

Maꞑyála Wàt'a Restoration Project

An aerial photograph showing a vast landscape. In the foreground and middle ground, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees. A large, irregularly shaped clearing with bright green vegetation is located in the center. In the background, a large body of water (likely a lake) stretches across the horizon under a clear blue sky. The title 'Maꞑyála Wàt'a Restoration Project' is overlaid at the top in a large, black, sans-serif font.

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
Washoe Environmental Protection Department
Rhiana Jones and Mark Lara

Another Lake-Saving Project



Máyala Wata Restoration Planning Project for Meeks Meadow

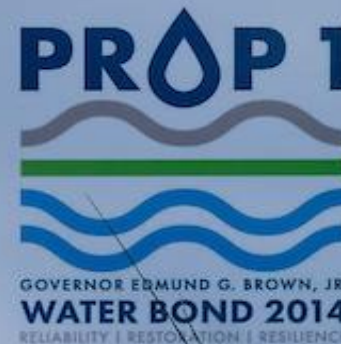
Funding and Project Partners



This institution is an equal
opportunity provider.



TAHOE
REGIONAL
PLANNING
AGENCY



Another project to improve California's
water quality, supply, and infrastructure.

Funded by Proposition 1
The Water Bond Act of 2014

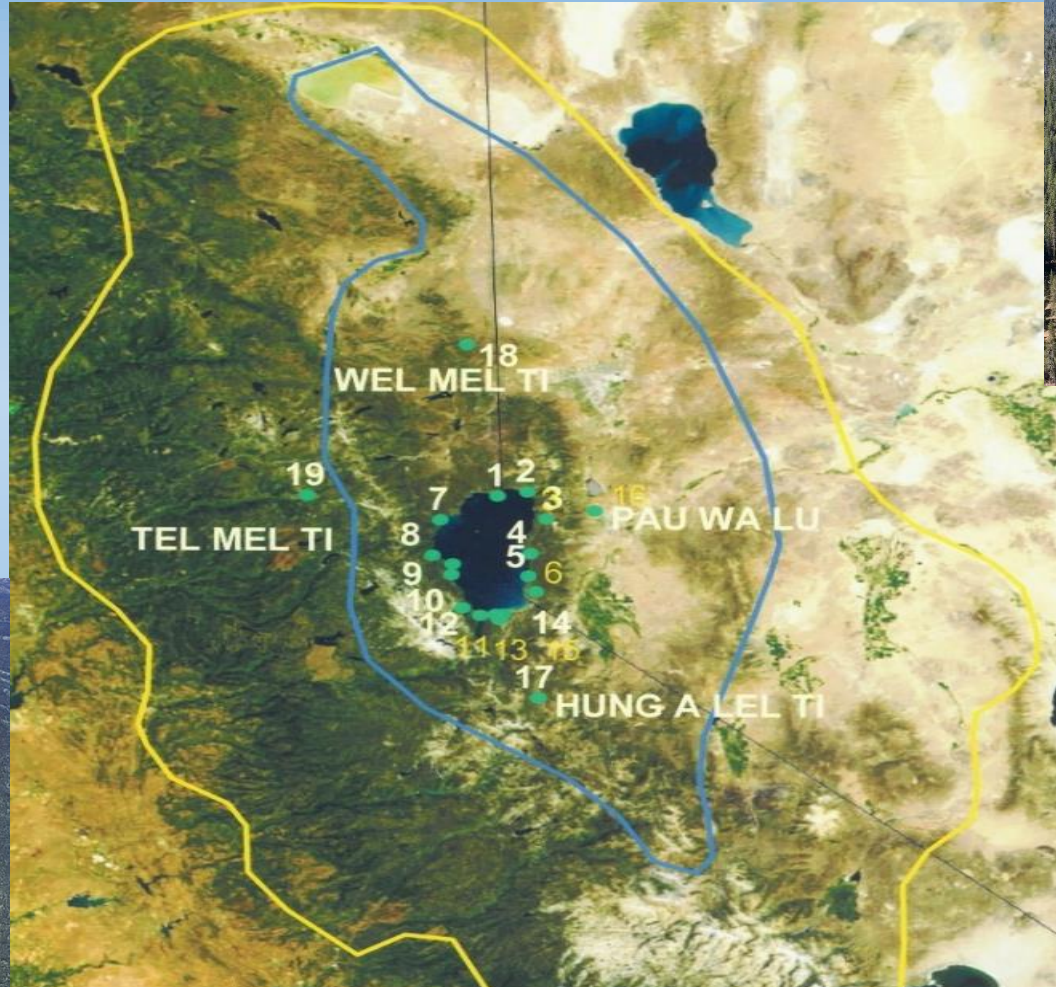
John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources Agency

Edmund G. Brown, Jr. Governor

conservationclearly.org

Where is Meeks Meadow?

