3.11 RECREATION

3.11.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the recreation uses and existing facilities in the Lake Tahoe Region, as well as the regulatory and planning processes that address recreation in the Region. Potential impacts of the Regional Plan Update alternatives are analyzed, and mitigation measures are provided for those impacts determined to be significant.

Although no changes to the Recreation Element of the Goals and Policies are proposed as part of this Regional Plan Update, all alternatives would result in some level of new development or redevelopment that would potentially affect existing recreational facilities in the Region. This analysis does not attempt to predict the specific type, size, or location of new developments, but assesses impacts in a programmatic manner based on the relative amount of development potential of each alternative.

3.11.2 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

The following provides an overview of the public agencies involved with recreation opportunities and activities within the Tahoe Basin. Laws, regulations, ordinances, and guidelines are also addressed that are applicable to the Regional Plan Update alternatives.

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

In 1987, TRPA adopted the first Regional Plan for the Lake Tahoe Region to address growth and development and provide a policy guide for decision making. Several components of the Regional Plan address policies and regulations pertaining to recreation: Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities; Goals and Policies; and Code of Ordinances.

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD CARRYING CAPACITIES

Through adoption of Resolution 82-11, TRPA has established two threshold indicators for recreation, which represent minimum standards of environmental quality targets to be achieved in the Region. The two recreation threshold indicators are as follows:

- **R-1, Quality Experience and Additional Access.** It shall be the policy of the TRPA Governing Body in development of the Regional Plan to preserve and enhance the high-quality recreational experience including preservation of high-quality undeveloped shorezone and other natural areas. In developing the Regional Plan, the staff and Governing Body shall consider provisions for additional access, where lawful and feasible, to the shorezone and high-quality undeveloped areas for low density recreational uses.

- **R-2, Fair Share of Resource Capacity.** It shall be the policy of the TRPA Governing Body in development of the Regional Plan to establish and ensure a fair share of the total Regional capacity for outdoor recreation is available to the general public.

Based on the most recent Threshold Evaluation Report completed in 2012, both recreation threshold indicators are in attainment (TRPA 2012).

The R1 threshold consists of two parts: (1) preservation and enhancement of a high-quality recreational experience and (2) the provision of additional access to high-quality lands for recreation, including Lake access. The attainment of R1 is evaluated by considering the quality of the experience of recreation users and by
considering the availability of public access to the Lake and other natural features. The quality of recreation experiences is evaluated through recreation user surveys conducted by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) following National Visitor Use Monitoring protocols. Such surveys assess the overall satisfaction of recreation users and compare the importance of identified recreation attributes, such as condition of recreation facilities, with the experience that the recreationists perceive. The evaluation criteria for the second part of the threshold relies on assessing the extent of public land acquired and the availability of additional amenities that provide public access for low-density recreational uses, such as trails and trailheads.

The R2 threshold is intended to ensure a fair share of the Region’s total capacity for outdoor recreation is available to the general public. The attainment of R2 is based on three indicators: (1) cumulative accounts of persons at one time (PAOT) allocations, (2) facility development for recreation projects that do not require PAOT assignments, and (3) acquisition of new public lands that support recreation purposes.

**REGIONAL PLAN**

**Goals and Policies**

The Regional Plan contains the specific goals and policies to achieve and maintain environmental thresholds. These are addressed in three broad categories: dispersed recreation, developed recreation, and urban recreation. Dispersed recreation includes such activities as hiking, jogging, primitive camping, mountain biking, nature study, fishing, cross country skiing, rafting/kayaking, and swimming. All these activities require a quality resource base and some degree of solitude. Developed recreation includes marina and boat launch facilities, ski areas, campgrounds, and beaches. Urban recreation includes facilities located near urban areas, such as sports facilities, day-use areas, and recreation centers. Goals and policies for all types of recreation generally pertain to providing opportunities and sufficient capacity for high-quality recreation opportunities in a manner consistent with resource protection and overall Regional capacity. The Recreation Element will not be substantially changed from the 1987 Regional Plan under any of the Regional Plan Update alternatives. Goals and policies most relevant to this EIS include the following:

**Dispersed Recreation**

▲ **Goal 1:** Encourage opportunities for dispersed recreation when consistent with environmental values and protection of the natural resources.

onyms Policy 1:** Low density recreational experiences shall be provided along undeveloped shorelines and other natural areas, consistent with the tolerance capabilities and character of such areas.

onyms Policy 2:** Areas selected for nature study and wildlife observation shall be appropriately regulated to prevent unacceptable disturbance of the habitat and wildlife.

onyms Policy 3:** Trail systems for hiking, and horseback riding shall be expanded to accommodate projected demands and provide a link with major regional or interstate trails.

