

1, Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Truckee River is a critically important natural resource that serves many functions. The river is the outlet of Lake Tahoe, providing water supply for Reno and Nevada users. The river is a significant natural resource that provides a recreational trout fishery, habitat for the endangered Lahontan cutthroat trout, and riparian habitat for wildlife.

The Truckee River is also an essential transportation corridor. State Route (SR) 89 parallels the river, serving as a regional gateway to the North Shore of the Tahoe Basin. SR 98 also provides essential circulation for local residents living along the river and in both Placer and Nevada Counties, and is a key route for visitors to access major ski areas and the lake.

The Truckee River Corridor is also an outstanding recreation resource; providing a popular destination for paddlers, hikers, anglers, cross-country skiers, and bicyclists. The existing Class I trail along the southernmost river reach is popular with both families and more serious athletes.

While river corridor property is mostly in public ownership, long-established private parcels along the river contain many residences that are both seasonal and permanent homes.

PURPOSE OF THE TRUCKEE RIVER CORRIDOR ACCESS PLAN

From Tahoe City to Truckee, historical railroad, past logging, and current transportation issues have combined with recent growth in local population, development, and recreational use to put substantial pressure on the Truckee River corridor.

Pressures include habitat impacts, such as eroded streambanks and degraded riverside meadows. Safety hazards occur at intersections and where drivers park along SR 89 to walk to the river. Visitors and locals are inappropriately crossing private property to reach or cross the river.

Public interest in and use of the Truckee River is increasing among local and visiting recreationists, such as fly fishers, paddlers, bicyclists, and hikers. The Truckee River is an increasing attraction to tourists from outside the area.

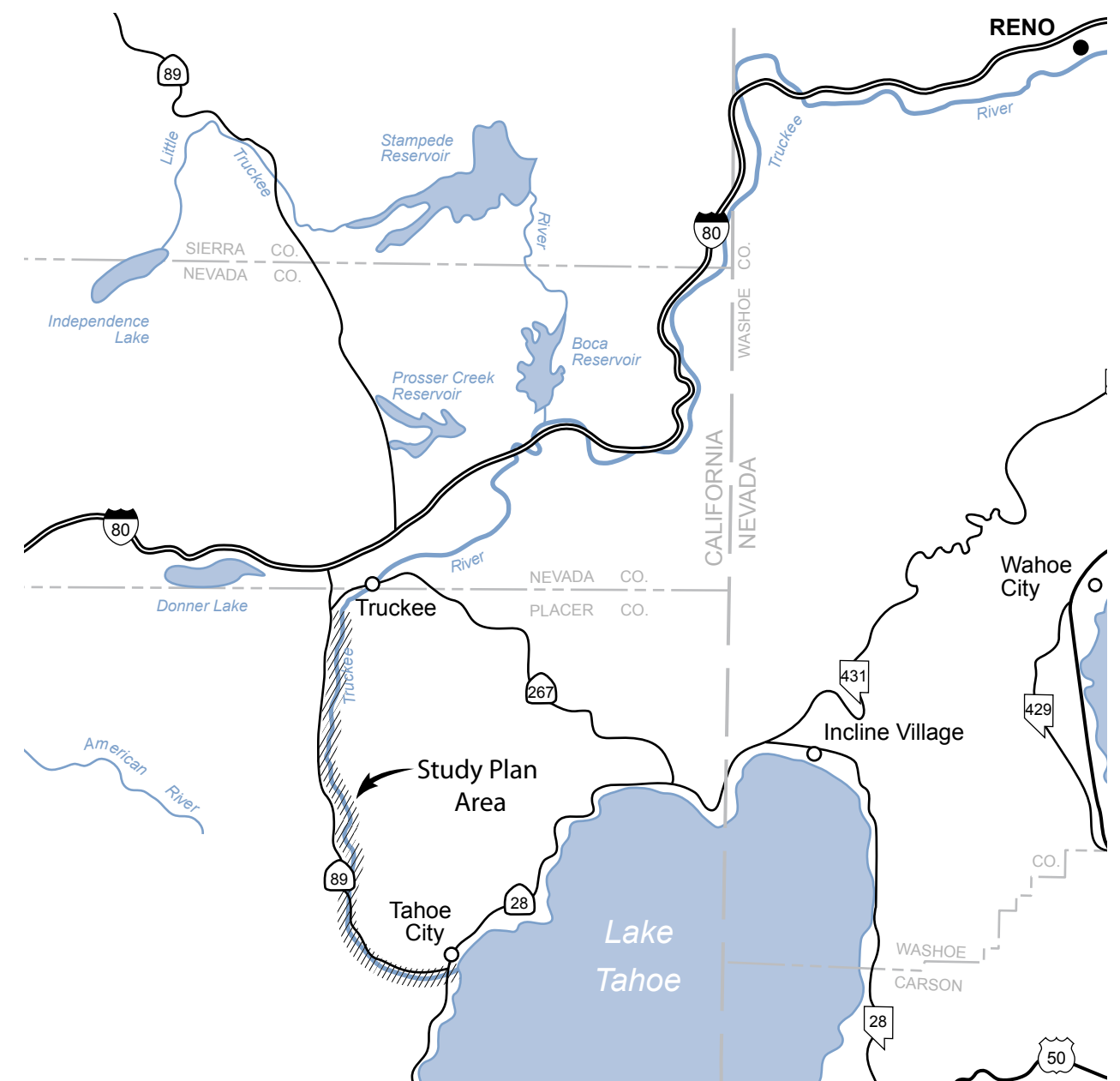
No single agency, organization, or stakeholder has jurisdiction over all the land in the river corridor or control of all these issues; however, leadership in the form of coordination of plans and projects can go a long way toward creating solutions.

