, Archaeologist  
Robert Frost, Fire Prevention

### **Nevada City District**

Nolan Smith, Archaeologist  
Dave Connell, Wildlife Biologist  
Robert Cary, Forester  
Donn Thane, Forester

## RIVERS DETERMINED TO BE NOT ELIGIBLE - EASTSIDE RIVERS

River	Comments
Cold stream/Hwy. 89	Not free-flowing
Cold stream/Mt. Lola	*
Smithneck Creek	
Berry Creek	
Little Truckee River/ between Stampede and Boca	Not free-flowing
Five Lakes Creek	
Prosser Creek/ North and South Forks	
Silver Creek	
Pole Creek	
Upper Cold Creek/ tributary to Cold Creek	
South Fork Cold Creek/ tributary to Cold Creek	

\* Where there are blanks these streams were determined to not be eligible because no outstandingly remarkable values were identified by the ID team.

## STUDY RIVERS

The Eastside or Truckee River Basin Wild and Scenic River study evaluates the suitability of eight eastside study rivers, including the Upper Truckee River which was determined eligible for suitability study by an Interdisciplinary Team from the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Specific eligibility information for the west side rivers is available for review at the Forest Supervisors Office in Nevada City, California.

The outstanding values of the rivers studied in detail in this EIS are described below:

### 1. Truckee River

**Background** - The eligible river originates from the waters of Lake Tahoe at 6,240 feet and drops to about 5,780 feet over 11 miles near the town of Truckee. The surrounding slopes are covered with a conifer forest. In the corridor itself, mixed conifer occur on the east side and true fir on the west side. Highway 89 borders the entire segment, offering numerous access points. This level of accessibility helps define the river's character as a type of linear park. Frequent pullouts along the roadway enable people to park and unload their picnic and camp equipment and carry them to the shoreline. The first four miles between Tahoe City dam and the River Ranch, is also paralleled by a bikepath constructed and maintained by the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD). Past River Ranch, river access needs are provided by the developed recreation sites managed by the Forest Service.

A summertime use that became popular, and somewhat controversial, in the 1970's is rafting or floating the river and general water sports. The Truckee River between Tahoe City and the River Ranch is a very placid reach of water and popular for water sports including floating with rafts, inner tubes, and air mattress. Placer County regulates commercial rentals along the river between the dam at Tahoe City and the River Ranch. Noncommercial use has increased and the TCPUD

developed a public launch facility and parking area near the "Y" at Tahoe City. Adequate flows for water sports can be maintained throughout the summer, except under drought conditions.

The Truckee River is Lake Tahoe's only outlet. A dam built in 1865 controls the release of Tahoe's waters, the top six feet which (regulating up to 745,000 acre feet of water) are operated as a reservoir, ultimately draining into Pyramid Lake. The natural level of the outlet from the lake is 6,223 feet; however, the quantity of inflow and operation of the gates at the Tahoe City dam can store a maximum level of 6,229 feet. When the lake level is below the natural rim, there are no flows in the Truckee. Although there have been discussions about pumping water from Lake Tahoe during extreme droughts, no pumping has occurred in recent years, other than a limited amount to keep the fish alive that were trapped near the dam.

Flows are controlled by the dam at Tahoe City and are managed within two management constraints. Current minimum in-stream flow requirements are 50 cu ft/sec in the winter and 70 cu ft/sec during the summer period in order to maintain fish habitat. Flows are coordinated with releases from other reservoirs within the Truckee River Basin to maintain a flow of 500 cfs near the California/Nevada State line, known as the Floriston rates. In a normal year, the average release from the Tahoe City dam is 250 to 350 cfs. A flow of 125 cu ft/sec is considered the minimum flow needed to float the river.

### **Free Flowing**

The segment of the Truckee from Lake Tahoe to Truckee City meets the intent of the criteria. There are some modifications to the river, but they are not significant enough to effect its free flowing characteristics. The banks along the Deer Park Picnic Area have been rip-rapped to prevent erosion at this heavily used site. Further, boulder placement at the Caltrans project (at the highway's river crossing) tends to look artificial, but this could be mitigated.

### **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

#### **Recreation**

The Truckee River is heavily used by the general public for hiking, biking, fishing, water sports (floating and kayaking), swimming, camping, picnicking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, snowplay, and skiing. The ease of access and the proximity to Lake Tahoe add to the area's attractiveness as a recreation corridor. The intensity and diversity of recreational uses along the Truckee River combine to make outstandingly remarkable recreation values. Criteria to make this determination included: (this criteria was also used to evaluate recreation values for all study rivers).

- Diversity of recreation opportunities: Number of potential/actual activities participated within the area.

- Quality/uniqueness of existing recreation opportunities: Comparative number of percent of similar opportunities available in the region.

- Level of use: Number of user days, visitor hours, or other measure of use levels.

- Access: Ease of access (trailheads, etc., accessibility by road): availability of access points; proximity to population centers.

- Character/naturalness: Pristine quality; level of wildness/remoteness; extent of undeveloped area.
- Presence of interesting natural features or wildlife: Number and type of points or features of interest.
- Scenic quality: Presence of panoramic views and other scenic qualities.
- Number/type recreation sites/facilities: Extent of appropriate facility development; potential/existing camping areas, trailheads, trails etc.
- Length of boating season: Number of weeks/months and time of year the river is navigable and boatable at reasonable conditions.
- Class/difficulty of river segment.
- Length of run/river segment: The actual length of navigable river available to recreational river runners and average time required to boat the segment.

### **Scenic Quality**

The Truckee River Canyon from Tahoe City to Truckee is rated as a variety class A landscape which means that it has high visual diversity and high scenic quality. The water features of deep pools, riffles, and small rapids, excellent water quality and riparian vegetation make the river corridor a very attractive setting. Within the corridor, there are occasional rocky bluffs with vertical cliffs and steep talus slopes sometimes down to the river bank. Overall, while the features are attractive, there are no dramatic water features such as roaring rapids or waterfalls. The study team did not identify any features that would indicate the potential for Outstandingly Remarkable visual characteristics.

### **Cultural Resources**

The Truckee River was an important transportation corridor for the Native American Washoe who traveled to Lake Tahoe along the river. The area was inhabited by the Washoe during the spring and summer months with Lake Tahoe and the Truckee River system supplying fish, a food source critical to Washoe subsistence. There are several recorded prehistoric village sites along the banks of the lower Truckee River which are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These prehistoric sites are considered to have outstandingly remarkable values.

The railroad bed for the Lake Tahoe Railroad and Transportation Company parallels the Truckee River. This railroad served as the primary transportation link to Lake Tahoe prior to the automobile and was intrinsic to the development of the North Shore of Lake Tahoe. The Knoxville Townsite, which was a former boomtown whose ore was found to be worthless, is also adjacent to the river. Further, historic logging along the river corridor has left several logging related features such as splash dams and mill sites.

The railroad bed for the Lake Tahoe Railroad and Transportation Company is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Geology**

The geology of the Truckee River Canyon is not unusual, but is characteristic of the Sierra Nevada. However, it is not a "textbook" example of such a river. The Study Team did not find the geological features to be outstandingly remarkable.

## **Fisheries**

The Truckee River provides a significant fisheries resource and the California Department of Fish and Game (CFG) recognizes the reach from Tahoe City to Truckee as the most important trout spawning area on the entire main stem of the Truckee River. CFG's entire trout planting program on the main stem of the Truckee is concentrated in this area. Other game fish species found in the area include rainbow, brown, brook, and Lahontan cutthroat trout, and mountain whitefish. The Truckee River also provides important habitat for native non-game species including: Lahontan redbreast, Lahontan speckled dace, Tahoe sucker, mountain sucker, Paiute sculpin, and Lahontan tui chub. The easy access along Highway 89, combined with numerous CFG trout plants throughout the season, produce highly successful angler experiences. The recreational fishing experience adds to the diversity of recreational opportunities for the area and the recreational OR values. The fisheries values, alone, were not considered outstandingly remarkable.

## **Wildlife**

Wildlife found along the Truckee River are typical of the Canadian Life Zone as species are associated with Red fir, lodgepole, and meadow/willow/alder habitats. Species include mule deer, beaver, waterfowl and pine marten. Spotted owls occupy adjacent stands of older forests near the Deer Creek drainage. Bald Eagle's roost along the river area sporadically during the winter. However, the Team did not find wildlife values significantly higher than similar habitats in the Sierra, and did not identify any outstandingly remarkable wildlife values.

## **Botanical and/or Ecological Values**

The Lower Truckee corridor provides typical high elevation riparian associations along the riverbanks and a conifer environment away from the river. The previously endangered *Berberis (Mahonia) sonnei* is no longer on the threatened and endangered list. As a result of this action, botanical values are not considered to be outstandingly remarkable. Other ecological values are considered typical for the Sierra and there are no other outstandingly remarkable ecological values known within the river corridor.

## **Conclusion**

The Truckee River was determined eligible for Recreational River status under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. This recommendation is based on the fact that the river is free flowing between Tahoe City and Truckee and possesses outstandingly remarkable Recreation and Cultural Resource values.

## **2. Coldstream Canyon (Emigrant Canyon)**

### **Background**

Emigrant Canyon, a fork of Coldstream Canyon, is 5.2 miles long, and flows from a scenic canyon which lies just south of the Donner State Park. Coldstream Canyon flows into Donner Creek just below or east of the Donner State Park. Most of the land ownership is private, although the California State Parks is in the process of acquiring an additional one mile of stream frontage. Much of the private land within the area has logged or is scheduled for logging.

### **Free Flowing**

The stream meets the criteria as free flowing. There are no impoundments on the stream.

### **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

#### **Recreation**

Recreation use is limited in the area and consists mostly of day hikes along the Pacific Crest Trail and into the headwaters. Other dispersed use includes fishing and mountainbikes. Recreation use is typical of the Sierra and the Team determined there are no outstandingly remarkable recreation features.

#### **Scenic**

Coldstream Canyon (Emigrant Canyon) is considered to be highly scenic with high spatial definition. The scenic values are complimentary to other outstandingly remarkable features and the scenic values are not considered outstandingly remarkable.

#### **Cultural Resources**

The Truckee River Route of the California Overland Emigrant Trail parallels much of Coldstream and Emigrant Canyon. All of the various components (i.e., routes, cutoffs, branches) of the California Overland Emigrant Trail achieved National Trail status in August 1992. This trail is considered to be an outstandingly remarkable value.

#### **Geology**

There are no unique or specially significant geological features within the area. There is a granite bowl located at the top of the creek displaying some glaciation, but overall the area does not contain any outstanding remarkable geological features.

#### **Fish and Wildlife**

Coldstream Canyon (Emigrant Canyon) supports populations of brook and brown trout. Lahontan reddsides have also been observed. There is a good potential habitat for native fisheries including Lahontan cutthroat trout. There is habitat for pine marten and goshawk, both old-forest dependent species. The area has been heavily logged leaving a network of riparian stringers throughout. The fisheries and wildlife values are not considered outstandingly remarkable.

#### **Botanical and Ecological Values**

There are no known Threatened or Endangered species, although there is a potential for four sensitive Ivesia species. The botanical and ecological values are typical for the Sierra and no outstanding remarkable features were identified.

## **Conclusion**

The Stream is eligible due to significant cultural resources. The Emigrant trail is considered outstandingly remarkable due to its relationship to a nationally significant historical event. Based on identifying the historical resources as outstandingly remarkable, Coldstream Canyon has been determined to be eligible as a National Recreational River.

## **3. Alder Creek**

### **Background**

Alder Creek is 6.4 miles long with its headwaters just above or west of the Tahoe-Donner development. The stream flows east to Prosser Reservoir. Approximately 60% of the lands adjacent to the stream are managed by the Tahoe National Forest and the remaining 40% are privately owned, with numerous small private land ownerships.

Roads parallel both sides most of the stream for 90% of the length of the creek. Part of the area is within the 1960 Donner Ridge fire. Tahoe-Donner is a land development project that has a small ski area and a golf course in addition to the real estate development.

### **Free Flowing**

The stream meets the criteria of free flowing.

### **Determination of Outstanding Remarkable Characteristics**

#### **Recreation**

Donner ski area and the Tahoe-Donner golf course are part of a large planned community real estate development. Other recreation activities include a variety of dispersed uses such as walking, driving for pleasure, and bird watching. Recreation use is limited and for the most part users are homeowners in the general area. There are no outstandingly remarkable recreation features in the area in the opinion of the study team.

#### **Scenic**

Scenic values are generally moderate and the spatial definition is low. The area does not contain any outstanding remarkable scenic values.

#### **Cultural Resources**

The Donner Camp, used by the George and Jacob Donner Families of Donner Party fame, is located on the lower reaches of Alder Creek. Professional Historians generally agree that a branch of the California Overland Emigrant Trail did not follow Alder Creek. Additionally, there is a

sawmill site and a large, complex prehistoric basalt quarry site adjacent to the creek. The Donner Camp is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and constitutes an outstandingly remarkable value. The sawmill was recently determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Geology**

The geology is common to the Sierra and there are no outstandingly remarkable characteristics.

### **Fisheries and wildlife**

Alder Creek supports three trout species, brook, rainbow, and brown. Brook trout are the most numerous, rainbow trout are moderately abundant, and there are only a few brown trout at this time. Rainbow trout from Prosser Reservoir spawn in the lower end of the stream, just above the reservoir. There are no known fish or wildlife Threatened or Endangered species associated with this stream, although there is an active beaver population and a growing wildlife population. Overall, the wildlife and fisheries values are not considered outstanding remarkable.

### **Botanical and Ecological**

There are no known unique plant communities or Threatened or Endangered species within the area. There is potential for four Ivesia species, *Silene invis*a and *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *torreyanum*, all Forest Service sensitive species. Overall the botanical and ecological values are not considered outstandingly remarkable.

### **Conclusion**

The nationally significant Donner Camp is located in the lower reaches of the creek. This is the location of the site where the Donner family actually camped which is separate from the rest of the party which camped at Donner Lake. There is a split in professional opinion as to whether the overland emigrant trail followed over this route. The site is eligible for listing on the National Historical Register.

## **4. Sagehen Creek**

### **Background**

Sagehen Creek is an eight mile long segment which flows from its headwaters to Stamped Reservoir. The lands adjacent to the stream are entirely National Forest System Lands and are managed by the Tahoe National Forest. The University of California at Berkeley has a field research station in the Sagehen Basin and has conducted a variety of research activities on National Forest lands within the Sagehen Basin since 1951. There have been over 178 research publications, 27 Ph.D. dissertations and 27 M.S. theses based on work at Sagehen Creek Field Station. The primary research emphasis has been basic research on the ecology of aquatic and terrestrial species and communities with an emphasis on management of wildland resources.

## **Free Flowing**

Sagehen is a free flowing stream and free from any impoundments. The stream channel condition is natural except where roads cross.

## **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

### **Recreation**

Forest Service management direction within the Sagehen Basin has not encouraged intensive recreation use because of the long term research activities being conducted throughout the basin. There is a small campground on Sagehen Creek and light dispersed recreation such as fishing and deer hunting occurs throughout the basin. There are no outstandingly remarkable recreation values in the area.

### **Visuals**

The Sagehen headwaters have a high visual quality while the remaining area is considered moderate to low in visual quality. The Study Team did not consider visual quality to be an outstandingly remarkable factor in the Sagehen Creek area.

### **Cultural Resources**

The Sagehen basin was logged beginning in the 1870's. Evidence of these early animal and railroad based logging systems and associated sites are still visible. The basin is considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The values are considered to be outstandingly remarkable.

## **Geology, Hydrology, Vegetation, and Ecological Resources**

The Sagehen headwaters are an intact glacial cirque. The Sagehen cirque is a vernal pool and has a population of vernal quillwort (*Isoetes bolanderi*) which is not widely distributed on the TNF. The number of springs (over 20) gives rise to fens which are part of a complex hydrological system and are considered to have significant value for research purposes. These fens are unique vegetative communities with 40 different plant species, including two sundews, *Drosera rotundifolia* and *Drosera anglica*. Mosses dominate the peatlands, especially *Drepanocladus* and *Cratoneuron* species, several monocot species, as well as shrubs. A fen generally has continuous running water and consequently a higher pH and different plant community from a bog (which generally have impounded water, lower pH and the diagnostic presence of *Sphagnum* mosses - a situation more common along the Canadian Shield and in eastern North America). These fens are the largest and most extensive on the Forest.

There are known occurrences of *Ivesia sericoleuca* and *Silene invisa* within the study area. Both are Forest Service sensitive species.

The largest fen in the area - Mason Fen, was proposed by the Tahoe National Forest in their Forest and Resource Management Plan for designation as a Special Interest Area, an administrative designation that is intended to identify areas with special or unique values, and provide protection of these values.

The biological diversity within Sagehen along with the historical values are clearly outstandingly remarkable features in the view of the study team.

### **Fisheries and Wildlife**

Sagehen Creek is an eastside Sierra stream and has received extensive research over the years. The stream supports five native fish species in greater abundance than other similar creeks in the area. All the native fish which includes the Lahontan redbreast, speckled dace, Tahoe sucker, mountain sucker, and Paiute sculpin are listed by the California Department of Fish and Game as State species of Special Concern. Sagehen Creek also supports brown, brook, and rainbow trout.

A number of Forest Service Sensitive species exist in the area and research has been directed toward understanding them. These include the pine marten, Sierra red fox, and the goshawk. There are a number of habitats within the area including extensive riparian areas, fens and bogs, a mixed conifer forest, and the area is within part of the Donner Ridge fire, which burned in 1960. The area is generally representative of the east slope of the Sierra and probably the key fish/wildlife value in the area is the availability of data from the research. The native fish community in Sagehen Creek is both unique and has outstandingly remarkable values. Additionally, there are several rare caddis fly species inhabiting Sagehen Creek.

### **Conclusion**

Sagehen Creek hosts numerous interrelated outstandingly remarkable values that is best identified as ecosystem values. The stream is also considered highly representative of eastside Sierra Nevada stream ecology for native fisheries. The interdependence of values increases its level of significance including the broader hydrology is also likely to be involved in supporting two class I (T&E) invertebrates in the stream. This ecological significance supports the stream being outstandingly remarkable and also supports the hydrology, geology, wildlife, fisheries, and plants being considered outstandingly remarkable. This is the best ecological/botanical value of the eastside rivers. Fisheries by itself is considered unique and outstandingly remarkable due to the natural assemblage of native fish. The University of California Research Station has provided extensive and professional reports and papers on the natural resources in and around Sagehen Creek over many years. These research values are considered a complementary OR value. In addition the cultural values of the often intact steam engine logging technology remnants is also considered regionally significant and therefore outstandingly remarkable.

## **5. Upper Independence Creek**

### **Background**

The eligible reach of Upper Independence Creek is the two mile of stream above Independence Lake to its headwaters. Access to Upper Independence Creek is via one of two roads that parallel the north and south side of the lake. The roads terminate just short of the west end of the lake and access is controlled by the private property surrounding the lake. The stream above the lake is accessible only by trail and considered a "pristine" area. Upper Independence Creek, approximately 1/4 mile above the lake, flows entirely through National Forest System lands

managed by the Tahoe National Forest. Upper Independence Creek is one of two streams being considered for "Wild" River designation out of the eight rivers in this study.

Independence Lake is a natural lake where the water level has been raised by construction of a dam. The dam provides an additional storage of 17,300 acre feet of water that is owned by Westpac Utility, a provider of municipal and industrial water to Reno and Sparks. The storage capacity of the lake varies between an elevation of 6921 feet and 6949 feet.

### **Free Flowing**

Upper Independence Creek, above Independence Lake, is a pristine and natural free flowing stream. Upper Independence Creek drains a small watershed and flows are minimal during the late summer and fall. In 1992, the 7th year of the drought, Upper Independence Creek flows had dropped to intermittent flows during the fall.

### **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

#### **Recreation and Visual**

Because of the controlled access, the area is remote and pristine. The area above the lake is accessible by trail. Fishing in Upper Independence Creek is closed to protect the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a threatened species, so recreation use is limited to hiking, camping, or birdwatching. Deer Hunting is a popular recreation activity in the Fall.

Scenic values are moderate to high. There is high spatial definition with 2000 foot walls and cliff faces. The valley is a classic "U" shaped or glaciated valley. Independence Lake is located within two lateral moraines left from the glacier.

#### **Cultural Resources**

The cultural values within the area include three prehistoric sites and two historic sites which are aspen groves with carvings by early day shepherders. The cultural resources are not considered outstandingly remarkable by the Forest Archeologist.

#### **Geology**

The upper section of the drainage is a "U" shaped valley which terminates into a recessional moraine. Hydrologic values are not unique, although the headwaters of the watershed is in excellent condition, most likely due to the fact that it is unroaded and undeveloped.

#### **Fish**

The eligible portion of the stream, above Independence Lake, supports a reproducing population of Lahontan cutthroat trout. Generally, as fry the Lahontan cutthroat trout migrate downstream to Independence Lake to live and grow and use Independence Creek to spawn. The creek does support a small number of resident trout and Lahontan reddsides. A key concern for maintenance of the Lahontan cutthroat population is to maintain sufficient water in the lake so that the fish can swim into the upper creek for spawning during the spring. Low water levels during the spring spawning period will create a barrier to the fish.

## **Wildlife**

Bald Eagle is the one Threatened or Endangered species in this drainage. Eagles frequent the area particularly in the fall when the Kokanee Salmon spawn upstream from Stampede Reservoir. The area does provide habitat to a number of Sensitive species including the California Spotted Owl , pine marten, Sierra red fox, and the Pacific fisher. Both owls and bald eagles have been sighted in this area in past years. Upper Independence Creek does have a natural connector with Sagehen Basin and research on the pine marten is currently being conducted in both drainages. Bears have been observed during the Lahontan cutthroat trout spawn along with more common species such as deer and coyotes during the summer season.

## **Botanical and Ecological**

The upper watershed contains a number of fens, meadows and pristine plant communities. The fens are not as large or as extensive as Sagehen Basin. There are stands of old-growth California red fir. The area has never been logged and has received limited grazing in the last 40 years. The upper canyon is probably one of the least changed from man's activities within the Truckee watershed. There are no known TES species within the area. However, there is unsurveyed potential habitat for *Scheuchzeria palustris* var. *americana*, *Vaccinium coccinium*, and four *Ivesia* species.

## **Conclusion**

For the upper reach of Independence Creek fisheries, plants, and scenic values are considered outstandingly remarkable for the following reasons: The fisheries are of national importance primarily because this is the only stream that supports a continuously self supporting Lahontan cutthroat trout population that has not had to have re-introduction of the species. The scenic values are of regional significance due to the classic U shaped valley configuration and the dramatic spatial definition of the valley. The plant values are of regional significance due to the existence of fens which are quite rare in the State of California and known to occur only in Nevada and El Dorado Counties. Based on the outstandingly remarkable values identified above it has been determined that Independence Creek above Independence Lake is eligible as a National Wild River.

## **6. Little Truckee River**

### **Background**

The Little Truckee River is 14 miles long from its origin at Webber Lake to Stampede Reservoir. Much of the Little Truckee is accessible from either State Highway 89 or the Jackson Meadows Road, both paved highways. About 65 percent of the lands along the Little Truckee are National Forest System Lands managed by the Tahoe National Forest. The remaining lands are in private ownership in the nature of large blocks. Many of the significant meadows that lie along the Little Truckee are privately owned. The privately owned lands are primarily used for livestock grazing and logging, although there is a large, privately owned recreation complex on Webber Lake.

## **Free Flowing**

Webber Lake, near the origin of the Little Truckee has a small dam used primarily to hold water for recreational purposes. Further down the drainage a trans-drainage diversion was constructed prior to the turn of the Century to transfer Truckee River water into Sierra Valley for irrigation purposes. Sierra Valley lies within the Feather River drainage. The Sierra Valley Water users have a small diversion dam on the river just above the junction with the road to Independence Lake where the water to Sierra Valley is diverted. This diversion dam currently is a major barrier to fish migration and diverts most of the stream water during the irrigation season.

## **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

### **Recreation**

Recreation activities are mostly dispersed with driving for pleasure along Highway 89 and the Jackson Meadows Road. There are two campgrounds, the upper and lower Little Truckee Campgrounds, dispersed camping in Perazzo Meadows and fishing along the entire river.

The area does provide opportunities for snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and is the site of Mt Lola which was proposed as a four-seasons destination recreation area.

### **Scenic**

The river flows through a series of meadows with spacious views and the stream meanders through a variety of settings including wide valleys, through the Donner burn, and adjacent to the two major roads. Road construction has changed the channel in a number of locations which resulted in increased flows and some channel cutting as result of the high flows. Visual quality is typical along the east slope of the Sierra and although pleasant, is not considered to be outstandingly remarkable.

### **Cultural Resources**

There are a number of prehistoric and historic sites within the general area of the Little Truckee River including a historic dairy site, a Hobart Estates logging camp, the Sierra Valley Diversion ditch, and the Henness Pass Road. Along the Henness Pass Road are numerous stage stops including Davis Station. Segments of this turnpike and associated stage stops are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Geology and Hydrology**

There are no special geological or hydrologic features. The river does have an impressive 100 foot waterfall in three major drops. During spring flows this waterfall is a very impressive scenic feature. There are also fossilized leaves in the canyon below Webber Lake.

### **Fisheries and Wildlife**

The Little Truckee River provides quality habitat for native and non-native species including, brown, brook and rainbow trout, Lahontan reddsides, speckled dace, Paiute sculpin, Tahoe sucker, mountain sucker, and mountain whitefish. A privately owned Fly Fishing Club has about a mile of river that attracts fisherman from out-of-state.

The area supports one of the three largest populations of willow flycatchers, a State listed endangered species, west of Highway 89 in the numerous meadows. Pine Marten, a sensitive species have been seen in the area and there is potential habitat for the Pacific fisher. Thirty bald eagles a T&E species, wintered in 1990 at the inlet to Stampede Reservoir and there is potential habitat for the Great Gray Owl.

### **Botanical and Ecological**

There are a number of fens along the Little Truckee although the total number is not known. The fens are not as large or as extensive as in Sagehen Basin. The river supports extensive areas of riparian habitat and support a number of birds and animals which utilize riparian habitats.

There is a known occurrence of the Forest Service sensitive plant *Ivesia sericoleuca* within the study area. There is also unsurveyed potential habitat for *Vaccinium coccinium*, *Scheuchzeria palustris* var. *americana* and four *Ivesia* species.

### **Conclusion**

The vegetation, wildlife, and cultural resources were identified as outstandingly remarkable. Based on this finding the Little Truckee River has been determined to be eligible as a National Recreational River. The vegetation values were considered outstandingly remarkable because of the fens which are quite rare in the Sierra Nevada. The wildlife values are considered outstandingly remarkable due to the presence of bald eagle nesting sites and the second most extensive population of willow fly catcher in the State. Cultural resources were identified as outstandingly remarkable because of the National significance of the Henness Pass road and the associated historic transportation activities and several historic sites.

## **7. Perazzo Creek**

### **Background**

Perazzo is 3.2 miles long, a tributary of the Little Truckee River, and flows mostly through National Forest system lands managed by the Tahoe National Forest. 0.4 miles of the river does flow through privately owned lands. Access is provided off the Jackson Meadows road via a rough timber road. The meadow complex is probably the most outstanding feature associated with Perazzo Creek.

### **Free Flowing**

Perazzo Creek is a free flowing stream with no impoundments or diversions. The stream, although small, provides sufficient water to support a fishery throughout the summer and fall.

## **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

### **Recreation**

There are dispersed activities along the stream including fishing, hunting, and snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. There are two undeveloped campsites along the stream that receive moderate recreation use during the summer period.

### **Visual**

This canyon has high visual quality due to the wide vistas at the lower end of the canyon and the dramatic cliffs that are found at the upper end.

### **Cultural Resources**

An old dairy site is located in the lower meadow and prehistoric sites have been identified in the meadow. The cultural resource values are not considered to have outstandingly remarkable values.

### **Geology and Hydrology**

There are no unique geological or hydrological features in the area.

### **Fisheries and Wildlife**

Perazzo Creek supports native fish of Lahontan reddsides, Tahoe suckers and Paiute sculpins and non-native brook and brown trout. There are several fisheries habitat improvement projects underway or being planned to improve the fisheries habitat in Perazzo Creek.

One of the key wildlife values is the suitable nesting habitat available for the Willow Flycatcher. Pine marten have been seen in the area and there is potential habitat for the Pacific fisher and Great Gray Owl.

### **Botanical and Ecological**

Perazzo Creek and Canyon have an extremely diverse population of plants for a relatively small area. Fens are found in the area along with wet and dry meadows. The fens are not as large or as extensive as Sagehen Basin. Perazzo Creek has an extensive meadow complex. There are large stands of quaking aspen and a great variety of wild flowers including monkey flowers and evening primrose. The area has large vertical rock monuments like stove pipes, grouse, beaver ponds, waterfowl nesting areas habitat for sensitive furbearers. The uniqueness of the Perazzo Watershed is its diversity of land forms and plant communities. There is a known occurrence of *Silene invisa* within the study area.

### **Conclusion**

The plant/ecological associations and the broad diversity of wildlife habitat along with the willow flycatcher are the outstandingly remarkable values for Perazzo Canyon. For plant values fens in particular are considered quite rare and quite valuable. The fens along with bogs, dry meadows, wet meadows, stands of aspen, a wide range of wild flowers and forbs provides a very diverse and

unique plant community. This diverse plant community that provides an extensive riparian community supports many riparian dependent species including the willow fly catcher. The fact that this area has the second highest concentration of willow flycatchers in California indicates a very unique wildlife value. The old growth in the area adds to the diversity and provides valuable habitat for old growth dependent species such as the pine marten.

Based on the above outstandingly remarkable values, it is determined that Perazzo Canyon is an eligible Wild and Scenic River.

## **8. Upper Truckee River**

**Background** - The part of the Truckee River that flows into Lake Tahoe on the south end of the lake is called the Upper Truckee River. This stream is Lake Tahoe's largest tributary, draining 56.6 square miles of the southern tip of the Tahoe Basin. The Upper Truckee's watershed is about 36,200 acres, 85% of which is in El Dorado County, California and the rest in Alpine County, California. The entire river consists of 14 miles and drops approximately 2,400 feet from its headwaters to Lake Tahoe. The upper 7 miles is totally within National Forest lands and is the portion of the river considered eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. The remaining 7 miles of river flows mostly through private and highly developed lands.

The "backcountry" character of the area called Meiss Country is consistent until it reaches Christmas Valley where there is urban development. Meiss Country includes part of the Upper Truckee watershed from its southernmost tip north to Big Meadow Creek and Benwood Meadow Creek.

The area was known as the Dardanelles or Echo-Carson Roadless Area when it was studied for Wilderness classification and released for other multiple uses by the California Wilderness Act in 1984. Subsequent management has been designed to protect the natural conditions and the LTBMU Forest Plan provides for a continuation of maintaining natural conditions.

**Free Flowing** - The Upper Truckee River is a natural flowing river without impoundments, diversions, channel straightening, rip-rapping, or other modifications. The area is riverine in appearance and free of high head dams and extensive rip rap and diversions. Watershed restoration projects have been carried out occasionally, but none has extensively modified the channel or its environment.

### **Determination of Outstandingly Remarkable Characteristics**

#### **Recreation**

The Upper Truckee River is an easily accessible area popular for non-motorized recreation use. Ten to fifteen thousand recreationists use it each year. Trailheads for access are extensive, and the Pacific Crest Trail, a National Scenic Trail, and the Tahoe Rim Trail traverse the area. Recreational uses include hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, swimming, horseback riding, fishing, and cross country skiing. Primitive recreation is especially appropriate in the area and local residents use it as the alternative of choice to the Desolation Wilderness.

Meiss Country depicts the cultural landscape of the mountain west - complete with pole fences, and the historic cabin/barn complex. The cabin/barn complex is eligible for inclusion in the

National Register of Historic Places and still is used to manage the livestock (cattle) within the area. In the winter, a Forest Service permittee operates a backcountry skiing/ski hut concession. Rather than falling-down remnants more commonly encountered, the working condition of the ranching setting is unique. These features, which are preserved in an area that has never been logged provide a sense of stepping back a hundred years in time. Because of the topography, visitors can see or hear very little from the "outside world" although in reality they are just a few miles from US 50, 88, 89 or the development in Christmas Valley.

The area contains an outstandingly remarkable recreation setting.

### **Scenic Quality**

The southern portion of the Upper Truckee has broad meadows and shallow lakes offering unobstructed views of the high alpine ridges to the east and west. The northern portion is more steeply dissected, with the Pacific Crest's granite terrain and cliffs to the west, and volcanic breccia to the east. Coupled with the dramatic backdrop scenery, the nearview scenery such as the massive volcanic Round Lake Buttress is distinctive. Further, the dramatic old Sierra junipers occurring throughout the area add to the special character of the Meiss Country. These landscapes and the extensive meadows from which they are view, created a distinctive visual quality and an outstanding alpine visual setting. These scenic values are considered outstandingly remarkable.

