

# CTC looking at how best to manage its lands

By Kathryn Reed

In a meeting that was more about reports than decision-making, the California Tahoe Conservancy board was updated last week about the Upper Truckee Marsh, lands the state agency owns and what the adoption of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Plan means.

While the environmental documents for the Upper Truckee Marsh may be released at the end of next month, a comprehensive workshop about restoration along the Upper Truckee River is not slated until April or May.

Penny Stewart with the California Tahoe Conservancy told the board at the Dec. 14 meeting the idea is to bring experts from various disciplines together to talk about restoring the river – what has happened, what is in the works and what is planned. River restoration is part of the marsh project.

Nancy Gibson, U.S. Forest Service chief in the Lake Tahoe Basin and a non-voting member of the CTC board, said she supports the education component of such a meeting to explain the why here and why now questions. However, she said funding is in place for the reach of the river the Forest Service is responsible for and would hate to have that money threatened as the CTC takes this new global approach.



The Upper Truckee Marsh, which borders the Tahoe Keys, is an area the California Tahoe Conservancy wants to restore.  
Photo/AECOM

"I'm cautious about undermining decisions that have already been made," Gibson said.

Lynne Paulson, who is concerned with what is going on at Washoe Meadows State Park and Lake Valley Recreation Area, said the panel discussion should happen sooner. The river runs through those parcels.

Les Wright, a member of South Lake Tahoe Recreation Commission, advocated for including a boardwalk across the meadow from the Al Tahoe neighborhood to the Tahoe Keys area.

### **Asset lands**

Property that has some financial value to the CTC comes under the category of asset lands. They could potentially be sold and developed.

The 332 parcels that have been identified as such amount to 223.56 acres. Patrick Wright, CTC executive director, said it is not the intent to start unloading them all.

Bruce Eisner with the CTC said about 20 of those would likely be put on the market in the next five years. He said those are mostly in the commercial core areas. This would mean filling

in open space in high traffic areas and getting rid of parcels that don't fit the Conservancy's goals.

Nine of the parcels are in Meyers near highways 89 and 50.

"These were acquired as a possible multi-agency visitors center," Eisner explained. He said as Meyers moves forward with its area plan that these parcels might be of interest to planners, especially since the agencies have abandoned the idea of such a center.

The Conservancy's current policy to sell land requires requests for proposals be sent out in a competitive bid process instead of the conventional route of using a real estate agent. Eisner suggested looking at revising that policy in order to offer flexibility.

### **Regional Plan impacts**

With passage of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan it means changes to land coverage issues involving the CTC and other marketable rights.

The ability to use excess coverage mitigation fees across hydrologic area boundaries is seen as a positive by the CTC.

The CTC hopes the incentives to transfer residential development rights from sensitive land to town centers will jump-start the agency's ability to purchase developed land, like old motels, that were built in stream environmental zones.

Another change with the Regional Plan is that Van Sickle Bi-State Park, a CTC and Nevada State Parks project on the South Shore, is now designated recreation instead of conservation.

The CTC will also benefit from how bike and walking trails are exempt when it comes to coverage issues.

### **In other action:**

- Wright said it's likely Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., will reintroduce the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act. This would mean money for various Tahoe groups for projects under the environmental improvement program that was established after then-President Bill Clinton came to Tahoe in 1997.