

15 projects singled out as Best in Basin

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency recognized 15 projects completed in 2016 with Best in Basin awards.

Now in its 27th year, the program each year showcases projects around the lake that demonstrate exceptional planning, implementation, and compatibility with Tahoe's natural environment and communities.

This year's winners are:

- **Kingsbury Stinger Trail:** The U.S. Forest Service and nonprofit Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association partnered to build this multi-use trail that runs from the Andria Drive trailhead in upper Kingsbury to the Tahoe Rim Trail and ends at Terrace View Street in Lower Kingsbury, connecting with a class 1 bike path there. The project restored a steep and heavily-eroding old trail alignment. More than 100 people contributed to the project with 1,500 hours of volunteer work. Project partners: American Conservation Experience, Nevada Recreational Trails Program.
- **Burke Creek Highway 50 Crossing and Realignment, Phase 1:** Nevada Tahoe Conservation District daylighted a portion of Burke Creek in Stateline that was previously in an underground culvert, creating 200 feet of new stream channel, functioning floodplains, and installing a new, more appropriately sized stream crossing under Highway 50. Project partners: Balance Hydrologics, Wood Rodgers, Burdick Excavating, Nevada Department of Transportation, Nevada Division of State Lands, Douglas County, U.S. Forest Service.
- **Edgewood Lodge and Golf Course improvement project:** Edgewood Companies made major improvements to its golf

course water features, which receive stormwater from surrounding areas and function as the final treatment area before they discharge into Edgewood Creek and Lake Tahoe. The project renewed storage capacity of ponds, created new wetlands and 32,766 square feet of new stream environment zone, and significantly reduces fine sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus pollution into Lake Tahoe. Project partners: Nichols Consulting Engineers, Sierra Nevada Construction, Soil Tech, SMC Construction.

- **Tahoe Mountain Lab:** Cristi and Bernard Creegan and Jamie and David Orr overhauled the former *Tahoe Daily Tribune* building in South Lake Tahoe, turning it into a unique co-working space for startup businesses and entrepreneurs and a gathering place for the community. The project improved the building's energy efficiency by 34 percent; built upon the success of the recent Harrison Avenue upgrades; and breathed new life and vitality into an aging and under-utilized building. Project partners: Creegan Builders, Joe Ward, Gabbart and Woods, *Tahoe Daily Tribune*.
- **Sierra Tract Erosion Control Project Phases 3-4:** The city of South Lake Tahoe upgraded several hundred acres of the Sierra Tract neighborhood to reduce nuisance flooding and stormwater pollution into the Upper Truckee River. The project installed curb and gutter on neighborhood roads, above- and below-ground infiltration basins and treatment facilities, and protection for road shoulders. Project partners: CDM Smith Inc.; Western Botanical Services, Burdick Excavating.
- **Lake Tahoe Unified School District energy upgrades:** The district secured a \$763,000 grant through the California Clean Energy Jobs Act Proposition 39 K-12 Program to update aging and energy inefficient facilities. The project installed building automation systems, upgraded 7,287 interior and exterior lights to more efficient LED lighting, installed a high-efficiency HVAC system at the district office, installed smart irrigation systems

district-wide, and installed high-efficiency windows at the middle school. Investment totaled \$2.7 million, with potential lifecycle savings of more than \$6 million. Project partners: Climatec, Lake Tahoe Sustainability Collaborative.

- **Silliman slope stabilization:** Property owners stabilized 145 feet of heavily eroding slope between Fallen Leaf Lake Road and Fallen Leaf Lake with rip-rap, boulders, and vegetation to protect the lake from erosion and improve public safety on the narrow road. Project partners: John and Rich Silliman, John Larsen, Randy M. Klitsch/TECS, Tahoe Outdoor Living.
- **Camp Richardson BMP retrofit:** The U.S. Forest Service and Camp Richardson Resort Inc. partnered to upgrade the popular Camp Richardson tent and RV campgrounds with paved roadways and parking areas to reduce dust, best management practices and infiltration basins to reduce stormwater pollution, new restrooms and a check-in kiosk, and bear-proof food lockers at campsites. The project reduced impervious coverage in stream environment zones and reduced overall coverage by 20 percent.
- **Lake Valley wood roof replacement program:** Shortly after the Angora Fire, Lake Valley Fire Protection District secured a federal grant that has helped nearly 400 homeowners replace hazardous wood-shake roofs with non-combustible roofing materials and create defensible space on their properties, improving community resilience to wildfires and helping create fire-adapted communities at Lake Tahoe. Project partners: California Office of Emergency Services, Federal Emergency Management Agency, local roofing contractors, and city of South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County building officials.
- **Cave Rock tunnel extension:** Nevada Department of Transportation built a 60-foot-long, 27-foot-tall tunnel extension carefully blended into the surrounding