### **Cultural Resources**

Two known cultural sites are located in this watershed: a prehistoric fishing campsite along the river, and the Meiss cabin and barn.

The two story Meiss cabin was constructed in 1878 and was used as a cow camp for over 120 years. The barn, burned by fire, was rebuilt in 1914. The structures are on the banks of the Upper Truckee and it is believed that the river's water source and the adjacent meadow suitable for livestock were the primary reasons for the cabin's location. Both the cabin and barn received an extensive overhaul in 1983 by the grazing permittees. The cabin was used for livestock management during the summer and is used as a shelter for cross-country skiing concession during the winter. The Meiss cabin and barn complex are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register nomination is in process. They are considered outstandingly remarkable historic features.

The prehistoric fishing campsite has not received any formal archaeological research. It is known that Native Americans have occupied the Tahoe Basin for thousands of years and it was used intensively spring through fall.

### **Geology/Hydrology**

Like most of the Sierra, the Upper Truckee River has been influenced by both glaciation, vulcanism, and faulting. Most of the area is composed of undulating to very steep granitic, metamorphic, and volcanic rock outcrops and strongly sloping to very steep, stony to gravelly, coarse loamy sands and sandy loams. The rock outcrops range from small, scattered rocks to large areas covering several acres. These outcrops range from small, scattered rocks to large areas covering several acres. These outcrops are largely the result of glaciation.

A special characteristic of several of the riparian stringers is the presence of fens. Uncommon in the Lake Tahoe Basin, these organic soils, are in this case located around a spring.

The conclusion of the study team was that there are no outstandingly remarkable geological or hydrological values, as characteristics are typical of the Sierra Nevada and the Lake Tahoe Basin.

### **Fisheries**

Fisheries habitat is distributed between 20 miles of stream and six lakes. The Streams are the Upper Truckee River and Big Meadow Creek. The lakes are Dardanelles, Elbert, Four, Meiss, Round, and Showers.

The Upper Truckee, because of its large capacity and extensive length, is able to support the greatest number of migratory and resident fish populations of any Lake Tahoe tributary. The Upper Truckee supports rainbow trout, brown trout, eastern brook trout, and Lahontan cutthroat trout.

The Lahontan cutthroat trout is the only native trout to the area. Due to habitat degradation, historical overharvesting, dam and diversion construction on spawning tributaries, and competition from and hybridization with non-native trout, the Lahontan cutthroat is listed as Threatened on the Federal list. The recovery plan developed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California State Department of Fish and Game identified the Upper Truckee as suitable for the restoration of the fish. Restoration began in 1988 with the removal of non-native fish and continued through 1991. In the summer and fall of 1990-91, Lahontan were reintroduced in Meiss Lake and the Upper Truckee. Populations are now self-sustaining; however, some additional non-native fish removal may be necessary in the future. There is the potential for a population of 3,000 fish to exist in the area.

There are outstandingly remarkable fisheries values within the area, including the only self sustaining population of Lahontan cutthroat trout in the Tahoe Basin.

### **Wildlife**

There are a wide variety of wildlife habitats within the Upper Truckee, including habitats for black bear, willow flycatchers, a Forest Service Sensitive species, waterfowl, goshawks, pileated woodpeckers, golden eagles, and key habitat for mule deer.

The California Department of Fish and Game has identified a significant amount of "critical fawning habitat" for mule deer. During the spring, hiding cover is very important to fawns, to provide protection from predators. Willows, corn lilies, and aspen are important components of cover in riparian habitats and all are present along the Upper Truckee.

The Carson Valley and Grizzly Flat deer herds use the area during the spring and summer. Available forage for both herds has been impacted by drought. Loss of habitat due to increased urbanization along the winter ranges is a serious problem to maintenance of the herds. Surveys by CFG have found the does to be in very poor to poor condition.

The critical summer habitat designation for mule deer leads to an outstandingly remarkable wildlife value for the area.

## **Botanical and/or Ecological Values**

The area provides habitat for hidden-petal campion (*Silene invisa*), a Forest Service Sensitive plant. There are populations elsewhere along the Sierra and due to the large number of occurrences of the hidden-petal campion, its presence does not constitute an outstandingly remarkable value for the river corridor.

## **Conclusion**

The Upper Truckee River was determined to be eligible for possible classification as a Scenic river in the Draft EIS. Outstandingly remarkable values contributing to this determination were cultural resources, fisheries, recreation and scenic values, and the wildlife values in the area. Many who commented on the Draft EIS expressed that the Upper Truckee should be recommended as a Wild river, not Scenic. In response to this public input the Forest Service re-examined whether the river could qualify as Wild.

The primary reason that the Forest Service originally felt that the Upper Truckee did not meet the standards of a Wild river was the presence of the Meiss cabin and barn complex, an outstandingly remarkable feature. Located on the streambank of the Upper Truckee, these historic features were believed to move the river segment out of the Wild category because of the "essentially primitive shoreline" requirement of that river classification. In re-examining the issue, the Forest Service Handbook was again consulted. It states that a few inconspicuous structures, particularly those of historic or cultural value like the cabin/barn complex, need not bar Wild classification. These structures affect only a minor portion, in terms of area, of the river segment, and help to define the character of the Meiss Meadow section. Public feedback is that they enhance the river environment in this situation. In addition, past watershed restoration activities have stabilized, but not extensively modified the river. Consequently, in response to public comment, the Forest Service now recommends a Wild designation for the headwater of the Upper Truckee.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS**

The Tahoe National Forest evaluated a number of areas with the potential for Special Area Designation (SIA) in the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. SIAs are a Forest Service administrative designation designed to highlight areas with unique values. Three areas were evaluated that are associated with the current Wild and Scenic River study on Sagehen Creek and Independence Lake. Documentation of the evaluation is found in Appendix C, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Tahoe Land and Resource Management Plan (TNF LRMP 1990).

Management conditions in the Sagehen Basin have changed since issuance of the TNF LRMP in 1990 as there is new information relating to the cultural resources, new spotted owl requirements and a change in emphasis in research in the area. Based on these changes, the Forest Service is planning to reevaluate the Sagehen Basin for possible SIA designation. The new analysis will be completed in a separate site-specific study.

Independence Lake was also evaluated for SIA consideration, however the area evaluated was the area surrounding Independence Lake and did not include the Wild and Scenic River study area on Upper Independence Creek. Values identified in the original study included habitat for the Federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout and a "classical" terminal and lateral glacial moraine complex. The moraines at the lake is the northernmost example of Sierra Nevada glaciation and is the best preserved. Consideration of the area for SIA status was dropped as only 10 percent of the area consisted of National Forest System lands at the time of the analysis.

However, recent land acquisitions above the lake and within the eligible study river corridor suggests that with the change in land ownership and considering the habitat values for Lahontan cutthroat trout, SIA designation would be an appropriate way to protect the OR values.

#### **EXISTING SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS**

(From the Tahoe National LRMP, dated July 1990)

##### **SAGEHEN HEADWATERS (79 acres)**

The Sagehen Headwaters area is located in a glacial cirque basin comprising the headwaters of Sagehen Creek (Section 16, T.18N., R.15E.), the Sagehen Botanical Area is an excellent example of virgin red fir, mountain hemlock, and mountain mahogany communities in an "avalanche" forest. The cirque basin is filled by an ephemeral pond containing a wide variety of aquatic invertebrates. One hundred thirty species of plants have been found in this area, including a species of lichen known only in this location in the Sierra Nevada. Because of the area's botanical uniqueness and undisturbed ecosystem, a significant opportunity exists for research.

##### **MASON FEN (30 acres)**

The Mason Fen represents the largest fen in the Sagehen Basin vicinity. It is one of the varieties of peatland identified in California. The fen is located near Truckee, California at

the University of California Sagehen Creek Field Station (Section 7, T.18N.,R.16E.). The Mason Fen has been the subject of research since 1957. The Sagehen Creek area receives water from springs. Precipitation from rain and heavy winter snowfall penetrates the porous volcanic rocks that are characteristic of the region, and collects on impervious bedrock, creating numerous springs (Savage 1973). About 40 plant species have been identified from the Mason Fen (Erman and Erman 1975). Two carnivorous plants are common on the Mason Fen; *Drosera rotundifolia* (roundleaf sundew) and *Drosera anglica* (English sundew). This is an unusual occurrence in California.

## **RECOMMENDED SPECIAL INTEREST AREA**

### **UPPER INDEPENDENCE CREEK**

National Forest Acres	2,093
Private Land Acres	435
Total Acres	2,528

Independence Lake was evaluated for SIA designation as part of the analysis process for the Tahoe National Forest LRMP and was not recommended primarily because of the limited National Forest System lands adjacent to the lake. The eligible study river or Upper Independence Creek was not included in the SIA analysis during the forest planning process completed in 1990.

A potential Special Interest Area can be described for Upper Independence Creek which flows into Independence Lake. Upper Independence Creek provides critical spawning habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout (Federally listed as threatened 1975). Most of lands within the proposed SIA are National Forest System lands with the exception of the first 300 feet of stream above the lake, and the steep canyon walls in Sections 5 and 17 in T18N, R15E. Management direction would only apply to National Forest system land. The upper canyon is a classical "U" shaped canyon formed by glaciation and shows evidence of a terminal and lateral glacial moraine complex which encompasses the lake. The moraines are the northernmost example of Sierra Nevada glaciation and is the best preserved.

Additional private lands on the stream above the lake have been acquired since issuance of the LRMP in 1990. The upper canyon is a pristine and undeveloped area supporting key fisheries habitat. The Independence Lake and creek Lahontan cutthroat trout is an endemic population that has never been artificially replanted to the best of our knowledge. This lake/creek population is unique to the Sierra Nevada and has been identified by USFWS as a population suited for species recovery (USFWS 1995). In contrast, most of the other streams supporting a Lahontan cutthroat population have been stocked or restocked with a hatchery population and are not suited for species recovery..

The proposed SIA does include some lands originally identified for possible ski area development in the Mt. Lola area. These lands are on south facing slopes and not considered essential to any future ski area development. Future ski area development within Independence Creek may not be compatible with SIA designation, depending upon the type and scale of the development proposal.

### **Environmental Consequences with and without SIA Designation**

- a) **Recreation** - Current recreation is light and dispersed. Access to the upper Independence watershed is either by boat or foot travel along the north and west shores of the lake. Recent logging and road construction on private lands have developed logging roads along both sides of the lake to the upper end. These roads are not open to the public motorized access. SIA designation should not have any significant effect on existing recreation use or cultural resources due to the limited access to the canyon. Future development of the south slopes within Independence Creek for ski area use could be impacted, depending upon the specific development proposals. The slopes are generally south facing and not considered essential for any future ski area development associated with Mt. Lola. Recreation values are currently protected under standards and guidelines in the Tahoe National Forest LRMP.
- b) **Timber** - Timber lands on National Forest lands in the canyon are not suitable for regulated timber management. There should be no change with or without SIA designation.
- c) **Water, soils, and air** - There would be some slight potential to degrade soil and water resources resulting from a temporary increase in recreation use with designation. There would be no impacts without designation. There would be no effect on air quality with or without designation.
- c) **Fisheries** - The fisheries resource would receive an additional layer of protection through designation as management direction for the SIA would be to protect and enhance the fisheries. Basic fishery values would be protected without designation through implementation of LRMP Standards and Guidelines, although the area would not receive the same level of attention or enhancement that SIA designation would bring.
- d) **Minerals** - The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry, although the area has a low potential for minerals. Without designation, the area would remain open to mineral entry.
- e) **Facilities** - There are no National Forest system trails or other facilities in the area. There is no anticipated affect with or without designation.
- f) **Private lands** - There should be no effect on the use of the private lands with or without designation. Management direction does not apply to private land.

## PLAN AMENDMENT

The following section of the document is the Forest Land and Resources Management Plan amendment language for the new Management Area (MA) created for this Upper Independence Creek SIA. The wording and management direction provided here is precisely the wording that will amend the Forest Plan.

## 035 INDEPENDENCE

2,528 Gross Acres

2,093 NFS Acres

### I. DESCRIPTION

This management area (MA) is located southwest of Independence Lake on the southern flanks of Mt. Lola, about eight air miles due west of State Highway 89. The boundary of this MA is defined by the upper watershed of Independence Creek which flows into Independence Lake. Elevations range from 6,949 feet on the shore of Independence Lake to 9,143 feet at the top of Mt. Lola. There are 88 acres of wetlands. The primary road to the eastern edge of the Management Area is a spur off of the Independence Lake Road (FS road 350). This spur road is on private land and gated. There is motorized public access on FS road 350 to a public campground on the east shores of Independence Lake. From Independence Lake access to the area is by boat or walking on a gated road through private land. Independence Creek and its tributaries are the only streams in this drainage.

This MA is classified as the Independence Zoological Area (SIA)

Vegetation in the upper watershed contains a number of fens, meadows and pristine plant communities. Stands of old-growth red fir occur. The area has never been logged and has received limited grazing in the last 40 years. No grazing allotments are in this area. The upper canyon is one of the least changed from man's activities within the Truckee watershed. Unsurveyed potential habitat exists for several rare plants including *Scheuchzeria palustris* var. *americana*, *Vaccinium coccinium*, and four *Ivesia* species.

The area is unsuited for regulated timber management. The area is not within any grazing allotment.

Three prehistoric sites and two historic sites have been identified. The historic sites are aspen groves with carvings by early day shepherders.

The privately owned, land is managed for timber resources by large landowners.

The visual quality of the area is considered high with attractive and diverse vegetation, steep rugged slopes, and a nicely defined U-shaped valley and basin from past glaciation. Recreation use is limited to dispersed activities such as hiking, camping, and occasional hunting. No trails have been built within the area. There is a popular trail to the top of Mt. Lola that skirts the northern boundary of the area. No roads occur within the area so most recreation access is from Independence Lake campground by boat or by hiking. Almost the entire MA is within the RARE I Castle inventoried roadless area; because the area was analyzed for wilderness allocation in the Truckee Little Truckee Land Use Plan, it was not included in the RARE II inventory.

Independence Creek provides key habitat for spawning Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) that reside in Independence Lake. The LCT fishery is considered to be of national importance because it is one of only a few streams that support a continuously self-supporting natural Lahontan cutthroat trout population. This area also provides habitat to a number of sensitive species including Mt. yellow-legged frog, California spotted owl, pine marten, Sierra red fox, and Pacific fisher. American bald eagles, a T&E species, are occasionally seen in the area. There is a natural wildlife corridor connector from this watershed to the adjacent Sagehen Basin.

Selected emphasis species are Lahontan cutthroat trout.

## **II. SUMMARY OF ISSUES, CONCERNS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

A management concern is that if water storage in Independence Lake drops below 7500 acre-feet (at the 6920 foot elevation) then Lahontan cutthroat trout would not have access from the lake to upstream spawning habitat. A natural alluvial fan barrier occurs at the creek mouth which prevents access to spawning areas when the lake storage is less than 7500 acre-feet. The lake level is managed for power generation and irrigation delivery by Sierra Pacific Power.

The Independence area appears to be qualified for designation as a zoological area under 36 CFR 294.1.

## **III RESOURCE MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS**

Management emphasis is to protect and enhance Lahontan cutthroat trout and their habitat. The Forest Service will cooperate with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Game and other interested agencies and groups to accomplish tasks identified in the Lahontan Recovery Plan (1995) and any other actions identified that will assist in protecting or improving Lahontan cutthroat trout populations and habitat. Biological/ecological and scenic values will also be protected and enhanced consistent with the main emphasis of managing Lahontan cutthroat trout.

## **IV. MANAGEMENT AREA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

- A. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum - Semi-primitive non-motorized
- B. Visual Quality Objective - Retention
- C. Transportation Management Policy - No roads permitted.
- D. Off-highway Vehicle Restrictions - Closed.
- E. Fish and Wildlife Administration - Coordination and Cooperation (#22)
- F. Forestwide Standards and Guidelines - all apply except 25, 26, 31, 32, and 33.

## **V. AVAILABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

- A1 Nordic Cross-Country Skiing
- A6 Closed OHV
- A15 Special Interest Area Investigations and Management
  
- G2 Minerals Management - Locatable Withdrawals
- G4 Minerals Management - Leaseables Withdrawals
  
- J1 Land Adjustments - Retain and Acquire
  
- L3 Trail Construction/Reconstruction - Foot Traffic only
- L13 Transportation Management Trails - Restricted use
  
- P5 Fire Protection - Visual High Use, Reservoirs & Improvements

## **VI. PROPOSED RESOLUTION OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

The Forest Service provided comments (May 26, 1998) on the Draft Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) EIS/EIR specific to maintaining Independence Lake water storage at 7500 acre-feet during the LCT spawning period. The F.S. requested a contingency process be identified in the TROA EIS/EIR should the lake storage be less than 7500 acre-feet during the LCT spawning season. The Forest Service requested a guarantee that LCT will always have access to Upper Independence Creek to spawn.

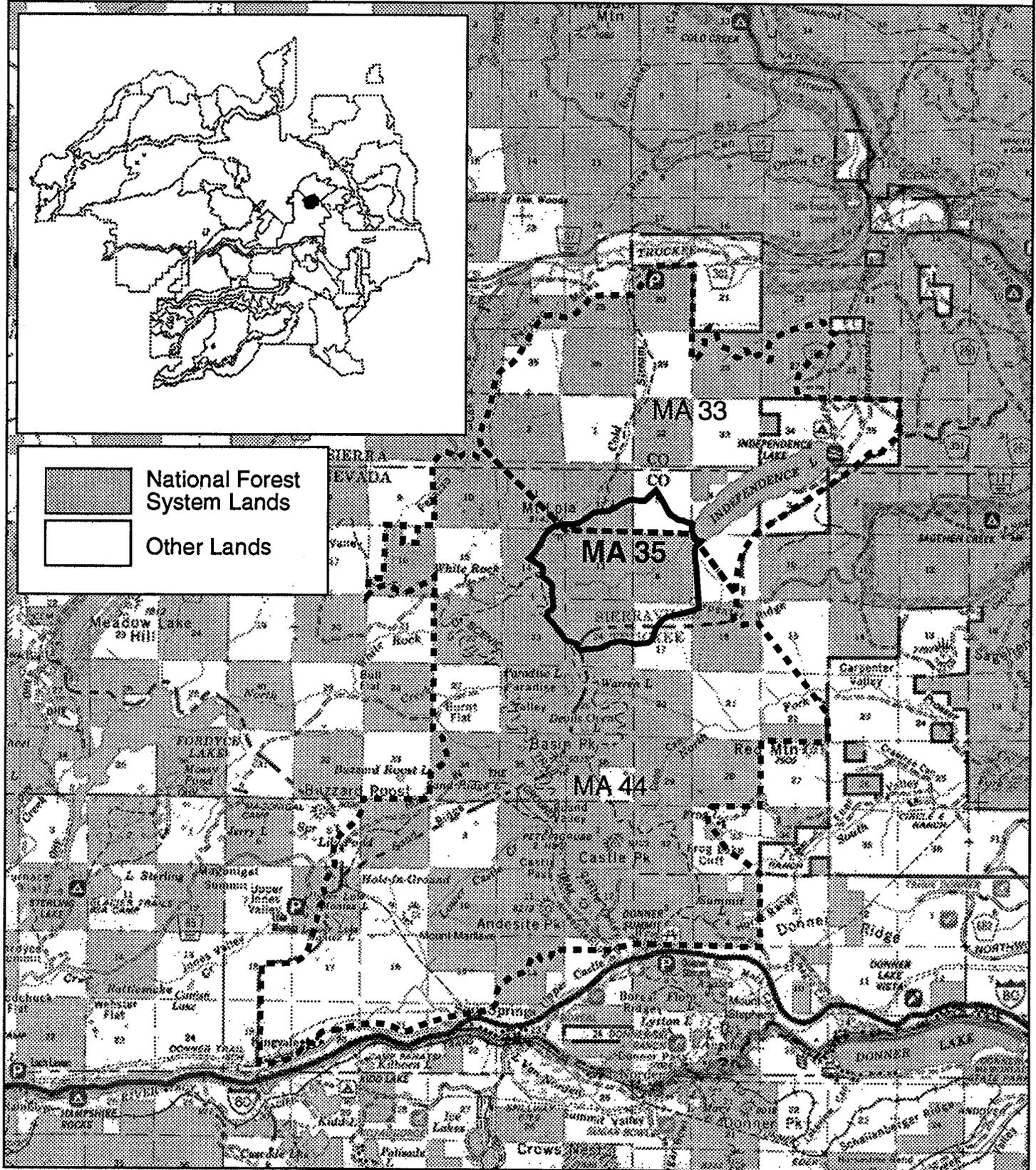
## **VII. SPECIFIC MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Forest Service and research institutions may monitor for research purposes

# MANAGEMENT AREA 035

## INDEPENDENCE

T18N, R14E



**TABLE C.1**  
**Upper Independence Creek**  
**and**  
**Sagehen Creek (Basin)**

	Recommended Status by Alternative						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Independence Creek *	Wild River	None	SIA	SIA	SIA	SIA	SIA
Sagehen Creek (Basin) **	Scenic River and study for SIA	None	Scenic River and study for SIA	Study for SIA	Scenic River and Study for SIA	Study for SIA	Scenic River and Study for SIA

\* Independence Creek is recommended for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in Alternatives C,D,E,F, and G. (See Map for SIA boundary)

\*\* Sagehen Creek (Basin) is recommended to be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study in Alternatives D and F. (Study Area boundary is shown on map entitled "Potential Special Interest and Research Natural Areas" dated 1989 issued with the Environmental Statement for the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan).

\*\* Alternative A, C, E, and G recommends that the Sagehen Basin, outside of the Scenic River corridor, be analyzed for Special Interest Area designation by the Forest Service in a separate site-specific study.

# APPENDIX D

## SAGEHEN NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER

### Proposed Management Standards and Legislative Language

#### PROPOSED LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN DIRECTION

**Description:** The following direction applies to the Scenic River Corridor, or a 1/4 mile-wide strip on each side of the centerline of Sagehen Creek. The specific Scenic River boundary would be established after legislation. The area also incorporates Management Area 043 (Sagehen Station) which is described in the Tahoe Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (TNF LRMP).

#### 1. Resource Management Emphasis

The objective is to manage the Scenic Corridor to protect the Outstanding Remarkable values (OR) identified for the area including vegetative and ecological values, fisheries and wildlife values, geological and hydrological values, and the historical values found in the area.

Research is considered a complementary activity providing a greater understanding of the OR values and their interdependence. Research that furthers the understanding of the ecological relationships in the Sagehen Basin will be encouraged.

The Forest Services recognizes the Sagehen Station facilities are in need of upgrading and expansion to fulfill the mutually agreed upon mission of the station.

#### 2. Management Area Standards and Guidelines

**a) Visual Quality Objectives** - Retention except for the area within the Sagehen Station complex or at specific research sites in the corridor which will be managed for Partial Retention. The area associated with the Sagehen Campground and the fuel breaks will also be managed for Partial Retention. Meeting Retention and Partial Visual Quality Objectives will be evaluated from a river users point of view with view distances expected to be around 400 to 500 feet or more. Immediate foreground views of less than 200 feet is not intended to limit research activities or development of facilities needed to meet the research objectives for the area. Development of facilities for the Sagehen Station complex will be constructed and maintained to be compatible with the natural surroundings.

**b) Recreation Opportunity Spectrum** - Roded Natural.

**c) Transportation Management Policy** - The area within the Scenic River Corridor and the Sagehen Station complex will be closed to public motorized vehicles, except roads or trails identified as being needed in the "Sagehen OHV Project", dated 5/8/86. New transportation development in the corridor will be limited. Administrative vehicle access to the Station is permitted. Transportation management policy beyond the Sagehen Station complex provides

that motorized use will continue as directed in the TNF LRMP. This direction provides for summer off-highway use (OHV) use on designated trails and open for wintertime snowmobile use.

**d) Off-highway vehicle restrictions** - Closed within the Sagehen Station complex. In areas outside the Sagehen Station complex, the direction provides for designated routes for summer OHV use and open for wintertime snowmobile use.

Reduce potential adverse impacts from current OHV use and from future increases in OHV use by continued implementation of the "Sagehen OHV Project", dated 5/8/86.

**e) Research Facilities** - The upgrading and expansion of facilities would be permitted under any designation. Facilities development will be compatible with natural surroundings and in keeping with the mission of the station. Potential developments include, but are not limited to, a dormitory for use by groups of up to 30 people, several dispersed researcher cabins, upgraded laboratory facilities and expanded parking, all designed to fit in with the surroundings. Developments considered incompatible with designation include construction of a major conference center, a sprawling "bone yard", and other large-scale developments.

Protocols will be formulated as part of upgrading and expansion as required by Special Use Permits (e.g. master plan and NEPA requirements).

The Sagehen Station is in a period of transition and future development may not occur until a source of funding is secured. Nonetheless, designation as a National Scenic River is not intended to foreclose future options for upgrading and expanding facilities as needed to meet the mission of the station.

**f) Recreation Facilities** - Continue to manage Sagehen Campground as a semi-primitive facility to accommodate recreation visitors enjoying either the OR values or other recreation attractions. Expand or improve this campground as needed to accommodate any increased recreation interest in the area. Interpretive trails may be needed to help the recreation public understand the OR values and their role in protection of those values.

**g) Timber Management** - Manage the forests to maintain and enhance old-forest and riparian values. Timber management activities within the Scenic River corridor will be designed to move an existing second-growth forest to a forest favoring old-forest conditions. Special emphasis will be placed on protecting the forests within the Scenic River from fire through maintenance of a series of existing shaded fuel breaks in the area.

### **3. Available Management Practices**

- A1 Nordic Cross-Country Skiing
- A5 Restricted OHV
- A6 Closed OHV
- A8 Developed Recreation and Interpretive Service Sites Management, Public Sector
- A9 Recreation Management (Private and Other Public Sector)
- A11 Recreation or IS Site Construction or Rehabilitation
- A15 Special Interest Area Investigation and Management
  
- C1 Stream fisheries - Nonstructural Improvement and Maintenance
  
- D2 Range Management - Permanent Range Type (extensive management)
- D5 Range Management - Transitory Range Type (extensive management)
- D8 Range Improvement - Structural (Permanent and Transitory)
  
- E7 Special Cutting
  
- J2 Land Adjustments - Limited
  
- L5 Trail Construction/Reconstruction - Foot, Equestrian and Trailbike
- L9 Transportation Management Roads - Regulated Use
- L10 Transportation Management Roads - Closed
- L12 Transportation Management Trails - Open
- L13 Transportation Management Trails - Restricted Use
  
- G2 Minerals Management - Locatable Withdrawals
- G4 Minerals Management - Leasable Withdrawals
  
- P1 Fire Protection - Continuous Fuels

## **PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE**

The following language is proposed for Legislation that would incorporate Sagehen Creek into the National Rivers System as a National Scenic River:

a) Provides that the research activities conducted by or through the sponsorship of the University of California can continue as described in the Principles of Protocols developed by the University of California and the Tahoe National Forest, approved February 25, 1981. The Sagehen Station is in a period of transition. Proposed National Scenic River designation is not intended to foreclose future options for upgrading and expanding the facilities to meet the research objectives.

b) Provides that the Statement of Protocols can be amended at any time with agreement between the US Forest Service and the University of California. Amended Protocols will be formulated as part of upgrading and expansion as required by Special Use Permits requirements including development of a master plan. Amendment of the protocols will comply with procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

# **APPENDIX E.**

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS**

### **Introduction**

This appendix is divided into four sections: 1) Summary of Public Involvement; 2) Content Analysis and Response Process; 3) List of General Public and Interest Group Respondents to the DEIS; and 4) The comments from the public, and the Interdisciplinary (ID) Team Responses.

### **1. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, April 28, 1993. Three open houses were conducted by the Forest Service on the following dates and locations: May 19, 1993 at the Truckee-Tahoe Sanitation District Building in Truckee, CA; May 20, 1993 at the Fairway Community Center in Tahoe City, CA; and May 26, 1993 at the Eldorado County Library in Tahoe City, CA. By the end of August, thirteen letters were received from individuals and or organizations. As a result of these letters, comments made at the open houses, and numerous phone calls, three major issues were identified. These issues were documented in Chapter I page I.4. These issues along with internal concerns formed the initial concerns. Based on comments to the DEIS the existing issues were refined and additional issues identified. The FEIS responds to all of these issues.

A revised Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, August 17, 1994 informing the public that the Draft EIS would be available for public review beginning August 18, 1994 and that the public comment period extended through November 18, 1994. Chapter VIII lists the Agencies and people who were asked to comment about our Wild and Scenic Study or were sent a DEIS.

During this comment period the Town of Truckee conducted a public meeting on October 13, 1994. Forest Service officials were asked to attend and provide information during this meeting. A Plumas County planning staff person was asked to present the county's experience with the Feather Wild and Scenic River designation and the Plumas National Forest. The Mayor of Truckee facilitated the meeting and solicited comments and questions from the public attending the meeting.

At the close of public comment on November 18th the Forest had received 413 letters from a wide range of people and organizations. Twenty eight organizations, eight State or Federal Agencies, three county officials and two city officials responded with letters. Out of the 413 letters, 253 or 61 % were form letters and the remaining 39% were individual letters. The form letters were distributed from through out the geographic area and similar in representation to the total number of letters. Respondents from the local area accounted for about 20% of the letters. The local area included the Lake Tahoe and Truckee area, the Nevada City, North San Juan, Yuba City area, and Auburn. The Tahoe City/Truckee letters were 8% of the total and Nevada City another 8%. The remaining 80% of the letters were from the following areas: San Francisco Bay Area 35%, California general 20%, Reno 13%, Sacramento 7%, out of State 2%, and the remainder with unknown addresses 2%. Some of the out of State, and many of the other respondents had a second

home or property somewhere in the study area. The biggest number were in the Lake Tahoe vicinity.

## **2. CONTENT ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE PROCESS**

The Forest Service is directed to respond to public comments by the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) state, "Comments on an environmental impact statement or on a proposed action shall be as specific as possible and may address either the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed or both." (40 CFR 1503.3)

As discussed above, letters were received from the general public, public organizations, governmental agencies, and elected officials. Each letter was assigned a unique identification number. Then each letter was coded to indicate the type of respondent (i.e., individual, elected official, organization, etc.) the number of signatures, and the location of residence or office origin. The letters were then read for content, and codes were given to each substantive comment to identify the subject matter of the various resource issues. A comment was assigned codes to indicate the major subject areas of the concern and the more specific reasons for the concern. General statements were developed to represent the more typical comments that many letters expressed. More specific or unique comments were captured verbatim and stored in a computer data base. When developing responses to comments the interdisciplinary team members were able to look at the general statements as well as the verbatim comments. Responses were developed in three ways. If the general statement best reflected the comments for that topic area, a response was developed for that statement. If there was a detailed verbatim statement that provided a more clear picture of the concerns, the verbatim comment became the topic. A response was then developed for the verbatim comment. In most cases the most detailed comment was chosen to represent the concern. In some cases there were comments spread through several resource categories that had a common theme. In this case the ID team member created a new general statement that reflected this broader theme. A response was then developed for the broader statement of concern.

An individual who sent in a letter can find the identification number for that letter after their name at the end of this section. When looking at the topics (the term we are using for comments) the reader will see several letter and number codes after the topic number. These are the identification numbers (ID #) and then the comment number (CN #). If a reader sees their identification number after the topic number, they will know that their comment was included in this topic area. The convention for this document is that the first ID number is the number of the verbatim comment listed below the Topic number. Additional ID numbers are of letters that had similar comments. When you see many ID numbers you can tell that this topic area had many comments.

Based on the letters received the comments are organized in the following Categories:

- B. Alternatives: Comments are about support for Alternatives or rivers.
- C. Document: Specific comments about parts of the document.
- D. Process: Specific concerns about the planning process.
- E. Property Rights: Comments about private land and property rights.
- F. Condemnation: Comments about use of Condemnation.
- G. Mining: Comments about effects of designation on mining.
- H. Timber: Comments about effects of designation on timber.

- I. Botany, Wildlife, Riparian Areas, and Ecosystems: comments about effects of designation on these resources and relationships with other resources.
- J. Archaeology: Comments about effects of designation on archaeological resources.
- K. Water: Comments about water, water uses, dams, and river management.
- L. Visual Quality: Comments about the effects of designation on visual resources and possible impacts on other resources.
- M. Economics: Comments about the effects of designation on the economics within the local area.
- N. Recreation: Comments about the effects of designation on recreation resources and activities as well as impact on other resources.
- O. Local Vs Federal Control/decisions for future generations: Comments about the effects of designation on local property rights and role of Federal Government.
- P. Grazing: Comments about the effects of designation on Grazing and other resources.

