



Date: April 10, 2018

To: Tahoe RCD Board and Staff

From: Tahoe Resource Conservation District

Johnson Meadow Planning Approach

Objective

The purpose of this document is to align and guide internal actions in the planning and implementation process of Johnson Meadow for the Tahoe RCD Board and staff. This is a supplemental document to the Tahoe RCD Strategic Direction, 2018-2022 and is a product of a strategic planning session conducted by Solid Ground Consulting on March 13th with Tahoe RCD management staff and Board.

Johnson Meadow planning philosophy

Our priorities for Johnson Meadow

The board and staff of the Tahoe RCD are committed to restoring, stewarding, and managing the iconic Johnson Meadow property in ways that:

- Provide ecosystem and watershed protection benefits through preservation, management, and future restoration of meadow, riparian, aquatic, and upland habitats, connectivity to other public lands, and for compatible public uses that are consistent with wildlife habitat preservation and protection of sensitive biological resources.
- Align with the Tahoe RCD's mission, goals, and restoration priorities.
- Align with other plans that benefit the overall Upper Truckee watershed.
- Recognize and incorporate the community's desired outcomes.
- Provide appropriate opportunities for learning and connectivity for the surrounding community.
- Encourage the community to take pride in and steward this special place.
- Prioritize education over regulation.
- Are flexible and adaptive, allowing for continuous learning and innovation.

Guiding principles for the planning process

Our planning process will address multiple priorities and be conducted in a way that encourages broad and meaningful public input. The planning process will:

- Communicate known conservation, stewardship, and management priorities for the property.
- Be proactive in reaching out to users of the property and the community at large throughout the planning process.
- Be transparent, providing regular communications, timelines, and realistic expectations to all stakeholders.
- Involve diverse stakeholders from throughout the community, providing multiple opportunities for input.

Planning deliverables

Our process will result in several interlocking plans, including:

- Outreach and Engagement plan:
 - Immediate/Initial outreach
 - Long-term outreach and engagement
 - Land Management Plan
 - Master Plan for Restoration and Site Development
 - *Phase One: Immediate implementation, 2018-2020;*
 - *Phase Two: Long-term implementation*
- Funding Plan

Immediate outreach (high priority)

The RCD will work with partners to conduct immediate outreach to inform the community of the purchase and what to expect. Staffing and hard costs for this outreach will be accommodated in the RCD's 2017-2018 budget.

Key information and messages

- Who owns the property
- How public can use the property
- Who to call for immediate issues
- Long-term goals for the property (funder purposes)
- How to participate in long-term planning for the site
- Address specific concerns of neighbors including encroachments, bridge and access

Key audiences

- Landowners (neighbors)
- Key partners
- Media
- Elected officials
- Users

Communication tools and preparation

- On-site signage
- Clear contact information for immediate concerns
- FAQ document available on Tahoe RCD website and print
- Engagement schedule
- Survey Monkey for comments and current contact information
- Potential spring/summer events and tours on the land (kick off celebration)
- Understand key staff roles and who will respond to concerns

- Transparency and Involvement: Prepare the board and staff with consistent messages and key roles

Land management plan (high priority)

This plan describes the day-to-day guidelines for use and maintenance of the site.

Phase One: Immediate (Draft Plan developed by March 31)

- Focus on day-to-day users, neighbors, and maintenance: "Top 10 concerns."
- Mollie and Nicole complete draft by March 31 including CTC input and board review.
- Ensure adequate budget for plan implementation in 2018-2019 RCD budget
- Discuss staffing/implementation strategy with CTC.
- Consider interim connectivity solution during planning process ("the bridge").
- Integrate with existing programs as much as possible: conduct inventories, identify high priority concerns for Summer 2018 action
- Adaptive document; revisit in October 2018.

Phase Two: Long-term

- Developed in conjunction with Master Plan process

Master Plan

The Master Plan for the site will describe the RCD's plans for:

- Restoration, including a phased / prioritized project list and CEQA/NEPA
- Conservation
- Public access

Contingent on funding, the RCD will contract with a planning firm with capabilities in community engagement and environmental planning. The process is expected to take approximately two years and cost up to \$750,000. The RCD will also assign dedicated staff to the project.

Funding Plan

The development of a funding plan will begin in conjunction with the Master Plan process. The funding plan is intended to include both capital funds for restoration and construction projects, as well as funding for long-term operations and management needs. The Funding Plan is anticipated to influence and evolve alongside the project phasing described in the Master Plan.

Key elements include:

- Research, including existing plans for similar efforts, potential sources, etc.
- Raising awareness with key funders (possible Board role)
- Matching sources to projects
- Understanding funder timelines and priorities

RCD management will explore the potential to hire a consultant for all or part of the funding plan.

Roles of the RCD Board of Directors

The executive director will report regularly on milestones in the planning process for Board counsel.

- The Board will review the overall timeline, budget, and staffing plan for the immediate Outreach and Engagement Plan, the Master Plan, and Funding Plan.
- The Board will consider any policies needed to support the Land Management Plan.
- Board members will play key roles in community engagement:
 - ◆ *Board quotes included in outreach*
 - ◆ *Attend public meetings*
 - ◆ *Engage networks – contacts and organizations*
 - ◆ *Presentations to partner boards*
 - ◆ *Elected officials (face to face with planned remarks)*
 - ◆ *Scripted tours*

Input from key partners

While the RCD is ultimately responsible for setting a course for success on the Johnson Meadow property, we value collaboration and plan to seek input from key partners throughout the process. We value the insights and advice of our partners, and take an adaptive management approach that allows us to absorb lessons learned and continuously improve. Some of our key partners include:

- Barton Memorial Hospital
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California State Parks
- California Tahoe Conservancy
- City of South Lake Tahoe
- El Dorado County
- Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
- South Lake Tahoe Public Utility District
- Tahoe Fund
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- US Forest Service