

CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY
PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION PROGRAM
PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT AND GUIDELINES
FEBRUARY 1992

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**CALIFORNIA TAHOE CONSERVANCY
PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION**

**PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT AND GUIDELINES
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I. PROGRAM STATEMENT

A. Introduction

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 66905 et seq. and 66950 et seq., the California Tahoe Conservancy has been created, in part, to undertake programs for the provision of public access of public recreational facilities in the Lake Tahoe region. To do so, the Conservancy has been given the authority to undertake the acquisition of land and construction of site improvements, either directly or through the promulgation of grants. Pursuant to this mandate, the Conservancy on December 19, 1986, established a public access and recreation program.

B. Program Objectives

The Conservancy's goal under this program is the funding and implementation of projects which balance resource and implementation objectives. These objectives are more fully described below.

1. Resource Objectives - The resource objective of this program is to increase and enhance significant regional public access and public recreational opportunities on a basinwide basis and in a manner consistent with use and resource protection needs.

This objective recognizes the need to provide regional access and recreation opportunities by undertaking projects throughout the Basin with emphasis on providing access to regionally significant lakefront, riverfront, and natural areas which receive or can accommodate significant visitor use. It recognizes this can be accomplished through providing new facilities, expanding the capacity of existing, overutilized facilities; providing additional support facilities and promoting the use of existing, unimproved areas to accommodate public use. It also acknowledges the need to tailor projects to match the level and type of development to the anticipated uses and users, within the environmental constraints of the project sites.

2. Implementation Objectives - The implementation objective of this project is the implementation of projects providing significant public benefit in the most comprehensive cost-effective, and timely manner possible.

This objective recognizes the urgent and rising demand for enhanced public access and recreation opportunities at Tahoe and the limited amounts of funding available. Within this context, planning and funding under this program will be directed toward implementable projects which:

- achieve significant public benefits by considering and addressing all appropriate access and recreation needs of the project sites. Projects or portions of projects undertaken must be able to stand alone in providing a public access and/or recreation benefit;
- achieve these benefits at the lowest necessary cost; and
- achieve these benefits in the shortest necessary amount of time. It is an objective of this program to fund site improvement and/or acquisition projects which can be readily implemented.

C. Availability of Funds

Funding is available from funds appropriated to the Conservancy for the public access and recreation program through the State budget process. The 1991-92 budget includes \$1.25 million for site improvements and associated costs related to public access and recreation projects from the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Section 8(g) Revenue Fund ("8(g)" funds). In addition, funds for land acquisition and associated costs related to public access and recreation projects are available from funds appropriated to the Conservancy from the Lake Tahoe Acquisitions Bond Act (Bond Act).

The Conservancy will continue to seek additional funding in future fiscal years to allow continued implementation of the program. Project sponsors are encouraged to contact Conservancy staff for confirmation of funding amounts currently available under the program.

Funds are being made available on a program basis. In other words, these funds are available for projects directly undertaken either by the Conservancy itself, through grants, or a combination thereof.

These funds are also being made available on a basinwide basis. This reflects both a judgment that the amount of funding for the program cannot at this time be broken down by jurisdiction and that the use of limited funds should be based on the highest priority need regardless of location.

It should be noted that project sponsors may use the funds allocated for acquisitions either in conjunction with site improvement funds or for land acquisitions needed for future public access and recreation projects.

D. Comprehensive Approach to Program Implementation

The Conservancy will use a coordinated and comprehensive approach toward the initiation, evaluation, and implementation of projects under this program. Under this approach, projects will be developed concurrently by the Conservancy and by other potential project sponsors. Approved projects will then be implemented directly by the Conservancy itself, by another project sponsor via a Conservancy grant or a combination thereof.

In summary, the process will work as follows. First, preliminary project proposals prepared by both the Conservancy and other project sponsors will be collected and evaluated pursuant to criteria discussed hereafter in consultation with other agencies with special interest or specialized expertise in public access and recreation. Thereafter, the proposals will be brought to the board for conceptual review and overall direction. Following this review, and upon further consultation with interested agencies, it will be possible to focus and prioritize the best proposals and arrange for the preparation of formal applications and/or specific project proposals. These will be presented to the Conservancy board for action. These steps are discussed hereafter in greater detail.

II. PROJECT INITIATION

The Conservancy is requesting that potential sponsors contact the Conservancy staff to discuss their proposed projects and to submit preliminary project proposals for review. Conservancy staff will also incorporate proposals for public access and recreation projects to be directly undertaken by the Conservancy into this process. This preliminary submittal process is intended to assist in the identification and design of qualifying proposals.