### 3. LIST OF GENERAL PUBLIC, INTERESTED GROUPS, GOVERNMENT, AND AGENCY RESPONDENTS TO THE FEIS

IDNO	Last Name	First Name							
22									
23			331	Dangberg	Steve	167	Johnson	Abigail	
383	Abdalla, MD	Michael	212	Danielson	Dean	311	Johnson	Carolyn	
160	Adamson	Frank	29	Dardick	Sam	408	Johnson	Pat & Greg	
108	Akers	Ellery	255	Davids	Peter/Jean/Eric	171	Johnston	Bob	
154	Alastuey	Steve	165	Davis	Fred	55	Jones-Poma	Alison	
337	Aogaichi	Midori	389	Day	Linda	395	Jordan	Wendy	
372	Babula	Jared	291	Dear	Elizabeth	19	Joses	Doug & Loree	
155	Baker	Emery	120	Deardorff	Glen	172	Juvinall	Todd	
303	Barnett	Robert	254	DeBaris	Joseph	243	Katzen	Joanne	
74	Barrett	Douglas	315	DeLuchi	Denis	197	Keefe	Ray	
297	Barrett	Harold	256	DeMartini	Mr & Mrs Jack	213	Kelso	Bob	
316	Barry	Mrs. James	192	Denis	Wendy	162	Kerns Sr.	Charles	
14	Bateer	Steven	327	Desmond	Deb	419	King	Jan & Walter	
397	Battelle	Richard	121	Devoto	Don	205	Kleweno	M. Kay	
164	Bedayn	Rod	396	deVries	Esther	318	Kloepfer	Joanne	
235	Beddall	Fred	274	Dickson	Brad	39	Klusman	Don	
89	Bee	Phil & Barbara	353	Dietz	Mary/Tom	215	Knox	Josh	
1	Bell	Emmy	157	Dixon	Jane	156	Kormylo	Kevin	
17	Bendict	Jim	21	Donahue	Tim	369	Koss	Christopher	
11	Benner	Stephen	271	Downer	Craig	219	Kratt	Marilyn	
416	Bennett	Barbara	51	Drake	Robert	344	Krueger	Laurie & Peter	
330	Berg	Lisa J.	35	Dwyer	David	206	Krulwetz	Bill	
247	Berknotter	Frank	412	D'Anne	Denise	112	Lacey	Carol	
196	Bernhart	Ursula	180	Eagan	Kathleen	298	Lagomarsino	Sarah	
411	Bliss	Everett	265	Economou	Constantina	34	Lahren	Mary	
227	Bloom	Richard	356	Ehlert	D.A.	88	Lahren	Brian	
385	Bock	Charles/Felicia	333	Eisele Jr.	John	313	Landauer	Donald	
415	Bodenhofner	Karl	257	Elder	JW	97	Lang	Jon	
286	Bodine	Roger	123	Elving	Mette	287	Langefort	Aurelie	
30	Bowling	Donald	173	Evans	Steven	135	Langner	Mark	
84	Boyd	Randall	312	Evans	Jerome	294	Lannoy	Steve	
248	Boyd	Donna	351	Evans	Lisa	317	Lannoy	Mike	
65	Boyer	Patrice	193	Farnan	Frank	323	Larner	Virginia	
95	Braden	Delores	33	Farrel	David	3	Lawton	Robert	
292	Broden	Richard	181	Farrel	David	103	Lazar	Lyn	
293	Broden	Richard	260	Federicks	John	358	Leonard	Carl	
220	Brown	Gary	151	Hageboom	Robert	27	Leong	Robin	
224	Brown	Gary	405	Hagen	Marcia/Edward	58	Levitz	Susan	
370	Brown	Ann W.	406	Hagler	William	92	Lien	John	
2	Browning	Melvin	77	Hammemos	Virginia	40	Linney	Doug	
296	Buchner	Lewis	18	Hanic	Ken	47	Loucks	Gary	
304	Buckley	Dan	178	Harlow	David	48	Loucks	Annabelle	
125	Burns	Truman	71	Harris	Virginia-Jane	269	Ludeis	Dave & Cathy	
176	Burroughs	James	187	Hartley	Leah	244	Lusten	Darlene	
127	Burrows	R.	210	Harvey	Alison	43	Lynn	Susan	
150	Burton	Mary Elizabeth	245	Haves	Kenneth & Janet	365	Macintosh	Richard & Betty	
325	Butcher	George	96	Heaslet	Gail	336	MacLeod	Gordon	
78	Caffee	J.L. & Elizabet	93	Henderson	Wellington	382	MacMillan	Olga	
341	Callender	William	24	Henson	Ryan	131	Mahon	Richard	
159	Camara	Tom	267	Herbert/grav	Micheal/Kim	5	Malluats	R.	
115	Cardella	Richard	67	Hester	Milda	62	Maple	Beverly	
301	Carlson	Jim	242	Hickman	Greg	239	Marsh	Susan	
275	Carter	Lloyd	54	Hicks	Roger	393	Massie	Charles	
236	Casteen	Oleen	66	Hickson	Diana	387	Mattson	Lu	
218	Chittenden	David	374	Hielte, MD	George	91	Maul	Terry	
309	Christie	Allen	7	Hodge	Judy	270	Maul	Terry	
183	Chuderson	Raymond	8	Hodge	John	209	Mayer	Dorothy	
253	Cincino	Rich	285	Hoffmann	Marie	46	McAlister	John	
60	Clerg	Steve	342	Holby	Frank & Lorraine	13	McCaffen	Pat	
86	Cohen	Eleanor	32	Holt	Kenneth	147	McCown	George & Karen	
70	Collins	Marion	102	Honermann	Jana	228	McCracken	Brad/Eleanor	
417	Colver	Micheal	132	Horowitz	Richard	284	McDermott	Brent	
377	Conover	Ted	166	Howe	Greg	188	McHugh	Sean	
350	Conrad	Jerry	82	Huard	Joseph	122	McLaughlin	Robert	
378	Cook	Elaine	398	Hudner	Philip	20	McNabney	AB	
130	Copoulos	John	80	Hudzinski	Leonard	402	Merrick	Scott/Theresa	
288	Cory/Vallejo	Jay/Katy	63	Hunt	Myphon	225	Meyer	L. Bruce	
223	Craig	Julia	59	Hunter	Nancy	104	Miller	Stanley	
335	Crede	Robert	42	Infusino	Thomas	116	Miller	John	
376	Crossley	Jean	68	Jabour	Kathy	314	Milligan	A.A.	
352	Cummings	Gary & Sandi	366	Jackson	Aaron	305	Milis Viola	Martha	
367	Cummings	John	109	Jacobs	Mark	12	Moore	Thomas	
413	Dain	Ernest	111	Jalbert	Matt	90	Moore	James	

252	Moore	Estelle	169	Taylor	Clark
69	Morris	Vonya	179	Taylor	Willie
246	Munson	Warren	202	Teague	Donald
139	Myers	Tom	41	Tennies	Michele
53	Nance	Susan	61	Thomas	Ruth
340	Napell	Mr&Mrs Herbert	306	Thomas	Ruth
328	Nason	Rochelle	83	Timley	John
321	Nauer	Ed & Glenna	190	Tom	Gerald & Joan
283	Neill	Elizabeth	152	Toubes	Judith
15	Neleon	Leo	4	Troutwine	Jack
75	Newells	Ray	49	Troutwine	John
361	Nichols	William	381	Valle-Riesta	Chris
258	Noller	Mr & Mrs George	85	Vanderlaan	JD
195	North	John	38	Varian	Kerry
409	Not Given		222	Vinitze	Joe
410	Not Given		307	Waggoner	John
207	Oeser	Cynthia	360	Walker	Stephen
208	Oirich	Frank	320	Ward	Daniel
384	Olshauseu	Detlev	380	Warjowski	Bob
98	Olson	Eunice	249	Wasielewski	Jeff
229	Orchard	Pete	403	Watkins	Warren
266	O'Quin	Michael	407	Welch	Douglas/Valerie
106	Pahl	Randy	295	Weston Jr.	Henry
87	Parker	Fredrick	264	Weston/Coh	Herbert/Katheri
388	Patterson	Charles	276	Whisenand	Tim
37	Patton	Gary	211	Whitaker	H.J.
204	Payton	Elizabeth	217	White	James
126	Peckham	Lamar	28	Whyte	Peter
182	Pennington	Paula	107	Wilcox	Cheryl
232	Peterhans	Mrs. Micheal	105	Williams	Bob
31	Peterson	Ted	251	Williams	Don
379	Peterson	Everett	332	Wilson	Barbara
99	Phillips	Corley	346	Wilson	John Banker
117	Pincolini	Bert	359	Wilson	Glenn
362	Portle	Bob	226	Winternitz	William
170	Pratt	David	302	Wise	C.M. Rofer
140	Price	Nancy	329	Wojuechows	Autumn
163	Priewe	Donald	290	Wold	Dexter
141	Pullian	LV	339	Wolfe	Cameron
148	Quaid	Mary	278	Volken	Chris
200	Rafferty	John	279	Volken	Nan
10	Ranz	Gary	280	Volken	Stan
310	Raymond	Hank	281	Volken	Heidi
394	Read	Edward	282	Volken	Jan
137	Rivers	Walter	36	Woodworth	Carla
50	Rix	Maxine	354	Wooten	Frederick
221	Robbins	Jack	153	Wright	Brian
56	Rodes	Don	189	Wright	Angela
100	Roehr	Mary	240	Wright	Melinda
404	Roman	Micheal	319	Young Kruec	Carol
128	Rooney	Seann	324	Zachariasen	Kerry Ellen
241	Rose	Greg	233	Zemon	Jeri
338	Rosenbaum	Joel	144	Zimmerman	Elaine & Steve
268	Saima-Barklow	Viola	174	Zitcak	Michael
133	Scalise	Corey			
113	Schafer	Jean			
289	Schloss	Jeff			
134	Schneider	David			
348	Schneider	Richard			
392	Scholz	David			
45	Schramm	Steve			
357	Schuchardt	Robert G.			
238	Schuitema	Jeffery			
234	Schwass	Wallace			
186	Schweickert	Richard			
185	Scott	Melanie			
414	Scott	Ann Herbert			
94	Seiler	Stuart			
371	Seipp	Edwin			
25	Sill	Marjorie			
300	Symmes	Roderick			

IDNO	Last Name	First Name	Honorific	Organization
30	Bowling	Donald	Chairman	Sierra County Board of Supervisors
292	Broden	Richard		Nevada County Forest Issues Group
176	Burroughs	James	Deputy Secretary	The Resources Agency of California
275	Carter	Lloyd	President	Save our Streams
29	Dardick	Sam	Supervisor, 5th District	County of Nevada
21	Donahue	Tim		Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter
180	Eagan	Kathleen	Mayor	Town of Truckee
173	Evans	Steven		Friends of the River
181	Farrel	David	Chief	US EPA, Region IX
26	Gebhard	Tyra		Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter
177	Gill	Ranjit		CA Regional Water Quality Control Board
178	Harlow	David	State Supervisor	US Department of the Interior
24	Henson	Ryan		California Wilderness Coalition
32	Holt	Kenneth		Dept of Health & Human Services
42	Infusino	Thomas		Friends Aware of Wildlife Needs
172	Juvinall	Todd		CABPRO
39	Klusman	Don		CA Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs
27	Leong	Robin		Audubon Society Napa-Solano
40	Linney	Doug		CA League of Conservation Voters
43	Lynn	Susan		Truckee River Yacht Club
46	McAlister	John	President	CA Landowners Alliance
20	McNabney	AB		MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY
12	Moore	Thomas		League To Save Lake Tahoe
328	Nason	Rochelle	Executive Director	League to Save Lake Tahoe
37	Patton	Gary	Supervisor	County of Santa Cruz
31	Peterson	Ted		Tahoe Truckee Flyfishers
45	Schramm	Steve		Mission Peak Fly Anglers
25	Sill	Marjorie		Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter
175	Springer	Fred		Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
179	Taylor	Willie	Director	US Department of the Interior
38	Varian	Kerry		SYRCL
41	Tennies	Michele		Wilderness Adventures
28	Whyte	Peter	Chapter Vice President	Audubon Society Napa-Solano
36	Woodworth	Carla	Councilmember	City of Berkeley

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

The following section contains the comments (identified by Topic number) and responses to them. Following this section is the reproduction of letters from Federal, State, and local agencies. The comments from these agencies are incorporated with the rest of the comments and response section.

#### **B. ALTERNATIVES**

##### **B-1 Supports Alternative A**

**Topic #B001 (CAT B01 ID 177 CN 05 & CAT B03 CN 06, and CAT C12 ID 302 CN 07)** It appears that Alternative A, C, or G, with a re-evaluation of the "Wild" designation for applicability to the Upper Truckee River and Perazzo Creek, would better provide that protection than would the preferred Alternative identified in the draft EIS.

##### **Response #B001**

Alternatives A, C, or G would all designate substantially more rivers than the preferred alternative in the Draft EIS. These alternatives, if acted upon by Congress, would provide more protection in terms of maintaining free flowing streams and protecting and or enhancing outstandingly remarkable values already identified for these rivers. This is not the only factor the Forests considered in determining which streams to recommend for designation. Ultimately, one of the most important criteria used for recommending rivers for designation was which rivers would make a significant contribution to a National system of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Wild and Scenic River Designation is not the only mechanism for protecting river and other resource values. The Forest Land and Resource Management Plan have many standards and guidelines that address a wide range of requirements and approaches to providing resource protection. In many cases these standards and guidelines and other laws and regulations will provide more direct protection of resources than Wild and Scenic River designations. The Upper Truckee River and Perazzo Creek were re-evaluated for a wild designation. The result was the determination that the Upper Truckee River could qualify for a wild classification and is being recommended for a wild designation. Perazzo did not qualify for wild classification due to roads and timber harvest activities in the area. Further, Perazzo was not recommended for designation.

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**Topic #B002 (CAT B01 ID 236 CN 01, ID 12 CN 01, 26/04, 36/02, 59/01, 60/01, 62/02, 70/01, 81/01, 83/02, 84/02, 85/01, 90/01, 100/01, 104/01, 118/01, 120/01, 128/01, 135/01, 137/01, 140/01, 141/03, 144/01, 150/05, 153/01, 154/01, 156/01, 158/01, 173/01, 173/21, 187/03, 188/01, 190/01, 195/01, 196/01, 197/01, 206/01, 208/01, 210/02, 213/02, 218/02, 230/05, 244/02, 253/02, 261/01, 264/01, 266/05, 267/01, 286/02, 296/01, 302/01, 305/04, 328/01, 358/01, 387/03, 388/01, 418/01)**

I support Alt. A and designation for all eligible rivers. We need to entirely protect all these rivers. Wild & Scenic Rivers are few and far between and they must all be protected.

##### **Response #B002**

Alternative A would recommend designation of all the rivers identified as eligible in this study. As discussed in response #B001, Alt. A would provide the most protection but there are other management requirements available in terms of resource protection. Also noted above is the idea

that protection is only one of the criteria used to determine which streams to recommend. It is true that Wild and Scenic Rivers are few and far between and one of the jobs of the Forest Service is to recommend only the best streams for designation that make an important contribution to a National system.

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## B-2 Supports Alternative B

### **Topic #B003 (CAT B02 ID 30 CN 01)**

The Board wishes to express its opposition to the designation of any river or stream for possible addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. This action was taken by the Board of Supervisors in regular meeting on the basis that such a designation of any stream or river would create significant, adverse effects on the local economy and ability to enhance the natural resource industries of the County.

### **Response # B003**

The position of the Board has been duly noted and considered as part of the public comment process between Draft and Final EIS. The Forest is equally concerned about any action or decision that would create significant adverse effects on the local economy and ability to support the natural resource industries of the County (Sierra County) or any other County. The environmental consequences as a result of designation in this DEIS and FEIS do not identify any significant effects on either economic impacts or even moderate constraints on natural resource activities such as logging. In particular, none of the recommended streams have any significant potential for significant reductions in timber management practices and or outputs.

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### **Topic #B004 (CAT B02 ID 172 CN 01, 2/01, 3/02, 4/01, 5/01, 7/02, 8/02, 9/02, 13/01, 14/01, 16/01, 18/01, 46/019, 47/01, 48/013, 54/08)**

CABPRO has studied the above document in great detail. We have many members familiar with the streams which are contained in your DEIS. We have had others, whom we consider experts in environmental documents, advise us of their opinions and analysis of the DEIS. After all of this work, it became clear that CABPRO's position must be as follows; Adopt Alternative B. (No Action). Recommend designation of no rivers.

### **Response # B004**

Thank you for sharing your support of Alternative B which recommends no rivers for designation. Between Draft and Final EIS all alternatives including Alt. B and comments supporting alternative B have been reviewed and carefully considered before arriving at a final recommendation.

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## B-3 Supports Alternative C

### **Topic #B005 (CAT B03 ID 53 CN 04, 55/02, 56/04, 171/03, and 177/06)**

I hope you will reconsider your recommendation and choose Alternative C, which calls for designating rivers that have the most extensive outstanding qualities, which is the point of the

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

**Response #B005**

Thank you for sharing your support of Alternative C. Between Draft and FEIS, Alternative C and comments supporting Alternative C have been carefully considered before developing a final recommendation.

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B-4 Supports Alternative B

**Topic #B006 (Cat B04 ID 29 CN 01, 10/01, 11/01, and 32/01)**

I have reviewed the report prepared by the Tahoe National Forest's staff entitled "WSR/DEIS for the Eastside Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study." I support the designation of the Upper Truckee River and the Sagehen River as "Scenic Rivers" and the designation of Independence Creek and the Upper Sagehen River as Special Interest Areas.

**Response #B006**

Thank you for sharing your support of Alternative E, the preferred alternative in the DEIS. Between Draft and Final EIS all alternatives including Alt. E were reviewed again for consideration before developing a final recommendation.

The final recommendation includes the streams you support but changes the Upper Truckee River to a wild designation. Upper Independence Creek Watershed is recommended as an SIA and Upper Sagehen basin is recommended for further study as an SIA.

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**Topic #B007 (CAT B04 ID 39 CN 01)**

In reading over your report, I believe that you and your team have done an admirable job in addressing all of the issues regarding designation of Wild and Scenic Rivers. I would also agree that Alternative E is the most applicable alternative for these rivers. You have not only considered current usage, but used the foresight to anticipate the future of these areas.

**Response # B007**

Thank you for sharing your support of Alternative E. As stated in B005, Alternative E along with all the other alternatives were reviewed again before developing a final recommendation.

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B-5 People support the Truckee River and Upper Truckee River for designation.

**Topic #B008 (CAT B05 ID 83 CN 04, 141/02, 150/01, 187/01, 230/01, 246/01, 257/02, 305/01, 373/02, 374/03, 376/01, 377/01, 380/01, 393/03, and 404/01)**

People are indicating a strong interest in seeing both the Truckee River and Upper Truckee River designated Wild and Scenic Rivers.

**Response #B008**

As indicated in other responses, both the Truckee River and Upper Truckee River were carefully reviewed along with public comments before making a final recommendation.

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**Topic #B009 (CAT B05 ID 12 CN 03 & CN 02)**

Of particular concern to the Tahoe Basin are the Upper Truckee and Truckee Rivers. The Upper Truckee River is the major tributary of Lake Tahoe; protection of its waters is critical to the lake's water quality. According to the 1988 LTBMU FEIS: Protection of the exceptional clarity of water in Lake Tahoe from further degradation and the eventual restoration of lost clarity is a high goal for managers of the land. Nearly every activity on the land has the potential of affecting water quality and thus must be planned, implemented or regulated with these in mind. In addition to analyzing the direct and indirect impacts of each activity, the combined impacts of numerous activities on the national forest along with those on adjoining private and other public lands must be considered. This is called assessing the cumulative watershed impacts occurring due to all activities within a watershed.(p. 3-58) In light of continued impacts on water quality (327.67 disturbed acres on the East Shore Project, for example), the Forest Service should take advantage of every available opportunity to work towards its "high goal" of improved water quality.

**Response #B009**

The Forest Service plans and implements all projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin with improved water quality in mind, as directed by the Forest Plan. As an agency, we work to take advantage of water quality improvement opportunities, as evidenced by the numerous Presidential Commitment activities that have a water quality improvement focus (road obliteration, best management practices, facilities retrofit, etc.). Because the Upper Truckee river makes an excellent addition to the nationwide Wild and Scenic Rivers System, we champion its designation. However, on-the-ground management is not anticipated to be any different should designation occur. The Upper Truckee river is managed under the Unroaded Recreation Prescription, which limits the applicable management practices in the area. In addition, Lake Tahoe is designated as California's only Outstanding National Resource Water, warranting a higher degree of scrutiny for projects implemented in the basin. Discharges of waste into the basin's surface waters, such as the Upper Truckee, are already prohibited.

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**Topic #B010 (CAT B05 ID 296 CN 03)**

The lower Truckee needs help-it gets a LOT of use, and the upper Truckee needs to be fully protected while it is still in an undeveloped area.

**Response #B010**

The Lower Truckee River does receive a high level of use on both public and private lands. Recreation is one of the Outstandingly Remarkable values for the Lower Truckee River that was carefully considered when weighing whether the Lower Truckee should be recommended for designation. It is not recommended for designation, but the Forests will continue to work hard at managing the high levels of public use. In fact, a public-private partnership is being developed to coordinate land management and planning activities in the Truckee River watershed. The focus is on watershed health and its benefits to economic health and related public safety issues.

The stretch of the Upper Truckee River recommended for designation is undeveloped and the recommended wild designation would help emphasize maintaining this undeveloped character.

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**Topic #B011 (CAT B05 ID 369 CN 01)**

I have lived in the West for over forty years and been a resident of Tahoe City, off and on, for twenty-five years. Having watched the degradation of our western rivers during those years, I am

very anxious that you take advantage of every possible opportunity to preserve the Upper Truckee and the Truckee Rivers.

**Response #B011**

In the process of reviewing the alternatives from Draft to Final each river has been evaluated independently to consider its merits in regards to recommending it for designation. Wild and Scenic river designation is not the only tool for protecting and managing river resources.

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**Topic #B012 (CAT B05 ID 381 CN 01)**

The Truckee is the centerpiece of recreation opportunities in the popular area, and very significant to wildlife resources in this otherwise semi-arid habitat.

**Response #B012**

Recreation opportunities and wildlife resources are presently being managed within the Truckee River corridor. These river values were considered during the process to determine which rivers to recommend for Wild and Scenic River designation.

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**Topic #B013 (CAT B05 ID408 CN 04)**

It seems by attaining wildness designation it would facilitate better management of your lands in the corridor. Presently many of your parcels are being illegally intruded upon by the public and adjacent private property owners.

**Response #B013**

Designation of the Truckee River could put additional emphasis on managing for the issues you list; however, designation is not required for the Forests to manage for these concerns within the Truckee River corridor. In many cases it takes not only Forest Service management but the cooperation of several other agencies and local government to effectively respond to many of the more complicated issues along the Truckee River.

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**Topic #B014 (CAT B05 ID 408 CN 06)**

Please support the concept of federal protection of the Truckee River from Lake Tahoe to Truckee (minimum) as a National Wild and Scenic River.

**Response #B014**

This concept has been considered in both the Draft and Final EIS as a possible recommendation for Wild and Scenic River designation. The preferred alternative does not recommend designation of the Lower Truckee River. Other management tools will be used to manage the values identified and recognized along the Truckee River.

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B-6 People Support the Upper Truckee River for designation

**Topic #B015 (CAT B06 ID 12 CN 02, 24/01, 58/04, 141/01, 150/02, 187/02, 246/02, 257/01, 267/04, 305/02, 369/02, 376/02, 377/02, and 404/02)**

People support the idea of recommending the Upper Truckee River for Wild and Scenic River

designation.

**Response #B015**

Thank you for sharing your support for designating the Upper Truckee River. This river is in the final recommendation.

---

B-7 People Support the Little Truckee River for designation

**Topic #B016 (CAT B07 ID 24 CN 07, 124/03, and 178/06)**

In addition, we feel that the study report erred in its assessment of the Little Truckee River. The Little Truckee River has ample willow flycatcher habitat, and if protected, could serve as a habitat corridor to the main-stem Truckee River.

**Response #B016**

The Forest has identified the Little Truckee River as an area with a significant amount of willow flycatcher habitat. While designation could add emphasis to protecting this habitat for willow flycatchers, it is something the Forest is already managing for through the Forest Land and Resources Management Plan Standards and Guidelines.

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**Topic #B017 (CAT B07 ID 178 CN 04)**

The presence of outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historical, cultural, or similar values should be a major factor in the determination of which rivers are recommended for wild and scenic designation. The difference between Alternatives G and E is that Alternative G recommends designating Perazzo Creek as a scenic river, and Alternative E does not recommend any special designation for these rivers.

**Response #B017**

The presence of outstandingly remarkable values for each river is definitely a major factor in the determination of which rivers to recommend for wild and scenic river designation. Each river was independently evaluated as part of the process of developing alternatives and considering changes from draft to final EIS. Outstandingly Remarkable values and how those values with the stream would contribute to a National System of rivers, was the most important factor in evaluating each stream.

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B-8 People support Sagehen Creek for designation

**Topic #B018 (CAT B08 ID 24 CN 02, and ID 58 CN 03)**

People are supportive of recommending Sagehen Creek for Wild and Scenic River designation.

**Response #B018**

Thank you for sharing your support for Sagehen Creek. After careful review Sagehen is continuing to be recommended for designation in this FEIS.

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**Topic #B020 (CAT B08 ID 10 CN 04)**

I would suggest that the Sagehen watershed be designated as "scenic" with some possible extra protection or rehabilitation to restore the native species of grasses that have been overgrazed and replaced by annual forb species. The willow in the upper reaches of Sagehen Creek has suffered damage by overgrazing, especially by sheep, which would adversely impact the habitat of the willow flycatcher.

**Response #B020**

The Final EIS recommends Sagehen Creek being designated a Scenic River. Management of the resource values, outstandingly remarkable (OR) values, and appropriate management practices will be addressed in a management plan if Congress chooses to designate a river. Over the past several grazing seasons, the Tahoe NF has placed grazing use standards for the willow species in the permittee's annual operating instructions that will maintain current healthy willow populations in their healthy state and rehabilitate those willow populations that have been damaged in the past and where the environment is capable of rehabilitation. Grazing use of this area will be further addressed through the allotment planning process.

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**Topic #B021 (CAT B08 ID 11 CN 02)**

Grazing in the Sagehen watershed has altered the species composition in some of the meadow areas, favoring annual forb species over the original native grass and graminoid species. Grazing, especially by sheep, has also impacted willow population in the upper areas of the watershed where severe willow predation can be seen late in the grazing season. Trampling, also by sheep, is destabilizing the stream bank in several places. Do these impacts significantly alter the desired condition expected under Scenic status? Perhaps this issue could be addressed in the final EIS. I agree with the identification of Sagehen Creek as qualifying for the proposed protective status, but I suggest the elimination of grazing, at least from the riparian areas of the drainage, should be considered as a possible requirement for maintenance of Scenic Status. I encourage continuation of study that might lead to SIA status for the upland areas not surrounding Sagehen Creek not covered by scenic status.

**Response #B021**

Please refer to response #B020. Also, grazing issues can not be resolved through the Wild and Scenic planning process. Grazing issues need to be resolved through the administration of the existing term grazing permit and through the allotment planning process on a site-by site-basis.

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**Topic #B022 (CAT B08 ID 170 CN 01)**

The recommendation of "Scenic" - for Sagehen Creek, in Alternatives A, C, E, and G seems right to me. It should certainly not be downgraded to something less, as in Alternatives B, D, and F. As far as the rest of Sagehen Basin is concerned, it definitely should be declared as a Special Interest Area. While Table 3.1 lists "Outstandingly Remarkable Values" for 6 different attributes of Sagehen Creek, much of what is so outstanding actually is not in the stream corridor at all, but elsewhere in the basin. In particular, the best of the excellent set of historical logging remains lie almost entirely outside of the stream corridor. Also, the very largest of the springs, several smaller springs, some of the fens, and some of the best wildlife habitat are outside of the stream corridor.

**Response #B022**

Sagehen Creek is recommended as a Scenic River in the Final EIS document, which meets your recommendation. The Forest recognizes that many of the Outstandingly Remarkable values do extend beyond the 1/4-mile corridor on each side of the stream as discussed above. This information was the original impetus for recommending the consideration of an SIA designation in a future planning process. With or without any designations the Forest will take these values into consideration with future projects within the basin.

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**Topic #B023 (CAT B08 ID 189 CN 02)**

The town supports the Forest Service recommendations of a SIA along Upper Independence Creek and Sagehen Creek, and a Scenic designation for Sagehen Creek. These designations are consistent with the pristine value and free flowing characteristics of these streams. In addition, these areas are primarily under federal ownership.

**Response #B023**

Your ideas about SIA's and a Scenic designation for Sagehen Creek are some of the factors that lead to recommending these designations and further studies.

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B-9 People support Independence Creek for designation

**Topic #B024 (CAT B09 ID 10 CN 03)**

I agree that Upper Independence Creek be designated as "wild" for the following reasons: This watershed represents one of the largest un-entered areas (by logging) in the Northern Sierra. This watershed represents prime habitat for the Lahontan cutthroat trout and that habitat requires protection to insure the viability of the LCT population in light of the natural impact of drought it has experienced in the past 7 years.

**Response #B024**

The Upper Independence Creek watershed is considered prime habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout. This is the prime reason the upper watershed is being recommended as a Special Interest Area (SIA) in the Final EIS. Management direction for the SIA will emphasize habitat and watershed protection to protect and or enhance Lahontan cutthroat trout populations. Forest management efforts will be coordinated with California Dept. of Fish and Game as well as the Fish and Wildlife Service. The SIA designation should do a better job at managing for Lahontan cutthroat trout than a wild river designation.

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**Topic #B025 (CAT B09 ID 11 CN 03 and ID 124 CN 01)**

Upper Independence Creek should get maximum protection. This represents one of the largest remaining un-entered areas in the northern Sierra, and designation should be planned to prevent future entry except to maintain ecosystem health in the area. Protection of the Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) population should be a major issue in consideration of upgraded status for this watershed. There is presently inadequate posting of the waters of upper Independence Creek

against fishing for LCT, and enforcement of this critical ban does not exist. The prolonged drought has had an unknown natural impact on the LCT population. I urge consideration of whatever status maximum long term protection for the watershed of Upper Independence Creek.

**Response #B025**

The protection of Lahontan cutthroat trout populations is a major issue in terms of how to manage the upper watershed. After careful consideration of all the issues the Forest recommendation is to designate the upper watershed as an SIA expressly focused on management for the Lahontan cutthroat trout. Posting and enforcement against fishing for LCT is an implementation issue that involves coordination with the State Fish and Game Department. Hopefully, efforts in this area can be improved in the future.

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**Topic #B026 (CAT B09 ID24 CN 05 & ID 24 CN 06)**

We are also very disappointed that the study report failed to recommend either Independence Creek or Perazzo Canyon for wild and scenic river status. Both of these watercourses are exceedingly wild and well-endowed with ecological and recreational values. Independence Creek for example is the sole spawning area for the Independence Lake population of Lahontan cutthroat trout. As you know, this is the only lake-dwelling population of Lahontan cutthroat in existence. In addition, bald eagles, California spotted owls, pine marten, and willow flycatchers are known to forage, and on occasion dwell, within the Independence Creek and Perazzo Canyon watersheds. Both of these watersheds are primitive in nature and have not been grazed by cattle in many years. Given also that both of these watercourses are within the Castle Peak roadless Area and possess outstanding recreational and cultural values, they clearly deserve wild and scenic river designation.

**Response #B026**

The information cited above is some of the factors considered in both the Draft and Final EIS to determine which rivers to recommend. With Independence Creek, the final determination was that an SIA would better address the management concerns for Lahontan cutthroat trout than designating the upper stream a wild river. Clearly, Lahontan cutthroat trout are a significant value and will be managed as needed through the SIA program with cooperation from State Fish and Game Department and the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service.

Perazzo Creek is not being recommended for designation. The values you have identified will be protected and managed through Forest Plan Standards and guidelines. The roadless character in the Perazzo Creek area has changed since the RARE I inventory. Logging on private land and improvements to the road precludes Perazzo from receiving a wild classification.

