

2.7 Vegetation

The Plan area is dominated by conifer forests, with grasses and riparian vegetation in the stream environments. Threshold standards are in place for a variety of vegetation types. Threshold attainment trends are generally good, although invasive species and noxious weeds were identified as potential threats. Progress is being made on fuels reduction and forest ecosystem restoration.

Vegetation communities within the Plan area are listed in Table 2.7 and mapped within Figure 2-11. The majority (58 percent) of the Plan area consists of mixed white fir forests. White fir forests are primarily located along the west shore of the Plan area, extending from just north of Dollar Point to Tahoma. The north shore of the Plan area is dominated by jeffrey pine in the lower elevations and red fir in the higher elevations.

Existing vegetation patterns are strongly influenced by past and current human activities. Between 1859 and 1900, nearly 60 percent of the Lake Tahoe watershed was clear-cut. As a result, most forestlands are less than 150 years old. Restoring Lake Tahoe's old growth and late seral forests is a long-term Threshold attainment goal.

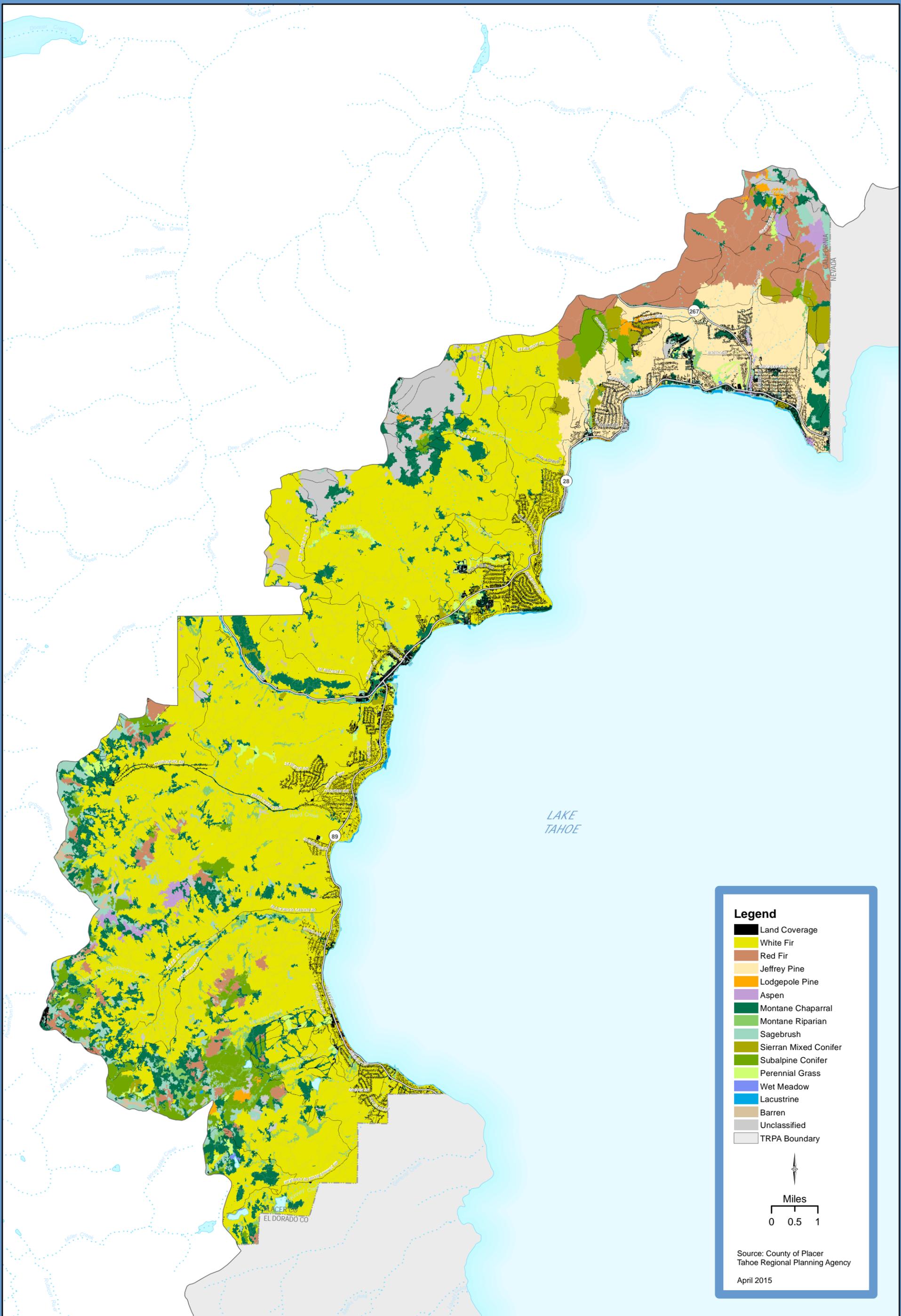
Housing and commercial development have also influenced the vegetation pattern present today in the Plan area. Impacts have been most significant in stream environment zones.

After most of the logging was complete, public agencies began acquiring land in the Tahoe Basin, intensifying in the 1930s and again after TRPA was established. Today more than 85 percent of the land in the Lake Tahoe Region is managed by the US Forest Service, Nevada Division of State Lands, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the California Tahoe Conservancy. The agencies manage land for vegetation improvement, restoration of sensitive land, and other public benefits. Controlled burns have become an important strategy to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, allow larger trees to thrive, and support a healthy forest ecosystem. TRPA also administers strict Vegetation and Forest Health ordinances.

Table 2.7: Vegetation Communities

<i>Vegetation</i>	<i>Land</i>	
	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Area %</i>
White Fir	26,755	58.0%
Montane Chaparral	4,656	10.1%
Jeffrey Pine	3,513	7.6%
Red Fir	3,106	6.7%
Sagebrush	2,100	4.5%
Subalpine Conifer	1,767	3.8%
Montane Riparian	917	2.0%
Sierra Mixed Conifer	686	1.5%
Perennial Grass	440	1.0%
Aspen	337	0.7%
Barren	229	0.5%
Lodgepole Pine	206	0.4%
Lacustrine	60	0.1%
Wet Meadow	29	0.1%
Unclassified	1,360	2.9%
Total	46,162	100.0%

Source: USFS, TRPA, 2007.



Legend

- Land Coverage
- White Fir
- Red Fir
- Jeffrey Pine
- Lodgepole Pine
- Aspen
- Montane Chaparral
- Montane Riparian
- Sagebrush
- Sierran Mixed Conifer
- Subalpine Conifer
- Perennial Grass
- Wet Meadow
- Lacustrine
- Barren
- Unclassified
- TRPA Boundary


 Miles
 0 0.5 1

Source: County of Placer
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
April 2015