Ray Lacey and David Gregorich of the Conservancy staff are available to assist applicants in developing proposals which will meet program objectives, guidelines, and criteria. They may be contacted by phone at (916) 542-5580 or by writing to:

California Tahoe Conservancy
2161 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

A. Eligible Project Sponsors - The Conservancy shall be eligible for funds for projects which it directly undertakes itself. In addition, El Dorado County, Placer County, the City of South Lake Tahoe, the North Tahoe Public Utility District, the Tahoe City Public Utility District and eligible nonprofit organizations are eligible grantees under this program. Local agencies which manage State properties are eligible for grants for such properties if they are responsible for providing site improvement on them.

Government Code Section 66905.9 defines an eligible nonprofit organization as any private, nonprofit organization which qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the United State Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and having among its principal charitable purposes the preservation of land for scientific, historic, educational, recreational, scenic or open-space opportunities or protection of the natural environment or preservation or enhancement of wildlife.

B. Contents of Preliminary Submittals - Where possible, the preliminary submittals should include:

1. identification of the project area and discussion of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project and its benefits;
2. a preliminary concept plan which identifies the site improvements contemplated, identifies any acquisitions which may be needed, and includes an estimate of the project's cost and a preliminary schedule for its completion;
3. an indication of the amount of Conservancy funding sought for site improvements and/or land acquisition; and
4. other background information which may be helpful to the Conservancy in its evaluation of the proposal.

While the level of detail expected at preliminary submittal is not as extensive as for a final application, it is hoped these submittals will contain sufficient detail to allow assessment of the project's compliance with program requirements, objectives, and criteria.

III. PROJECT EVALUATION

Upon receipt of preliminary submittals, staff will initially assess their completeness and their consistency with the general eligibility criteria and objectives of the program. In cases where the staff finds that a project proposal is either incomplete or does not meet eligibility criteria, staff will work with the project sponsor to complete or modify it to where it will qualify for further consideration. Staff will next begin to consult with the project sponsors and other agencies and organizations with expertise or other interest in the program in order to refine the proposals.

Staff will also periodically update the Conservancy board on the receipt and status of proposals received. At this time staff will also seek the board's conceptual review of the proposals and seek its direction concerning the preparation of specific project proposals and/or formal grant applications for individual projects.

It should be noted that this will be an ongoing process and potential sponsors are encouraged to submit additional proposals for Conservancy consideration as appropriate throughout the life of the program.

The following criteria will be utilized to evaluate and prioritize projects either directly undertaken or funded through grants by the Conservancy.

1. Significant increase and enhancement of regional public access and recreational opportunities - The project either provides new access or significantly enhance access to an existing public access or public recreational facility. Preference will be given to projects which directly provide access to the lake, the Upper Truckee and Truckee Rivers, or to other significant natural areas. Preference will also be given to projects which connect existing public recreational facilities (i.e., trails).
2. Adequacy of design - The project involves facilities which directly serve public access or public recreational needs. The project design should be appropriate to the type and level of use anticipated, and include measures, if necessary, to protect natural resources (e.g., erosion control). Preference will be given to projects which encourage year-round use of the site. Preference will also be given to projects which provide facilities for a wide range of users, including the handicapped.
3. Comprehensiveness - The project comprehensively deals with all access and/or recreation needs related to the proposal. Due to funding limitations, preference will be given to smaller-scale, comprehensive, integrated project proposals.
4. Cost-effectiveness - The project provides significant public benefit at the lowest necessary cost. Preference will be given to projects which can be made more cost-effective through the use of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) where appropriate, and/or inclusion of matching funds or in-lieu contributions by the applicants.
5. Implementability - The project can be implemented in a timely manner. If a project is large and complex and depends on other funding sources, the portion of the project to be funded by the Conservancy must be able to be implemented by itself in a manner consistent with the objectives of the program.
6. Management - There must be a commitment to manage the project for a minimum of 20 years or the useful life of the project whether in terms of acquisition or site improvements.
7. Model - The project is useful as a model for future access projects. Projects incorporating effective and innovative approaches to providing public access and recreation opportunities will be given preference.
8. Cooperation and support - The applicant demonstrates support of the project by other public agencies, landowners, and other parties necessary for the successful implementation and long-term viability of the project.

IV. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Upon conceptual approval of project proposals by the board, staff will then prepare specific proposals for projects on its properties and request the submittal of formal grant applications by eligible sponsoring organizations for other projects. These will then be brought to the board for possible action.