▲ **Goal 2:** Provide high-quality recreational opportunities.

onyms Policy 1:** Wilderness and other undeveloped and roadless areas shall be managed for low-density use.

onyms Policy 2:** Separate use areas shall be established for the dispersed winter activities of snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing when conflicts of use exist.

onyms Policy 3:** Nearshore/foreshore structures should be appropriately located to minimize impacts to recreational boating and top line fishing.

**Developed Recreation**

▲ **Goal 1:** Provide a fair share of the total Basin capacity for outdoor recreation.

onyms Policy 1:** All existing reservations of services for outdoor recreation shall continue to be committed for such purposes.
Policy 2: When reviewing projects that commit significant resources or services to non-outdoor recreational uses, TRPA shall be required to make written findings that sufficient resource capacity remains to obtain the recreation.

Policy 3: Provisions shall be made for additional developed outdoor recreation facilities capable of accommodating 6,114 PAOTs in overnight facilities and 6,761 PAOTs in summer day-use facilities and 12,400 PAOTs in winter day-use facilities.

Goal 2: Provide for the appropriate type, location, and rate of development of outdoor recreational uses.

Policy 1: Expansion of recreational facilities and opportunities should be in response to demand.

Policy 2: Bike trails shall be expanded to provide alternatives for travel in conjunction with transportation systems.

Policy 3: Public boat launching facilities shall be expanded, where appropriate, and when consistent with environmental constraints.

Policy 4: Private marinas shall be encouraged to provide public boat launching facilities.

Policy 11: Expansion of existing ski facilities may be permitted based on a master plan for the entire ski area. The plan must demonstrate (1) consistency with the other goals and policies of this plan and the requirements of the Compact, (2) that the expansion is consistent with the availability of accommodations and infrastructure to support visitors when they are off the ski area, and (3) that expansion of existing parking facilities for day use does not occur.

Goal 4: Provide for the efficient use of outdoor recreation resources.

Policy 1: Promote the use of underutilized recreation areas through programs that improve the public awareness of recreation opportunities and through an expanded water and inland transit system.

Policy 2: Seasonal facilities should provide opportunities for alternative uses in the off-season, wherever possible.

Urban Recreation

Goal 1: Provide sufficient capacity for local-oriented forms of outdoor and indoor recreation in urban areas

Policy 1: Reserve sufficient public service and facility capacity to accommodate all forms of urban recreation.

People at One Time

The Regional Plan uses the concept of people at one time (or PAOT) as a measure of recreation capacity. PAOT describes the number of people that a recreation use can accommodate at a given time. Allocations of PAOTs are used to both promote and control recreation facility development. Although certain recreation facilities have a design capacity for a given number of people at a time (e.g., developed campgrounds), PAOTs are not a management tool and do not indicate the overall use of a site. PAOTs are intended to ensure that a “fair share” of the Region’s remaining resource capacity (e.g., water and sewer services) is available for outdoor recreation areas and is allocated to projects that would result in an increase in the carrying capacity of recreation sites. If a qualifying recreation project would result in additional vehicle trips at a level that would trigger a traffic analysis, PAOTs would be needed in an amount commensurate with the intensity of new development.

Three categories of PAOTs are utilized under this system:

Winter day-use PAOTs are necessary for winter recreation facilities such as ski areas or snowmobile courses.
Summer day-use PAOTs are necessary for summer day-use recreation facilities such as beaches or trailhead parking.
Summer overnight PAOTs are necessary for a new campground or existing campground expansion.
Dispersed recreation does not require the allocation of PAOTs unless the dispersed activity is associated with a facility that requires them (e.g., a kayak rental concession at a developed beach).

Plan Area Statements and Community Plans
Chapters 11 and 12 of the Code, Plan Area Statements (PAS) and Plan Area Maps and Community Plans, requires that each PAS and Community Plan specify the permissible amount of additional recreational capacity, subject to the PAOT system. Any additional capacity that is beyond that specified in the PAS or Community Plan can be drawn from the reserved pool of PAOTs.

