

Congressional support for Tahoe funding iffy

By Michael Doyle, McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON – Capitol Hill and courthouse shadows will cloud the Lake Tahoe Summit that convenes Tuesday.

No doubt, the political A-listers gathering for the 18th annual summit have much to celebrate, starting with the spectacular views from the location near South Lake Tahoe. They also have their work cut out for them.

“We have our challenges, environmentally,” Amy Berry, CEO of the Tahoe Fund, said in an interview. “There’s a lot more to be done.”

Little time, for instance, remains for the current Congress to finish Lake Tahoe restoration bills introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act would authorize \$415 million over 10 years for forest fuels management, watershed restoration, storm-water management and other projects. It would continue an earlier law passed in 2000 but that expired in 2010.

The House version introduced last October has not yet had a hearing.

Underscoring the political challenge, the House bill is not co-sponsored by Republican Rep. Tom McClintock, whose district spans California’s share of the 191-square-mile lake. In the Senate, where members of the minority party can easily erect roadblocks, four Republicans voted against the Senate’s version in committee in June.

Brian Baluta, spokesman for the House bill’s author, Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Nev., said, “We hope to get a hearing by the end of

this Congress.”

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