DáꞤaw (Lake Tahoe) is
the center of the
Waší·šiw Ꞥítde (Washoe
homelands)



Washoe Presence in Meeks Meadow

Washoe management of Meeks Meadow included activities such as, pruning, thinning, and periodic burning to keep the meadow open and encourage desirable vegetation.

1850-1870's: European-American arrived in the Tahoe Basin and began using Meeks Meadow for grazing. The Washoe population was displaced as there was less availability of land use and resources.

1928: Meeks Bay was developed as a resort. The present Highway 89 bridge was constructed.

1930-1970's: Without Washoe presence in the meadow, continued fire suppression, conifer invasion of the meadow increases, reducing native meadow vegetation, wildlife habitat, and changing meadow hydrology.

1998: LTBMU and Washoe Tribe sign MOA regarding the operation of Meeks Bay and the co-management of Meeks Meadow.

2010's: LTBMU begins planning efforts for a major conifer removal and prescribed burn at Meeks Meadow (in line with Washoe traditional practices).

The Tahoe Basin is an extension of the Washoe people. Meeks Meadow provided the Washoe with food, medicine, and basketry material.

1880's: Logging in the Basin began. Logging was followed by erosion, dense forest regrowth, and native meadow vegetation was displaced.

1930's: Washoe people were relocated to designated reservations, and denied access to traditional lands and practices at Lake Tahoe.

1960: The mouth of Meeks Creek was dredged to create a marina and wetlands were filled.

1980-1990's: Conifer invasion of Meeks meadow continues, despite attempts by the USFS to remove trees. A slash pile burn burned a large part of the meadow in 1995, but conifer invasion continued.

2000's: The Washoe Tribe's continued involvement with the bay and meadow, has resulted in conifer removal test plots, plant surveys, and monitoring.

2016: The Washoe Tribe receives Federal and State funding to complete planning for the implementation of Meeks Meadow restoration project.

Present

1997 MOU

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
USDA - FOREST SERVICE
LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT
AND
THE WASHOE TRIBE OF NEVADA AND CALIFORNIA

This Memorandum of Understanding between the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California ("Tribe"), and the USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit ("LTBMU"), is effective as of the date of the last signature below.

- Whereas,** The Tribe and the LTBMU mutually wish to establish and formalize a government to government relationship;
- Whereas,** the Tribe and the LTBMU mutually recognize the need and benefit to formalize the processes of communication for land and resource management decision making and for other governmental relations;
- Whereas,** the Tribe and the LTBMU mutually recognize that improving our relationship is the best course in achieving our common goal of wisely managed, and sustainable resources;
- Whereas,** the Tribe and the LTBMU mutually recognize the need for future additions to this Memorandum of Understanding, specific project agreements will be considered binding to both parties.

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

- Whereas,** The Tribe is a sovereign entity, and its members have lived upon their aboriginal lands for centuries and were the first stewards of certain lands now managed by the Forest Service contained within those aboriginal lands;
- Whereas,** the Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribe, to which the federal government owes a trust responsibility, and maintains a government to government relationship with, as acknowledged in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior and published in the Federal Register listing of federally recognized Indian Tribes on October 21, 1993, and includes the Carson Indian Community, the Stewart Indian Community, the Woodfords Indian Community, the Dresslerville Indian Community, members residing on allotments and off-reservation lands;
- Whereas,** Article V of the Tribal Constitution states that "The members of the Washoe Tribe hereby delegate, to the Tribal Council, the authority to exercise by resolution or the enactment of Tribal laws all the inherent sovereign powers vested in the Tribe as a sovereign aboriginal people;"
- Whereas,** the Tribal Council is the formally constituted governing body of the Tribe, entrusted with the responsibility to protect, preserve and promote the ceremonial, religious, cultural, governmental and economic interests of the Washoe people.

2019 Stewardship Agreement

USDA, Forest Service

OMB 0596-0137
FS-1506-21C

Agreement No. _____
Cooperator Agreement No. _____

STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT Between The WASHOE TRIBE OF NEVADA AND CALIFORNIA And the USDA FOREST SERVICE, LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT

This Stewardship Agreement is hereby made and entered into by and between the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, hereinafter referred to as "The Tribe," and the USDA, Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, hereinafter referred to as the Forest Service, under the authority and provisions of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-79, sec. 8205.

Background: In 2003 Congress authorized the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to enter into stewardship contracts and agreements "to achieve land management goals for the national forests that meet local and rural community needs." The primary focus of this legislation is to achieve land management goals through stewardship projects awarded under contracts or agreements. Unique to the legislation is the ability to exchange goods for services that meet the land management objectives.

The area addressed in this Stewardship Agreement is known as the Meeks Meadow - Mayala Wata Restoration Project and lies within the borders of the States of California. This area includes an un-estimated number of acres to be treated during the term of this Stewardship Agreement.

