



TAHOE-BAIKAL INSTITUTE

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT • WATERSHED EDUCATION & PROTECTION •
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES • CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING • PEACE

2010 Summer Environmental Exchange ~ Research Projects ~



1. Project Name: Baseline Monitoring for Upper Truckee River Restoration Project

Project Leader: Shelby Perry, AmeriCorps Member, California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC)

Project Advisors: Scott Carroll & Stuart Roll, California Tahoe Conservancy

Project Summary: TBI project participants will collect pre-project baseline monitoring data for large-scale restoration projects along the Upper Truckee River. Data collection will include continuing groundwater and

vegetation/biomass monitoring from the 2009 TBI CTC project, as well as collecting additional geomorphic data along the river. The protocols will be repeated in subsequent years in order to monitor the changes in vegetation in response to the restoration treatment.

Goals and Objectives: The pre-project vegetation data will be used to assess the influence of the restoration project on the revival of the wet meadow system at the project site. The geomorphic data will be used to drive future changes to the project design.

2. Project Name: Flammable Invasive Species Mapping

Project Leaders: Ian Turner, AmeriCorps Member, Tahoe Resource Conservation District (TRCD)

Project Summary: Using GPS units to plot areas of weed infestation, the Tahoe RCD and TBI participants will create a map that shows the current distribution of cheatgrass, medusahead, and Broom species in the Tahoe area. The aforementioned weeds are generally recognized as flammable invasives, and thus have the potential to invade an area and alter the fire regime (fire frequency, intensity) of that area. Mapping of cheat grass infestations on USFS property has been conducted previously; using this data as a starting point, we intend to expand the focus of this study to include flammable invasive species on public and private property.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of this project is to create a complete GIS map that displays the current distribution of flammable invasive weed species in the south shore area of Lake Tahoe. Over the longer term, the map created during this project will raise awareness of what role these flammable plants may play in the fire regime of the Tahoe area. An infestation of cheatgrass, for example, on a private parcel would greatly increase the ability of a wildfire to spread in the undergrowth; this then comes into play when considering the maintenance of fire defensible space.





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3. Project Name: Forest Restoration Multimedia Production

Project Leader: Gay Eitel, US Forest Service – Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU)

Project Advisors: Joy Barney, Environmental Education Specialist, US – Forest Service – Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU)

Project Summary: To start and complete a Forest Service interpretive product such as a brochure, DVD, interpretive panel, or recreational opportunity guide.

Project specifics will be determined by the interest/skills/experience of the group. The participants will be partnered with Generation Green of Lake Tahoe high school students who have been hired for the summer to do these projects. The subject matter of the product will be a Forest Service SNPLMA (Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act) restoration project. Participants will learn how the Forest Service and other agencies use multimedia products to educate and engage the public in understanding what we do. They will learn how to write interesting text which is easily understood by the general public.

Goals and Objectives: To complete a product which will help the general public understand management practices on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. To help the SEE participants learn how to create an interpretive product. To help the SEE participants understand the art of interpretive techniques and how this is useful in getting key messages across to the general public.

4. Project Name: Upper Truckee Marsh Vegetation Survey

Project Leaders: Lauren Zielinski, AmeriCorps Member, California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) and Kara Steeland, AmeriCorps Member, Tahoe Resource Conservation District (TRCD)

Project Advisors: Adam Lewandowski & Scott Cecchi, California Tahoe Conservancy

Project Summary: TBI project participants will collect pre-project monitoring data and conduct an aquatic invasive species survey for large-scale restoration projects in the Upper Truckee Marsh. Data collection will include conducting baseline vegetation/biomass monitoring on the UTM. This monitoring will be continued in subsequent years in order to monitor the changes in vegetation in response to the restoration treatment. Kara Steeland, an AmeriCorps member serving at TRCD, will assist with an aquatic invasive species survey in the Tahoe Keys sailing lagoon and in the mouth of the Upper Truckee River that flows out of the Marsh. Participants will be involved with collecting and identifying invasive plant species that are found during the survey.

Goals and Objectives: The data collected during this project will assist the project planning of an upcoming restoration project on the Upper Truckee Marsh. The vegetation data will be analyzed and used to monitor the change in vegetation type and vigor before and after the project. The invasive species data will be used in future project planning.

