

# Federal Rural Schools Act money allocated to 3 basin counties

Lake Tahoe Unified and Douglas County school districts will be receiving money through the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

The money is distributed to counties and then to school districts.

“These payments are part of the Department of Agriculture’s long-standing commitment to rural communities, schools and American youth,” Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a press release. “Our century-long support of America’s public schools and roads is one of many ways in which the Forest Service, as a good neighbor and partner, contributes to rural communities becoming self-sustaining and prosperous.”

The federal government is giving more than \$323 million to 41 states and Puerto Rico. El Dorado County is projected to get \$2,269,335, Douglas County \$30,130, and Placer County \$924,886.

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit in the past has used some of these funds for Generation Green.

The money may be used for supporting public schools and public roads, for projects to help maintain and improve the health of forests, and for county projects including “Firewise Communities” programs, reimbursements for emergency services on national forests, and development of community wildfire protection plans.

Since 1908, the Forest Service has shared with states 25 percent of gross receipts from timber sales, grazing,

minerals, recreation, and other land use fees on national forests to benefit public schools and public roads in the counties in which the forests are situated. With timber sales decreasing, schools suffered. That is how the act came about. It keeps being reauthorized, but in 2012 it was only reauthorized for this one distribution so future funding is not guaranteed.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*