



Lake Tahoe

Federal Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes
 Wednesday, October 14, 2009
 USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
 Emerald Bay Conference Room
 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Attendees:

- John Pang, Patrick Wright, Mike Berg, Michelle Sweeney, Steve Teshara, Rochelle Nason, Jim Lawrence, Lon Rusk, Greg McKay, David Childs, Mark Kimbrough, (Jim Thomas, Peter Kraatz, John Falk via conference call)

Designated Federal Official (DFO)

- Terri Marceron

Chairman

- Andrew Strain

Other Representatives

- Zach Hymanson, TSC; Linda Lind, Arla Hains, Richard Vacirca, Holly Eddinger, Cheryl Beyer, USFS; Phil Brozek, USACE (via conference call); Stephanie Byers, Steve Chilton, USFWS; Jack Landy, EPA; Paul Nielsen, Julie Regan, Harmon Zuckerman, Shane Romsos, TRPA; Sudeep Chandra, UNR, Chip Morrill, SLI Sustainability Commission; Jerry Owens, NRCS (via conference call)

Public

- Hans Bonnicksen, Marion Whittman

Welcome, Introductions, Review of Agenda & Approval of Previous Minutes -

Andrew:

- Andrew requested Arla to start the roll-call and went through the agenda.
- Approval of previous minutes: Moved to approve minutes by Rochelle (with change Arla discussed with the committee), motion seconded by Greg and approved.

Phil Brozek, USACE - Upcoming Retirement:

- Andrew – I would like to thank Phil Brozek for his contributions to the Basin. It is true that our community, the lake and watershed are better off because Phil was here and cared about the issues. He dedicated much time to finding solutions. This is his last LIFAC meeting

- Terri – I have a Certificate of Appreciation for Phil on behalf of the LIFAC, LTBEAC and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. There is also a Jon Paul photo book signed by those here today. Phil did a fantastic job. He was always prepared, active, and engaged. I appreciate his work with the Federal Interagency Partnership. He always figured out where his agency could help. He knew how to leverage and seek funding. Phil knew where to put his energy to complete a job. Congratulations Phil, you were an agency member that was action oriented. You made things happen quickly to protect resources. Best of luck.
- Phil – the partners I worked with made this true. Your willingness to work with the Corps was always appreciated.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) – Dr. Sudeep Chandra, University of Nevada – Reno
PowerPoint Presentation – Alterations to the Bottom Ecology of Lake Tahoe: A Case for a Nearshore Management & Monitoring Program.

- Sudeep – what do we know about the status of the invasives in the lake? There is a draft written document coming by Christmas. In the next 30-35 minutes I will tell you what we know is happening. If you are interested in some of the information given today, email questions to any of the collaborators listed. There are 5-6 reports I can send you on the nearshore invasives.
- The outline of Sudeep's presentation included:
 - Tahoe's long history of introductions: intentional vs. illegal or unintentional
 - A practical case for prevention and immediate management of recent invasives, can we manage the species discussed today?
 - Alteration to the bottom ecology of Lake Tahoe: impacts and threats from plant, invertebrate, and fish introductions
 - Potential establishment of New Zealand Mudsail and quagga mussel

Questions for Sudeep:

- Steve T. – how much do the trappings cost?
- Sudeep – I will get back to you on the cost for crayfish trappings for a two-year period.
- Steve C – there is a commercial harvester in Seattle; it is viable on the commercial level. We may only need to harvest for five years.
- Harmon – what if you were to give crayfish traps to every fisherman?
- John F. – how can you manipulate the population without having another species take over?
- Sudeep – for the crayfish, I recommend a pilot study. I don't want to answer those questions – go with prevention first. We need to act quickly. With funding from USACE we performed a study on the adult quagga mussels in the lab. We took them from Lake Mead and put them in Lake Tahoe water. All exhibited positive growth and potential for reproduction. This is an indication we should take precautionary measures to keep them out of the lake. I want to point out clams can provide habitat for other non-natives. We need a longer-term monitoring framework that could detect the next invasive.
- John F. – in the study the calcium needs are most acute for newborn quagga – will low levels of calcium sustain the next population?
- Sudeep – next week I am submitting a proposal to study that.
- Michelle – \$150-250K to control water milfoil – is that annually?