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**Topic #B027 (CAT B09 ID 57 CN 01)**

This letter is in regard to wild and scenic recommendation. I felt that Independence Creek and East Fork Creek should be included for the fact that they have Lahontan trout in them. This is a unique, native species that needs to be preserved. The only hatchery in California is in serious trouble, the majority of the fish died this fall and these two places have them as few waterways in this region do.

**Response #B027**

As stated in the two previous responses Independence Creek and the associated Lahontan cutthroat

trout will be managed carefully through the designation of an SIA that encompasses all of the upper watershed. East Fork Creek is part of the Westside Study and is being addressed in that study. With or without wild and scenic river designation, Lahontan cutthroat trout will be managed with special emphasis.

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B-10 People support designation of Perazzo Creek.

**Topic #B028 (CAT B10 ID 11 CN 04)**

I was disappointed to see the elimination of Perazzo Watershed from consideration for protective status. This area is remarkable statewide for its biodiversity. Over 10% of all the habitat types identified by the CA DF&G for the entire state occur in the 36 square miles of the Perazzo-Little Truckee Watershed. Upper elevations in the area include some un-entered stands of red fir and hemlock, and the lower reaches of the creek support rare fen communities. Much of the area drained by Perazzo Creek supports some of the last remaining prime marten habitat on the Sierraville District, and most of the length of the creek includes habitat for the listed willow flycatcher. This area will become increasingly more valuable for its recreational and ecological amenities, and less for commodity production, as public pressures and policies shift over the next decade. The recent logging on private land in the Toms Valley and Upper Perazzo Creek areas mentioned in the Report might be considered a further incentive to convey protective status on this area since it indicates a stable foreseeable future in the logged stands. Please reconsider the possibility of some protective status for Perazzo Creek. SIA designation for this area might be a good compromise strategy that balances the local (Sierra County Board of Supervisors) short term goal against the long term welfare of American society and the ecosystem.

**Response #B028**

We agree that Perazzo Watershed contains outstanding diversity of plant and animal resources. And, it is true that Perazzo Creek is identified in the technical/agency draft of the Recovery Plan for LCT as a potential LCT recovery site. These values and the diversity of the Perazzo Watershed are provided a measure of protection through the Forest Plan as explained below.

The Tahoe Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) provides direction for managing habitats and specific species. Species diversity is managed through the Sensitive Species and Management Indicator Species (MIS) Programs. Habitat diversity is managed by identifying critical habitats such as riparian areas, old-growth habitats, hardwoods, and others while also directing that enough quality habitat be provided so that management activities do not cause the forest's sensitive aquatic, plant, and wildlife species to become listed as threatened or endangered. Managing individual species along with habitats are the Forest Service approach to managing for diversity. Management of habitat diversity alone would not assure the viability of all species that are a part of the ecosystem. Refer to Tahoe LRMP Forestwide Standards and Guidelines #s 23-30 and 46-47.

In addition, values for a specific area are identified in the Forest Plan in management area direction. Willow flycatcher and spotted owl values are identified in Management Area 018 (Henness) - which includes Perazzo Creek.

Wild and Scenic designation may have added another layer of protection for the outstandingly remarkable values in these areas but was not selected as the best way to manage these values in

Perazzo Watershed. It was also suggested that SIA designation would provide added protection for these values. Perazzo Watershed is not being recommended for SIA designation. SIA designation for Perazzo Watershed/Perazzo Creek would not necessarily exclude activities such as grazing and timber harvest. The objectives of a specific SIA direct which activities occur within it. At this time, the Forest will manage the outstanding values of Perazzo Watershed by following LRMP direction. Added protection measures for some of these values such as putting a fence around the willow flycatcher area to exclude cattle, occur under Forest Plan direction.

The Forest recognizes that understanding how to conserve diversity is an evolving science. New information on species and habitat management continues to be identified and addressed in our planning processes.

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**Topic #B029 (CAT B10 ID 178 CN 05, 10/04, 57/03, 124/02, 124/04, 173/20, 178/07, and 302/02)**

Scenic river designation of Perazzo Creek would provide further emphasis and protection for its unique vernal pools, bogs, fens, meadows and old-growth forest. As stated in the DEIS/study report, an additional outstanding wildlife value of this canyon and the Little Truckee River is that they support the second largest population in California of the California endangered willow flycatcher, *Empidonax trailii*.

**Response #B029**

Vernal pools, bogs, fens, meadows, old-growth forest, willow flycatcher, and biological diversity are all provided a measure of protection in the Tahoe LRMP as explained in response #B28. Wild and Scenic designation may have added another layer of protection for the outstandingly remarkable values in these areas, but was not selected as the best way to manage these values in Perazzo Creek and Little Truckee River.

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B-11, and B-12 People support Coldstream for designation and People support Alder Creek for designation.

**Topic #B30 (CAT B011 ID 124 CN 05 104/03, and 124/06)**

People are showing support for Coldstream being designated Wild and Scenic. Other people are showing support for Alder Creek.

**Response #B30**

Thank you for sharing your support for Coldstream and or Alder Creek. As mentioned in several other replies, these streams as well as the other streams along with the comments have been carefully reviewed before coming to a final recommendation. The important historic values for both of these streams did not have strong associations with the river environment. The historic values will clearly be managed through present forest planning standards and guidelines. Wild and Scenic designation would not provide any more protection than already afforded through present direction.

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B-13 People support the Upper Truckee for designation as a Wild River.

**Topic #B031 (CAT B13 ID 12 CN 04, CAT I 300/01, 305/03, 12/05, 317/02, 336/02, 404/03, CAT D, 173/05, 177/04, 173/09, CAT O 354/01, CAT B05 12/03, CAT B13 12/04, 150/03, 217/02, 315/01, 343/03, 354/02, 359/01, 364/01, 367/01, 374/02, 386/01, 359/01, 364/01, 367/01, 374/01, 386/01, 359/01, 388/02, 389/01, 391/01 and CAT C05 302/05)**

The Upper Truckee should be recommended for Wild designation to provide the utmost protection for water quality and wildlife reasons. Wild designation is needed to preserve the clarity of Lake Tahoe. The river is free of impoundments and its shoreline and watershed is essentially primitive; in fact, the Upper Truckee passes through some of the wildest lands in the Basin. The cattle do not enhance the scenery in the least bit, and they are ruining the river banks and gravel spawning beds. As the rest of the Basin becomes more developed, protecting wild areas and their wildlife becomes more important. A "Wild" designation will provide better protection of existing water quality and beneficial uses than a "scenic" designation.

### **Response #B031**

One hundred and three of the public comment letters expressed that the Upper Truckee should be recommended as a Wild river, not Scenic. In response to this public input, the Forest Service has re-examined whether the river could qualify as "Wild." The primary reason that the Forest Service believed the Upper Truckee did not meet the standards of a Wild river was the presence of the Meiss cabin and barn complex, which is one of the river's outstandingly remarkable features. This complex is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places and helps to define the old West character of the Meiss Meadow (Alpine County) section of the Upper Truckee. These cultural features, located on the streambank of the Upper Truckee, were believed to move the river segment out of the Wild category because of the "essentially primitive shoreline" requirement of that river classification. In re-examining the issue, the Forest Service Handbook was consulted and it states that the existence of a few inconspicuous structures, particularly those of historic or cultural value like the cabin/barn complex, need not bar Wild classification. In addition, the past watershed restoration activities had stabilized, but not extensively modified, the river. Consequently, in response to public comment, the Forest Service now believes that a Wild recommendation for the Upper Truckee River is appropriate.

Your comment infers that you may think that a "wild" designation will prohibit cattle grazing within the corridor. That is not the case. While certainly not every visitor will feel the same way about encountering cattle during their recreation experience, the Forest Service has no plans to remove cattle from the allotment. Grazing, to the level that existed upon a river's designation, is an allowed activity under the wild river classification. If grazing was conducted in such a way that resource values of the river and its corridor were being compromised, then some modification of the grazing regime would be assessed. However, there is no assumption that the only solution would be removal of cattle. In fact, the grazing operation factored into the uniqueness that contributes to the outstandingly remarkable setting, in that Meiss Country encapsulates the cultural landscape of the mountain west -- complete with pole corrals, cows with bells, cowboys on horses, and the historic cabin. Rather than falling-down remnants more commonly discovered, the working condition of the ranching setting is unique. These features, perfectly preserved in an uncut forest, provide a sense of stepping back a hundred years in time.

**Topic #B032 (CAT B13 ID 59 CN 04, 59/02, 70/02, 83/03, 140/02, 144/02, 153/03, 158/02, 173/04, 174/01, 190/02, 197/02, 257/04, 264/02, 302/03, 307/01, 308/02, 309/01, 312/02, 317/05, 320/01, 321/01, 322/02, 328/02, 333/01, 338/02, 341/01, 344/01, 348/01, 352/01, 356/01, 358/02, 362/01, 373/01, 382/01, 383/02, 387/04, 392/02, 393/01, 395/03, 397/03, 398/01, 400/01, 409/01, 410/01, 411/01, 412/01, and 417/01)**

People want to see the Upper Truckee River changed from a Scenic designation to a Wild designation.

**Response #B032**

The Upper Truckee River was carefully reviewed between draft and final EIS. Upon review it was determined that the Upper Truckee could be classified Wild and would in fact be recommended for a Wild designation.

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**Topic #B033 (CAT B013 ID 393 CN 02)**

The Upper Truckee is a beautiful WILD area and Wild River. It has one highway going by it, # 89. A "Wild" designation undoubtedly would protect critical habitat. If Hwy. 89, because of its proximity causes this beautiful area not to be Wild, it certainly IS STILL "Scenic", as a matter of fact a drive down 89 during the fall as leaves are turning is a sight you see very seldom.

**Response #B033**

As discussed earlier the Upper Truckee was evaluated for Wild designation between the Draft and Final EIS. The Wild designation recommended for the Upper Truckee will continue to manage the area for the whole range of river values with particular emphasis on the outstandingly remarkable values identified for this specific river. However, the last sentence in this comment appears to be referring to that section of the Upper Truckee River that flows through Christmas Valley. Please be aware that the area proposed for designation ends before this point. At Christmas Valley, the river's characteristics change to a developed environment, so the segment analyzed ended at the change.

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B-14 People support a Scenic designation for the Truckee River.

**Topic #B034 (CAT B14 ID 391 CN 02) ID 195 CN 03, ID 307 CN 02, ID 315 CN 02, ID 328 CN 04, ID 338 CN 03, ID 339 CN 02, ID 343, CN 01, ID 359 CN 02, ID 362 CN 02, ID 371 CN 01, ID 388 CN 04, ID 392 CN 03, 69/02, 150/04, 174/02, 197/03, 257/05, 308/03, 309/02, 312/03, 317/06, 320/02, 322/01, 331/01, 333/02, 341/02, 344/02, 348/02, 352/02, 356/02, 358/03, 367/02, 382/02, 383/03, 386/02, 387/05, 389/02, 395/04, 398/02, 400/02, 409/02, 410/02, and 411/02)**

bove comments support the Lower Truckee as a Scenic River designation because of the recreation and scenic values. They generally want to see the river protected and growth managed. The following is a good representative comment of the ideas expressed.

Or, take the Truckee River itself. Does it not warrant any protection at all? It doesn't appear to me that it is so plain and ordinary that it should be assigned permanently for gradual deterioration! Commercial development naturally must seek to expand in any way that it is allowed to. Does it not make sense, then, and achieve good policy and practice, to foster a recreational asset rather

than give it no designation at all, not even Scenic? Is it sound public policy to allow the Truckee river area to go down hill, aesthetically, spiritually and recreationally? Why? To what purpose? Regulation and management can only be assured with Scenic river status.

**Response #B034**

On National Forest System lands there are a wide range of standards and guidelines and other practices that provide protection for the scenic and recreation resources within the Truckee River corridor. In addition to National Forest guidelines there are a range of Federal, State, and Local agencies that provide additional direction on both public and private lands. Most commercial development is taking place on private land, which is regulated by city or county zoning. Wild and Scenic River designation would not be the appropriate avenue for controlling growth on private land. The aesthetic, spiritual, and recreational values were carefully reviewed and considered before a final recommendation was developed that did not include the Lower Truckee River. However, existing direction will continue to protect many of the values you have identified.

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B-15 Other general comments about the alternatives.

**Topic #B035 (Cat B15 ID 178 CN 01, 210/01, 238/01, 244/01, 246/03, 308/04, 312/01, 321/03, 324/01, and 378/01)**

People would like to see more or all of the rivers designated to provide more protection for the resource values identified in the study.

**Response #B035**

The Forests reviewed each river very carefully between Draft and Final EIS. The Forests are recommending the rivers considered to be the best candidates for Wild and Scenic River designation. Many of the values identified in this study will be protected with or without Wild and Scenic River designation.

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B-16 People do not support designation of rivers

**Topic #B036 (CAT B16 ID 06 CN 01 and 50/02)**

People do not want to see designation because they are concerned that designation will attract heavy unwanted additional use. There could be damage to the resource as a result.

**Response #B036**

This is a reasonable concern for people. Our experience with Wild and Scenic Rivers to date indicates that the amount of use will be proportional to the kinds of public attractions available on the river. We expect light to moderate increases in use on the rivers being recommended.

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**Topic #B037 (CAT B16 ID 051 CN 03)**

I also have concerns over the Sagehen Creek recommendation. This is an important ecological study area with intensive research activity. Currently under funding problems, I fear that your

designation may provide the "excuse" needed by potential funding sources to eliminate this important research. Please drop that recommendation.

**Response #B037**

The recommended designation of Sagehen Creek recognizes the important research conducted over the years. Wild and Scenic designation incorporates research as one of the values to manage within the corridor. In addition the designation should help ensure that the ecological values will be adequately protected and encourage future ecological studies.

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**C. DOCUMENT**

C-1 Comments about the Summary

**Topic #C001 (CAT C01 ID 172 CN 09)**

Paragraph One states "The DEIS/Study Report further evaluates the environmental consequences of such designation on the human environment".. What exactly does this mean? There is no definition of the human environment which makes it impossible to ascertain any impacts of designation on that environment.

Paragraph Six states that this DEIS is tiered to the Final EIS's for the TNF and LTBMU management plans. If this is the case, those documents did not identify any Eastside rivers for Wild and Scenic designation. The only two streams identified for further study as noted on page 3, Record of Decision were the Upper Truckee and the Upper Rubicon. These were to be studied cooperatively with the Lake Tahoe Management Unit and the Eldorado National Forest. Using the premise of these plans is defective rationale.

In the same paragraph it states that the Secretary of Agriculture may recommend that all or some of the Study Rivers be designated. This is very troubling to those that wish this process to be fair. If the whole process is as subjective as it appears to be, then no matter what the local citizens want, this can be overruled by someone from Washington DC., with little or no input or regard for our opinions.

Page S.2 first paragraph under Bold heading states emphatically that all eight rivers are free-flowing. On page IV.3 number VII, streamflow, you state that the entire Truckee river system is controlled by a series of dams and reservoirs. This seems to be a contradiction in views.

Page S. 8, Table S.3 on effects on Timber Outputs should also contain the total timber in the different alternatives. In addition to annual output figures, the public should be able to see impacts of forsaken harvest over the next decade or longer. Since local jurisdictions receive Timber Harvest receipts for schools and roads, any reduction in those receipts is an impact to local budgets. What is the value of the timber to the free market? Jobs and other facets of the local economy will be impacted negatively if more timber is withdrawn from harvest opportunities.

**Response #C001**

In paragraph one of the summary the use of the term "human environment" is meant to be a broad term that includes the general area where the rivers are located as well as where people live. In

other words the document will look at environmental consequences of the physical environment as well as possible consequences to people and their institutions.

In paragraph six the concept of tiering means that the DEIS/Study Report is consistent with the broader direction in the final EISs for the TNF and LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plans. Standards and guidelines for water, plants, visual resource, and recreation etc., will all be applicable. You are correct that only a few rivers are referred to in the respective EISs for each Forest Plan. This Study process is an extension of the Forest Planning process that is taking a more detailed look at both eligibility and suitability for possible Wild and Scenic Rivers above and beyond what was identified in the Forest Planning process. For the LTBMU specifically, Practice 35, Land Management Planning, the LTBMU Forest Plan was amended on May 31, 1990. This amendment directed that the Forest implement the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by conducting an eligibility assessment for the Truckee River. If eligible, a suitability assessment was to be scheduled. In the interim, the Forest Service was not to modify the river's free flowing characteristics. The required eligibility assessments were conducted in 1990 and 1992; this suitability assessment completes the implementation of the Forest Plan's direction.

The Secretary of Agriculture does have the role of recommending rivers to Congress based on the information in the FEIS/Study Report. The public, including local citizens, have input into the process through their comments on the Draft and Final EISs. In addition, local citizens can provide input to their Congressman when a river or group of rivers is being considered for legislation by Congress. It also must be noted that the opinions of local citizens varies widely and these different concerns are captured in this section of comments and responses.

The first paragraph on S.2 stating that all eight streams are free flowing is not a contradiction of the information on page IV.3 number VII in the DEIS. Based on the definition of a free flowing stream, segments of streams can be determined to be free flowing while there is a dam above or below that segment. A dam and the reservoir behind it can not be part of the free flowing stream. Based on this definition, Forest ID teams identified rivers that were eligible including the Truckee River (which has a dam at the outlet to Lake Tahoe), and the Little Truckee River (which has a dam below the segment, Stampede Reservoir, and a dam above on Independence Creek, a tributary) and Independence Creek (which ends at Independence Lake, a reservoir with a small dam). These dams are described on page IV.3 section VII as you identified in your comment. Existing or future dams can be allowed above or below a river segment and are clearly addressed in Section 7 b of the act where it states: "Nothing contained in the foregoing sentence, however, shall preclude licensing of, or assistance to, developments below or above a potential wild, scenic, or recreational river area..." Developments in this case are referring to dams and water projects discussed above. Also, see page III.1 of the DEIS where it refers to the USDA and USDI Final Revised Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification and Management of River Areas (47 FR 39454; September 7, 1982) which indicates that a river segment flowing between impoundments is not necessarily precluded from designation if it meets eligibility criteria.

Table S.3 on page S.8 does show the total annual timber outputs for each alternative listed at the bottom of the table. With the annual figure one can calculate the decade shortfalls quite easily. Timber outputs are an important consideration in the suitability recommendations. Your specific concerns about receipts to local counties and possible impacts to jobs in the local economy are good examples why this is an important factor in evaluating suitability for wild and scenic rivers. It should be noted that the table demonstrates the worse case reduction for outputs in Table S.3

because there are other constraints that generally have reduced outputs since the Forest Plan was approved in 1990.

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## C-2 Comments about Chapter I

### **Topic #C002 (CAT C02 ID 179 CN 01)**

By way of correction, this paragraph should state that the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) was initiated in 1975 by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (USDI), continued by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, and is now maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). An initial listing for all states (except Montana and Alaska) was published by the NPS in 1982 and a major update was made in 1994. Listing on the NRI is not a close-ended process and the list has expanded dramatically as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have identified potentially eligible rivers during their land management planning processes. Also, "P.L. 90-54211 should be "P.L. 90-542, as amended" and the words "and immediate environments" should follow "rivers" in the last line, first paragraph. In the third paragraph the word "classification" should be "designation".

### **Response #C002**

Thank you for your detailed comments. The corrections will be made as you suggest. There is one exception in regards to changing the word "classification" in the third paragraph. A more accurate change is to use the word "eligibility" instead of your suggestion of "designation."

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### **Topic #C003 (CAT C02 ID 172 CN 10)**

Under background, the statement that the intent of the Act "is to preserve some of the Nation's free flowing rivers for present and future generations" needs further explanation. The public should be informed of the existing rivers named since inception of the Act and their locations throughout the United States. If we don't have the big picture available to view, the public may not be convinced of the need for more rivers and streams being designated. Please point out in the document where the definition of free flowing is contained.

Paragraph 3 says, "the public pointed out that the National Forests had not adequately inventoried their respective rivers"...CABPRO has been concerned from the beginning when it became apparent that the "public" was five river preservation groups. No other groups were allowed to be involved in the discussion of the appropriateness of additional studies. The TNF plan was done over a period of years with a lot of public input. That public input was as varied as the population. Rivers that subsequently became eligible were proven unworthy in the TNF Plan. It seems that an outstandingly remarkable value would have been identified in the original study. Since they weren't, how could those values just pop up in a subsequent study. CABPRO believes that because the system analysis is subjective that the bias of the individuals towards designation is evident with the recommendations in the DEIS.

Page I.2 Other Relevant Studies. Paragraph 2 is very confusing. The TROA studies appear to be another overlapping set of agencies studying yet more aspects of the Truckee watershed. This is certainly a waste of taxpayer's money. Since there is an historic problem allocating water to humans and wildlife, wouldn't an analysis of the impacts on the other studies make more sense than isolating each from the other?

Public Involvement and Planning Issues Page 1.4. The Act does not affirm the rights of States and local governments to control their own zoning requirements on private lands. Local planning must conform to the Act according to Section 6. (A) (2) c. It states, "In order to carry out the provisions of the subsection the appropriate Secretary shall issue guidelines, specifying standards for local zoning ordinances, which are consistent with the purposes of this Act."

Paragraph 3 states, "None of the eight rivers were originally identified on the Nationwide rivers Inventory maintained by the National Park Service." CABPRO restates our concern that these streams were not included in either the TNF Plan or the NRI as eligible for designation, yet they are now deemed eligible. This strengthens our view that the process is subjective to the bias of the individual(s) doing the analysis and is not reflective of the previous studies. Therefore, for these and other reasons CABPRO recommends that no rivers be added to the Wild and Scenic rivers System under this DEIS.

### **Response #C003**

This study focused on the Eastside within the Sierra Nevada Province. On pages IV.13 through IV.15 of the DEIS, rivers in the general area or adjacent that have been designated by Congress are listed. Rivers that are eligible for consideration on the Eastside have also been listed. While listing all designated rivers in California and or the entire country may be interesting, it was not required because of the different ecological and geomorphological characteristics on the eastside are quite different than other parts of California and the country. A list of designated rivers is available in the planning files as part of the Wild and Scenic River Act. A map is also available for public review.

A complete definition of free flowing was not included in the DEIS. We will add the definition from the act at the beginning of Chapter III.

You are correct that the public addressing our inventory of rivers was river conservation groups. They met with the Forest Supervisor and staff in regard to a possible appeal of the Forest Plan. Their position was that the Forest did not follow its own planning guidelines in regards to the eligibility process for Wild and Scenic Rivers. Specifically, they asked the Forest to show when interdisciplinary team meetings were conducted and who attended those meetings. The Forest had to report that they did not conduct interdisciplinary meetings in regards to eligible rivers. Based on this information the Forest Supervisor decided that, in fact, the Forest had not followed the planning guidelines. He also decided the Forest would develop an agreement with the five river groups to go ahead with a systematic ID team-based-study of possible eligible rivers. If any rivers were identified as eligible, it was agreed that the Forest would then evaluate these rivers for suitability. The Forest Supervisor did not need additional input from other public groups because the question was about following proper procedures. In this case, when it was identified that the process had not been followed, the Forest Supervisor has the authority to correct these mistakes in an expeditious way. The Suitability Study, which is this FEIS/River Study has been open to public comment from the start and these comments are part of the public record.

On page 1.2, Other Relevant Studies, the whole point of paragraph 2 and 3 was to explain that the recommendations in the Wild and Scenic River Study and the decisions made in TROA could be made independently of one another without significantly restricting choices made by the other Study. At the same time, there are some relationships between the two studies. To ensure

cooperation on both studies, the Forest Service became a cooperating agency on the TROA study and the Bureau of Reclamation became a cooperating agency on the Wild and Scenic River Study.

On page I.4 there is a discussion of private land concerns and an interpretation of Section 6 (c) of the Wild and Scenic River Act. You are correct that this section of the act does not affirm the rights of States and local governments to control their own zoning requirements on private lands. The sentence will be changed in the final EIS to be more accurate. However, the main intent of Section 6 (c) is to limit the use of condemnation on .."private lands located within any incorporated city, village, or borough which has in force and applicable to such lands a duly adopted, valid zoning ordinance that conforms with the purposes of the act." It also directs the "appropriate Secretary to issue guidelines, specifying standards for local zoning ordinances which are consistent with purposes of this Act." This Section of the Act is somewhat irrelevant to the Study at hand because no properties have been identified for purchase or condemnation. If a parcel was identified as desirable for purchase in the future, the forest would follow the policy of purchasing land from a willing seller. This is discussed in detail in Chapter V under lands.

In regards to the concern that none of the eight rivers were identified on the NRI or the Forest Plan, it is important to point out that the Forest did not conduct a systematic interdisciplinary process for evaluating outstandingly remarkable values. It is not surprising that the Forest did not identify any rivers with OR values in the Plan when an interdisciplinary process was not employed. See previous discussion in paragraph three of this response for more detail. In regards to the NRI see topic #C02 that indicates that the NRI continues to change as agencies identify additional rivers.

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#### C-4 Comments on Chapter III

##### **Topic #C004 (Cat C04 ID 302 CN 04)**

On page III.5 of the document, "Wild Rivers" are defined as "free of impoundments and are generally inaccessible, essentially primitive,..." The Draft document only considers Upper Independence Creek eligible as "Wild."

##### **Response #C004**

In the draft document only Upper Independence Creek was identified as eligible as "Wild." Many people questioned this particularly for the Upper Truckee River and Perazzo Creek. Between Draft and Final this issue was carefully reviewed. As a result the final recommendation is to designate the Upper Truckee as a "Wild" river. Perazzo did not meet the standard of Wild and was not recommended for designation.

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##### **Topic #C005 (Cat C04 ID 302 CN 06)**

Perazzo Creek flows through the Castle Peak Roadless Area, and is described on page IV-26 of the draft document as accessible only "via a primitive road."

##### **Response #C005**

Access "via a primitive road" is not an accurate description of the road along Perazzo Creek. This will be changed in the document to a "rough logging" road. Logging on private land and

improvement of the road were the two factors that resulted in a scenic classification for Perazzo Creek rather than a wild classification.

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**Topic # C006 (Cat C04 ID 302 CN 08)**

Page III.6 of the document shows that each of the eight rivers evaluated have "Outstandingly Remarkable" values. I consider Alternative A as the best alternative to protect these Values.

**Response #C006**

Alternative A, which recommends designation of all eight streams, is certainly an effective way to emphasize protecting the Outstandingly Remarkable values. It is not the only way to protect these values and, in many situations, the existing Forest Standards and Guidelines provide clear protection for these values. Ultimately, the purpose of this suitability study is to determine which rivers to recommend for designation while considering OR values, land uses, and many other factors.

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C-5 Comments on Chapter IV Affected Environment

**Topic #C007 (Cat C05 ID 19 CN 03)**

In addition, there are some errors in the report. On pg. IV.29 pp6 - should be fallow for 5-15 years instead of 10 years.

**Response #C007**

You are correct. This number was changed in the Final EIS.

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**Topic #C008 (Cat C05 ID 170 CN 02)**

The following paragraph and the enclosed Sagehen map have information on Sagehen springs and fens that might possibly be useful in supporting the "Scenic" and "SIA" classifications.

There are at least 32 significant springs in the Basin, shown as circles on one of the enclosed maps, with the larger circles representing springs with larger flows. The most outstanding area of the Basin hydrologically is not even mentioned in the DEIS. It is south of the Sagehen Campground, on the south side of the creek. As shown on the map, the two largest springs are there. They both have remarkably uniform year-round flows, providing much of the total flow in Sagehen Creek during dry periods. Between these two springs is a somewhat smaller spring on a hillside above the creek. The outflow of this spring has formed a large fen that is terraced into several levels down the hillside, and the next-to-bottom level has a few thousand square feet of area in which the "watch-list" plant *Drosera rotundifolia* is the predominant vegetation. This is in contrast to the better-known and protected Mason Fen, which actually has been drying up in recent years and has only a very thin scattering of *Drosera*. The multi-level fen is currently not even protected from grazing and was damaged by sheep in 1992.

The Perazzo fens are not being protected adequately under current management plans despite what is claimed in the DEIS; cattle have wallowed in some of them. The cattle should be fenced-off from the whole string of fens but have not been.

If a Perazzo Meadows SIA is created, it could be extended upstream some distance along both the Little Truckee River and Perazzo Creek. An extension up the Little Truckee should go at least to the waterfalls. I think that these have been way understated in the DEIS. "The river does have three small waterfalls above Perazzo Meadows." This sounds more like some minor riffles in the stream bed than like the reality, which is that the 3 falls are right on top of each other, creating a drop of maybe 100 feet. During high runoff periods, this makes an impressive sight, certainly of regional significance.

**Response #C008**

Thank you for sending the map and information on fens in Sagehen Basin. Your information verifies the values we identified for Sagehen Creek and certainly support some of the OR values that led us to recommending Sagehen Creek for designation. This information along with additional information that leads you to recommend the Sagehen Basin for a SIA designation is addressed under Category B08.

The Forest Plan standards and guidelines along with range allotment plans provide clear direction to protect these valuable fens. While fencing is one approach to protecting these areas, there are several other tools available. The Forest will work with the range permittee to ensure that these fens are protected over time.

Your comments about the waterfalls near Webber Lake is well taken and the text has been adjusted to reflect your comments. Later in the summer the stream flows over the falls drop substantially. Nonetheless, spring flows are very impressive as you state.

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**Topic #C009 (Cat C05 ID 177 CN 01)**

The Water Quality Section, page IV.4, includes a statement that there are no known significant water quality problems in any of the study rivers. At your environmental scoping meeting held this summer, our staff informed you of the Clean Water Act Section 303 (d) listing for the Truckee river for metals. Waters on this list are described as "water quality limited segments where objectives or goals of the Clean Water Act are not attainable with the Best Available Treatment/Best Control Technology (BAT/BCT)." We have enclosed copies of our current draft Fact Sheets summarizing known problems.

**Response #C009**

Thank you for your comment that more accurately reflects the water quality situation for our study rivers. This information has been incorporated in the final text in a concise fashion. The more detailed information you provided will become part of the planning file.

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**Topic #C010 (Cat C05 ID 177 CN 02)**

Pages IV.13 and IV.14 include incorrect statements about the State's Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Eastern Sierra. The East Walker River is not designated a State Wild and Scenic River, nor are the entire West Walker and East Fork Carson Rivers. Reaches of the West Walker and the East Fork Carson Rivers are designated as State Wild and Scenic Rivers as described below:

East Fork Carson River: Approximately ten river miles from the Town of Markleeville to the California/Nevada State line.

West Walker River: Approximately 37 river miles from Tower Lake downstream to the confluence with Rock Creek, near the town of Walker on the edge of Antelope Valley, as well as about one mile of one tributary (Leavitt Creek)

**Response #C010**

Thank you for your information on the East Fork Carson River and the West Walker River. The FEIS reflects this information.

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**Topic # C011 (Cat C05 ID 177 CN 03)**

The statement on page IV.18 that the USFS administers facilities such as water and sewer lines is unclear. Does the USFS administer the actual facilities, or does it administer rights of way and/or special use permits?

**Response #C011**

The USFS administers the various facilities through special use permits. This has been clarified in the FEIS.

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**Topic #C012 (Cat C05 ID 178 CN 09)**

Chapter IV. Affected Environment. Description of Eligible Rivers. Upper Independence Creek. Page IV.23. The document states that a barrier to fish migrating from Independence Lake to Upper Independence Creek exists when the lake elevation drops below 6,220 feet. However, it also states that the storage capacity of Independence Lake varies between an elevation of 6,921 and 6,949 feet. There appears to be a discrepancy in these numbers which should be corrected or explained.

**Response #C012**

Thank you for pointing out the discrepancy. The range in elevations for water capacity are correct. The 6,220 feet elevation is not correct and has been changed in the FEIS. The proper elevation is 6,920

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**Topic #C013 (Cat C05 ID 178 CN 10)**

Chapter IV. Affected Environment. Description of Eligible Rivers. Perazzo Creek. Page IV.26. Perazzo Creek is identified in the technical/agency draft of the Recovery Plan for LCT as a potential LCT recovery site.

**Response #C013**

Your comment is correct and the information has been added in chapter IV of the FEIS.

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**Topic #C014 (Cat C06 ID 54 CN 05)**

A basic tenant of the Act is that present land uses would be allowed to continue after designation (p.V.2). There are no restrictions on sale of private lands in a wild & scenic corridor (p.V.2).

Perhaps most important to this community, no acquisition (i.e., condemnation) of private lands and no development is planned for any of the eight eligible rivers (V.2).

**Response #C014**

Your comment reflects what is said in Chapter V. Just so there are no misunderstandings, the FEIS adds the word sale after disposal just to be sure people understand that there are no restrictions on the sale of private land within a wild and scenic river corridor.