This Stewardship Agreement covers the area known as the Meeks Meadow complex "Meeks Meadow" across from Meeks Bay, El Dorado County, California. The Tribe seeks to restore and maintain ecological and hydrological function of an estimated 300 acres of meadow habitat. The goal is to achieve conditions similar to pre-European contact. This will ensure continued use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) within the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The Washoe People's creation story took place at Lake Tahoe. The Washoe People were the first human inhabitants of the Lake Tahoe region. Meeks Meadow served as their historic summer camp. Their lifestyles and ceremonies revolved around the environment. People were viewed as a part of the environment. Care of the environment provided everything the Washoe People needed. The meadow was utilized for hunting, gathering, and the cultivation of foods, medicines and basket-making materials. Meeks Creek and Bay were utilized for drinking water, fishing, and ceremonial purposes. Historically, the open character of Meeks Meadow was maintained by the Washoe people using natural processes, such as periodic intentional burning, timber harvesting, pruning, weeding, and digging. The meadow's function has declined over the years due to livestock grazing, logging, increased tourism, and conifer encroachment. This has been exacerbated by frequent droughts, fire suppression/lack of natural disturbance processes,

Cultrally Significant Plants Found in Meeks Meadow

Nanolwa? (nan-hole-wah)

Golden current (*Ribes aureum*)



Ćamdu (tz-ahm-do)

Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)



Šuwetik (shu-wet-uk)

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)



Pećumeli? (petz-umel-eeh)

Woods rose (*Rosa woodsii*)



Why this Stewardship Agreement Important for Indigenous Peoples?

- Empowerment derived from Co-Management
- Development of Wetlands, Conservation plans, Integrating Traditional Washoe stewardship techniques and models as well as other traditional methods for protection and conservation
- Inventory of resources with Washoe Elders to determine which resources that under Washoe Stewardship principles must be present as indicative of meadow health
- Identification of less alternative methods for protecting and restoring the project area, emphasizing the aboriginal methods of the Washoe Tribe

Importance of including Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Land Management and in collaboration with Federal Agencies

- Allows for the Tribe to manage aboriginal lands in a historical and cultural manner
- Include the Washoe community in restoration work days instills a sense of responsibility, belonging, and stewardship of the traditional Washoe Homelands
- This project serves as template for increased Tribal involvement in the Lake Tahoe Basin, working collaboratively with federal, state, and local agencies



Barriers

- Covid-19
- Communication and scheduling conflicts
- Mutual respect
- Capacity and Staff overturn
- Incorporation of TEK

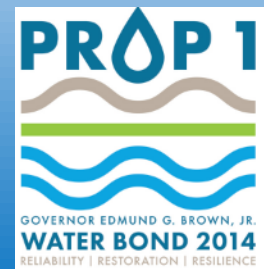


Education and Outreach

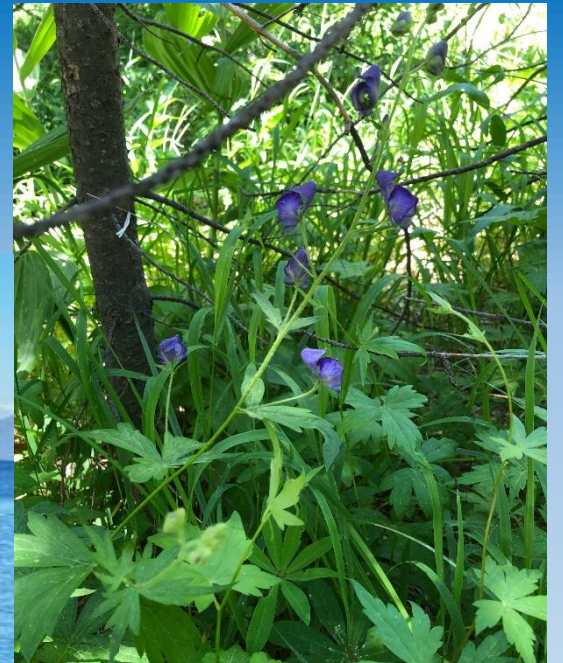


Acknowledgements

- Photo credit to John Peltier Photography
- Cale Pete
- Connor Magee, PhD
- Wes Kitlasten, PhD
- Shana Gross, MS
- Mary Adelzadeh, MS
- Washoe Environmental Protection Department (WEPD)
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU)
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
- CARDNO INC.
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC)
- Calflora.com
- Swanson Hydrology and Geomorphology
- <https://www.kunr.org/post/washoe-fishing-camps-lake-tahoe#stream/0>
- <https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/kt5s20178k/>



ʔuwaʔáŋawi



Questions?



**LEW
DÁ?AW
GEYÉĆÍŠ?É·SHA**

League to Save Lake Tahoe · Washoe Tribe of NV and CA