- Sudeep – yes. Mowing allows fragmenting. The milfoil moves around and re-establishes. We have pilot funding for a study with Dr. Anderson for different treatment options in the Tahoe Keys (\$40,000).
- Patrick – are you aware of the proposals coming in for Lake Tahoe SNPLMA Round 11?
- Sudeep – no
- Patrick – jointly \$600,000-\$800,000 combined SNPLMA and State Land's funding request is what we will propose for stormwater and invasives. What do you believe is the top priority?
- Sudeep – I think other areas are important too but there is no funding. Next year we will go outside the Basin for funding. Within the three institutions we have plenty of expertise. Our emails are clogged with people who want assistance with proposals.
- Steve T. – we need funding and priorities. I would like to see us have sources to manage the AIS populations we have now. It is good you are applying from funds from other areas. The information that you learn in Tahoe is helpful for other areas.
- Sudeep – Dr. Whittmann and I look at boats moving throughout the west. We need \$150K and manpower.
- Steve T. – collaboration – put agencies in a partnership within a broader region.
- Sudeep – we outreach with other systems. We want to be ready to go if invasives are identified in the lake. I can show you the request we made to Gina Banks (Senator Feinstein's office). Prevention will be critical since there are 3-5 other invasive species moving out west.
- Zach – there is a shared responsibility between the capital and science side to work together on these projects.

Aquatic Invasive Species – AIS Inspection Stations Feasibility Study – Steve Chilton, FWS

- Steve –
 - Work Task One: Synthesis of Existing Information (review Lake Tahoe and other states)
 - Work Task Two: Preferred inspection/decontamination locations with alternatives (traffic analysis, construction costs, analysis of potential sites, and land assessment)
 - With \$200,000 first 2 work tasks above could be completed by January 15, 2010
- Steve – this presentation should be titled “Entry point inspections status – why and how?” Ramp inspections are not foolproof. Off-site inspections next year will stop more boats but not 100%. We put together a Request for Proposal (RFP) for seven point-of-entry inspection stations. Prevention will be close to 100% or about 98%. We can ramp up quickly – about 16 months. Most control/prevention will be at the ramps. Build a program with inspections at the ramps, no boat launch unless inspected. Who can we hire? At what level of expertise? Workers are not always as conscientious when you pay \$10 per hour. We need to look at feasibility of stations, cost to maintain? Put buildings up and man 24/7, 365 days a year? Is that viable for 5 plus years if feasibility study proves out? RFP could go out in next two weeks. The consulting firm is getting back to us on what we can get for the money. We went over the work tasks needed with them.
 - Can this be done?

- What are the costs?
 - Where should they go?
 - Politically correct?
 - Will moving this way get us closer to 100%?
 - We know now the AIS can live here (from recent study)
- Steve I. – are there inspection stations like this anywhere?
 - Steve C. – there are border checks at Washington State. They look for invasives and other things. The Basin will only be checking boats.
 - Andrew – we asked FWS to look at budgets (SNPLMA and non); consequences of changing scope, and where else they might find money for the study to meet the deadline.
 - Patrick – we don't know the invasive strategy in the Basin.
 - Steve C. – in Rounds 8, 9 and 10 we identified inspection, control and public outreach. I could have brought the detailed budget in today.
 - Patrick what do I tell Sacramento (California state government) if they call? Feinstein has asked for your strategy many times.
 - Steve C. – the AIS Management Plan identified priorities in four areas.
 - Sudeep – the plan of action needs to be taken to another step. A working group has moved forward to the next round of actions.
 - Steve C. – the AIS Coordination Team sent out priority recommendations
 - Patrick – we need leadership.
 - Rochelle – I saw a document with a large request for funding for a small amount of detection. Need prioritized set of actions with the prices of the actions. Private sources could pitch in if we had that information
 - Steve C. – you asked for the consequences of taking \$200,000 from Round 10.
 - Rochelle – we need to resolve what the scope of the feasibility study is.
 - Andrew - we need to get back to our question. I realize the National Task Force has the AIS Management Plan. Is FWS planning to move forward on the feasibility study and where is the funding coming from?
 - Steve C. – I provided the upfront tasks for the \$200K. An evaluation of what we have today and where we are going.
 - Rochelle – are there any improvements to prevention efforts for 2010? Provide a number to measure effectiveness.
 - Steve C. – no where else are they doing this. It is hard to tell. The \$200K is for evaluation and alternatives.
 - Patrick – we need a strategy and action plan for the \$200K. How it fits into the big picture, and consequences.
 - Steve C. – take \$100K out of Round 10, LTFAC come up with \$100,000.
 - Rochelle – is there still a request to Feinstein?
 - Steve C. – yes, the bill hasn't come up yet so we are not banking on it.
 - Rochelle – Ted Thayer, TRPA said “we could get a lot done with \$200K”. I can go to a private person for money. I need to know what they would get. I want something realistic to help. We need a program with bite size pieces to advocate funding for.
 - Andrew – the AIS Management Plan is an overall strategy.
 - Steve C. – **Action item:** I will send it to LTFAC.
 - Steve I. – If there was a study of blocking every way into the lake and all boats, I wouldn't vote for it. It would turn people against Tahoe. We need a workshop with a professional facilitator to figure out the solutions.

