



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Lake Tahoe Basin  
Management Unit

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Date: February 5, 2013

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board  
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd.  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Dear Chairman Jardine and Members of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality control Board:

I'm asking for your consideration and permit issuance for the Upper Truckee River Reach 5 Restoration and Utility Relocation Project.

The Upper Truckee River Project has been planned in coordination with members from the Upper Truckee River Watershed Advisory Group since 2006, in the context of the larger restoration effort occurring in the watershed from Meyers to the river's mouth at Lake Tahoe. The Reach 5 Restoration project is proposed by the USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) and the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC), who share ownership in the project area. Participating agreements between the CTC and LTBMU have been established for project planning and environmental analysis, and to identify the LTBMU as the agency responsible for implementing the Reach 5 project. LTBMU participation in the planning, development, design and implementation of the project was made possible by several Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act grants, totaling \$5,550,000. Approximately \$4 million dollars are remaining for implementation of the Reach 5 project and this money is designated exclusively for this use.

A high level of public and private coordination has gone into the analysis, review, and design of the Upper Truckee Reach 5 project beginning in 2006. This includes input from an established technical advisory group (TAG) consisting of a multi-disciplinary group of professionals from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, CTC, CA State Parks, City of South Lake Tahoe, US Army Corps of Engineers, CA Watershed Network, South Tahoe Public Utility District, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, CA Department of General Services and CA Department of Fish and Game.

In addition, the Draft NEPA/CEQA/TRPA environmental document was circulated for public review and comment on April 22, 2011; receiving four public comments during the draft phase. Public input was incorporated and considered in finalizing the environmental analysis with the final document released in February of 2012. The NEPA Finding of No Significant Impact and Decision Notice were signed on March 20, 2012, and the CEQA Notice of Determination was filed on March 21, 2012.

In working with our partners and regulatory agencies, it is particularly worth noting that, under the Environmental Improvement Program, restoration of the Upper Truckee River system has been a primary focus to achieve established goals for reducing sediment from stream channel



erosion to Lake Tahoe. From the Lake Tahoe TMDL Implementation Plan, the Upper Truckee River is currently estimated at 60 percent of total fine sediment loading from stream channels in the Tahoe basin. Public involvement and scientific evaluation concludes that "no action" is simply not feasible when so much is at stake in achieving improved clarity for Lake Tahoe.

Sincerely,



**NANCY J. GIBSON**  
Forest Supervisor