landscape to protect the traveling public from falling rocks at Cave Rock. The project included measures to improve scenery, lighting upgrades, road repaving, and improved signage to alert motorists of icy conditions and bicyclists in the tunnel. The project also included water quality improvements along nearly four miles of Highway 50 to reduce stormwater pollution into Lake Tahoe. Project partners: Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Q&D Construction, CA Group Inc., TRPA, South Shore Transportation Management Association, Tahoe Transportation District, Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Hi-Tech Rockfall Construction, Nevada Highway Patrol, Titan Electrical, Drill Tech Drilling & Shoring, CMC Steel.

- **Northwood Boulevard fuel reduction:** Property owner James Hite, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, and Healthy Trees, Inc. partnered to thin 15 acres of dangerously overgrown forest in Incline Village, reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health and resilience. Project partner: Nevada Division of Forestry.
- **Somers Loop water quality improvement:** Nevada Pacific Development Corporation, David and Cheryl Duffield, and a team of partners restored the former Stack Estate, a 6.4-acre lakefront site in Crystal Bay. Working in steep and rugged terrain with near-surgical precision, the project removed seven dilapidated structures, removed five abandoned septic systems and 20 drums of hazardous household waste, restored 12,769 square feet of native vegetation, and removed 540 cubic yards of soil and rock contaminated with diesel fuel, motor oil, kerosene, or lead to achieve a clean close for the site from Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. Project partners: Midkiff & Associates, Inc.; Marlette Environmental Consulting, LLC; Resource Concepts, Inc.; Tri-State Surveying, Ltd.; Walden West Design; Olsen Engineering; Wise Consulting & Training; Cruz Construction Company,

Inc.; Clean Harbors Environmental Services; Kelley Erosion Control, Inc.; Alpha Analytical, Inc.; Advance Installations, Inc.; Nelson Electric Company; High Sierra Blasting; Luke Landscape Contractors, LLC.

- **Tahoe Beachfront Residences:** Todd Davidson and partners razed an old, lakefront hotel on Highway 28 in Kings Beach to build this new residential project, marking the first significant private investment after the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project. The project reduced the number of units on site and vehicle miles traveled, reduced impervious coverage at the site by 11 percent, installed best management practices to improve water quality, improved scenic qualities from the lake and highway, and established a new node of vibrancy in a Kings Beach community ripe for investment and revitalization. Project partners: GLAMorris, Dale Cox Architecture, Bill Johnson, Arnett & Associates, PR Design and Engineering, Inc.
- **Homewood Bike and Pedestrian Trail:** Tahoe City Public Utility District and partners completed this 1-mile “missing link” in the West Shore Bike Trail, which runs from Tahoe City to Sugar Pine State Park. The trail runs between Cherry Street and Fern Street in Homewood, improving on a popular community and recreation amenity, increasing safety and recreation opportunities, and helping people travel the West Shore without a motor vehicle. Project partners: Auerbach Engineering, Dokken Engineering, Vinciguerra Construction, Caltrans, Homewood Mountain Resort, Placer County, North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, California Tahoe Conservancy, California Natural Resources Agency, Tahoe Fund, Placer County Parks.
- **Lake Tahoe info website:** This website launched by TRPA and other partners in the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) is a clearinghouse for information on all EIP projects, which entities funded them, when and where they were completed, and what they

accomplished. The website puts the full story of the EIP at the fingertips of anyone with a computer, no small feat for a program with more than 50 public and private partners that have invested more than \$2 billion over two decades in projects to conserve and restore Lake Tahoe's environment. Project partners: U.S. EPA, TRPA, Sitka Technology Group, Environmental Incentives.