TAHOE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

LAKE TAHOE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

The Lake Tahoe Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) (TMPO 2010), prepared by the Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization, is a guide for planning, constructing, and maintaining a regional bicycle and pedestrian network and support facilities and programs. The network includes on-street bicycle lanes and bicycle routes and off-street paths and sidewalks. The BPP includes maps and prioritized project lists for the bicycle and pedestrian network and lays out policies for local governing bodies and transportation agencies. In addition, the BPP identifies potential funding sources and specifies recommended designs to encourage consistency and safety within the Region.

FEDERAL

U.S. FOREST SERVICE, LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT

The USFS National Forests are managed on a multiple-use, sustained-yield basis for production of forage, wildlife, wood, fish, water, and outdoor recreation. Wilderness management and protection of forest areas containing historic, scenic, geologic, ecologic, or other special qualities are inherent in Forest Service management policies. Within the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), the Forest Plan that was adopted in 1988 guides decisions on recreational issues. Unique to this Forest Plan is the emphasis on watershed, wildlife and fisheries restoration, and outdoor recreation with a de-emphasis on grazing and timber production. The mission statement for the LTBMU states that “The Forest Service mission at Lake Tahoe is to manage, protect, and enhance the environment of this national treasure for the benefit of the people.”

STATE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) defines its mission as follows: “to provide the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state’s extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and providing opportunities for high-quality recreational experiences based on those resources.” DPR manages the California State Park System, including Emerald Bay State Park, D.L. Bliss State Park, and Sugar Pine Point State Park in the Region.

CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

The California State Lands Commission (CSLC) is responsible for leasing sovereign lands on the California side of Lake Tahoe. The area lying between the high and low marks of non-tidal navigable waters is subject to a public trust easement for commerce, navigation, fishing, recreation, and preservation. The high and low water marks for the California side of the Lake have been established as elevations 6,228.75 feet and 6,223 feet Lake Tahoe datum, respectively. Any activities involving the state’s sovereign lands in Lake Tahoe below 6,223 feet require a

3.11-4 Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Regional Plan Update Draft EIS
lease from CSLC. CSLC is involved with the protection of California’s rare and endangered wildlife and plant species, as described in Section 3.10, Biological Resources, of this document, and for ensuring compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

**CALIFORNIA Tahoe CONSERVANCY**

The California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) was created in 1984 to restore and sustain a balance between the natural and human environments for public and private uses at Lake Tahoe. CTC provides grants to local governments and non-profit organizations for erosion control, public recreation and access, land acquisition, and other projects, and implements a mandate that, among other things, seeks to increase public access to the Region’s natural recreational opportunities. In the past 20 years, the CTC has acquired and developed many lake access parcels, including highly visible park developments in Kings Beach and Carnelian Bay. Acquisitions in Tahoe Vista resulted in removal of dilapidated structures and site restoration for more passive lake access. The CTC also owns shoreline property operated for other recreational purposes by the North Tahoe Public Utility District, and numerous other properties available for dispersed and developed recreational uses.

**NEVADA DIVISION OF STATE PARKS**

The Nevada Division of State Parks (NSP) manages the Lake Tahoe–Nevada State Park. The Lake Tahoe–Nevada State Park Master Development Plan with Resource Analysis (Lake Tahoe–Nevada State Park Plan) describes the basic principles for the use, preservation, and operation of Lake Tahoe–Nevada State Park. NSP is preparing an update to the 1990 Plan, which will provide future guidance regarding development and management of the park. The goal of the plan is to provide a long-range management and development strategy based on current visitation, needs and conditions, as well as projections for future use and needs. The plan describes user conflicts and visitor impacts for Sand Harbor Management Area, Cave Rock Management Area, Spooner Lake Management Area, Marlette/Hobart Backcountry Management Area, and the Highway 28 Management Area.

**NEVADA DIVISION OF STATE LANDS**

The Nevada Division of State Lands (NDSL) requires applications for structures lakeward of high water, 6,229.1 feet elevation, although the state claims ownership of Lake Tahoe lakeward of 6,223 feet elevation, Lake Tahoe datum (NRS 321.595). NDSL requests comments from the Nevada Department of Wildlife regarding impacts to recreational access and fish habitat resulting from Shorezone leases. NDSL also maintains the public trust on the Nevada side for submerged land below an elevation of 6,223 feet Lake Tahoe datum.