In regards to acquisition of private land, you are correct that we do not have any purchases proposed. If at some future time the purchase of private land became desirable, the policy would be to buy land only from willing sellers. Condemnation has never been used on a California wild and scenic river and only extraordinary circumstances would change that situation.

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**Topic #C015 (Cat C06 ID 173 CN 15 and CN 18)**

NEPA requires federal agencies to take a "hard look" at the environmental consequences of their proposed actions. Pursuant to that mandate, Forest Service planning documents must assess the potential environmental impacts of any decision to recommend or not to recommend rivers for federal protection. In addition, existing legal precedent requires the agency to prepare a site specific EIS when it decides to release potential wilderness areas for non-wilderness uses. Similar to decisions releasing wilderness area, agency decisions not to recommend federal river protection irretrievably commit the river resource to future development. Even where the agency establishes relatively protective management prescriptions for a river area, the decision not to recommend federal protection exposes the river to a continued risk of hydroelectric development that may degrade or destroy the river's free flowing character and outstanding values.

The requirement for a thorough environmental analysis for decisions regarding the suitability of potential Wild & Scenic Rivers is expressly recognized in Forest Service administrative direction. The agency's planning handbook (Chapter 8, section 8.31) requires that the study report evaluate the environmental impacts of appropriate alternatives and describe the reasonably foreseeable potential uses of the rivers that would be enhanced, foreclosed or curtailed by designation or non-designation.

The Environmental Consequences section (Chapter V) of the study report and Table 2.3 Summary of Environmental Consequences (pg. II.9-11) inadequately describes the reasonably foreseeable impacts of designation and non-designation on specific rivers. Ironically, Chapter V and the table summary analyze the impact of designation on federal management activities like logging and grazing and provides virtually no analysis of the reasonably foreseeable impacts of these activities on outstanding river values without protection - a true twisting of the intent and spirit of NEPA

Agency evaluation of activities which may impact Wild & Scenic values are often limited to the impacts on classification - that is whether the activity is permissible based on the Wild, Scenic or Recreational classification of a specific river. This narrow analysis ignores the mandate of the act to protect the free flowing character and outstanding values of rivers as required by section 10 of

the act. Proper NEPA analysis of any suitability study report should analyze the reasonably foreseeable impacts on an eligible river's free flowing character and outstanding values as a consequence of non-designation. The Eight Eastside Rivers study report fails to meet this legal mandate.

Of particular concern are those rivers which are allocated to LRMP prescriptions which may degrade or harm outstanding values. Perazzo Creek has outstanding vegetation/ecological, scenic and wildlife values. Much of the watershed is allocated to the intensive timber management prescription, with a visual quality objective of modification and recreation opportunity spectrum of roaded natural. By any reasonable measure, the outstanding values of the creek must be considered threatened and will probably suffer some level of degradation if the creek is not recommended and protected as a Scenic River.

**Response #C015**

In asserting that the agency has not taken a "hard look" in this EIS because the impacts of logging, grazing, intensive recreation, and dam construction are not adequately documented, the respondent assumes that such activities are "reasonably foreseeable." With the exception of undeveloped recreation use, implementation of any new or additional activities, as described above, would require project-level NEPA analysis and a Forest Service decision. There are no known proposals that will be triggered when these rivers are not designated. Thus, it is not necessary to analyze these activities in detail as an environmental effect if the rivers are not designated.

On the other hand it is reasonably foreseeable that there will be continuing timber, grazing, and recreation programs and we have added a general assessment of how these activities might affect wild and scenic river values. This assessment will look at the Outstandingly Remarkable values as part of the analysis. In addition, we have added a section on the potential impacts from a dam if one was built.

Your concerns for Perazzo Creek are over stated in terms of the prescription for that management area. The 1990 prescription allocation was intensive timber management. Subsequent plan amendments due to the California Spotted Owl EIS (CASPO) have effectively changed the prescription to long rotations with thinning and group selection harvests. Trees over 30 inches will be retained and most areas would retain at least a partial retention VQO. This has been addressed in more detail in the FEIS.

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**Topic #C016 (Cat C06 ID 179 CN 04)**

Page V.2 - In the third paragraph, third line, "public ownership" should be substituted for "Federal or state Government" since ownership by local Government is also applicable.

**Response #C016**

Your comment is correct that Section 7(b) of the Act includes "political subdivisions of the State," in other words local government. The wording has been changed to add local government in the FEIS.

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**Topic #C017 (Cat C06 ID 179 CN 05)**

Page V.3 - The first paragraph of Alternative A states that all rivers would be protected by designation except for the Truckee River (Tahoe City to Truckee), which would be subject to the easement rights held by the Sierra Pacific Power Company for power purposes. However, on Page IV.24, the DEIS states that Sierra Pacific Power Company also owns the water impounded at Independence Lake and provides water to Reno and Sparks. It further states that evaluation of adverse effects to Independence Creek and the resident Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus (=salmo) clarki henshawi*), are to be evaluated in the Truckee river Operating Agreement (TROA) EIS/EIR. It is recommended that the FEIS evaluate all the existing easement rights by the Sierra Pacific Power Company and any potential adverse effects to all eight rivers. If potentially adverse conditions are exempt from designation, i.e., (Page IV.25) maintaining the option for a proposed water impoundment for the Little Truckee, the FEIS should discuss these conditions in the analysis of the alternatives.

**Response #C017**

As stated in the DEIS, Sierra Pacific Power Company does retain easement rights for power purposes on National Forest System lands along the Truckee River. When the Forest Service acquired these lands through exchange, Sierra Pacific Power Company retained the rights to power development and other associated activities such as diversion of water from the main channel and locating powerlines where needed. This is a fairly complicated and unique land- right situation. On the other hand, the water impounded at Independence Lake is under the normal regulations of any utility and the regulated flows from Independence Lake will not change options for Wild and Scenic designation or non-designation.

It is very appropriate for TROA to evaluate possible adverse effects on Lahontan cutthroat trout in its study because of the threatened status of LCT. US Fish and Wildlife requires protection of this species with or without Wild and Scenic River designation. Therefore, this issue will not be analyzed in this FEIS/River Study. In regards to the proposed water impoundment for the Little Truckee River, Sierra Pacific Power Company does not have any easements at this time and, if the Little Truckee River were recommended for designation, the option of building that reservoir would be precluded. In summary, the DEIS and FEIS have addressed the one unique easement affecting the Truckee River, and other water rights are addressed where appropriate. No additional effects analysis is needed in this area.

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**C-10 Comments about the Appendices****Topic #C018 (Cat C10 ID 19 CN 02)**

We feel that the research should be required to verify the statement on P. B23 that "The Lahontan cutthroat trout is the only native trout to the area." It is our understanding that Mr. Leslie was interviewed a number of years ago and he "Thought he had caught a Lahontan on the Upper Truckee River." This is not enough evidence to indicate to us or historians that the trout are actually native to the area.

**Response #C018**

Lahontan cutthroat trout evolved in the prehistoric Lahontan Lake Basin, and are the only native trout to the eastside of the TNF and Lake Tahoe. This is why the US Fish and Wildlife Service, in

cooperation with Fish and Game as well as the Forest Service and other agencies, have a Recovery Plan.

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**Topic #C019 (Cat C10 ID 19 CN 04)**

On P.B22 the Meiss Cabin and barn has been used as a cow and/or sheep camp for over 116 years instead of 60 years.

**Response #C019**

You are correct. This number was modified in the final document.

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**Topic #C020 (Cat C10 ID 179 CN06)**

Page C.4 Appendix C - Because the Reno area is rapidly being developed, water demands from Independence Lake will continue to increase. Consequently, it is suggested that the FEIS provide specific water protection measures in the SIA Management Area Standards and Guidelines (Appendix C, Page C.4) for Independence Creek. It would also be useful for the FEIS to analyze whether either Wild or SIA designation, in combination with any protection measures enacted by these two documents, would adequately protect this national aquatic resource.

**Response #C020**

The Forest has reviewed the Management Direction for the SIA and added some additional specific measures and language to make it clear that protection of the Lahontan cutthroat trout is the highest priority for management. Language was also added to make clear that specific fisheries management concerns will be coordinated with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Specific water protection measures are not being listed here because most water protection measures presume active management. The emphasis here will be protection of the watershed for fisheries benefit with minimal management activities.

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**Topic #C021 (Cat C05 ID 170 CN 02)**

Upper Independence Creek: While I support the proposed SIA classification for this area, I believe that some corrections and additions should be made to the information in the DEIS.

Wildlife should be added as an OR for Upper Independence Creek. The statement on page B.16 that says, "There are no unique or Threatened or Endangered species" is wrong. Bald eagles not only "are seen occasionally in the stream drainage," they have nested there for at least the last 7 years. Further, both nesting and non-nesting willow flycatchers were found in 1994 in the meadow/willow area at the southwest end of the lake. Still further, a California spotted owl was found in 1994 in the privately-owned Section 17. All of these facts are documented in the Timber Harvest Plan 2-94-478NEV(3), filed with the California Department of Forestry at Redding on 10/14/94.

The "Wildlife" section on page B.16 says that the area provides habitat for the California spotted owl, pine marten, Sierra red fox, and Pacific fisher. This should be rewritten to say that an owl actually has been found, as have martens (in both sections 8 and 13). But the likelihood of fishers

and Sierra Nevada red foxes being in this relatively isolated pocket of suitable habitat is probably minimal.

**Response #C021**

Your specific comments about wildlife are accurate. The text on page B.16 has been changed to reflect the following information. There is a threatened or endangered species in the area. The species is the bald eagle. Suitable bald eagle habitat exists and historical records show sightings within the area. There is also suitable willow flycatcher habitat and several nests have been documented by a private consultant biologist. Suitable spotted owl and pine marten habitat exists and historic records show sightings within this area. Sierra Nevada red fox and fisher may use this area but there have not been any sightings. While the wildlife values are high, the ID team did not find the area Outstandingly Remarkable for wildlife. In contrast, the Little Truckee River and Perazzo Creek were found to have Outstandingly Remarkable wildlife because of high populations of willow flycatcher and bald eagles along with several other species. The OR determination will not be changed.

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C-11 Comments on Maps and Tables

**Topic #C022 (Cat C11 ID 173 CN 10)**

Friends of the River is very disappointed with the preferred alternative identified in the study report (Alternative E) and its emphasis on supposedly minimizing the impacts to private lands and costs to public agencies. The study fairly characterizes the private land issue by stating: The general perception of many landowners is that designation would seriously impact their rights, even though the law explicitly limits the Federal governments authority on private lands. (pg. I.4)

This "explicit" lack of federal authority over private land is well documented in the study's "Environmental Consequences" chapter (pg. V.2). Astoundingly, the findings in these sections are directly contrary to Table S.2 - Summary Of Environmental Consequences (pg. S.5) and the ultimate justification used for the preferred alternative. The table and the conclusion are evidently based on the misguided belief that federal designation would somehow impact private property, even though this myth is refuted elsewhere in the study.

**Response #C022**

We agree with your basic criticism that the preferred alternative wording emphasizes the avoidance of private land and minimize costs to the public as if those are the most important factors in choosing an alternative. You are correct that this is very misleading when in fact the discussion under consequences indicates that there is almost no impacts on private land and there is an explicit lack of federal authority over private land. The themes for each alternative have been reviewed and changed where appropriate to avoid this implication. Table S.2 on page S.5 is misleading in regards to impacts on private land. The main problem with this table is that it describes high impacts on private land for those rivers that have a high proportion of private land. You are correct that this is not consistent with the consequences section that identifies very few impacts. Table S.2 has been changed to be consistent with the consequences section. It is important to recognize that there are existing impacts on private land from public use that tends to flow over on to private land. The basic impacts on private land are trespass, trash left behind,

sanitation concerns, and sometimes vandalism. These problems exist for many private landowner with or without river designation. To the degree that designation attracts additional river users, there can be additional impacts to private land.

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**Topic #C023 (Cat C011 ID 179 CN 03)**

Table 2.3 - It would appear that in the Private Land column, the Truckee River should indicate "Moderate impacts" and Cold Stream "High Impacts" based on the amount of private ownership along each. It would be extremely useful to a decision-maker if a chart summarizing impact of each alternative were presented, rather than just the Preferred Alternative.

**Response #C023**

As discussed under response #C021, the impacts on private land have been completely changed to more accurately reflect the limited impacts on private land expected due to designation. While it would be handy to have a chart summarizing the impacts for each alternative, we felt it would be more instructive to summarize the impacts by river. This is done because each river was evaluated separately to get at the cumulative effects for each alternative. An additional river(s) could have been added at any time to the ultimate preferred alternative based on merits and consequences. The evaluation during the Draft and between Draft and Final EIS was not constrained by the existing alternatives.

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C-12 General Comments about the Document

**Topic #C024 (Cat C12 ID 29 CN 02)**

As a Nevada County Supervisor, I urge congressional action for protecting these areas and ask that local officials be invited to participate in the preparation of management plans for the four designated streams (includes the 2 SIA's).

**Response #C024**

Thank you for your input on these streams. If and when Congress designates the two recommended rivers, a management planning process that involves local officials and the public will proceed. The Special Interest Areas require Regional Forester approval. The Independence Creek SIA will be recommended based on the analysis in this document and will include the general management direction. The Sagehen Basin will be studied at a later date for whether a SIA should be recommended.

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**Topic #C025 (Cat C12 ID 32 CN 02)**

We note that, if the river is designated into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, an appropriate management plan would then be prepared in a coordinated effort. This plan should address future management interventions (i.e., the allowable number of visits and group size and related regulatory measures) that may be implemented to protect the environment and users of the designated areas. Although the management plan to be developed should be very specific and cover a variety of issues, we believe the Final EIS should briefly elaborate on general management actions to be taken. For example, because of the expected increase in recreation use, what measures will be taken to instruct users about issues relating to human waste disposal, littering, fire hazards, and safe drinking water, and will these issues be adequately handled with existing

resources? Will additional facilities be needed to accommodate the expected increase in recreational use?

**Response #C025**

Since any actual river designation by Congress could be years away, it seems more appropriate to leave the details to the future management planning process. This planning process would be completely open to public involvement. The rivers recommended will continue to be managed with existing LRMP direction along with the amended language that provides for interim protection.

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**Topic #C026 (Cat 12 ID 33 CN 01)**

We have rated this DEIS as "LO" Lack of Objections. We recommend, however, that the DEIS address a few additional issues. The DEIS should examine the possible sources of air pollution which may decrease visibility problems in the river areas. The Final EIS (FEIS) should discuss whether these river areas will be designated as Prevention of Significant Deterioration, Class I areas under the Clean Air Act [42 U.S.C. 7491].

**Response #C026**

Overall there are no significant air pollution sources that would create visibility problems for the rivers evaluated. There are three areas with some level of pollution. The town of Truckee, Tahoe City, and South Shore Lake Tahoe. All three areas see pollution from vehicle traffic and wood stoves. None of the rivers being considered would be recommended as Class I areas (Prevention of Significant Deterioration) under the Clean Air Act. The two areas that have the best potential for this designation do not meet the size requirement.

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**Topic #C027 (Cat C12 ID 48 CN 12 and Cat F04 ID 5 CN 02)**

The intent of the Act is to preserve areas in a pristine state yet these areas have been heavily used in the past and are in no way pristine. They may be beautiful areas but that alone does not make them pristine. If, in fact, you truly want to preserve these area, then leave them alone with no designation. The surest way to see these areas destroyed is to give them a special designation that will draw in hordes of people. Crowds of tourists will run down and destroy the very areas being sought for preservation.

**Response #C027**

Thank you for your perspective on the best way to protect areas. We have to agree that in some cases certain designated areas or named areas become over run with people and the very values that people want to see are diminished because of their popularity. On the other hand, the purpose of the act is broader than just preserving areas in a pristine state. A wild river designation would meet that goal. With recreation and scenic rivers there would be an expectation to protect or enhance outstandingly remarkable values while accommodating many human activities. The main purpose of the Act is to identify rivers that should remain in a free flowing condition. The enjoyment of free flowing rivers can range from pristine wilderness areas to crowded urban area.

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**Topic #C028 (Cat C12 ID 51 CN 01)**

Mr. McMorrow commented on what happened years after the wild and scenic designation in his county, when his county created a new general plan. I gathered that the federal officials who worked on their designation some 15 years prior had all gone on and no one was left to "keep their word" over what was agreed to verbally 15 years prior. No; new administrations, new policies, new staff now interprets what was "meant" 15 years ago. Mr. McMorrow's presentation left a sour taste in my mouth. To sum up, its a whole new ballgame today - but with "Wild and Scenic" a done deal!!!

**Response #C028**

Mr. McMorrow, a county administrator from Plumas County, gave a very interesting presentation on the county's perspective of working with the Plumas National Forest over the years including their experiences with the Feather River Wild and Scenic River. His presentation was requested by the City of Truckee during a public hearing they conducted. Mr. McMorrow had two main points about Wild and Scenic Rivers. His first point was that the designation did exactly what it was supposed to do. That is, it protected the river from several water development projects being considered before designation. His second point was that issues came up 15 years after designation that were not in any way anticipated when the river was designated. One example he gave was that a county bridge washed down the river in the flood of 1986. It ended up in a wild segment of the river on National Forest System land managed for non-motorized access. The county had to confer with the Plumas National Forest and determine the most appropriate way to remove the bridge in a way that was reasonably consistent with the wild designation. The bridge was ultimately removed but it took more consideration, time, and cost than what the County might have expected. This information was a very helpful perspective for both the public and the Forest Service.

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**Topic # C029 (Cat C12 ID 232 CN 02, ID 237 CN 02, ID 238 CN 02, ID 248 CN 04, ID 278 CN 02, ID 279 CN 02, ID 280 CN 02, ID 281 CN 02, ID 282 CN 02, ID 286 CN 01, ID 288 CN 02, and ID 316 CN 03>**

People have enjoyed the Lake Tahoe area or the river areas for years and believe they are very special. Therefore, the rivers need protection and should be designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers.

**Response #C029**

It is heartening to know that so many people take the time to enjoy the wonderful resources of the Tahoe Basin and the Truckee River watershed. We agree that river environments are very special and deserve protection. This protection is achieved through a wide range of tools including wild and scenic river designation. Other tools include city and county zoning and planning ordinances as well as Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines.

**D. PROCESS**

D-1 The early process used to initiate the study was illegal

**Topic #D001 (Cat D01 ID 46 CN 01, ID 02 CN 04, ID 04 CN 07, ID 09 CN 05, ID 14 CN 02, ID 15 CN 01, ID 22 CN 04, ID 48 CN 01, and ID 49 CN 01**

My first comment, is that I feel this study has been unduly influenced from the start by several environmental groups. The original study found no rivers eligible, that none had any "national significance". Yet after secret meetings with five environmental groups, the USFS went back and now found "national significance." The rivers and 10 streams did not change but it is obvious that the opinions of those judging the criteria did change. No where in the EIS is any proof given to show "national significance" for any streams and the subjective bias of those involved is not enough to show "national significance." I feel that the public and not just a handful of special interest groups should have been involved from the start. Since all the streams involved are non-navigable and entirely within the boundaries of California, they cannot be of "national significance."

**Response #D001** See also response # C003

This issue of a secret meeting and or an illegal meeting surfaced during the scoping process and informational meetings for the public. The answer has always been the same. The Tahoe National Forest agreed to meet with 5 river advocate groups, identified as potential appellants, during the public appeal period for the Forest Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. The Forest met with several potential appellants in a similar fashion during the summer of 1990. The contention of the river groups during the meeting was that the Forest did not follow its own manual direction to conduct interdisciplinary team (IDT) meetings to systematically determine the eligibility or non-eligibility of streams and rivers on the Tahoe National Forest. They also requested to know if the Forest had evaluated old growth and Special Interest Area (SIA) values as part of our eligibility process. The answer to these questions was that the Forest did not conduct IDT meetings, did not review old growth or SIA values, and did not systematically evaluate all streams for eligibility of Wild and Scenic River status. The Forest Supervisor, who attended the meeting, made a determination that in fact we had not followed Manual Direction for Wild and Scenic River planning procedures and would enter negotiations with these river groups to develop an agreement on what steps to take. In return, the river groups agreed not to appeal the Forest Plan. The basic agreement set forth was that the Forest would proceed with a systematic process of evaluating streams for eligibility using an ID team. Those rivers found eligible, if any, would be provided interim protection until such time as suitability was addressed. The Forest would proceed with a suitability evaluation of any eligible rivers as soon as practical for the Forest. The Forest Supervisor was able to develop this agreement without public meetings or additional public input because the Forest was agreeing to follow the proper procedures directed in the Forest Land Management Planning Manual.

The eligibility process did not involve public meetings because the main task was to inventory potential resource values ( Wildlife, Recreation, Scenery, Cultural, Botanic, Geologic, Water, and Ecological values). The ID team then systematically determined if the values identified were of local, regional, or national significance. From that process the team determined if certain rivers had "outstandingly remarkable" values and therefore were eligible wild and scenic rivers. Following the process for eligibility, the rivers were classified based on existing ground conditions for wild, scenic, or recreation status. The result of this process was the identification of thirty streams being eligible for Wild and Scenic River consideration out of approximately 600 perennial streams on the Forest. See Appendix B for more details.

The final and most important step in this process is to address the eligible streams for Wild and Scenic River suitability. That is, the process being conducted through the DEIS and this FEIS. This process is where the public is involved with commenting on land uses and their opinions as to

whether a river should be considered suitable or not. Most of the comments (topics) in this chapter are directly or indirectly aimed at the question of whether rivers should be considered suitable or not. The Forests and Forest Supervisors went to considerable effort to review all of these comments and consider them before moving to a final recommendation on specific rivers.

The rivers under consideration have not been evaluated for navigability. Navigability is not a relevant criteria to determine national significance or outstandingly remarkable values. An example of a nationally significant value on the eastside study is Alder Creek Camp of the Donner Party. This is the site where the Donner family camped for the winter, unable to cross the Sierra Nevada. The fate of the Donner Party is probably the most famous story of the early pioneers following the emigrant trail to California. Forest Service Archaeologists, using the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), have determined that this site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Because the site is considered an eligible property under the NHPA, this was a primary factor in considering that this site is considered to have a nationally significant value.

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#### D-2 Early process and report is biased towards designation

##### **Topic #D002 (Cat D02 ID 172 CN 05, and ID 047 CN 06)**

CABPRO attended many meetings where USFS staff presented their views and interpretations of the Act. It became clear to those of us concerned with local control, States and property rights, that there is not clear, definitive, or understandable criteria for naming any river or stream under the Act. Most of the items in the DEIS are opinions. These opinions are based on a subjective analysis of data collected by people who may or may not have a personal bias. In local EIRs an impartial person or business is hired to look at the data. This is done to ensure that an attack on the document cannot be made on the objectivity of the data gatherers. In the apparent climate of distrust today regarding government, perhaps the USFS should re-evaluate how, and who does these environmental documents.

##### **Response #D002**

In the eligibility process the Tahoe National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Management Basin Unit formed ID teams to identify eligible streams as discussed in response #D001. The members of the team were professional hydrologists, wildlife biologists, archaeologists, landscape architects, recreation managers, fisheries biologists, botanists, and geologists. These professional people identified potential resource values based on known information. Based on this information the teams made recommendation to the Forest Supervisors on eligibility, at which time final determinations for eligibility were made. In the DEIS and now FEIS, the Forest Supervisors are making a decision on which rivers to recommend for suitability to the administration and then on to Congress. Most of the DEIS and FEIS is a collection of facts and documentation of possible consequences from designation or non-designation of the rivers being considered. Ultimately, the Forest Supervisors balance and consider many different factors to arrive at a final recommendation. This process is done in a systematic, factual, and impartial way under the direction of the Forest Supervisor.

None of your accusations of bias are backed up by examples that would lead us to respond further on this issue. The final recommendations only list two rivers for designation, which is one quarter of the rivers considered. It seems hard to argue the Forests went overboard with designation

recommendations or were biased towards designation. The Forests used professional staff to conduct the eligibility and suitability process because of their expertise in specific resource areas and/or Wild and Scenic River planning. If the expertise did not exist within Forest Service staff, the Study could have been contracted to a private consultant. In this particular case there was no need to do so.

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D-4 National significance of recommended rivers is not demonstrated.

**Topic D003 (Cat D04 ID 07 CN 04, ID 02 CN 03, ID 46 CN 02, ID 47 CN 05, and ID 172 CN 04)**

I see no "unique" qualities which would qualify any of these rivers. I have seen many other rivers which contain the same qualities as those included in the study. Unfortunately the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act is a very loosely written act which becomes very restrictive once in place. I am sure every river has some imaginary "unique" quality and could in some way qualify to be a part of the Wild & Scenic Rivers system.

**Response #D003**

The concept of what constitutes a "unique" quality is a valid concern and something the ID team spent some real effort in developing. The team developed indicators to consider what might make a value unique. After discussing the known facts about each resource, the ID team considered whether the value was of local, regional or national significance. Some of the values are not immediately apparent when looking at a stream. Sagehen Creek is a good example. The ecosystem values of the fens, plants, and hydrology were considered regionally significant. The University of California research added to the uniqueness of this stream. None of these values are apparent upon a cursory visit to Sagehen Creek. Almost every stream the team reviewed had some special value. Only seven streams on the east side of the TNF were recommended out of this process. To make this part of the process more clear, the streams that were determined not eligible will be listed in Appendix B. For more detail on the eligibility process, refer to Appendix B. In regards to how restrictive Wild and Scenic Rivers implementation can be, please see the comment and response discussion under E. Property Rights and O. Local control vs. Federal control.

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D-5 The definition of the word free-flowing is not followed in the document (rivers recommended have dams and therefore are not free flowing)

**Topic #D004 (Cat D05 ID 46 CN 13, ID 04 CN 08, ID 18 CN 03, ID 19 CN 01, and ID 48 CN 11)**

Further, the Act is very clear that the stream must be free-flowing in order to be designated but the creeks in the study are clearly not free-flowing. The EIS does not clearly define each stream as free-flowing and the minor attempts to address the issue are clearly very subjective. If the criteria needed for designation are twisted, bent, or ignored, how can any clear reading come from the EIS? How accurate can the EIS be if it seeks designations for streams that clearly do not fit the definition? And how can the public know what designation holds for them in the future if the very study of designation was so clouded by subjective conjecture?

**Response #D004**

The question of free-flowing is clearly addressed in Appendix B pages B.1 and B.3 where it makes it clear that the ID team had to determine that a stream was free flowing before addressing other issues. The definition of free-flowing on page B.1 is accurate but incomplete. The complete definition is provided here and was added to Appendix B for further clarification. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act defines "free-flowing" as existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence of low dams, diversion works, or other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System does not automatically disqualify it for designation, but future construction of such structures is not allowed. The Guidelines state that, "The fact that a river segment may flow between large impoundments will not necessarily preclude its designation. Such segments may qualify if conditions within the segment meet the eligibility criteria." With this criteria the ID team determined that the Little Truckee River was free-flowing even though there is a low dam across the river that diverts a substantial amount of water to the Feather watershed for irrigation purposes. The team determined that additional flows from Independence Creek reduce the impact of the diversion. The dam itself is low key and during the winter months the river flows right over the diversion. This dam fit the description of a "low dam."

During the drought years both the Truckee and Upper Truckee Rivers had stretches that did not flow. In this regard there are no specific requirements concerning minimum flows for an eligible segment. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides definitions in Section 16(a) and (b). Flows are considered sufficient for eligibility if they sustain or complement the outstandingly remarkable values for which the river would be designated.

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**Topic #D005 (Cat D05 ID 19 CN 01)**

We question the eligibility of the Upper Truckee River, since by definition, "a river must be free-flowing which is defined as existing or flowing in a natural condition without impounding diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modifications of the waterway." In 1988 the Dept. of Fish and Game and the USFS blasted a barrier into the Upper Truckee River, thereby modifying it. Early as July 6, 1994, some portions of the Upper Truckee River were dry, without water, and certainly not free-flowing.

**Response #D005**

The Forest Services's assessment of this Upper Truckee River segment found the river to be flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. In our review in response to this comment, we still believe that the free flowing criteria are met. The area is riverine in appearance and free of high head dams and extensive rip rap and diversions. None of the project work that has been conducted within the river corridor has extensively modified the channel or its environs. In fact, all work has been conducted to enhance the channel, including the 1997 temporary electric fence placed to exclude livestock from a degraded segment of river until vegetation can reestablish. Neither the Forest Service nor the California Department of Fish and Game ever used explosives in any aspect of Lahontan cutthroat trout reintroduction activities. Finally, some rivers do go dry, especially during drought periods. Water volume is not a statutory criteria found in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. According to Federal regulations, "Flows are considered sufficient for eligibility if they sustain or compliment the outstandingly remarkable values for which the river would be

designated" (47 CFR 39457). Most of the outstandingly remarkable values for the Upper Truckee are not dependent upon certain flow levels. Other rivers on the Los Padres, San Bernadino, and Inyo National Forests have been found eligible and have been recommended for protection although they have periods of low or nonexistent dry year flows.

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D-6 There is a concern that restrictions once in place for the 1/4 mile along the river will grow to include entire ecosystem

**Topic #D006 (Cat D06 ID 172 CN 08, ID 46 CN 06, and ID 48 CN 10)**

CABPRO does appreciate the apparent concern that the USFS has shown for the importance of private property rights as stated in the cover letter. However, there is no definitive explanation on future plans regarding visual quality objectives or the addition of other rivers and streams. This is important because the present USFS intent could be misconstrued or changed down the road. This could lead to additional lands being impacted in viewsheds, riparian areas, watersheds and ecosystems. Since CABPRO has followed the issue of Wild and Scenic Rivers for quite some time, it has become evident that "ecosystem management" has become the preferred management style of the USFS. There is no clear definition that fits any particular area the same as another. Again this is a subjective view and can be easily misconstrued in the future. Watershed management has become quite popular with environmental groups as of late. Watershed management can be different things to different people. Are we trying to protect the water? Are we trying to protect the animals? Are we trying to protect the plants? Are we trying to "protect" everything in the watershed? What are we trying to "protect" it from? The long term goal for a watershed should be contained in the DEIS.

**Response #D006**

On page V.3 there is a description of the Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) for each river if designated. These VQOs would only apply on National Forest System lands. During development of the management plan for rivers designated by Congress, the viewshed is evaluated for appropriate VQOs. The viewshed can extend beyond the quarter-mile corridor. In the case of the two rivers recommended for designation, there would be no change to the status quo. With Sagehen Creek the views out would not extend generally beyond the quarter mile corridor. With the Upper Truckee River the VQO beyond the corridor would be consistent with the semi-primitive non-motorized management already applied to that area.

The Forest Service uses ecosystem management planning as a process that identifies the ecological capabilities of large landscape areas. This information is used to identify desired conditions and potential projects that could help reach these future conditions. Specific projects are still evaluated through NEPA- required environmental analyses. Watersheds are normally used to organize the areas looked at for ecosystem management. In NEPA- required analysis subwatersheds are evaluated and possible impacts to water quality are carefully considered. Both ecosystem management and watershed management are tools to assist in the planning processes. They are not land allocation commitments or decisions that can be misconstrued.

The Forest Service is moving away from the concept of protecting specific plants and animals to looking at maintaining populations of plants and animals. At a broader level the objective is to maintain healthy ecosystems while managing the forest landscape. The Forest Plan contains many Standards and Guidelines to help direct management concerns for a whole range of resources from

soil, water, and wildlife to recreation while conducting management activities such as timber harvests, road building, etc. The DEIS does not address long-term goals for a watershed because that information is not relevant to the decision being made in this analysis.

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D-9 The criteria for determining outstandingly remarkable values is questionable.

**Topic #D007 (Cat D09 ID 48 CN 02, ID 09 CN 01 and Cat C12 ID 02 CN 06)**

When the streams were originally studied, none were found to have the "national significance" needed to qualify for further study or designation. Yet after the secret meetings, suddenly some streams were found eligible. What exactly changed to make these streams eligible? The rivers and streams certainly didn't change, so one can only assume that the criteria must have changed at the insistence of some one or some groups. The criteria are highly subjective and to date undefined. The public has no way to truly know if the individuals who made the judgements were biased or under pressure to make certain findings, but that appears to be the case.

Page IV.15 listing future streams to be studied for Wild & Scenic is another good reason the USFS is not acting in good faith. Any listing now will keep the door open for further listings as evidenced by that list.

**Response #D007**

As discussed in response #D003 the ID team went through a very systematic process to identify known values and determine whether they were outstandingly remarkable. More detail of this process is found in Appendix B. In response #D001 we point out that the Forest did not conduct a systematic process with ID team input as to possible values for streams in the Forest Plan. So what changed is that the Forest proceeded with a systematic approach that looked at all streams on the Forest and identified 30 eligible streams. There was no pressure on team members to make findings of one kind or another.