The Placer County Planning Department has taken the first steps toward this coordination by funding the preparation of a corridor access plan to identify environmental and access-related river corridor issues and projects. This study plan is intended to serve as the guiding vision to help agencies and organizations 1) direct land management activities; 2) enhance, restore and protect natural resources; and 3) develop trails, staging areas, and other potential low-intensity recreational facilities.

VISION STATEMENT

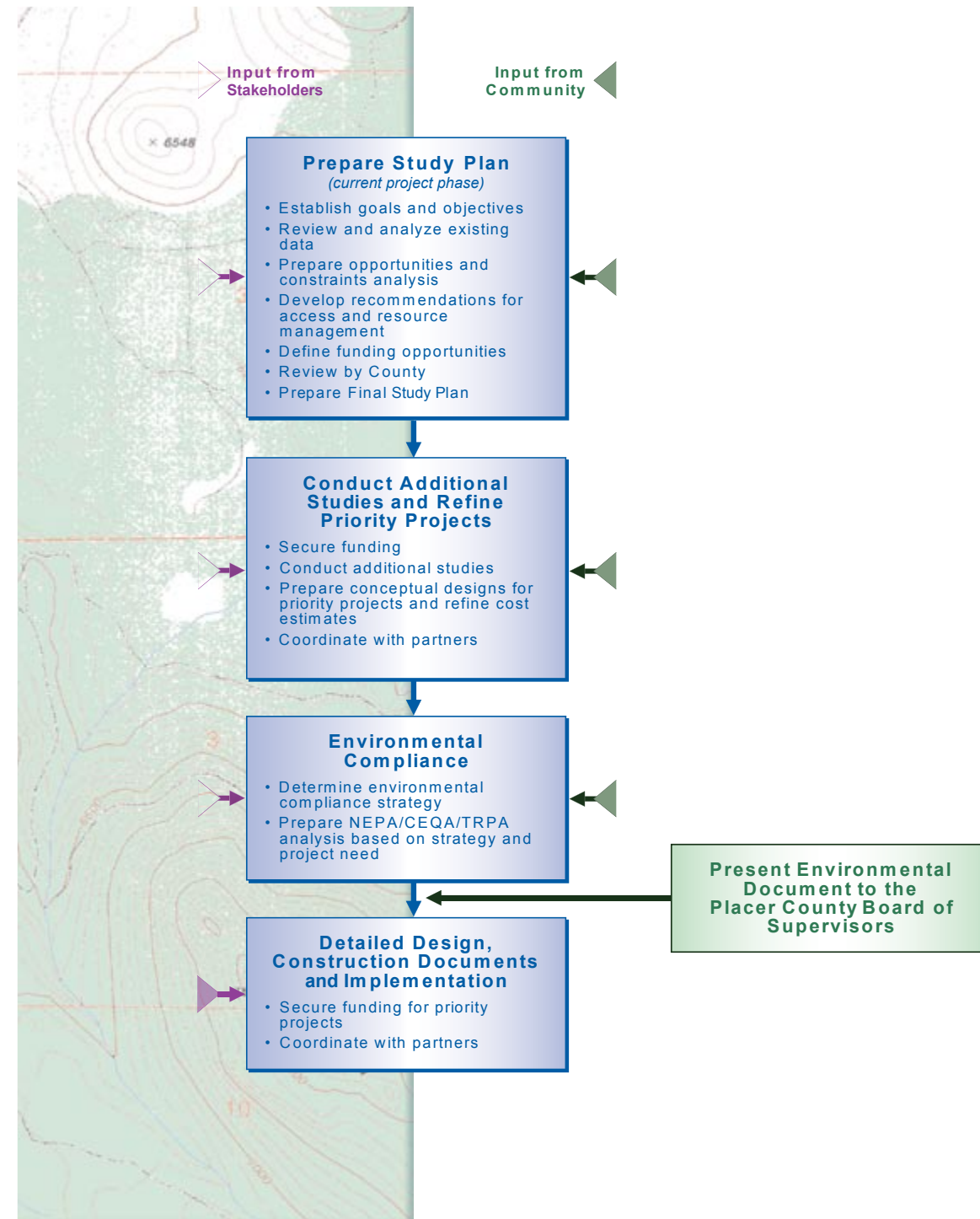
The vision of the *Truckee River Corridor Access Plan* is to restore and enhance the river corridor's ecological, water quality, recreational, and nonmotorized-transportation values for the benefit of residents and visitors, while protecting private-property rights of corridor landowners.

