

MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer
Submitted by: Jennifer Merchant, Principal Management Analyst

DATE: April 21, 2009

SUBJECT: Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$265,080 to fund a pilot wayfinding signage project at the Tahoe City Transit Center and interpretive displays at the UC Davis Historic Fish Hatchery in Tahoe City.

Action Requested

Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$265,080 to fund a pilot wayfinding signage project at the Tahoe City Transit Center and interpretive displays at the UC Davis Historic Fish Hatchery in Tahoe City.

Background

Placer County has entered into an annual agreement with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association to provide transportation and infrastructure project development and tourism marketing and visitor information services. The agreement is funded with general fund Transient Occupancy Tax dollars and requires Board of Supervisors approval prior to expenditure from the infrastructure portion of the agreement budget.

The Resort Association's Infrastructure Committee and Board of Directors have voted to recommend that the County Executive Office carry forward the following project for approval by your Board. In doing so, they affirm that the project is consistent with the Resort Association's Tourism and Community Development Master Plan, which was approved by your Board in July 2004. Therefore, the following NLTRA infrastructure expenditure is being recommended by the County Executive Office for approval.

Brief Project Description / Funding Request:

Interpretive Displays- UC Davis Historic Fish Hatchery- \$197,080

The recommended Infrastructure Fund expenditure will fund interpretative signage at the UC Davis Historic Fish Hatchery in Tahoe City. The former hatchery, which was initially used in the 1920s, underwent a \$4 million restoration project, which transferred use of the facility to a modern field station and research center. Due to its proximity to downtown Tahoe City and a heavily used multi-purpose trail, UC Davis is proposing an

interpretive component so that visitors and residents have an opportunity to learn about the building's history and current use.

The proposed interpretive component would include touch screen monitors, historic video footage, explanation of current research, and information about local fish species. The total cost of the project is \$342,570, and is also partially funded by UC Davis.

Wayfinding Signage Pilot Project- Tahoe City Transit Center- \$68,000

The recommended Infrastructure Fund expenditure will fund creation of a wayfinding demonstration project for the Resort Association's new signage design manual. Your Board approved an allocation last year to initiate preparation of a Guidelines Manual for a proposed regional wayfinding signage program. The manual defines wayfinding signs as those that assist visitors and residents in orienting themselves with and navigating through the region. The program envisions a series of pilot projects to demonstrate and test the manual's recommendations. The first project recommended for pilot status consideration will accompany the Tahoe City Transit Center, currently being designed by Placer County. The funds will be utilized to create signage that identifies the Transit Center from the main road, and also provides on site directional signage for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists that highlights the many recreation and other services provided in proximity to the transit center.

Fiscal Impact: The funding described above would come from the Resort Association's FY 2008-2009 County Agreement budget funds designated for infrastructure improvements. There are sufficient funds available within this budget category to cover the amount of the requested expenditure approval.

Environmental Analysis: The Board of Supervisor's approval of the NLTRA's expenditure funding contribution to these infrastructure projects is categorically exempt from CEQA per Section 15061, which provides a general rule that if an activity does not have the potential to cause a significant environmental effect, it is exempt from CEQA. The specific projects were and continue to be evaluated under CEQA by the corresponding lead agencies.

Recommendation: Approve the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's proposed expenditure of budgeted infrastructure funds in the amount of \$265,080 to fund a pilot wayfinding signage project at the Tahoe City Transit Center and interpretive displays at the UC Davis Historic Fish Hatchery in Tahoe City.

The recommended projects represent the cooperation of multiple agencies and funding partners and the expenditure has the potential to lead to significant improvements to the tourism infrastructure at North Lake Tahoe. The projects recommended for funding are consistent with goals in the Resort Association's Tourism & Community Investment Master Plan.