The rivers listed on page IV.15 are rivers found eligible for Wild and Scenic River consideration. The rivers listed on the Toiyabe and Inyo National Forest will be evaluated for suitability in the future during a separate land management planning revision process. The rivers that are on that list were identified during the previous land management planning process.

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D-14 Selection criteria for selecting rivers for designation is inadequate.

**Topic #D008 (Cat D14 ID 56 CN 03, ID 38 CN 01, ID 53 CN 01, ID 54 CN 07, and ID 74 CN 02)**

If Sagehen Creek and the Upper Truckee are really the best additions to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System because of their biological and other outstanding resources, then why isn't that listed as the reason for recommending their designation? The Act itself talks about preserving rivers that "possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish, and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values" - not rivers that minimize potential impacts to private lands. With that in mind, I'd personally like to see the Forest Service recommend Preferred Alternative C, protecting whichever of the eight rivers that exhibit the most extensive "outstandingly remarkable" values in the national context.

### **Response # D008**

We agree with your basic premise that the process we are going through is to identify the best additions to the Wild and Scenic River System. The outstandingly remarkable values that can contribute to this system is clearly a driving force behind the criteria of which streams to recommend, if any. The chapter II alternatives have been changed to better reflect this. While private land is a factor to consider in the process, it certainly is not an overriding concern above all other issues.

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### **Topic #D009 (CAT D14 ID 173 CN 14, ID 178 CN 02, ID 179 CN 02, 54/06, 54/03 and 171/05)**

Many of the alternatives appear arbitrary and fail to truly meet the stated intent or alternative emphasis. One example is the preferred alternative's second emphasis on the cost of administration. The total estimated cost of administering the preferred alternative which recommends Sagehen Creek and the Upper Truckee River is projected to be \$130,000 for the first five years. However, a more "cost effective" alternative could include Alder Creek, Independence Creek, Little Truckee River, and Perazzo Creek, which would cost \$123,000 - \$7,000 less than the preferred alternative. This alternative could also conceivably address private land concerns since all four streams have more than 50 percent public lands and are exempt from fee title condemnation. Although we are not advocating this alternative, it is just one example of the arbitrary treatment of the alternatives in the study report.

Another alternative not evidently considered in the study report "because no interest had been expressed during scoping" (pg. V.1) is the alternative of segmenting a river to eliminate potential conflicts with private property. This could be easily done on the Truckee River by ending the eligible segment at the Truckee Town boundary. In addition, the initially identified outstanding botanical value in this stretch is likely to be eliminated with the reclassification of *Berberis (Mohonia) sonnei*, thereby making the river stretch within the town boundary ineligible in any case.

Some of the alternatives portrayed in the study report simply are not real because the criteria used to recommend rivers under each alternative emphasis appears capricious, arbitrary and are inconsistently applied. For example, Alternative C - Extensive Outstanding Values appears to use a minimum of two outstanding values as the needed "extensive" threshold. This alternative excludes Cold Stream and Alder Creek because they possess only one outstanding value each, but does include the Little Truckee River, which has two outstanding values. And yet, Independence Creek, with two outstanding values is also excluded. Independence Creek is also capriciously excluded from Alternative G - greatest Botanical/Ecological Values even though the creek clearly possesses an outstanding ecological value.

Given that federal designation has no practical impact on private lands or property rights other than the very slight potential for condemnation, we are mystified as to why an alternative was not developed excluding those rivers with less than 50 percent public land (Cold Stream and Alder Creek). Display of an alternative with this emphasis would provide a much more realistic response to the concerns of private land owners by eliminating rivers subject to fee title condemnation.

**Response #D009**

Your comment is well taken that several of the alternatives appear arbitrary. An earlier response has indicated that the FEIS will address the themes of the alternatives and, in particular, modify the preferred. As the themes were stated, there was no intent for them to appear as strict criteria for alternative development. When the alternatives were developed there was a desire to be sure there was a range of alternatives with different mixes of rivers. Ultimately, to arrive at the preferred alternative each river was evaluated on its own merits separate from other rivers. The main purpose for the alternatives was to display cumulative effects when more than one river is recommended.

Berberis (Mahonia) sonnei has been delisted. We still think the bridge is a better ending point than the town boundary. In the FEIS this segment possibility is listed as an alternative eliminated from detailed study. Having the river segment go through part of town was not a major factor in not recommending it for designation. If it might have swayed the recommendation to designation, it would have been brought forward as an alternative.

The Table 3.1 on page III.6 was inaccurate. The Little Truckee has three Outstandingly Remarkable values. The Table missed wildlife, which is a technical error. The alternative does make sense with this information. Table 3.1 has been corrected in the FEIS.

Independence Creek was not included in Alternative G because it was being recommended for SIA status, which would protect the ecosystem values equally well in a more extensive area.

An alternative that included just Cold Stream and Alder Creek would be very instructive in regards to streams with less than 50% public ownership, but that is about all. This idea has been added as an alternative eliminated from detailed study so the point about condemnation can be illustrated. In regards to private land, see the response to D010.

**Topic # D010 (Cat D14-C12 ID 38 CN 01 and Cat D15 ID 56 CN 02, ID 253 CN 01)**

I have some major concerns about the wording of and justification for recommending Alternative E, designating those rivers that "minimize potential impacts on private lands" as the Preferred Alternative. I am particularly concerned if this reflects the criteria that will be used in making recommendations on the Westside.

The purpose of designating a river Wild and Scenic is precisely to "foreclose," "curtail," or "diminish" certain activities and uses - specifically the building of dams - which might threaten that river's free-flowing nature. Given the purpose of the Act, it seems that the justification for suitability should be based on whether a study river is "outstandingly remarkable" in a national context (Alternative C) rather than on "potential" impacts to private property.

It is inconsistent at best and illogical at worst to base suitability recommendations on "potential" impacts to private property when else where in the study you clearly affirm that Wild & Scenic designation has no primary impact on private property.

**Response #D010**

We agree that the wording for Alternative E is misleading. It would be easy for one to interpret the wording as the selection criteria for the preferred alternative. This was not the intent and the

wording has been changed in the FEIS to avoid this concern. Cost and potential impacts on private land are concerns in this study, and a factor to consider, but they are not exclusive and certainly not the most important factor.

We agree with your main point that "outstandingly remarkable" values should be an important consideration in the suitability recommendations. As discussed above, potential impacts to private land is a consideration in the process but not a factor predominant over other considerations.

Our recommendations for designation were primarily based on which rivers would make the best contribution to a national system of wild and scenic rivers rather than the potential impacts on private land. As stated above, the wording from DEIS to FEIS has been changed to avoid the impression that private land was the primary consideration in developing a final recommendation. We also agree that under consequences we do not identify major impacts on private land. However, private land owners presently see impacts from trespass, littering, vandalism, and sanitation problems. With designation we do not expect major increases in use that would create significant increases from the impacts described above. This still is a concern for private land owners.

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**Topic # D011 (Cat D14 ID 171 CN 01)**

The report needs to spell out the selection steps for each creek/river. It seems odd, for example, that Prosser Creek was not rated and included. At least the upper reaches of the N. Fork are in USFS ownership and are scenic. It does not matter that Independence Creek has a larger, more scenic valley. There are very few glacial valleys North of Truckee and these will all be over demand for recreation in 50 years. The Act is national, but recreation demand is primarily local. Please reconsider all of both forks of Prosser Creek, as the Euer and Carpenter valleys are high in scenic and recreational values, for this region. Riparian quality will rise in the next few decades as the USFS limits grazing on streambanks. The area is used for recreation by thousands of cross-country skiers in the winter and could pass into public hands in the future, depending on owner circumstances. A scenic designation would not adversely affect the private owners, but would signal the public valuation of the watershed.

**Response #D011**

The process for determining eligible rivers is documented in the first few pages of Appendix B. The rationale for each river that is eligible is then listed. Prosser Creek was considered very carefully by the ID team. All the values you mention were considered. The final determination was that Prosser Creek did have high scenic value and good recreation values, but the values were not strong enough to be considered outstandingly remarkable. The glacial valley characteristic for Prosser is well represented by Independence Creek and the Little Truckee River. The rivers on the eastside not considered eligible are now listed in the FEIS Appendix B. The planning files have more detailed notes on the considerations of rivers not determined to be eligible.

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D-19 Other Process comments and suggestions.

**Topic #D012 (Cat D19 ID 180 CN 06, and ID 22 CN 01)**

The study section of the Truckee River would more logically terminate at Donner Creek as opposed to the Hwy. 267 Bridge. The current study segment terminates in the center of our town

while termination at Donner Creek would coincide with the town boundary. The town recommends that the study section terminate at Donner Creek.

**Response #D012**

Future options for the town of Truckee would not be limited with a Wild and Scenic River Designation. The segment ended at the Highway 267 bridge because of identified resource values and an easy-to-locate landmark location. After careful consideration the Forest has decided to stay with the existing segment length.

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**Topic #D013 (Cat D19 ID 39 CN 02)**

I applaud the insight to also evaluate the Upper Independence Creek as a Special Interest Area (SIA) in lieu of a Wild and Scenic River designation. This designation as an SIA is far more valuable in protecting the area, as well as possibly enhancing the habitat to make this an environmental show piece.

**Response #D013**

Thank you for your support of the SIA designation. The SIA designation does have the benefit of identifying the upper watershed of Independence Creek, which is so crucial for the Lahontan cutthroat trout.

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**Topic #D014 (Cat D19 ID 70 CN 03)**

With so much of California being overrun by cheap franchise malls and housing developments, we need to protect our remaining unspoiled rivers and land from greedy development.

**Response #D014**

Wild and Scenic River designation is directed towards maintaining rivers in a free-flowing state and protecting or enhancing outstandingly remarkable values. Controlling growth, particularly on private land, is more relevant to local government land planning activities. Wild and Scenic River designation is not a very effective or appropriate tool to address development and growth issues on private land in most cases.

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**Topic #D015 (Cat D19 ID 172 CN 06)**

Since any designation is part of a Congressional bill, the DEIS should contain a copy of the original bill as amended to date. This would lend credibility to any argument by the USFS that these streams are part of a "nationally significant" network of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Without a copy of the bill, which these rivers would be amended into, it is hard to see the reasoning behind the overall thinking of the writer. Is it of such national significance that the writer connects the importance of these streams to the ST. Croix or the Buffalo? It is important for the citizens to know what these connections mean in the context of all Wild and Scenic Rivers.

**Response #D015**

Providing a copy of the Wild and Scenic River Act within the FEIS would not effectively answer your question of how the recommended rivers compare with the rivers already designated. In addition, it would add many pages to the document without providing much insight as to which if

any rivers should be recommended. Therefore the Act will not be added to the FEIS. Copies of the Act are available to the public upon request at the Supervisors Office.

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**Topic # D016 (Cat D19 ID 172 CN 07)**

In California, a preparer of environmental documents must not only list, alternatives, but any connections to a larger project. The larger project in CABPRO's view is the relationship any listing may have to the national picture. Attempts at listings are taking place all over the United States. Environmentally, the DEIS must address this. Since the Federal government is an overlay of all the states, there can be no disassociation of one river or stream from another. This will help CABPRO ascertain whether the water, riparian, mineral and other impacts are addressed adequately in the context of the "big" environmental picture, rather than snippets from regions of the country.

**Response #D016**

The focus of this study is to answer which rivers, if any, should be recommended to Congress for designation from this local area. When Congress takes up the question of river designations across the country or for a given State or just one river, that would be an appropriate time to look at the "big" environmental picture.

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**Topic #D017 (Cat D19 ID 173 CN 03)**

We concur with the eligibility findings provided in the report, specifically the recognition of the free-flowing character and identified outstanding values of the eligible rivers. Appendix B - Findings of Eligibility and Classification is an important component of the study report since the Tahoe Forest's river eligibility determinations have not been formally documented in any other report. A similar appendix should be included in the westside rivers study report.

**Response #D017**

Your observation is correct that this is the formal documentation of the eligibility findings. The Forests chose to move directly on to suitability rather than develop a separate document and plan amendment for just the eligibility. This was done to save time, paperwork, and to get the public involved with the key issue of river suitability. A similar appendix will be developed for the westside study report.

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**Topic #D018 (Cat D19 ID 173 CN 12)**

The preferred alternative is simply not supported by the information provided in the study report and the report is contradictory in several areas, a possible violation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

**Response #D018**

The preferred alternative is supported by the information provided in the study report with one exception. As pointed out in responses #D009 and #D010, we agree that the themes for the alternatives were inappropriate and misleading. Avoiding private land and minimizing costs were

not mandates or primary criteria for choosing an alternative. The wording used for the preferred alternative, in particular, clearly had this implication. As stated earlier this has been changed in the FEIS. An additional table 2.4 has been added in chapter II and the summary to indicate more clearly how each river was evaluated. This Table should provide more information as to how the Forests arrived at a preferred alternative.

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**Topic #D019 (Cat D19 ID 175 CN 01)**

The report makes no mention of existing hydroelectric development within the limits of the study area. We agree with this and have also determined that there are no pending applications for license, exemption, or preliminary permit for hydroelectric projects in the study area. Accordingly, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has no objection to the proposed designation of the study segments of these California rivers as parts of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

**Response #D019**

Thank you for informing us of the FERC's position in regards to Wild and Scenic River designation in relation to possible hydroelectric projects.

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**E. PROPERTY RIGHTS**

E-1 Designation could cause economic problems for adjacent landowners and/or the county.

**Topic #E001 (Cat E01 ID 15 CN 02)**

The total of impacts by this designation is enormous to the property owner of record.

**Response #E001**

No significant impacts to private land have been identified with designation of a river. It is recognized that if Wild and Scenic River designation creates a major increase in use, private land could see increases in trespass, trash, vandalism, and sanitation problems. However, major increases in use are not anticipated just based on designation. For the preferred alternative no impacts are expected because the two rivers recommended are entirely on National Forest System lands.

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E-2 Designation could cause increased problems for land owners including: more trash, trespass, and reduced authority on their own land.

**Topic #E002 (Cat E02 ID 48 CN 05)**

The threats of condemnation, easements, restrictions, lowered property values, and destruction from the public trespassing are of great concern. They do not happen immediately but will always be hanging over the heads of landowners in the future.

**Response #E002**

Condemnation has never been used in California for Wild and Scenic River land acquisition. It is Forest Service policy to acquire land only from willing sellers. Easements are developed across private land only where there is a need for public access for river access. Easements are negotiated with willing sellers. Trespassing is always a concern for private landowners in areas of high public use. We recognize that this is an on going problem for landowners on the Truckee River. Designation would not bring major increases of use, but it would not prevent trespass either. When a management plan was developed, techniques such as highlighting private land ownership on maps and publications would be pursued to try to reduce trespass. With designation, property values have remained stable or increased based on nationwide experience.

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E-3 Effects of designation on private landowners is not clear. There may be a number of unknown impacts.

**Topic #E003 (Cat E03 ID 46 CN 03, ID 02 CN 05, ID 09 CN 06, ID 16 CN 02, ID 48 CN 03, ID 46 CN 04, ID 51 CN 02, ID 41 CN 01)**

According to the EIS "Condemnation is permitted for clearing title and (OR) acquiring Scenic and other easements that are reasonably necessary to provide public access to a river or to protect the outstandingly remarkable values when they are threatened." The study does not define "outstandingly remarkable values" or how they might be threatened by private landowners. If, as the study claims, designation will impact only public land, then why is condemnation even mentioned? Why can condemnation be used to "protect" "outstandingly remarkable values" on private land if the Act will have no effect on them? When and who will decide and define what the "outstandingly remarkable values" are? Who will decide what a private landowner can do on their own land? And who will decide that when a private landowner does exercise his property rights, what actions might "threaten" the "outstandingly remarkable values"? Will the private landowner be told in writing in advance what can and cannot be done with his land?

**Response #E003**

Condemnation is a power Federal, State, and Local governments can exercise in certain situations. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act limits this power when there is over 50% of a corridor in public ownership. The language quoted above clarifies that condemnation could still be used in the situations described. The act is not conferring new powers to the federal government. The outstandingly remarkable values for each river are identified in chapter III. If these values were threatened by some dramatic change in land use, it is possible the Forest Service could use condemnation to preclude the change in land use. While possible, this has never happened in California. Condemnation can be used because one of the main purposes of the act is to protect or enhance outstandingly remarkable values. The effect on private land is a possible outcome if certain actions are attempted. Existing zoning would be likely to preclude most activities that would be seen to impact outstandingly remarkable values. The Forest Service will have no role in deciding what a private landowner can do on their own land unless scenic easements have been purchased. The Forest Service will not have the role of describing in writing what actions private landowners can and can not do. If local authorities, County or City, identify a proposed land use that threatens identified outstandingly remarkable values, they could inform the Forest Service of their concern and it is possible the Forest Service could use condemnation to acquire an easement to prevent that land use. The Forest Service would first pursue a willing seller situation for either the easement or an outright purchase of the land. No specific actions have been identified that

would prompt this process and none will be spelled out because it is a very unlikely situation to happen. The action would have to be a dramatic departure from existing land use that was causing great public discussion and debate before the Forest Service would become involved.

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E-6 The act is loosely written and courts have interpreted it broadly resulting in the loss of private property rights.

**Topic #E004 (Cat E06 ID 46 CN 14, ID 46 CN 05, ID 51 CN 04)**

The Act itself is very loosely written, as is the EIS, and they are subject to bias of any reviewer. They are so broad and vague that their interpretation can vary widely. Past Federal Court cases have shown that private landowners were deprived of their property rights and in some cases, their land, because the courts have chosen to take the Act at its broadest and most far reaching meaning. Past history has shown the Act is used more as a blunt weapon than as a tool, that rather than working with landowners and local governments, it usurps their power, forces mandates on them, and places them out of the power and control loop. The EIS does not address how these problems will be corrected or prevented in the future.

**Response #E004**

This comment provides no details but only asserts that landowners have been deprived of their rights and that this continues to be a problem. The Forest Service is aware that condemnation was used to purchase property early on after the Act was passed in 1968. Some of these activities were controversial and unpopular; subsequently, condemnation has not been used. The Forest is not aware of any other instances where the Act was used in a highly controversial way. As stated earlier, condemnation has never been used in the State of California for a Wild and Scenic River. The DEIS and FEIS accurately describes the situation on private land and will not pursue this issue further.

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E-9 Government programs often impact private property rights as programs grow beyond control of their original purpose.

**Topic # E005 (Cat E09 ID ID 48 CN 06, and ID 47 CN 04)**

The past history of the Federal Wild and Scenic Act have shown a dark path of roughshod treatment over private landowners, with thousands of homes and properties being taken from private hands, both through condemnation and direct pressures that left landowners with no option but to sell.

**Response #E005**

This is not an accurate depiction of how the Wild and Scenic River program operates. The Tahoe National Forest already manages the North Fork American Wild River and there no examples where landowners have been pressured to sell or threatened with condemnation. Likewise, there are many other Wild and Scenic Rivers in California managed in a similar fashion. For all the negative descriptions of the Wild and Scenic River program, no valid examples have been brought to our attention over the last five years of public involvement.

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E-12 Designation has no direct impact on private property

**Topic #E006 (Cat E12 ID 56 CN 01, ID 24 CN 08, ID 26 CN 03, ID 32 CN 04, ID 54 CN 01, 02, and 04, 58/02, 84/01, 100/02, 128/02 137/03, 153/02, 208/02, 213/03, 218/03, 230/02, 261/02, 266/02, 267/02, 284/02, 286/03, 380/04, 381/02, and 055/01)**

I'm afraid you are doing a real disservice to the community by basing your Eastside recommendation on supposed private property rights issues. I've been involved with the efforts to gain Wild and Scenic protection for the South Yuba river where misinformation about the issue of condemnation and the federal government's taking of private property has been a real problem. By choosing Preferred Alternative E, designating rivers that "minimize potential impacts on private lands," you are adding fuel to that fire and giving credence to the untrue arguments that Wild and Scenic negatively impacts private property rights.

**Response #E006**

In category D we responded to this issue by agreeing to change the wording of the alternatives. In general, we agree that there are very few direct impacts on private property from Wild and Scenic designation. We do recognize that if designation attracts additional public use there could be increased impacts from trespass, sanitation problems, and increased trash. These kinds of problems have been identified primarily on the Truckee River. If a river is designated, the management plan would address possible ways to discourage additional public use on private land. Some examples might be additional signing, emphasis of private land on maps and brochures, and/or decisions on how trails are located.

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E-15 Designation will enhance private property values

**Topic #E007 (Cat E15 ID 185 CN 02, and Cat C12 ID 32 CN 04)**

I understand that the occurrence of private lands intermixed with the federal lands should not pose a problem, as the Wild & Scenic designation does not cause a depression in property values or condemnation of property. In fact, it would seem that sufficient federal management of the river segments will have long term beneficial affects for the land owners (control of land use/abuse; management of potential environmental problems, etc.)

**Response #E007**

Wild and Scenic River designation should not pose problems for private land owners. The main expectation people should have with a Wild and Scenic River designation is that the river would remain free-flowing and that land uses would generally stay the same. We have noted in previous responses that on popular rivers high public use can be a problem for private landowners and designation might attract some additional use that might add to the problem. Federal management of the river corridor would put additional focus on maintaining land uses along a river. There would be no role for the Forest Service to direct or control land uses on private lands, but the Forest would encourage local and county governments to keep land use zoning consistent with the goals of a river designation. With the preferred alternative, this issue is academic because the two rivers recommended are on 100% National Forest System lands.

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## **F. CONDEMNATION**

F-2 Land will only be acquired through a willing seller/willing buyer basis

### **Topic #F001 (Cat F02 ID 173 CN 11 and ID 381 CN 03))**

The truth of the matter is that the only possible impact on private property is that some of the private land may eventually be acquired through willing seller purchase, exchange, or condemnation - a potential impact which is limited as a practical matter by budget and political will. It should be noted that the nearby North Fork American River was added to the federal system in 1979. Very little private property has been acquired along the river and no private property on any designated river in California has ever been subject to fee title or scenic easement condemnation. The only possible conclusion is that there is absolutely no impact on private property rights and local land use/zoning - as confirmed elsewhere in the study report.

### **Response #F001**

The Forest Service policy is to acquire land on the basis of a willing seller, willing buyer. Exchange of property is another way the Forest Service picks up desired property. On the North Fork American the Forest recently acquired 1942 acres from several willing sellers and exchanged 1880 acres with Sierra Pacific Industries. A little over half of the total was within the Wild corridor and the remainder was just outside the river corridor. The lands sold or exchanged were on steep slopes without homes or improvements. The money to purchase these lands came through the Lands and Water Conservation Act program approved by Congress. These have been the only major land status changes since the North Fork American River was designated in 1979.

It is correct that condemnation has not been used in California for Wild and Scenic River purposes. It would only be under a very unusual circumstance that condemnation would be used. As stated in the Act, fee title condemnation is precluded where more than 50% of the river is already in public ownership.

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F-3 Since 50% of land is in public ownership, condemnation according to the WSR Act is prohibited.

### **Topic #F002 (Cat F03 ID 53 CN 02 and ID 53 CN 02)**

On the South Yuba, more than half the river corridor is already owned by the Forest Service, BLM, and the California Parks and Recreation Department, so there can be no condemnation of private property anyway. My reading of the East Side study shows that seven of the eight rivers studied also have more than 50 percent public ownership.

### **Response #F002**

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in Section 6 (a)(2)(b), precludes fee title condemnation where more than 50% of the land is in public ownership. This provision does not preclude condemnation when necessary to clear title or to acquire scenic easements. There is no information in this study that would indicate that the Forest Service requires, is planning, or will pursue condemnation in the future. Only in the most unusual situation would condemnation be used to clear title or to purchase scenic easements. As stated earlier, condemnation has never been used in California for

Wild and Scenic River purposes. Your observation that 7 out of 8 rivers have more than 50 percent public ownership is correct.

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F-4 If rivers are designated private property could be condemned.

**Topic #F003 (Cat F04 ID 04 CN 05, ID 05 CN 04, and ID 48 CN 07)**

Furthermore, it is very wrong to use the condemnation powers allowed for in the Federal Wild & Scenic Rivers Act to take land away from the people who rightfully own it.

**Response #F003**

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not provide for any new condemnation powers for federal agencies. Condemnation is a power that federal, state, and local authorities already have for a wide range of purposes including locating power lines, roads and dams. As stated in response #F002, the act precludes fee title condemnation in river corridors with over 50% public ownership. Condemnation is still allowed for clearing title and purchasing scenic easements, an authority federal agencies already have. While the Forest Service has the authority to use condemnation, it is very rarely exercised. As stated earlier, condemnation has never been used in California for Wild and Scenic River purposes. Private landowners would not be threatened with condemnation if a river with private land was designated.

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**F-6 The DEIS does not address leased property**

**Topic # F004 (Cat F06 ID 46 CN 16 and ID 16 CN 04)**

The matter of leased property and structures along any of the streams is not fully addressed. What impacts will face the owner of any lease and what should they expect in the future? Will they be allowed to stay or will their lease be broken? Will any lease be bought out? What are the financial implications to the USFS and, to the lease holders?

**Response #F004**

Leasing is not addressed in this EIS because it is just a part of various private land options. If the Forest Service pursues purchasing a private property, leases would be dealt with through normal real estate practices.

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**G. MINING**

**Topic #G001 (Cat G01 ID 47 CN 02)**

I oppose W&S River designation for all the rivers because it will have negative impacts on mining

**Response #G001**

As identified in the Affected Environment, there is almost no mining on the rivers under consideration for W&S river designation. In addition, as stated in the DEIS on V.9, designation

should not have a significant impact on mineral activity. This is because existing operations and claims would continue even with designation. In the Truckee area this would be mostly sand and gravel operations. It should be noted that significant sand and gravel operations are not within the study rivers.

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**Topic #G002 (Cat G02 ID 16 CN 03, ID 46 CN 10)**

Comments suggest mining is important for local and national economies and designation will impact both

**Response #G002**

As noted in the response above, there is little mining in the area except sand and gravel operations, primarily outside of river corridors being studied. Even if designated there is not expected to be any impact on mining operations. Therefore, it is not expected that there will be any impacts on the economy through lost jobs in mining or in the local communities.

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**Topic #G003 (Cat G03 ID 09 CN 04)**

What impacts are there to existing mineral rights which are in these corridors? Will they be compensated for?

**Response #G003**

It is expected that there will be no impact to existing mineral rights within these study corridors. Mining activities with valid claims are allowed to continue their mining activities. Mining activities on National Forest System lands are subject to operating plans, which provide for appropriate mitigation measures to protect water quality and other natural resources. The right to file new claims would be withdrawn on the Upper Truckee because it is recommended for a Wild designation.

No existing rights will be withdrawn and, therefore, there will be no need for compensation. On private land, mining would continue under state laws.

**Topic #G004 (Cat G04 ID 16 CN 05, ID 46 CN 17)**

Some people are concerned that a holder of mineral rights might be prevented from mineral extraction and if this happened will the Forest Service buy their mineral rights.

**Response #G004**

As part of an operating plan the Forest Service will require certain measures to protect water quality and other resource values. It is possible in some cases that those measures along with the cost of mining and the value of the ore could result in an operation that does not make money. Whether to continue mining would still be up to the miner. The Forest Service would not buy those mineral rights in such a case. This process would go on with or without Wild and Scenic River designation. As stated in the above comments, there is so little mining in the study corridors that issues about plans of operations and other mining concerns are very limited.

## **55 H. TIMBER**

### **Topic #H001 (Cat H04 ID 07 CN 03)**

Designation on any river or stream, would have an effect on even the activities of government land, such as timber harvesting, etc. Resource use has been highly restricted on our public lands and we do not need more regulations to further restrict these activities. Please keep in mind that resource activities bring in local revenues for roads, schools, etc. and that these revenues have already decreased considerably in the past few years due to regulations and frivolous appeals.

### **Response #H001**

The concern of reducing timber outputs further and therefore reducing local revenues to county government for schools and roads is definitely a concern we reviewed carefully between draft and final. The preferred alternative should not result in a significant reduction in timber outputs. The portion of the Upper Truckee River recommended for wild designation is in an inventoried roadless area. No timber outputs were scheduled for this area in the LTMBU Land and Resources Management Plan. Sagehen Creek is recommended for a scenic designation, which would reduce scheduled outputs from the river corridor by as much as 224,600 board feet harvest per year based on the Forest Plan. The actual reduction will be far less than the 224,600 board feet reported in Table 5.1 in consequences because of subsequent direction from CASPO (Spotted Owl direction) that requires that all trees over 30 inches be retained and thinning prescriptions be applied in this area.

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### **Topic #H002 (Cat H05 ID 173 CN 16)**

In fact, a portion of the stream on private land has already been degraded by logging according to the study report which states "The logging practices on private land would not be considered compatible with the direction described... for a Scenic River"(pg. IV.28). Intensive logging on the adjacent public lands was approved through the site specific analysis process in 1993 as part of the Perazzo analysis Area. Logging is scheduled to begin next year. Although the study report notes that the logging plans were designed to "improve the health and vigor of the timber" and some measures were taken to protect the meadow complex, there is little doubt that the ecological diversity and high quality scenery of the area will be degraded. Consequently, environmentalists appealed this project and the appeal was subsequently denied.

Similar logging impacts on the outstanding values of the Little Truckee River and Sagehen Creek are also inadequately analyzed. The study report does note that these streams do contain the greatest available timber resources of the eligible rivers" (pg. V.4). The Little Truckee River, Upper Truckee River and Perazzo Creek are identified as being susceptible to grazing impacts (pg. V.9), but no site specific details are provided. What little information provided must be ferreted out of the study report and appears to be arbitrarily distributed throughout the document.

### **Response #H002**

This Study Report/FEIS has identified and recognizes that logging activities have happened and will continue to happen on both private land and National Forest System lands. These activities will have some level of environmental impact. Scenic quality on upper Perrazo Creek was clearly reduced by the logging on private land and subsequent logging in the Perazzo area was expected to reduce existing scenic quality to a Modification visual quality objective in some areas. The existing scenic quality was retained along the creek corridor on National Forest System lands due

to implementing streamside management zones and using thinning prescriptions. The valuable fens, meadows, and riparian vegetation, which are significant components of the outstandingly remarkable ecological value for Perazzo Creek, Little Truckee River and Sagehen Creek are protected by Forest Standards and Guidelines.

The Little Truckee, Upper Truckee River, and Perazzo Creek do receive grazing use to varying intensities. Impacts from grazing vary tremendously, depending on such variables as numbers of cattle or sheep, timing of use, duration of use, and how the animals are distributed over the range allotment. Where serious impacts have been identified, the Forest Service works with the permittee of the livestock to adjust the operation to reduce these impacts. Evaluation and adjustments to grazing would continue with or without a wild and scenic river designation. Balancing potentially conflicting uses has to be taken into consideration when considering wild and scenic river designation, and plays an important role in a river management plan.

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## **I. ECOSYSTEMS**

### **I-2 Comments about fisheries**

#### **Topic #I001 (Cat I02 ID 408 CN 3)**

In years past I have caught cutthroat in the Truckee between Tahoe and the town of Truckee as well as naturally spawned rainbow, even eastern brook. Whitefish are no longer in abundance as well as darters.

#### **Response #I001**

Thank you for sharing your observations. LCT do not survive to spawn in the Truckee River, but they have moved downstream from Martis in past years and can move upstream to where you fish. We agree that rainbow and brook could be in the river. We agree that whitefish are not common.

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I-6 Comments indicate it is important to designate rivers to protect watershed and ecosystem values.

#### **Topic #I002 (Cat I06 ID 24 CN 03, ID 41 CN 02, ID 156 CN 02, ID 230 CN 04, ID 247 CN 02, ID 302 CN 05, ID 382 CN 03, ID 408 CN 05, ID 418 CN 02)**

These comments support W&S designation for a variety of reasons for a variety of rivers. For example: Your recommendation of wild and scenic status for these watercourses is an affirmation of their irreplaceable qualities. Dam construction would be devastating to the fish life that depends on the river for spawning. Areas need protection from encroachment of developers and others not concerned with maintaining the natural beauty and environment. Old-growth stands could be established that would ease continuing efforts to reduce erosion along river and allow use of legislation to reduce pollution sources into this wonderful resource. A river that has increasing use should receive W&S designation - a river that has multiple demands requires us to support it in an environmentally responsible manner, managing for it's continued health. Designations of our rivers will protect our threatened species. All 8 rivers should be designated W&S thereby protecting native fish and wildlife from further depletion of habitat due to dams and development.