EXHIBIT I-1 Plan Area Map



Truckee River Corridor Access Plan

EXHIBIT I-2 Truckee River Corridor Access Plan Processing Diagram



PROJECT BACKGROUND

PLAN AREA

The study plan area begins at the SR 89 Truckee River bridge, known locally as “Fanny Bridge,” and extends downstream approximately 15 miles to the Placer County line just outside of the Truckee town limits (Exhibit I-1). The width of the corridor varies, but it generally extends approximately one-eighth mile on either side of the river.

Private, noncommercial properties were not examined and are not included in any study plan actions.

The plan was initiated by participants in the Truckee River Watershed Council’s Projects and Assessments Committee and funded by Placer County.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The study plan synthesizes current natural resource, recreation, and land use planning information and provides general guidance on future resources management and access-related projects in the corridor. Projects identified in this plan will generally require additional site-specific study, detailed planning and design, environmental compliance, and permitting before implementation. Each of these steps will engage the public through outreach and public review processes based on resource sensitivity, project complexity, and legal requirements. Exhibit I-2 illustrates the overall process required to implement a project and the role of the study plan.

Truckee River Corridor Access Plan

GOALS, DESIRED OUTCOMES, AND DESIRED SECONDARY BENEFITS

GOALS

The goals of this plan are as follows:

- Coordinate the multiple jurisdictions with authority in the corridor through a single management strategy to address trails and public access, habitat conservation and restoration, and water quality.
- Identify restoration projects that will improve wildlife and aquatic habitat, restore a contiguous riparian plant community along the river, and enhance water quality.
- Identify a recreation and transportation route and/or trail for walking, in-line skating, and bicycle use from Squaw Valley to the Town of Truckee.
- Identify access improvements for angling and boating from the SR 89 bridge to the Town of Truckee.
- Identify local and regional connections to multiuse trails and recreation access points.
- Coordinate with the Placer Legacy Open Space Conservation Program, watershed planning efforts, and other city planning and development initiatives.
- Develop a base map and related spatial information appropriate for future project-planning efforts along the Truckee River from Tahoe City to the Placer County line.
- Respect and protect private-property rights.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

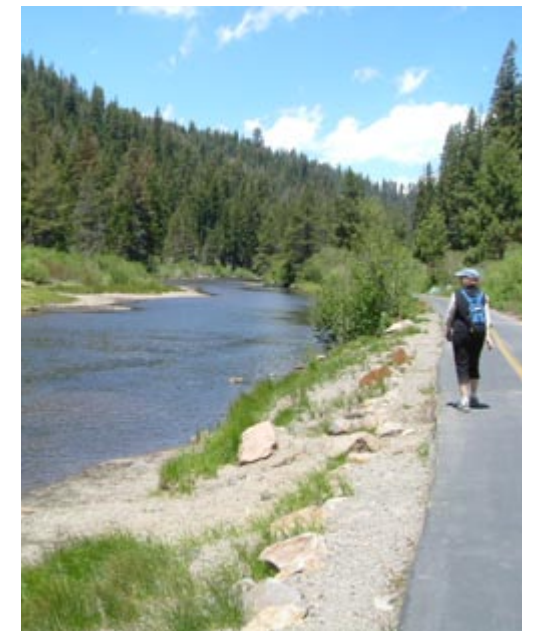
The desired outcomes from implementation of this plan include:

- Improve places for people of all ages and abilities to access the Truckee River and redirect existing public access, where needed, to protect natural resources. Discourage and/or restrict access to sensitive habitat areas.
- Provide a more even distribution of recreation experiences along the Truckee River.
- Respect and protect private-property rights. Discourage trespassing and direct access away from private parcels along the river.
- Increase natural-heritage and wildlife values along the corridor.
- Maintain or improve water quality of the river.
- Increase the educational and interpretive elements to highlight ecological, historic, cultural, and scenic qualities of the corridor.

DESIRED SECONDARY BENEFITS

The desired secondary benefits from implementation of this plan include:

- Encourage economic development by attracting new visitors and businesses and enhancing property values and local tax revenues.
- Promote compatible and mutually supportive land use patterns for developers, residents, the state and federal agencies, and local governments.



Truckee River and Class I bike path, 2005

Truckee River Corridor Access Plan

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