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE**

The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) is responsible for managing the fisheries, wildlife, and habitat resources on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. In addition, NDOW is also responsible for boating and safety on navigable waters in the state. NDOW protects boaters from navigational obstacles and protects the recreational angler’s boating access along the shoreline of Lake Tahoe. NDOW is a reviewing and commenting agency but has no regulatory authority related to permits for construction in hazards to navigation within the waters of Lake Tahoe.

**LOCAL**

The City of South Lake Tahoe, along with the Tahoe City Public Utility District, North Tahoe Public Utility District, and Incline Village General Improvement District, administer recreation departments. These local jurisdictions manage several beaches, campgrounds, day-use areas, lakeside parks, and boat launch facilities.
3.11.3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Recreation opportunities in the Region are abundant due to the diverse terrain and topography. Activities are generally associated with the Lake’s open water (e.g., swimming, boating, personal watercraft use, and fishing), the shoreline (e.g., sunbathing, camping, bicycling, and sightseeing), and the mountains surrounding the Lake (e.g., hiking, mountain biking, backpacking, snowboarding, and skiing). Recreational activities in the Region are generally seasonal and participants vary. Tourism is a key component of the Region’s economy and a high-quality recreation experience coupled with outstanding recreation opportunities is important to maintaining tourism.

Recreational activities are heavily influenced by the seasons and local weather. The recreational challenge in the Region is the delicate balance between public access to recreation and environmental preservation. Recreational activities can have an impact on water, soils, air, wildlife, transportation, and the scenic quality of the Region. As population increases, so does the demand for access to Lake Tahoe shores and other public lands for recreational activities. There is also increased demand for urban recreational facilities, such as swimming pools and sports fields.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately 85 percent of land in the Tahoe Region is publicly owned and managed by USFS and other state agencies (Exhibit 3.11-1).

FEDERAL

U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

Over 75 percent of the Tahoe Region is public land managed by USFS. This land includes beaches, hiking and biking trails, off-highway vehicles (OHV) trails, Wilderness, historic estates, and developed recreation areas such as resorts, ski areas, campgrounds, and riding stables. The LTBMU is managed to provide access for the public and to protect the natural resources of the area.

CALIFORNIA

Nine California State Parks (CSP) properties are located within the Region, and they provide an assortment of dispersed and developed recreation opportunities (Exhibit 3.11-1):

- Burton Creek State Park
- D.L. Bliss State Park
- Ed Z’berg Sugar Pine Point State Park
- Emerald Bay State Park
- Kings Beach State Recreation Area
- Lake Valley State Recreation Area
- Tahoe State Recreation Area
- Ward Creek Park Property
- Washoe Meadows State Park

In addition, approximately 4,800 parcels of land, comprising more than 6,500 acres, have been acquired by CTC on the California side of the Region for the purpose of protecting the natural environment and promoting public recreation and Lake access.
NEVADA

Lake Tahoe—Nevada State Park (Exhibit 3.11-1) is managed by NSP and includes Sand Harbor and the Spooner Backcountry. The park offers a variety of recreational activities for visitors to enjoy, including sandy beaches, a boat launch ramp, restrooms, and picnic and group use areas. In addition, NSP manages the Nevada side of Van Sickle Bi-State Park jointly with CTC.

NDSL leads the State’s programs to protect Lake Tahoe. The Nevada Tahoe Resource Team (NTRT) is an interagency team coordinated by NDSL and dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural environment in the Lake Tahoe Basin. NTRT is responsible for implementing Nevada’s share of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) and is coordinating and implementing a wide range of projects designed to improve water quality, control erosion, restore natural watercourses, improve forest health and wildlife habitat, and provide recreational opportunities.

LOCAL

At the local level, parks and recreation are under the jurisdiction of the public utility districts in California, the general improvement district in Nevada, and the parks and recreation department in the City of South Lake Tahoe. Recreational facilities associated with local jurisdictions include parks, beaches, trails, fields, golf courses, beaches, campgrounds, and community centers.

PRIVATELY OWNED LANDS

Privately owned open space lands include uses such as private parks, golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, playgrounds, club playing fields, landscaped outdoor areas, and community facilities.

EXISTING RECREATION USES

The Goals and Policies categorize recreation into three general types within the Region: dispersed, developed, and urban recreation. Dispersed recreation activities typically do not require the use of facilities other than access points and include hiking, jogging, primitive camping, fishing, backcountry and cross country skiing, rafting/kayaking, and swimming. Developed recreation involves recreation activities enhanced by the use of built facilities, such as campgrounds, marinas, and ski resorts. Developed recreation sites are located and operated on both public and private lands. Urban recreation includes indoor and outdoor recreation facilities such as athletic fields, ice skating rinks, swimming pools, and neighborhood parks and are primarily designed for use by the residents of the Region.