- Michelle – I agree we need the right venue and right people to meet in the next month.
- Rochelle – we are very exposed – I am unsure of the protection we have or can get for the funding needed.
- Andrew – last month we asked if FWS could reprogram \$200K for the feasibility study.
- Rochelle – I’m not hearing the group making progress on the plan.
- Sudeep – **Action item:** there is enough information. The AIS Working Group can pull it together. I feel certain that by year end a document could be put together. I am willing to assist Steve and have the information by Christmas.
- Michelle – A working group meeting could be pulled together. We still need a meeting put on the calendar and to decide who the right people are
- Sudeep – don’t send in people to just fill in.
- Julie – TRPA could host the meeting.
- Andrew – currently LTFAC has no action to recommend to TREX.
- Rochelle – Basin entry point inspections – we have to look at it. We thought for \$200K we would get something, we need a process.

Round 11 Nomination Form – Linda Lind

- Linda - we are tweaking for more clarity. In the past the nomination form was hard to fill out, this round we have created an actual form. It will be easier the nominators checking a “yes” and “no” box. This will save time. The form will be on the Forest Service website. Review it and give me a call with any suggestions or concerns. Also I produced a tip sheet to help people.
- I am willing to look at draft Round 11 proposals from other agencies and give suggestions. The final submission due date is November 20th.

TRPA Regional Plan Update – Harmon Zuckerman

PowerPoint Presentation – TRPA Regional Plan Update (RPU)

- Harmon – the vision is to make the RPU a cohesive document that:
 - Gives the reader a sense of place
 - Puts the Thresholds front and center
 - Expresses the vision for the Basin
 - Integrates the Code

Questions from the committee:

- Mark – the word recreation is not anywhere. There are a lot of recreation components here but is it not in the milestones or plan.
- Harmon – the recreation element has been expanded from three to five subcomponents. It is in there. I would appreciate you attending the meetings to identify issues.
- Rochelle – in the June 19th document on your website there are three different approaches proposed to the EIP. It has long been recognized that regulatory approaches are only one part, public investment is needed. CIP from several places should be united as the EIP portion of the regional plan. I don’t see anything about that here? In the materials to the Corps are there alternative approaches to the EIP? I’m concerned because the EIP has not been updated since 2001. Which approach will be going forward?
- Harmon – different approaches sent to Corps but some had very few differences. Older programs such as the EIP will only have slight differences.

- Rochelle – all of us are concerned about the EIP. We need you to talk about new legislation to implement the EIP. Can you bring that forward at our next meeting?
- Harmon – yes.
- Rochelle – we don't want the EIP to be put on hold. What we are doing is illegal. TRPA should update the EIP every year out of compliance with legal requirements. We need to know what the EIP looks like.
- Harmon – we are at the point to put the proposed alternatives on the website. Each of the different alternatives contains the policies, goals with each element of the RPU; EIP is an element of RPU.
- Jim L. – not aware of three different versions of EIP?
- Harmon – three potential futures of EIP.
- Rochelle – three alternatives are going to the consultant for analysis.
- Julie – the TRPA Governing Board adopted a resolution to support the EIP.
- Rochelle – in terms of environmental analysis, there are three different versions.
- Andrew – the group raised good issues. Harmon can get back to us.
- Patrick – more specific scheduling coming?
- Harmon – our goal is to bring it to the October Governing Board meeting. When issues are vetted and at which meetings, you will see that.
- Phil – the USACE and contractors have reviewed the document, and need to see TRPA's response to comments. The contractor has not begun the environmental analysis.

Public Comment: none

Logistics/Review

- Future agenda topics:
 - AIS management plan
 - EIP update
 - Fuels/vegetation program for the Forest Service
 - LTRA
- Andrew – the next meeting will be in December or early January. Terri and I will be contacting the LTFAC with proposed dates.

Roundtable Closure

- Andrew – the LTFAC will be on hiatus while work is done by the Partnership Coordination Team on Lake Tahoe SNPLMA Round 11 capital and science nominations.
- Michelle – thank you for sending the letter to Feinstein. Is there timing for response?
- Terri – there is no earmark or line item for FY2010 on either side for AIS. There is money for FWS on a national basis but nothing specific to Tahoe. As of last week nothing got earmarked for Tahoe.

Minutes certified by LTFAC Chairman Andrew Strain

Andrew Strain
Signature

2.23.10
Date