**Response #I002**

The Tahoe LRMP recognizes the importance of old growth, riparian, aquatic and other ecosystems. Special standards and guidelines exist to help direct management of these resources, i.e.: #23 - T&E species, #25 - diversity, #29 - riparian and meadow vegetation management, and others. We recognize the importance of sensitive species, aquatic habitat, old growth stands and river systems. Many of these values are being managed for with present direction.

A Wild and Scenic designation would preclude dam building on these eight rivers and would increase the emphasis on protection for outstanding values located within the river corridor.

The preferred alternative recommends designation of Sagehen Creek primarily because of the outstanding ecosystem values identified for this Creek. It is felt that these ecosystem values will make a significant contribution to the National system of rivers. As stated above there are other tools for protecting ecosystem values so there is not a need or requirement to recommend all streams that have been identified.

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**Topic # I003 (Cat I06 ID 26 CN 01)**

The draft fails to recommend important recreation areas in the lower Truckee River and critical fish and wildlife habitats at Independence and Little Truckee River. Wild and Scenic designation would be instrumental in regulation and management of these areas.

**Response #I003**

Upper Independence Creek is suitable bald eagle habitat. Historic sightings exist and records show sightings within this area. There has been a resident pair of bald eagles nesting along Independence Lake since 1987, but their current status is unknown. The pair was observed after the 1994 nesting season by FS personnel; however, reproduction was not confirmed. Alternate nests were also located along the lake.

Upper Independence Creek does have suitable willow flycatcher habitat and several nests have been documented by a private consultant biologist. The FS has conducted surveys of this area in the summer of 1997. Suitable spotted owl and pine marten habitat exists and historic records show sightings within this analysis area. The likelihood of the Pacific fisher and Sierra Nevada red fox inhabiting this area is minimal. In addition to the isolated habitat, the elevation is generally considered too high for these two species in this part of the Sierra.

Perazzo Creek and the Little Truckee River are located primarily in Management Area 018 (Heness). "Protection of willow flycatcher and spotted owl habitat" is a management concern in this area. One resource management emphasis in this management area is to "retain and improve, where possible, the willow flycatcher habitat." The willow flycatcher population is monitored each year to determine population trend. The Perazzo Meadow willow flycatcher population is the second largest in California. Although special designation may have added another layer of protection for Outstanding Remarkable values in this drainage, it was not selected in order to minimize potential impacts on private lands and reduce cost of administration to public agencies.

The Lower Truckee is not being recommended for designation and the high recreation use will be addressed and managed in cooperation with several other agencies.

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**Topic #I004 (Cat I06 ID 248 CN 03)**

Increasing use should recommend a river segment for protection, not exclude it. A river that has multiple demands requires us to support it in an environmentally responsible manner, managing use for its continued health. This supports long-term human use as well as the habitat for fish and wildlife.

**Response #I004**

Increasing use by itself is not much of a factor for recommending a W & S River. Outstandingly remarkable recreation activities or scenic attractions that attract high numbers of people is a better criteria. With or without W&S river designation, rivers with high recreation use and other multiple use demands need to be managed in an environmentally responsible manner that supports long-term human use as well as the fish and wildlife.

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## **J. ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Topic #J001 (Cat J02 ID 173 CN 08)**

Finally, the study report notes cultural features such as the Meiss cabin and drift fences "which are preserved in an area that has never been logged" and "provide a sense of stepping back a hundred years in time." Combined with the undeveloped scenic and primitive recreation features of the area, the Upper Truckee must certainly be regarded as "representing vestiges of primitive America," another basic criteria of a Wild river.

**Response #J001**

This was certainly one of several key issues that was reviewed and moved the LTBMU to recommend the Upper Truckee as a Wild River rather than a Scenic River.

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## **K. WATER.**

K-2 Need future options for water storage and flood control

**Topic #K001 (Cat K02 ID 46 CN 12, ID 7 CN 01, ID 9 CN 07, and ID 48 CN 10)**

Several respondents were concerned about the need for future options for water storage and/or flood control. The following comment is the best example: Another resource that will be negatively impacted by any designation is water. Water is critical in California, especially in our current drought times and with an ever growing population base. This area of California must depend on surface water because we do not have aquifers. For this reason it would be foolish to lock up any water source forever and these important issues are not adequately addressed in the EIS.

The EIS also makes no mention of the positive aspects of the local dams, for water storage, for recreation, for hydroelectric power, and for flood control. What also needs to be presented are the direct and potential impacts of any designation upon existing and future dams. Future expansion of designation also needs to be addressed, especially since the EIS lists streams for future study.

**Reponse #K001**

Water is a critical resource for California and Nevada. During drought years there is a clear concern for adequate water storage. Known potential dam sites for the rivers being considered are described in Chapter IV under each river's description. Out of all the stream segments being considered, only the Little Truckee River has a known proposed dam site, which is described in Chapter IV. The consequences of designation on this dam are described in Chapter V. In the big picture all the streams being considered flow into reservoirs or already have reservoirs regulating their flows. Existing reservoirs already occupy the best sites for water storage. This leaves only limited options for future water storage projects. The few options identified by water agencies have been documented in this study and are an important part of the consideration of what rivers to recommend. In addition, it is the position of the water-managing agencies that they want to keep as much flexibility as possible for future projects that could be almost anywhere along a stream segment. This input is part of the evaluation process for all the streams being considered in this study.

The DEIS did not mention the positive aspects of local dams for water storage, recreation, hydroelectric power, and flood control. These dams obviously make a significant contribution to society in terms of the water we drink and use for agriculture and industry as well as generating power, providing recreation activities, and protecting down-stream communities. This information has been added to chapter IV under the social and economic environment. The direct and potential impacts of any designation upon existing and future dams was addressed in the document on page V.10 under consequences to Water Development or Improvement Projects. Few effects if any are anticipated with existing dams due to direction in the Act under Section 7 (a) that indicates that the act does not preclude licensing and operation of dams upstream or downstream from designated river segments. This language will be added to this section of the document.

Table 4.2 on page IV.15 of the DEIS lists other rivers on other Forests that will be studied in the future. This information was provided to give a broader perspective of other rivers that will be considered in the future by other "eastside" Forests.

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**Topic #K002 (Cat 02 ID 172 CN 03)**

Ten or twelve years ago in Nevada County, a ballot was voted on and passed overwhelmingly to conserve Nevada County water options for the future. This vote still applies regarding how the local citizens feel about the streams. This must be taken seriously by the USFS. Additional information on that vote can be obtained from the County Clerk or NID.

**Response #K002**

The concept of conserving Nevada County water options for the future is a very valid concern and represents the concerns for other counties and water managing agencies as well. Since recommending a wild and scenic river for designation will preclude water development projects for that stream, the Forest Service looks at this issue very carefully. Each stream has been

reviewed between the Draft and Final EIS and the issue of designation versus water development options has been carefully considered.

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K-3 Water Quality would decrease

**Topic #K003 (Cat K03 ID 04 CN 02)**

The primary reason is that the existing rivers in the control of private landowners are well cared for. They have been in private hands for over 100 years and that is why they are in the pristine condition that we find them in today.

**Response#K003**

In many cases private landowners do an excellent job of managing their lands and the result is high water quality in the streams that flow through these lands. For rivers recommended for designation the Forest Service would encourage land owners within the river corridor to continue with good land stewardship practices. For this study the preferred alternative recommends two rivers that do not have private land within the corridors. The Special Interest Area recommended for Upper Independence Creek does have private land within the watershed-based boundary. Good stewardship of these private lands would also be encouraged.

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K-7 Dams can be positive for people and rivers

**Topic #K004 (Cat K07 ID 08 CN 01)**

I don't know where these people have gotten their ridiculous ideas that the rivers are in danger from resource use or dams. The fact is that sometimes dams are necessary and for the good of all. If they are not then they can be prevented -- Simple fact. Unfortunately these newcomers are selfish and want the rivers locked up for their rafting and other recreation. But their type of use is the one real danger to the rivers. This is the use that should be restricted, not resource use or necessary water projects.

**Response #K004 .**

Rivers have and will continue to provide a wide range of uses and services for society. Water supplies, often in the form of dams, is certainly one of the more important uses that come to mind. Many of the values of dams are discussed above in Comment and Response #K001. Other legitimate river uses include recreation activities such as rafting, kayaking, boating, and swimming. The Wild and Scenic River Act was passed by Congress to recognize that there is a strong need to preserve some rivers in their free flowing condition for the public's benefit and enjoyment. In passing the Act Congress recognized that there is a need to balance the many consumptive uses along rivers with protecting some rivers in their free flowing condition. The purpose of this study is to address this balance within the study area and recommend if any of the study rivers are suitable for designation. Designation by Congress would then protect the free flowing condition and outstandingly remarkable values identified in the study.

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K-10 Support WSR Designation since it will prohibit FERC from licensing dams.

**Topic #K005 (Cat 10 ID 171 CN 07, ID 58 CN 01)**

Designations would, of course, stop dams under basic water law and under FERC. This is only good economically, since dams are virtually all negative, in a full-cost accounting. Environmentally, it is hard to imagine a greater insult than a dam.

**Response #K005**

A wild and scenic river designation by Congress would definitely preclude FERC and other Federal agencies from supporting the construction of a dam on the river segment identified. Dams do have environmental impacts to wildlife, fisheries and other resources that depend on free flowing rivers. On the other hand dams do provide many important benefits to society. As discussed in response #K004, finding a balance between consumptive water uses and protecting rivers in their free flowing conditions is the point of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. This study addresses this balance for one small area of California.

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K-11 Protect the Upper Truckee river to maintain Water Quality in Lake Tahoe

**Topic #K006 (Cat K011 ID 88 CN 02, ID 173 CN 07, ID 195 CN 02, ID 308 CN 01, ID 316 CN 02, ID 317 CN 03, ID 321 CN 02, ID 322 CN 02, ID 333 CN 03, ID 338 CN 01, ID 347 CN 02, ID 360 CN 02, ID 371 CN 02, ID 372 CN 02, ID 374 CN 01, ID 397 CN 02, and ID 398 03)**

We are concerned about the continuing loss of water clarity and quality in Lake Tahoe. The Upper Truckee River should be designated because it is an important source of clean water to Lake Tahoe.

**Response #K006**

As Lake Tahoe's largest tributary, you are correct in that the Upper Truckee is an important source of clean water to the lake. Be assured that even without designation, the river's purity would be maintained due to the many regulations -- Forest Service, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Regional Water Quality Control Board -- in the Basin that require nondegradation of streamcourses and protection of riparian areas. Please see response B31 for additional information.

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K-12 There are already too many dams. We need protection for rivers and river systems.

**Topic #K007 ( Cat K012 ID 88 CN 02, ID 154 CN 02, ID 186 CN 02)**

All of these rivers should be protected from any new dam projects and the quality (what is left) of the rivers maintained.

**Response #K007**

Those rivers recommended, if designated by Congress, would preclude new dam projects and maintain the river qualities as you suggest. There are other ways to manage activities and protect river values which are identified in the Forest Plan standards and guidelines. Other Federal, State,

and local agencies also have key roles in managing and protecting water quality and associated resources.

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K-16 There is a need to prevent more development along rivers. River designation is a good way to accomplish this.

**Topic #K008 (Cat K16 ID 324 CN 02, ID 312 CN 04, ID 315 CN 03)**

As a resident of the Tahoe area and a former river guide on California's rivers, I will always demand close analysis of impacts and alternatives to any proposed development projects on rivers. This state has precious few stretches of open water left and they need to be very carefully handled. Inclusion in the Wild and Scenic system is, in my view, almost always a good idea, since the stretches proposed for such treatment are in truth usually threatened by relatively small local interest groups, and development will not benefit more than an isolated community.

**Response #K008**

Wild and Scenic River designation can add emphasis to the importance of managing river resources in a positive manner. Often the issue of development is focused more on private land. On private land within designated river corridors, the Forest Service can urge counties to adopt zoning regulations consistent with the river classification. Ultimately the issues of development on private land are resolved at the county level. River designation will not necessarily prevent development on private land.

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K-17 Water Quality - Technical comments

**Topic #K009 (ID 32 CN 03)**

We note that the quality of water in all the study rivers meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards. To ensure that water quality is maintained in the future, we recommend the continuation of Best Management Practices by all parties. We are confident the responsible agencies, including two National Forests, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Corps of Engineers, will adequately and cooperatively ensure the protection of these resources.

**Response #K009**

The Forests are committed to the continuation of Best Management Practices for all the study rivers whether or not they are recommended for designation. The Forests are also committed to use Best Management Practices on all the rivers and streams not identified as study rivers. The Forests will also continue to work cooperatively with both the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers to ensure that water quality is maintained in the future.

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**Topic #K010 (ID33 CN 02)**

The DEIS should assess the water quality impacts on the rivers from activities potentially causing direct discharges and polluted runoff. Direct sources of water pollution are regulated under the permit system established by the Clean Water Act - the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) [33 U.S.C. S1342]. Polluted runoff can be caused by those activities permitted under the Wild Rivers System or could be caused by activities outside the river areas. Such potential runoff includes sediment and concrete materials from construction of buildings or

operation of mines, petroleum products from vehicle traffic, pesticides from vegetation management and agriculture and sewage from small facilities.

**Response #K010**

The DEIS and FEIS will not assess the water quality impacts on the study rivers from activities potentially causing direct discharges and polluted runoff. Other Federal and State agencies have the mandate to monitor and regulate activities that may cause impacts to water quality. A river receiving a Wild and Scenic River designation may receive more attention or emphasis in regards to water quality. The actual regulations for water quality still reside with other acts and are managed by other agencies.

Comment #K09, which comes from Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, already indicates that the study rivers meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards. The Forest will continue to employ Best Management Practices for management activities to ensure that these rivers as well as other rivers and streams continue to meet State Water Quality Standards.

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**L. VISUAL QUALITY**

L-1 Designation will result in greater protection of scenic quality, therefore it will impact users and private landowners

**Topic #L001 (Cat L01 ID 48 CN 04)**

See L-1 above for the basic comment

**Response #L001**

W&S River designation generally has an emphasis on protecting scenic quality. Whether this creates any impacts depends greatly on the individual river. In the case of the preferred alternative, the objective set for scenic quality on the Upper Truckee would not change. On Sagehen Creek the objective would change from a Modification VQO to a Retention VQO. There would be no impact on private land because there is no private land within the corridor. If there was private land within the corridor, there still would be no impact because the Forest Service has no authority on private land. Actual users of National Forest lands (recreation users) would benefit from an increased emphasis on maintaining scenic quality. Users associated with timber harvesting would see a small reduction in timber outputs available for timber sales.

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**Topic #L002 (CAT L02 ID 177 CN 05)**

When first I visited Lake Tahoe the year was 1924 and I was 13. I have been there more than 50 times, I suppose, and I cherish the lake and the Tahoe area. Please do what you can to protect a magnificent part of our country.

**Response # L002**

Most anyone can relate to your long-term appreciation of Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area. A whole range of management strategies are in place for both public and private land to protect the

"magnificent" aspects of Lake Tahoe and the associated landscape. Additional options, such as Wild and Scenic River designation, are other possible strategies for protecting the free-flowing character of streams and providing protection and/or enhancement of their outstandingly remarkable values. In this FEIS the Upper Truckee River is recommended for designation as a contribution to the Federal system of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Designation will add emphasis to protecting the important stream values associated with this river.

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**Topic # L003 (CAT L02 ID 322 CN 04)**

Steps must be taken to maintain the mountains and lake quality that make this area so beautiful and unique. With development we can lose it forever.

**Response # L003**

As discussed in response #L002, several management strategies are already in place to protect important environmental concerns including water quality of the Lake. Recommending the Upper Truckee River is an additional option that provides additional emphasis for protecting outstandingly remarkable river values.

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**Topic # L004 (CAT L02 ID 343 CN 04)**

Conversely in the spring the rushing streams are one type of beauty. Then in the summer the wild flowers in full bloom are special. Assuming that the cattle and sheep have not either eaten or trampled what should be unspoiled fields and meadows.

**Response # L004**

The above described beauty is one of many factors taken into consideration when considering which rivers to recommend for designation. Almost every stream within the study area has some aspect of beauty associated with it. Streams are one of the most attractive elements in our forest landscape. With this in mind only the most notable streams are identified as outstandingly remarkable for scenic beauty. At the same time other streams identified for other values will still contribute streamside environments that the public will find attractive. Cattle and sheep are one of the multiple use resources that are managed on National Forests. If cattle or sheep cause significant damage to vegetative and soil resources, management requirements are enacted that will mitigate or eliminate these problems.

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**Topic # L005 (CAT L02 ID 398 CN 04 & 06)**

I am writing in support of the proposal that the Upper Truckee river be designated for "Wild" status and the Truckee River along Highway 89 be designated as a "Scenic" river. The former is essential for the clarity of Lake Tahoe and the latter to protect the beautiful stretch of highway between Tahoe City and Truckee. ....The Upper Truckee River is, fortunately, undeveloped and the Tahoe-Truckee Road along the Truckee River, thanks to the river, is one of the most scenic drives in the West.

**Response # L005**

The Upper Truckee River is recommended for a "Wild" river designation in the FEIS. That will respond to your concern to help provide for the water clarity of Lake Tahoe. The Truckee River

corridor does provide for a beautiful scenic corridor from Tahoe City to Truckee. This stretch of river is not recommended for designation, but the scenic values are recognized, and they are protected in the respective Forest Land and Resource Management Plans with Retention and Partial Retention Visual Quality Objectives.

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**Topic #L006 (Cat L02 ID 377 CN 03)**

During my travels I have visited many of the world's touted scenic areas and have found few to compare with the lake, river, and streams we have so close to a large and expanding population base.

**Response #L006**

Many of the letters indicate a high level of appreciation for the natural beauty of the streams under study. These values are recognized and have been carefully considered as part of the process developing the final recommendations.

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**M. ECONOMICS**

M-2 The public/Federal Government can not afford the cost to implement Wild and Scenic River Designation.

**Topic #M001 (Cat M02 ID 04 CN 03 and ID 18 CN 05)**

That would increase our expenses for any government control or monitoring of the rivers. Taxes would go up.

**Response #M001**

There are certain expenses associated with designating a river. There are planning costs, implementation of the designation, and then day-to-day management costs. Some of these costs are covered already in the sense that the Forest commits a certain amount of its budget to Forest planning issues. Some of the day-to-day management goes on along rivers already today, particularly dealing with existing recreation use. In some cases a river designation may help the Forest to better compete for existing dollars to manage a river. In other cases the Forest may just set a higher priority on managing a designated river compared to some other activity. Over the long run, the designation of rivers identified in this study along with other recommendations could end up creating a higher cost of doing business for the Forest Service on a regular basis. If Congress responded by approving these additional costs of management, it could result in higher taxes ultimately. It would be very hard to track this directly because there may be reductions or much larger increases in other areas of the Forest Service budget. Ultimately, your concern about increased costs is valid and is one of the issues that has been considered during this planning process.

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#### M-4 Loss of property Tax Base

**Topic #M002 (Cat M04 ID 18 CN06, and ID 48 CN 09, ID 02 CN 02, ID 18 CN 04, 46/07, 4/04, 15/02, and 48/08)**

Designation will result in loss of property tax base and impact local counties. Greater expense to local government will be the result.

#### **Response #M002**

In the preferred alternative there will be no loss of property tax base if Congress designates the recommended rivers because there is no private land within the river corridors.

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M-5 Designation is important for local economies. Free flowing rivers brings in lots of tourists and recreationists

#### **Topic #M003 (Cat M05 ID 171 CN 02)**

For example, the mainstem Truckee River is the paramount recreation resource for the Truckee area. An appropriate long-term goal should be to greenbelt it from lake to lake. The Tahoe and Toiyabe should both try to protect this asset, which has regional level fly fishing, several archaeological sites, and considerable walking and biking potential. In Europe, such a regional river would have paths and hostels and be a significant draw to the area. Reno is moving steadily toward greenbelts along the Truckee and the Town of Truckee is considering the same policy. Stepping up the designation for this river would support these trends and speed up further voluntary acquisitions along the river and, in the long run, buying out Sierra Pacific from further hydro developments.

Viewed in terms of the Eastside, and especially in terms of Tahoe, Truckee, and Reno, Prosser Cr. and mainstem Truckee River are major assets. What are the other major rivers? Only the Walker and the Carson. Reno, Carson City/Minden/Gardnerville, Truckee, and the Sacramento region are all growing rapidly. Rivers and lakes are essential recreation resources in this region. River quality will rise as water rights statutes are flexed to protect critters and plants (Mono Lake for example). Such deals are being started in the Truckee watershed and everywhere.

#### **Response #M003**

Thank you for your vision for the Truckee River and how significant a role recreation and tourism could play within the river corridor. Your perspective on the regional importance of the Truckee river and how it compares to other rivers in the region is very helpful. This information was taken into account while reconsidering whether to recommend the Truckee River for designation.

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M-9 Technical Comments - Cost is not a valid reason to not recommend designation.

#### **Topic #M004 (Cat M09 ID 173 CN 13, and ID 171 CN 02)**

As to the second criteria for the identification of the preferred alternative - that of cost to the administering agency - we find no justification in the study report which supports the rivers recommended or not recommended by the agency. Table 5.2 - Cost of Designation (pg. V.23) offers estimates as to the cost of administering each eligible river. These cost estimates almost certainly include management actions required to protect the environment and meet federal law

and regulations regardless of whether the streams are designated - particularly on rivers with high recreational use impacts such as the Truckee River and Upper Truckee River, and on rivers with extensive grazing activities which require fencing. These management costs should not be attributed solely to designation.

#### **Response #M004**

In Chapter II the alternatives are listed with a one or two sentence theme and then described in more detail. These two sentence themes are not criteria. The intent of these initial sentences was to give a glimpse of what the alternative would be like. While the sentences for the Alternative E theme are accurate, we agree that they are misleading. This is addressed in more detail in Response #C021. We also agree that there is no significant analysis of these costs in the document and it would not make sense to use cost as the primary criteria for alternative selection. The case can be made that a river with the highest costs would provide the best candidate for designation if it had the best river characteristics. With this in mind costs should be seen as just one of many factors that are considered before a recommendation is made.

The comment that many of the costs are already covered by on going mangement is not correct. Table 5.2 identifies what are considered to be additional costs. These costs should be looked at as rough estimates and are most useful as a comparison between rivers. Actual costs for a given 5-year period could vary widely.

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## **N. RECREATION**

N-1 Designation will result in and or need greater regulation and management of recreation use.

#### **Topic #N001 (Cat N01 ID 03 CN 01)**

I am sick and tired of the government trying to impose further regulations and closing more land to free and easy access to the public.

#### **Response #N001**

The regulations for Wild and Scenic rivers apply to federal land, not private lands. None of the rivers considered in this study anticipate closing land. Providing adequate public access to a designated river is a typical emphasis for a designated river. No new fees are anticipated with the recommendation of any of the rivers in this study.

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#### **Topic #N002 (Cat N01 ID 12 CN 06)**

The Truckee River, from Tahoe City to Truckee "compacts a large amount of recreation use into a small area: rafting, fishing, picnicking, swimming, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and sightseeing are some of the activities." (LTBMU Forest Plan, Pg. IV-II 1) Scenic designation for the Truckee River would not only protect its important recreational values, but also provide the management coordination needed to mitigate the negative impacts of concentrated recreation use.

**Response #N002**

Wild and Scenic River Designation could be one tool for management coordination on the Truckee River. However, some of the agencies with management authority along the Truckee River already have mandates to coordinate with other agencies and support coordinated planning. The Forests have concern that Wild and Scenic River designation would not provide adequate authority or mandates for coordination among agencies and private landowners and, in many cases, would just add more complexity for everyone with few results or benefits.

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**Topic #N003 (Cat N01 ID 26 CN 02)**

The Draft fails to recommend important recreation areas in the lower Truckee River and critical fish and wildlife habitats at Independence Creek and Little Truckee River. Wild and Scenic designation would be instrumental in regulation and management of these areas.

**Response #N003**

Wild and Scenic designation is just one of several tools that can be used for recreation, fisheries, and wildlife habitat. Existing Forest management has kept many of the streams in good condition so that they could be considered eligible. With or without designation these important values will be carefully managed.

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**Topic #N004 (Cat N01 ID 118 CN 03)**

We Nevadans need the resources for wilderness to protect California from Californians. For instance the oversight of the Lower Truckee River.

**Response #N004**

The Lower Truckee River, if designated, would not be managed for wilderness. The recreation classification would emphasize maintaining existing uses in most cases. The Lower Truckee already receives high levels of use, which would be addressed to some degree with designation. One could not expect dramatic changes of use with designation.

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**Topic #N005 (Cat N01 ID 215 CN 02)**

The Truckee River is a very important rafting spot that needs to be protected against over-use and this designation would do just that.

**Response #N005**

The Truckee River does receive a high level of use from rafting. Wild and Scenic designation would be one approach to dealing with the rafting issue. If the Truckee River were recommended for designation it still could be many years before any action is taken because it takes an act of Congress to get a river designated. Meanwhile there are other avenues to look at the rafting situation including efforts lead by Placer County, the permit manager.

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**Topic #N006 (Cat N01 ID 248 CN 02)**

Increasing use should recommend a river segment for protection, not exclude it. A river that has multiple demands requires us to support it in an environmentally responsible manner, managing

use for it's continued health. This supports long-term human use as well as the habitat for fish and wildlife.

**Response #N006**

Rivers with increasing use and multiple demands can be good candidates for designation. With or without designation the USFS is committed to managing recreation use as well as the habitat for fish and wildlife.

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**Topic #N007 (Cat N01 ID 60 CN 03, ID 100 CN 03, ID 135 CN 02, ID 137 CN 02, 276/02, 266/03, 317 CN 04, ID 380 CN 03, and ID 387 CN 01)**

These people want to see rivers designated so that management plans are developed to manage the recreation use and provide for fish and wildlife habitat and other resource management guidelines.

**Response #N007**

Wild and Scenic River designation would address the issue of recreation management in relation to protecting other resources. When a management plan would be developed to deal with these issues depends on when Congress chooses to designate the rivers recommended. There are other avenues to address recreation use along these rivers for the Forest Service and other agencies.

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N-2 It is important to maintain free-flowing river recreation experiences.

**Topic #N008 (Cat N02 ID 20 CN 02, ID 85 CN 02, ID 168 CN 02, ID 230 CN 03, ID 266 CN 01, ID 378 CN 02 and ID 408 CN 02)**

It is important to maintain free-flowing river recreation experiences which dams would destroy. River experiences we have enjoyed over the years include fishing, rafting, swimming, and a wide range of day use activities.

**Response #N008**

We agree that maintaining free-flowing river recreation experiences is an important recreation component on the Tahoe National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Wild and Scenic River designation is clearly one way to ensure that certain streams stay free-flowing. There are few identified water development projects for the eastside streams under study so one should not assume that if a stream is not designated that it will be immediately dammed. This study is focusing on which streams would make a significant contribution to the national system of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Providing important free-flowing river recreation experiences will continue to be an emphasis for Forest recreation management even for streams not recommended for designation.

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**Topic #N009 (Cat N02 ID 180 CN 04)**

The town is very supportive of the concept of preserving the free flowing nature of the rivers, streams, and creek in and adjacent to the town of Truckee, including the Truckee River, Alder Creek, and Cold Stream. However, the town strongly believes that the protection of those river and streams corridors can be more efficiently and effectively achieved by the use of the town's

land use and zoning authority. The town has already begun the process of reorganizing the importance of these waterways within our General Plan.

**Response #N009**

We appreciate receiving input from the town of Truckee on this issue. We agree that the town can more effectively manage and protect the stream corridors within the town boundaries on private land through land use and zoning authorities. If at some time a dam was proposed for one of these streams, land use and zoning authorities are not enough to prevent FERC from authorizing a project. From this perspective, Wild and Scenic River designation would be the best tool for preserving free-flowing rivers. Ultimately, the main task of this study is to recommend the best candidates for Wild and Scenic River designation.

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N-3 Rivers are important reasons for living in the area and improve the quality of life.

**Topic #N010 (Cat N03 ID 340 CN 02, ID 83 CN 01, and ID 91 CN 02)**

We have a home in Tahoe City, and have for over thirty years enjoyed walking, biking, and rafting on the Truckee River between Tahoe City and Truckee.

**Response #N010**

People have expressed the importance of a wide range of recreation activities along the study rivers and how that has been an important element in their quality of life similar to your comment. This was an important factor to consider as the final recommendations for the FEIS was developed. For rivers not recommended for designation, the Forests will continue to manage for these recreation activities that a wide range of the public obviously value.

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N-5 It is important to protect the undeveloped roadless character of the Upper Truckee River by designating the river Wild.

**Topic #N011 (Cat N05 ID 173 CN 06, ID 84 CN 03, ID 266 CN 04, ID 271 CN 02, ID 317 CN 01, ID 328 CN 03, ID 376 CN 03, ID 397 CN 01, and ID 398 CN 05)**

The study report notes that the river flows through the Dardanelles roadless area and the current management is intended to protect and maintain its natural conditions. The report also states: Primitive recreation is especially appropriate in the area and local residents use it as the alternative of choice to the Desolation Wilderness. (pg. B.22). In fact, one of the river's outstanding values is its extensive opportunities for primitive recreation. The Lake Tahoe Basin Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) allocates the Upper Truckee watershed to the "unroaded recreation" prescription, with an emphasis on "maintaining substantially natural conditions" (LRMP pg. G-12) as "an area 1/2 mile from roads... with only subtle modifications to an otherwise natural setting." The roadless, undeveloped nature of the area and the prohibition against motorized use definitely correspond with the "generally inaccessible except by trail" criteria of a Wild river.

**Response #N011**

Based on your input along with many other people, the LTBMU reviewed its recommended classification level for the Upper Truckee River. The conclusion of the review was to change the recommended classification to Wild. A determination was made that management activities such as grazing and fisheries management could be conducted consistent with a Wild river designation

without any significant impact or change to current practices. Clearly, a Wild designation would be quite consistent with the recreation activities and management direction provided in the Basin's LRMP. Also see response in Cat B13 - #B031 for more detail.

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N-6 Added tourists caused by designation will impact the rivers and local services causing local taxes to increase. More publicity will cause more problems.

**Topic #N012 (Cat N06 ID 46 CN 15, ID 22 CN 02, ID 47 CN 03, and ID 50 CN 01)**

Conversely, will there be new roads and trails added to the areas so that the additional tourists can access the area? And how will the additional tourists adversely impact the areas? If you truly want to preserve these as is, then leave them alone, let them remain as they are. By giving special attention to any area, you draw attention to it and will increase the traffic going in and out. To preserve an area, the last thing you want to do is create a massive influx of people. The EIS does not address the future problems, impacts and costs created by designation when recreation and tourism to the area increases.

**Response #N012**

The expectations for increased tourism vary for each river. For the Truckee River there is already a tremendous amount of public use along the river. We would expect only a modest increase of use if designated. More remote streams such as the Upper Truckee River are again expected to receive modest increases in recreation use. Generally, the expectation is that the rivers would receive low to moderate increases in use when first designated. Then the use would drop back to normal increases based on the attraction of the river. None of the increased uses are expected to create a major burden on local services or increase local taxes significantly. To the degree public use of rivers increase, there would be an increase in tourist services such as gasoline, meals, and overnight accommodations. All of these increased services would also provide increased tax revenues for municipal and county services needed.

We do recognize your concern that designation of a river possibly could give a river more attention than needed and draw more public to that river. Additional people can bring additional management concerns that do need to be addressed. On the other hand these issues can be addressed in developing a management plan for the river recommended. The Forest really can not duck the question of which rivers, if any, should be recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation. That is the original land management planning question that this study is mandated to answer.

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**O. LOCAL/FEDERAL CONTROL**

O-1 People do not want additional control from Federal Government. They want local control.

**Topic #O-001 (Cat O-04 ID 04 CN 06, ID 05 CN 03, ID 08 CN 03, and ID 18 CN 02)**

As a biologist I can tell you that the protection of the land by private land ownership is a benefit to the plant and animal life that exists in the riparian areas. Areas under state or federal control have less protection than do private lands and the protection that they do receive is paid for by our tax

monies. The private landowners protect the land from: fire, unlawful mining, tree-cutting, vandalism, hunting, and they keep the trash in and around the river picked up. And they do it for free - at no cost to you or me.

**Response #O-001**

Your comment is an excellent argument for working cooperatively with private land owners on rivers recommended for designation. For some of the very reasons you state, it is quite appropriate for private land to remain within Wild and Scenic River corridors. The Forest Service position is that private lands make fine contributions to the Wild and Scenic River system and generally should remain private.

Management of State and Federal lands can be challenging, particularly in handling public use. On the other hand State and Federal lands generally stay less developed over time and can avoid high density development except where strategic day use and overnight campgrounds are located.

