

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
TRUCKEE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL (TRWC)
Coordinated Resource Management and Planning
for the
Truckee River Watershed
Placer County, Nevada County, Sierra County
California

I. PURPOSE AND NEED

The signatories of this Memorandum of Understanding recognize the value of coordinating resource management and planning activities within the Truckee River Watershed among public agencies, the business community, recreationalists, schools, river users and private landowners, and the general public. It is the intention of the signatories to evaluate and implement projects of mutual interest through stakeholder cooperation, information exchange, and education. This MOU is intended to focus on the planning and implementation of specific actions involving water quality and quantity, air quality, recreation, fisheries, riparian habitat, public safety, flood control, and overall watershed health in the Truckee River corridor and its tributaries. If by group consensus, changes in this document are determined to be necessary at some point in the future, the consensus process may change this document. Consensus means that the signatories in attendance must be in full agreement for the Council to take an action.

Opportunities within the geographic focus of the TRWC area include improving watershed quality through the following activities:

- Encouraging stakeholder involvement in promoting watershed health.
- Emphasizing the need to maintain a balance between recreation, the environment, and development
- Sustaining and improving habitat and wildlife diversity and watershed resources
- Encouraging management practices of various recreational facilities and activities consistent with good watershed health practices

This MOU establishes a voluntary and cooperative commitment by the signatories to work together in a watershed planning process and in the implementation of projects to the extent of their authority. This MOU is not a contract and is not legally binding; it is instead an agreement among the signatories to work together toward common goals to the extent

possible. No signatory may be forced to take any action with which it does not concur. Such voluntary action has the potential to result in improved resource management and minimize conflict between public agencies, the business community, recreationalists, schools, river users and private landowners, and the general public.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Truckee River Watershed Council is to develop and implement a locally developed public-private collaborative watershed management plan. The plan will focus on watershed health and its benefits to economic health and to related public safety issues and will make recommendations for courses of action.

GOALS

- To evaluate and understand current and historical natural watershed conditions.
- To initiate the collaborative effort to balance the competing and changing interests of current and future users of the watershed with long term protection and enhancement of the watershed.
- To protect and restore the watershed ecosystem to enhance the viability of human uses in harmony with all species which utilize the watershed.
- To encourage the management of recreation use in the watershed which protects private property, natural resources, and sustains economic health.
- To promote the education of all individuals, organizations, and agencies with the most current information on the function and the management of the watershed.
- To gain flexibility in river operations to protect public, private property and natural resources from flood or high water levels.

III. OBJECTIVES

A. WORKING TOGETHER ON LOCALLY DEVELOPED SOLUTIONS

1. To create partnerships with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and stakeholders to work collaboratively on locally developed solutions to protect, support, and enhance the ecological and economic health of the Truckee River watershed. Such partnerships may focus on solutions aimed at accomplishing the following:
 - improving water quality and quantity
 - enhancing the reliability of water supplies

- enhancing wildlife habitat and aquatic resource values
- integrating recreation and land use planning processes
- reducing the risk of catastrophic fire
- reduce the risk of flood damage to private and public property
- ensuring public safety

These solutions may be in the form of demonstration projects or workshops for public education and awareness.

2. To provide input and guidance on proposed actions affecting the watershed. This would include acting as a sounding board to agencies proposing actions in the watershed.
3. To identify funding sources to further the TRWC mission, goals, and objectives.

B. CURRENT CONDITIONS

1. Work with the stakeholders to develop and continually update a list of watershed resource issues to be addressed by the TRWC. This list may include but not be limited to the following:

- water resource
- air quality
- aquatic habitat conditions/ fisheries
- stream and river channel integrity (geomorphology)
- flood flow management
- erosion and sedimentation
- regional economic health
- watershed fuel loading and fuel load maintenance
- road construction and maintenance
- watershed land use
- river corridor land use
- agricultural, grazing, and timber harvest
- instream, riparian, and other recreation uses
- public safety

2. Work with the appropriate stakeholders to organize existing data and databases relevant to each resource issue.
3. Develop an understanding of the interactive nature of the watershed processes and decision-making processes with respect to each resource issue.
4. Develop working objectives for the resource issues.
5. Develop an assessment which summarizes the historical trends, important inter-

relationships, current baseline conditions, and working objectives for each resource issue.