A. Conservancy Projects - Specific acquisition and site improvement projects will be brought to the board as they are ready for implementation. After conceptual approval, the normal pre-acquisition process will be completed for proposed acquisitions. Conceptual plans will be finalized for site improvements, which will set the stage for authorization to fund construction of the site improvements.

B. Conservancy Grants - In the event another entity is willing and able to implement and manage the project, the Conservancy may chose to implement the project via a grant. Upon conceptual approval of such a project, eligible entities will be requested to submit formal applications pursuant to the provisions summarized below.

1. Eligible grantees - As noted earlier, El Dorado County, Placer County, the City of South Lake Tahoe, the North Tahoe Public Utility District (NTPUD), the Tahoe City Public Utility District (TCPUD) and eligible nonprofit organizations are eligible grantees under this program. Local agencies which manage State properties are eligible for grants for such properties if they are responsible for providing site improvements on them.

2. Eligible project costs - The Conservancy may fund up to 100% of project costs for site improvements and acquisitions directly related or substantially related to providing public access and/or recreation. This may include design, project administration, land acquisition, and site improvement costs of approved projects. Specifically, the following types of costs are eligible for funding under this program:

- project administration and interagency coordination
- preparation and processing of permit applications
- preparation of preliminary and final design plans, specifications and cost estimates
- construction of site improvements
- project inspection
- acquisition of interests in land
- project evaluation and documentation

Eligible acquisition costs are limited to the current fair market value of the interest(s) being acquired less the amount of any other State funds being applied to the purchase price; escrow, title, and other closing costs; and the costs of project administration.

3. Ineligible costs - The applicant will bear all costs related to the preparation of concept design, the submittal of project applications, and preparation and processing of environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Applicants must commit to fund any project elements that are not substantially related to the purpose of public access and recreation.

The applicant will also bear all ongoing operation and maintenance costs of the project, over a minimum 20-year period.

4. Requested elements of an application - A formal application should contain the following elements:

(a) identification of the project area, discussion of the problem to be addressed and the benefits of the proposed project;

(b) a concept plan which includes: identification of the proposed site improvements, evidence of the ownership or control of the land at the project site sufficient for the construction and management of the project, a land acquisition plan if needed to secure sufficient ownership or control of the land, and estimated project schedule, an estimated project budget, and a monitoring program;

(c) the amount of Conservancy funding sought for site improvements and/or land acquisition;

(d) a description of any funding and/or in-kind assistance to be provided by the applicant, and the inclusion of CCC labor or any other cost-saving measures in the project;

(e) documentation for the project sufficient to comply with CEQA if applicable;

(f) a commitment by the grantee to implement the project in a manner consistent with the objectives of the program and to operate and maintain the project improvements over the useful life of the improvements; and

(g) other background information which may be helpful to the Conservancy in its evaluation of the proposal.

With respect to grants solely for land acquisitions, the Conservancy recognizes that less detail will be available on planned improvements for the project site since funds are not being requested for these activities. Nevertheless, applicants are asked to provide as much information as possible on all the required elements in order to allow the Conservancy to evaluate the overall project for which acquisition funds are being requested.

The Conservancy encourages applicants to commence an environmental assessment for their proposals at the earliest possible time so that they may be able to determine actions needed to meet the requirements of CEQA.

5. Review Process

Upon submittal, final applications will be evaluated for completeness and consistency with eligibility criteria and the objectives of the program. In reviewing the applications, the Conservancy staff will again consult with agencies having jurisdiction over the project area or access and recreation expertise such as the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, U.S. Forest Service, and Department of Parks and Recreation.

Once the formal applications are approved by the board, the Conservancy will enter into contractual agreements with the applicants. Such projects will then be implemented in accordance with the terms or any conditions of the Conservancy's approval and the grant contract.

Application Cover Sheet
Public Access and Recreation Program

This form should be used as a cover sheet for both concept plans and final applications. Supporting information should be attached.

1. Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Telephone: _____

2. Project Title: _____

3. Amount Requested for Site Improvements: \$ _____

Amount Requested for Land Acquisitions: _____

4. Project Location (include 8-1/2" x 11" area map)

5. Description of Need: _____

6. Project Description (include 8-1/2" x 11" map or sketch plan showing proposed improvements and required acquisitions.)

7. Acquisitions: _____

8. Estimate date of project completion: _____

9. Additional information (Attach photographs and past studies, if available.)