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**Topic #O-002 (Cat O-01 ID 172 CN 02)**

Wild and Scenic Rivers have been viewed as an additional, unwanted level of control over rivers and streams of local jurisdictions. CABPRO has studied in depth, other management areas throughout the US and California which were designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers. These designations placed a higher degree of management desires into an already over-budget system. There are simply not enough dollars to go around for all the areas on the "wish lists" of the USFS, River groups or any other faction favoring designations.

**Response #O-002**

This idea that Wild and Scenic Rivers is an unwanted level of control over local rivers and streams is certainly one theme we have received, but we have also received many other opinions that would not agree with this. One perspective that may help is to point out that the issue of water storage and flood control are also managed at the State and Federal level. Several of the major reservoirs (Boca, Stampede, Prosser) are managed by the Bureau of Reclamation. In other areas of the Forest, the Corps of Engineers or FERC are involved in building or permitting reservoir projects. With this in mind, Wild and Scenic River recommendations are addressing these broader land uses of keeping a river free-flowing or leaving options for further water control and management.

The point of not having enough dollars to manage for a long wish list of rivers is a concern we have also considered. The cost of managing rivers is one of the factors we considered while arriving at a final recommendation. One should not conclude that if the cost of management is high for a river that it would automatically be rejected for recommendation. For a river with high public use and significant attractions, the high costs could be seen as worth the investment and a major contribution to the Federal system of Wild and Scenic Rivers. In other words, the costs and the benefits have to be weighed.

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**Topic #O-003 (Cat O-01 ID 180 CN 03 and 05)**

The town opposes W&S designation of the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and the town of Truckee. Although the town is strongly supportive of maintaining a free flowing value of the stream, W&S designation could conflict with transportation and utility improvements within the

corridor. Future transportation improvements will be critical to the economic viability of the region.

The town is very supportive of the concept of preserving the free flowing nature of the rivers, streams, and creeks in and adjacent to the town of Truckee, including the Truckee River, Alder Creek, and Cold Stream. However, the town strongly believes that the protection of those river and stream corridors can be more efficiently and effectively achieved by the use of the town's land use and zoning authority. The town has already begun the process of reorganizing the importance of these waterways within our General Plan.

**Response #O-003**

Input from the Town of Truckee is greatly appreciated. A recreation designation would not likely preclude transportation and utility improvements, but it could add to the complexity and/or costs of these improvements. We are pleased to hear the Town is putting added importance on protecting stream and river corridors. Zoning is clearly the authority of towns and counties to deal with land use issues on private land. This new emphasis on stream corridors complements continuing efforts on National Forest System lands to better protect stream and river corridors. While we agree that the Town can effectively manage land use issues within the stream corridors, we have to point out that other federal agencies (FERC, Bureau of Reclamation, and Corps of Engineers) have ultimate control over the free flowing nature of these streams. Wild and Scenic River designation is the only approach that could guarantee that these streams would remain completely free flowing.

The concerns of the Town of Truckee along with many other jurisdictional and water rights complexities on the Truckee River was one of the main factors that led the Forest in not recommending the Truckee River for designation.

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O-2 Greater discussion about impacts on zoning is needed. Will the county lose zoning authority with designation?

**Topic #O-004 (Cat O-02 ID 46 CN 08)**

There is also no in depth discussion of the zoning changes required of local jurisdictions. The Federal Wild and Scenic Guidelines, listed in the Federal Register states: "Where land use controls are necessary to protect river area values, the managing agency will utilize a full range of land-use control measures including zoning, easements and fee acquisition." This is of utmost importance yet it is not addressed in the EIS as it should be.

**Response #O-004**

An initial review of zoning determined that they were consistent with Wild and Scenic River values. No need for changes in zoning, easements or fee acquisition were identified for any of the potential rivers. With the rivers in the preferred alternative there is no need for further reviews or discussion because there is no private land within the corridors.

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O-05 Designation removes opportunities for future Californians to resolve problems and challenges of tomorrow. Don't lock up options for the future.

**Topic #O-005 (Cat O-05 ID 47 CN 07, ID 08 CN 04, ID 16 CN 07, and ID 46 CN 18)**

The Federal Wild and Scenic River Act is just another Federal mandate that will impact local government and private property while locking up land and resources for our future generations. The fact that other streams are named for future study shows that designated areas are likely to be expanded, locking up more resources and impacting more private land.

**Response #O-005**

The whole point of this study is to weigh the benefits of river designation compared to possible impacts and changes in land use that would come along with river designation. Looking at future options for land management and river management is also part of this process. Your concerns for future options was considered in the DEIS and reconsidered in the FEIS process. While we would like to keep many options for the future, our task is to make recommendations now for the eligible rivers being evaluated for suitability. The other streams listed on the Toiyabe and Inyo National Forests will be addressed in a separate study and will deal with your concern about future options at that time.

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O-07 We want our children and grandchildren to be able to enjoy free-flowing rivers. It is important for future generations to have wild areas.

**Topic #O-006 (Cat O-07 ID 64 CN 02, 62/01, 16/06, 61/02, 81/02, 92/02, 140/03, 169/02, 173/02, 190/03, 192/02, 194/02, 196/02, 213/01, 214/02, 218/01, 257/03, 264/03, 292/02, 296/02 and 05, 318/02, 323/02, 337/02, 338/04, 342/02, 343/02, 345/03, 348/03, 354/01, 368/02, 373/03, 383/01, 388/03, 389/03, 392/01 and 04, 395/01, and 400/03.**

The above category accurately describes the many comments received emphasizing the importance of free flowing rivers for future generations. Some but not all of the comments added their concern for having wild areas in the future.

**Response #O-006**

The designation of a Wild and Scenic River would definitely provide future generations with a free-flowing stream. Many of the streams evaluated would not be able to provide a wild experience as defined for Wild Rivers. From Draft to Final EIS the Upper Truckee River was changed from a Scenic designation to a Wild designation recommendation. This would respond to some of the desire to maintain wild areas for future generations. The Upper Independence Creek SIA would also retain some wild characteristics. With the emphasis on Lahontan cutthroat trout management, it is likely that public use would be allowed but not actively encouraged.

Two streams are recommended for designation that would ensure free-flowing conditions over time. This does not mean that the streams not recommended will automatically be dammed or changed in the near future. Consultation with water managing agencies identified only one possible project on the Little Truckee River. It was not identified as a priority for development in the TROA studies. Water development proposals for the studied streams are likely to come up in the future, but we have not identified any imminent changes at this time.

## **P. GRAZING**

P-1 Designation will reduce grazing and impact local ranchers

### **Topic #P001 (Cat P01 ID 19 CN 05)**

We have noted that the "intent" of the DEIS is not to "change the existing economic conditions" but our concerns are that Alternative E will. Reducing the number of livestock in the area for whatever reason, will certainly impact us economically.

### **Response #P001**

It is definitely the intent of the DEIS and FEIS to not change the existing economic conditions for grazing in the recommended river corridors. We can understand your concerns that W&S River designation in some way would reduce livestock numbers. The vehicle for addressing livestock numbers is through the allotment management planning process and monitoring of the allotment. Environmental indicators used in both of these processes would indicate whether grazing is causing impacts and management of the livestock would need to be changed. The indicators and mechanisms to address this issue are the same with or without a Wild and Scenic River designation.

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### **Topic #P002 (Cat P01 ID 46 CN 11)**

Another concern we see is the impacts to the natural resources in the areas named in the EIS. These resources (timber, grazing, minerals) will be restricted, more likely prohibited in the river corridors and in the far-reaching viewsheds. This will hurt the local economy and national economy through lost jobs, lost resources, and lost revenues. Once in place, the restrictions and prohibitions could be continuously expanded to an ever growing region, taking in not only the viewsheds, but also the undefined ecosystem and watershed. Since the USFS seems to be moving towards ecosystem and watershed management, these are very important concerns that are addressed in the EIS.

### **Response #P002**

There will be no prohibition of grazing based on rivers being recommended for designation. The Upper Truckee River is recommended for a wild designation, which is the most restrictive classification. The wild designation will not mandate any changes in grazing numbers. The wild designation would continue and reinforce the existing policy of not allowing motorized access within the river corridor that is managed for unroaded recreation. Sagehen Creek is recommended for a scenic designation. A scenic designation would not require any changes to the grazing program in the present grazing allotment. As discussed in response P001, if there are unacceptable impacts from grazing, determined through the allotment management planning process and monitoring, grazing management will change according to the documented data from those processes.

In regards to timber and mining activities, the consequences for the preferred alternative do not identify significant effects or prohibitions due to W&S river designation. Management direction currently existing for the Upper Truckee already prohibits timber production: "timber production

is not allowed; however, vegetation management may occur to prevent catastrophic losses in the forest." Forest Service regulations for wild rivers is consistent in that "cutting trees is only permitted in association with a primitive recreation experience or to protect the environment." Consequently, for the Upper Truckee, management direction does not noticeably change with regard to timber management. For Wild rivers, new mining claims and mineral leases are prohibited within 1/4 mile of the river. There are currently no mining claims or activities along the Upper Truckee. See the response to comments under timber and mining for more information.

The idea that entire viewsheds and watersheds would be automatically restricted by W&S river designation is not accurate. For the Upper Truckee River, the watershed is managed for non-motorized activities already. With Sagehen Creek the viewshed is not very extensive and visual quality objectives are not expected to change beyond the corridor boundaries. There are fens and meadows that exist beyond the river corridor which will be protected with existing Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines. These ecosystem values beyond the river corridor will be evaluated for Special Interest designation in a separate study.

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**Topic # P003 (Cat P01 ID 171 CN04)**

The minor effects on the grazers are negligible, compared to the restrictions called for under the legislation of the last 20 years, which is just now being implemented by the USFS. In 20 years, there will be no cows in streams and riparian vegetation, fish and other animals will be back.

**Response #P003**

As discussed above in the first two responses, designation is not expected to have effects on grazing. There is no legislation that specifically calls for restrictions on grazing. There is, however, legislation that has required the Forest Service to update their allotment management plans through the NEPA planning process. Part of this process addresses appropriate levels of grazing in relation to potential resource impacts within the allotment. Where needed, there could be adjustments to grazing but this would be based on the analysis for a given allotment plan and monitoring.

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P-4 Other comments on Grazing

**Topic #P004 (Cat P04 ID 19 CN 06)**

We also propose that the public recreation and livestock grazing is, and can continue, to be compatible.

**Response #P004**

We agree with your basic statement. In general, livestock grazing has been compatible with recreation use. We expect grazing and recreation to continue to be compatible in most cases. In the few situations where we discover conflicts, a range of solutions will be identified and the best resolution pursued on a case-by-case basis.

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**Topic #P005 (Cat P04 ID 171 CN 06)**

Timber takes would not drop and grazing reductions are an economic gain, since this is a below-cost activity.

**Response #P005**

In the preferred alternative the environmental consequences section identifies a small drop in annual board feet in timber outputs and does not show any reductions in grazing. You may see reduced grazing activities as an economic gain, but that is a hard sell to the individual rancher if they have to face reduced income.



# COUNTY OF NEVADA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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jc



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



**Sam Dardick**  
Supervisor, 5th District  
Residence Phone: (916) 292-1726

## SIERRA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors  
P.O. Drawer D  
Downieville, California 95936  
916-289-3295

November 17, 1994

November 14, 1994

Mr. Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
P O Box 6003  
Nevada City Ca 95959

Re: Eastside Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study

Dear Mr. Horning:

I have reviewed the report prepared by the Tahoe National Forest's staff entitled "DSR/DEIS for the Eastside Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study". I support the designation of the Upper Truckee River and the Sagehen River as "Scenic Rivers" and the designation of Independence Creek and the Upper Sagehen River as Special Interest Areas.

As a Nevada County Supervisor, I urge congressional action for protecting these areas and ask that local officials be invited to participate in the preparation of management plans for the four designated streams.

Sincerely,

SAM DARDICK  
Supervisors, District V

SD:cf

United States Department of Agriculture  
Tahoe National Forest  
P. O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Attn: Mr. John Skinner  
Forest Supervisor

Dear Supervisor Skinner:

The Board of Supervisors has reviewed the draft study report (draft EIS for the Eastside Wild and Scenic River Suitability Study).

The Board wishes to express its opposition to the designation of any river or stream for possible addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. This action was taken by the Board of Supervisors in regular meeting on the basis that such a designation of any stream or river would create significant, adverse effects on the local economy and ability to enhance the natural resource industries of the County.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

SIERRA COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

  
Donald E. Bowling  
Chairman

DEB:THB:jc:11/11  
cc: Clerk of the Board

TAHOE N.F.  
NOV 21 1994

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	P. HORNING

Donald M. McIntosh  
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Nevada "Babe" Lewis  
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Lenny Gallegos  
District No. 5  
P.O. Box 6  
Loyalton, CA 96118

E-78



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

*X*

Public Health Service

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Centers for Disease Control  
Atlanta GA 30341-3724

September 14, 1994

TAHOE N.F.

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Ms. Judie L. Tartaglia  
Forest Supervisor  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
P. O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, California 95959-6003

Dear Ms. Tartaglia:

Thank you for writing to Secretary Shalala requesting a review of the Wild and Scenic River Study Report and Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (DLEIS) for the Eight Eastside Rivers on the Tahoe National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has lead responsibility for reviewing EISs, your letter was forwarded to this office for direct reply. We are responding on behalf of the U.S. Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services. You may send future requests for DEIS reviews directly to this office.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative E) recommends designation of the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek as National Scenic Rivers and recommends the Forest Service to designate Upper Independence Creek as a Special Interest Area. These plans are stated to be consistent with the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the Lake Tahoe Basin Land and Resource Management Plan. We concur with Alternative E as the preferred alternative and offer the following general comments.

We note that, if the river is designated into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, an appropriate management plan would then be prepared in a coordinated effort. This plan should address future management interventions (i.e. the allowable number of visits and group size and related regulatory measures) that may be implemented to protect the environment and users of the designated areas. Although the management plan to be developed should be very specific and cover a variety of issues, we believe the Final EIS should briefly elaborate on general management actions to be taken. For example, because of the expected increase in recreational use, what measures will be taken to instruct users about issues relating to human waste disposal, littering, fire hazards, and safe drinking water, and will these issues be adequately handled with existing resources? Will additional facilities be needed to accommodate the expected increase in recreational use?

Page 2 - Ms. Judie L. Tartaglia

We note that the quality of water in all the study rivers meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards. To ensure that water quality is maintained in the future, we recommend the continuation of Best Management Practices by all parties. We are confident the responsible agencies, including two National Forests, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Corps of Engineers, will adequately and cooperatively ensure the protection of these resources.

We note that subject rivers flow totally through National Forest lands and that there would be no impact upon private lands, a concern apparently expressed by some during the scoping process. We were pleased to note that the private landowners will be encouraged by the above agencies to manage their property in a way that protects the outstanding values of the river corridor and to use standards provided to them as a guide.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this document. Please ensure that we are included on your mailing list to receive a copy of the Final EIS and future EISs which may indicate potential public health impact and are developed under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Sincerely yours,

*Kenneth W. Holt*

Kenneth W. Holt, M.S.E.H.  
Special Programs Group (F29)  
National Center for Environmental Health

30341

4770 Buford Hwy  
Nth East F29 P29  
Atlanta GA  
30341

E.79



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

A 80 (33)

NOV 18 1984

Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
P.O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Mr. Horning:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the **Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Eight Eastside Rivers (DEIS)** in Tahoe National Forest. Our comments on this DEIS are provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [42 USC 4231 et seq.], Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations [40 CFR Parts 1500-1508] and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The DEIS examines the inclusion of eight rivers into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (Wild Rivers System). The DEIS assesses 7 alternatives for future management of river areas in the Lake Tahoe area and analyzes the environmental consequences of the alternatives. The proposal, or preferred alternative, recommends that only 2 rivers be designated as part of the Wild Rivers System.

We have rated this DEIS as "LO" -- Lack of Objections. We recommend, however, that the DEIS address a few additional issues. The DEIS should examine the possible sources of air pollution which may create visibility problems in the river areas. The Final EIS (FEIS) should discuss whether these river areas will be designated as Prevention of Significant Deterioration, Class I areas under the Clean Air Act [42 U.S.C. §7491].

The DEIS should assess the water quality impacts on the rivers from activities potentially causing direct discharges and polluted runoff. Direct sources of water pollution are regulated under the permit system established by the Clean Water Act - the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) [33 U.S.C. §1342]. Polluted runoff can be caused by those activities permitted under the Wild Rivers System or could be caused by activities outside the river areas. Such potential runoff includes sediment and concrete materials from construction of buildings or operation of mines, petroleum products from vehicle traffic, pesticides from vegetation management and agriculture and sewage from small facilities.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. Please send one copy of the FEIS to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office. If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 744-1574 or Edward Yates, of my staff, at (415) 744-1584.

Sincerely,

David Farrel, Acting Chief  
Office of Federal Activities

MI #2254

E.80

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20426

5-175

SEP 29 1994

Mr. Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, CA 95959-6003

Dear Mr. Horning:

This responds to Forest Supervisor Tartaglia's letter of August 23, 1994 (reference 1920-6), requesting our review and comments on your Wild and Scenic River Study Report and Draft Legislative Environmental Impact Statement for the Eight Eastside Rivers in the Tahoe National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

The report makes no mention of existing hydroelectric development within the limits of the study area. We agree with this and have also determined that there are no pending applications for license, exemption, or preliminary permit for hydroelectric projects in the study area.

Accordingly, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has no objection to the proposed designation of the study segments of these California rivers as parts of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the report.

Sincerely,



Fred E. Springer  
Director  
Office of Hydropower Licensing

The Resources Agency



of California

Pete Wilson  
Governor

Douglas P. Wheeler  
Secretary

California Conservation Corps • Department of Boating & Waterways • Department of Conservation  
Department of Fish & Game • Department of Forestry & Fire Protection • Department of Parks & Recreation • Department of Water Resources  
November 21, 1994

U.S. Forest Service  
Attn: Phil Horning  
P. O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, California 95959-6003

Dear Mr. Horning:

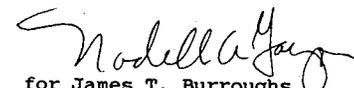
The State has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Eight Eastside Rivers, Wild and Scenic River Study, Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada and Sierra Counties, submitted through the Office of Planning and Research.

We coordinated review of this document with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Native American Heritage and State Lands Commissions, and the Departments of Conservation, Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, and Transportation.

None of the above-listed reviewers has provided a comment regarding this document. Consequently, the State will have no comments or recommendations to offer.

Thank you for providing an opportunity to review this project.

Sincerely,



for James T. Burroughs  
Deputy Secretary and General Counsel

cc: Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(SCH 94094003)

The Resources Building Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 653-5656 FAX (916) 653-8102

California Coastal Commission • California Tahoe Conservancy • Colorado River Board of California  
Energy Resources, Conservation & Development Commission • San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission  
State Coastal Conservancy • State Lands Commission • State Reclamation Board

177

-2-

## CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD -

## LAHONTAN REGION

2092 LAKE TAHOE BOULEVARD  
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA 96150  
(916) 542-5400 FAX (916) 544-2271Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
P.O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, CA 95959

November 17, 1994

Dear Mr. Horning:

**COMMENTS ON US FOREST SERVICE'S (TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST AND LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT) EIGHT EASTSIDE RIVERS WILD AND SCENIC STUDY REPORT AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (TRUCKEE RIVER DRAINAGE; ALPINE, EL DORADO, PLACER, NEVADA, AND SIERRA COUNTIES)**

We have reviewed the subject draft Report and Environmental Impact Statement (draft R/EIS). We understand the draft R/EIS to document the results of the analyses of eight rivers to determine their suitability for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The eight rivers analyzed are the Truckee River from Tahoe City to the City of Truckee, and seven tributaries to the Truckee River (Upper Truckee River, Cold Stream, Alder Creek, Sagehen Creek, the Little Truckee River, Upper Independence Creek, and Perazzo Creek). The draft R/EIS considers the seven alternatives of:

- A. Designate all eight rivers;
- B. Designate no rivers;
- C. Designate those rivers with the most outstandingly remarkable characteristics;
- D. Designate rivers with the greatest amount of public recreation directly associated with the river;
- E. Designate rivers that minimize potential impacts on private lands and minimize administrative costs to public agencies;
- F. Designate rivers that would minimize impacts on other resource uses such as timber management, water and power development, and minimize impacts on the state and local governments' ability to utilize existing utility and transportation corridors;
- G. Designate those rivers identified to have the greatest botanical and ecological values as related to the river environment.

The draft R/EIS identifies Alternative E as the Preferred Alternative. Alternative E recommends designation of the Upper Truckee River and Sagehen Creek as National Scenic Rivers.

We offer the following comments on the draft R/EIS:

1. The Water Quality Section, page IV.4, includes a statement that there are no known significant water quality problems in any of the study rivers. At your environmental scoping meeting held this summer, our staff informed you of the Clean Water Act Section 303 (d) listing for the Truckee River for metals. Waters on this list are described as "water quality limited segments where objectives or goals of the Clean Water Act are not attainable with the Best Available Treatment/Best Control Technology (BAT/BCT)." We have enclosed copies of our current draft Fact Sheets summarizing known problems.
2. Pages IV-13 and IV-14 include incorrect statements about the State's Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Eastern Sierra. The East Walker River is not designated a State Wild and Scenic River, nor are the entire West Walker and East Fork Carson Rivers. Reaches of the West Walker and the East Fork Carson Rivers designated as State Wild and Scenic Rivers are described as:
  - East Fork Carson River:** Approximately ten river miles from the Town of Markleeville to the California/Nevada state line.
  - West Walker River:** Approximately 37 river miles from Tower Lake downstream to the confluence with Rock Creek, near the town of Walker on the edge of Antelope Valley, as well as about one mile of one tributary (Leavitt Creek).
3. The statement on page IV-18 that the USFS administers facilities such as water and sewer lines is unclear. Does the USFS administer the actual facilities, or does it administer rights of way and/or special use permits?

E.82

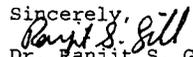
5. It is unclear how some of the federal Wild and Scenic criteria were applied to the various rivers, evaluated throughout the draft R/EIS, and summarized in Table S.1 *Rivers by Alternative*, and Table S.2 *Summary of Environmental Consequences from Wild and Scenic River Designation*. For example, "Wild Rivers" are defined on page III.5 as "free of impoundments and are generally inaccessible, essentially primitive,..." The Draft R/EIS considers only Upper Independence Creek as "Wild". Yet, the Upper Truckee River flows through an area described in the draft R/EIR on page IV-28 as "an area that is near natural, and was considered for Wilderness designation as part of the California Wilderness Act." Perazzo Creek is described on page IV-26 as accessible only "via a primitive road." Neither the Upper Truckee River nor Perazzo Creek were considered eligible for the "Wild" designation. We consider a "Wild" designation to provide better protection of existing water quality and beneficial uses than a "Scenic" designation.

It also does not seem like the "Outstandingly Remarkable" determination was made consistently for "Fish and Wildlife" or for "Ecological" values of the rivers.

6. The draft R/EIS identifies Perazzo Creek, Sagehen Creek, Alder Creek, the Upper Truckee River, and the Little Truckee River as supporting diverse riparian and wetland areas, including bogs, fens, meadows, and vernal pools. The draft R/EIS also assigns the "Outstandingly Remarkable" values for "Fish and Wildlife", and "Ecological" to Independence Creek, Little Truckee River, Perazzo Creek, Sagehen Creek, and the Upper Truckee River. We support an Alternative that would best protect these riparian and wetland areas, and the beneficial uses of these rivers. It appears that Alternatives A, C, or G, with a re-evaluation of the "Wild" designation for applicability to the Upper Truckee River and Perazzo Creek, would better provide that protection than would the preferred Alternative identified in the draft R/EIS.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact me or Cindy Wise at (916) 542-5400.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Ranjit S. Gill, Chief  
Planning and Toxics Unit

Enclosures

cc: Regional Board members

(179)



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Table 2.3 - It would appear that in the Private Land column, the Truckee River should indicate "Moderate impacts" and Cold Stream "High Impacts" based on the amount of private ownership along each.

It would be extremely useful to a decisionmaker if a chart summarizing impact of each alternative were presented, rather than just the Preferred Alternative.

Page V.2 - In the third paragraph, third line, "public ownership" should be substituted for "Federal or State Government" since ownership by local Government is also applicable.

Page V.3 - The first paragraph of Alternative A states that all rivers would be protected by designation except for the Truckee River (Tahoe City to Truckee) which would be subject to the easement rights held by the Sierra Pacific Power Company for power purposes. However, on Page IV.24, the DEIS states that Sierra Pacific Power Company also owns the water impounded at Independence Lake and provides water to Reno and Sparks. It further states that evaluation of adverse effects to Independence Creek and the resident Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus (=salmo) clarki henshawi*), are to be evaluated in the Truckee River Operating Agreement (TROA) EIS/EIR. It is recommended that the FEIS evaluate all the existing easement rights by the Sierra Pacific Power Company and any potential adverse effects to all eight rivers. If potentially adverse conditions are exempt from designation, i.e., (Page IV.25) maintaining the option for a proposed water impoundment for the Little Truckee, the FEIS should discuss these conditions in the analysis of the alternatives.

E-84

Page C.4 Appendix C - Because the Reno area is rapidly being developed, water demands from Independence Lake will continue to increase. Consequently, it is suggested that the FEIS provide specific water protection measures in the SIA Management Area Standards and Guidelines (Appendix C, Page C.4) for Independence Creek. It would also be useful for the FEIS to analyze whether either Wild or SIA designation, in combination with any protection measures enacted by these two documents, would adequately protect this national aquatic resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,  
*Willie R. Taylor*  
Willie R. Taylor  
Acting Director  
Office of Environmental Policy  
and Compliance

In Reply Refer To:  
ER 94/662

Mr. Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
P.O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, California 95959

Dear Mr. Horning:

We have reviewed the wild and scenic river study report and draft environmental impact statement for Eight Eastside Rivers, Tahoe National Forest, California and have the following comments.

Background, Page I-1

LC8+

By way of correction, this paragraph should state that the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) was initiated in 1975 by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (USDI), continued by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, and is now maintained by the National Park Service (NPS). An initial listing for all states (except Montana and Alaska) was published by the NPS in 1982 and a major update was made in 1994. Listing on the NRI is not a close-ended process and the list has expanded dramatically as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have identified potentially eligible rivers during their land management planning processes. Also, "P.L. 90-542" should be "P.L. 90-542, as amended" and the words "and immediate environments" should follow "rivers" in the last line, first paragraph. In the third paragraph the word "classification" should be "designation".

Rationale for Preferred Alternative

B-D14

The document states the planning team has determined that two of the eight eligible rivers totalling only 15 miles of river are suitable for designation. The only criterion used in making this determination is that suitability requires 100% Federal ownership. These two rivers are the least in need of designation to protect their outstandingly remarkable values according information in the document. It is suggested that the Truckee (72% Federal), Independence Creek (89% Federal) and Perazzo Creek (77% Federal) should be given further consideration. The document infers that local opposition to designation is based largely on a concern for potential Federal land acquisition. The report should state clearly that where over 50% of the land in the river boundary is in public ownership, land purchases must be from a willing seller.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
NEVADA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES STATE OFFICE  
4600 Kietzke Lane, Building C-125  
Reno, Nevada 89502-5093

4/1/11 (178)  
C/OODN/124 November 17, 1994  
File No. FS 6-6

Mr. Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
Post Office Box 6003  
Nevada City, California 95959

demo Don

Dear Mr. Horning:

Subject: Eight Eastside Rivers Wild and Scenic River  
Study Report and Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Nevada State Office (Service) has reviewed the Eight Eastside Rivers Wild and Scenic River Study Report and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS/study report) dated July 1994. The Service commends your analysis of the suitability of eight rivers within the Truckee River Basin for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Service recommends selection of Alternative G, which designates rivers with the greatest botanical and ecological values, as the preferred alternative. The DEIS/study report identifies Alternative E as the preferred alternative. The objective of Alternative E is to minimize potential impacts to private lands and costs to public agencies. The type and amount of expenses potentially incurred by public agencies from wild or scenic river designation and how they vary by alternative is not clearly outlined in the DEIS/study report. For example, it is unclear if this includes potential economic or public benefits from wild or scenic river designation.

The presence of outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historical, cultural, or similar values should be a major factor in the determination of which rivers are recommended for wild and scenic designation. The difference between Alternatives G and E is that Alternative G recommends designating Perazzo Creek as a scenic river and the Little Truckee River as a recreational river, and Alternative E does not recommend any special designation for these rivers.

Scenic river designation of Perazzo Creek would provide further emphasis and protection for its unique vernal pools, bogs, fens, meadows, and old-growth forest. As stated in the DEIS/study report, an additional outstanding wildlife value of

Mr. Phil Horning

File No. FS 6

6-607 (this canyon and the Little Truckee River is that they support the second largest population in California of the California endangered willow flycatcher, *Empidonax traillii*. Also of significance is the fact that Perazzo Creek is identified in the technical/agency draft of the Recovery Plan for Lahontan Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi* (LCT) as a potential LCT recovery site. Recreational River designation of the Little Truckee River would provide additional protection for its unique fens, meadows, and willow flycatcher population.)  
7-810  
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS

9-605 Chapter IV. Affected Environment. Description of Eligible Rivers. Upper Independence Creek. Page IV.23  
The document states that a barrier to fish migrating from Independence Lake to Upper Independence Creek exists when the lake elevation drops below 6,220 feet. However, it also states that the storage capacity of Independence Lake varies between an elevation of 6,921 feet and 6,949 feet. There appears to be a discrepancy in these numbers which should be corrected or explained.

~~10-605~~ Chapter IV. Affected Environment. Description of Eligible Rivers. Perazzo Creek. Page IV.26  
Perazzo Creek is identified in the technical/agency draft of the Recovery Plan for LCT as a potential LCT recovery site.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the DEIS/study report. If you have any questions, please contact Robin Hamlin or Mary Jo Elpers at (702) 784-5227.

Sincerely,

David L. Harlow  
State Supervisor

CC:  
Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon

Town Council

Kathleen Eagan, Mayor

Joseph C. (Joe) Aguera  
Gary R. Botta  
Embree B. (Breeze) Cross  
Steve A. Carpenter



X (180)

Department Heads

Stephen L. Wright, Town Manager  
Jill R. Brown, Director of Finance  
J. Dennis Crabb, Town Attorney

Jon A. Lander, Public Works  
Tony Lashbrook, Community Development

November 14, 1994

Mr. Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
U.S. Forest Service  
P. O. Box 6003  
Nevada City, CA 95959

RE: Eight Eastside Rivers E.I.S.

Dear Phil:

The purpose of this letter is to convey the Town of Truckee's comments on the Eight Eastside Rivers Wild & Scenic Rivers Study Report and Environmental Impact Statement.

1. The Town supports the Forest Service recommendations for establishment of a Special Interest Designation along Upper Independence Creek and Sagehen Creek, and the Scenic Designation of Sagehen Creek. These designations are consistent with the pristine value and free flowing characteristics of these streams. In addition, these areas are primarily under federal ownership.

2. The Town opposes Wild and Scenic Designation of the Truckee River between Lake Tahoe and the Town of Truckee. Although the Town is strongly supportive of maintaining the free flowing value of the stream, Wild and Scenic Designation could conflict with transportation and utility improvements within the corridor. Future transportation improvements will be critical to the economic viability of the region.

3. The Town is very supportive of the concept of preserving the free flowing nature of the rivers, streams and creeks in and adjacent to the Town of Truckee, including the Truckee River, Alder Creek and Cold Stream. However, the Town strongly believes that the protection of those river and stream corridors can be more efficiently and effectively achieved by the use of the Town's land use and zoning authority. The Town has already begun the process of reorganizing the importance of these waterways within our General Plan.

4. The study section of the Truckee River would more logically terminate at Donner Creek as opposed to the Highway 267 Bridge. The current study segment terminates in the center of our Town while termination at Donner Creek would coincide with the Town's boundary. The Town recommends that the study section terminate at Donner Creek.

Phil Horning  
Tahoe National Forest  
U.S. Forest Service  
November 14, 1994  
Page 2

Regardless of the outcome of the various designations, the Town is interested and committed to working with the Forest Service on any future management plans affecting the region. In addition, we would be very interested and involved in the legislative process should any of the rivers and streams in or adjacent to Truckee be recommended for designation to Congress. Please keep us informed of the recommendations that are contained in the Field Report.

The Town appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on this important document. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of you and Joanne Roubique in helping us understand the report.

Should you have any questions regarding our comments, please don't hesitate to call Tony Lashbrook, Community Development Director, at 582-7876.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Eagan, Mayor

KE/jrs

cc Town Council  
Town Manager  
Tony Lashbrook, Community Development Director

E.86