6. Facilitate the development of a cooperative watershed wide mapping (Geographic Information System) approach to support the TRWC activities.

C. FUTURE CONDITIONS

1. Develop and periodically refine the desired future conditions for each of the TRWC resource issues based on the best available data and science.
2. Work toward the development of measurable threshold parameters for each of the TRWC resource issues that can be used to determine if resource conditions meet, don't meet, or marginally meet the desired future condition.
3. On an on-going basis, identify the resources that do not meet or are not expected to meet the desired objectives. Identify the resources that could be improved and the potential mitigation measures, actions, and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that could be used to improve the resource condition.
4. Support the implementation of watershed improvements, solutions, and BMPs to work toward attainment of future desired conditions for each of the resource issues.
5. Provide a forum for stakeholders to review proposed projects, ongoing planning efforts, and actions that may affect specific TRWC resource issues or general watershed conditions. When consensus is reached, provide formal or informal input to project proponents and/or lead agencies regarding specific proposed or ongoing projects, planning efforts, and actions that may affect specific TRWC resource issues or general watershed conditions.
6. Support current and future data gathering activities relevant to the specific TRWC resource issues.

Notwithstanding the statement of missions and objectives herein, and because this MOU is not a contract and creates no obligation, the parties acknowledge and intend that this MOU shall not constitute the grounds for any liability in the event such goals and objectives are not met. Nor shall this agreement create any obligation or liability as to any signatory due to the action or inaction of any signatory. After the consultation and cooperation provided for herein, each agency shall continue to exercise its sole discretion in fulfilling legally authorized duties.

The watershed management plan and implementation guidelines developed under this MOU will not conflict with any legal obligation of any signatory, including those under

contracts, licenses, permits, regulations and statutes.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE TRWC AREA OF FOCUS

The Truckee River Watershed Council's area of focus consists of the Truckee River watershed from the Tahoe City Dam to the Nevada state line and includes that portion of Gray Creek and Bronco Canyon in the State of Nevada.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Participation by the public is strongly encouraged to enable the TRWC activities to fully reflect the consensus process of identifying and implementing the watershed objectives.

VI. DESIRED PARTICIPANTS

The following is a partial list of stakeholders in the Truckee River Watershed Council's area whose participation in the TRWC effort is desired:

Federal

- US Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- US Bureau of Reclamation
- The Truckee River Watermaster
- US Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Resources Conservation Service

State of California

- California Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region
- Department of Water Resources
- California Conservation Corps
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- State Lands Commission
- Caltrans

Regional and Local Entities in California

Placer County
Nevada County
Sierra County
Placer County and Nevada County Resource Conservation Districts
Town of Truckee
· Squaw Valley Municipal Advisory Council
North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council
Tahoe - Truckee Sanitation Agency
Public and Private Water Districts
Truckee River Basin Water Group
Ski Areas
Rafting Companies
Union Pacific Railroad
Business Community/Organizations
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
Truckee River Habitat Restoration Group
Major Landowners
Residents of the River/ Homeowners Associations
The General Public

State of Nevada

Paiute Tribe of Pyramid Lake
Truckee Carson Irrigation District
Washoe County Water Conservation District
Sierra Pacific Power Company

VIII. DATE OF MOU FORMATION

March 10, 1998.

IX. SIGNATORIES

We the undersigned, concur with the Truckee River Watershed Coordinated Resource Management MOU, and will act to implement it to the best of our ability.

NAME

TITLE

REPRESENTING