

Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2013

The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2013 continues the federal commitment at Lake Tahoe by authorizing \$415 million over 10 years to improve water clarity, reduce the threat of fire, combat invasive species and restore and protect the environment in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

- **Restores Lake Tahoe and the Tahoe Basin.** The legislation authorizes \$243 million over 10 years for the highest-priority restoration projects according to scientific data. The legislation authorizes at least \$138 million for stormwater management and watershed restoration projects that are scientifically-determined to be the most effective ways to improve water clarity. The legislation also requires a prioritized ranking of environmental restoration projects and authorizes \$80 million for the Lake Tahoe stakeholders to implement these priority projects. Implementation of priority projects will improve water quality, forest health, air quality and fish and wildlife habitat around Lake Tahoe.
- **Reduces the threat of wildfire in the Tahoe Basin.** Authorizes \$135 million over 10 years for hazardous fuels reduction projects to reduce the threat of fire in Lake Tahoe. It also creates incentives for local communities to have dedicated funding for defensible space inspections and enforcement.
- **Protects Lake Tahoe from the threat of Quagga mussels and other invasive aquatic species.** The bill would provide \$30 million for watercraft inspections and removal of existing invasive species and would require all watercraft be inspected and decontaminated to prevent the introduction of invasive aquatic species. Watercraft will be exempted from decontamination if they were last launched in Lake Tahoe.
- **Supports reintroduction of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.** The legislation authorizes \$20 million over 10 years for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Recovery Plan. The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout is an iconic species that has an important historic legacy in Lake Tahoe. Lake Tahoe is one of the historic 11 lakes that had Lahontan Cutthroat Trout in the past and is a critical part of the strategy to recover the species.

- **Funds scientific research.** The bill authorizes \$30 million over 10 years for scientific programs and research that will produce information on long-term trends in the Basin and inform the most cost-effective projects.
- **Prohibits mining operations in the Tahoe Basin.** The legislation would prevent the start of any mining operations in the Basin, ensuring that the fragile watershed, and Lake Tahoe's water clarity, is not threatened by pollution from mining operations.
- **Increases accountability and oversight.** All projects funded by this legislation will have monitoring and assessment in order to determine the most cost-effective projects and best management practices for future projects. The legislation also requires an annual report to Congress detailing the status of all projects undertaken, including project scope, budget and justification and overall expenditures and accomplishments.
- **Provides for public outreach and education.** The legislation requires signage on federally financed projects in order to improve public awareness of restoration efforts. In addition, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will have a public outreach and education program to encourage Basin residents and visitors to implement defensible space, best management practices for water quality and to prevent the introduction and proliferation of invasive species.
- **Allows for increased efficiency in the management of public land.** Under this legislation, the Forest Service would have increased flexibility to exchange land with state and local entities which will allow for more cost-efficient management of public land. Currently, the Forest Service manages more than 3,200 urban parcels spread throughout the Basin.