Information is incomplete on recreational uses at all recreation sites and for all types of recreation. However, USFS conducts visitor use surveys every 5 years to estimate the quality of recreational experiences at a variety of developed and undeveloped recreation sites on National Forest Service lands in the Region. These USFS visitor use data do not represent all recreation sites (especially urban sites), but they cover more than 75 percent of the land area with a variety of recreation sites and provide a useful indicator of overall recreational uses in the Region. The 2009–2010 survey estimated 5,786,000 visits to the LTBMU (USFS 2010); this is a decrease from the estimated 7,832,000 visits in 2004–2005 (USFS 2005).

Activity participation is an indicator of the types of recreation opportunities and settings in current demand by recreation users. Table 3.11-1 summarizes the percent participation in selected activities. Survey respondents were also asked to select just one activity as their main reason for visiting. While the order of percent
participation differed for fiscal years 2005 and 2010, the top six activities remained the same: relaxing, downhill skiing, viewing natural features, hiking/walking, viewing wildlife, and driving for pleasure (USFS 2005, 2010).

Table 3.11-1. Activity Participation for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (Fiscal Years 2005 and 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fiscal Year 2005</th>
<th>Fiscal Year 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation1</td>
<td>Identified as Main Activity2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(% of Respondents)</td>
<td>(% of Respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downhill Skiing</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing Natural Features</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking/Walking</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing Wildlife</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving for Pleasure</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Historic Sites</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Non-motorized Activities</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Center Activities</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort Use</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-country Skiing</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Study</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-motorized Water Activities</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorized Water Activities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobiling</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Activity</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Camping</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering Forest Products</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpacking</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Camping</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHV Use</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorized Trail Activity</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Motorized Activity</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: OHV = off-highway vehicle
1 Survey respondents were allowed to select multiple activities, so this column may total more than 100 percent.
2 Survey respondents were asked to select just one activity as their main reason for the forest visit, but some respondents selected more than one, so this column may total more than 100 percent.
Sources: USFS 2005, 2010
FACILITY CAPACITY ESTIMATES

The TRPA Regional Recreation Plan Recreation Assessment was completed in 2005 in preparation for the Regional Plan Update. While this study was conducted approximately 7 years ago, population levels have not increased as expected since it was prepared, and the analysis considers a base population below current levels (56,000) and projected populations greater than anticipated under any of the Regional Plan Update Alternative (65,450). (The current population of the Lake Tahoe Region is 54,473 and current maximum projections are estimated to be 59,773 [for Alternatives 4 and 5]). As result, this study is not only relevant to this analysis, but provides conservative estimates of recreation capacity and use. The Recreation Assessment identified existing facilities and identifies corresponding Design Capacity for People (DCP) levels. The following recreation uses were analyzed.

**Boat Launching Facilities:** Recreational establishments (excluding marinas) that provide boat launching, parking, and short-term trailer storage for the general public. Storage, mooring, and maintenance of boats are included under “marinas.” Raft launching is included under “day-use areas.” In addition, a number of marinas provide either a boat ramp or boat launching services.

**Cross Country Ski Areas:** Cross country ski areas encompass ski courses and ski trail systems that are authorized by TRPA for the purpose of cross country skiing; mapped areas and trails utilized in, and approved for, commercial Nordic skiing operations are included in this classification. These include both groomed and ungroomed trails.

**Day Use Areas:** Land or premises, other than participant sports (e.g., ball fields), designated for use by individuals or the general public, for a fee or otherwise, for outdoor recreation purposes on a daily basis, such as state, regional, and local parks, picnic sites, vista points, snow play areas, rafting facilities, and playgrounds.

**Developed Campgrounds:** This use includes both the Urban and Developed classifications. It encompasses facilities designed for temporary occupancy by campers traveling by foot, bike, and motorized vehicle and facilities that contain amenities such as camp sites with parking area, barbecue grills, tables, and restrooms. Developed campgrounds also accommodate the recreational vehicle camper, with sites for trailers, campers, and recreational vehicles, with some facilities providing individual utility hookups.

**Downhill Ski Facilities:** Downhill ski areas encompass uses and facilities pertaining to ski areas, including, but not limited to, runs, trails, lift-line cables, chairlifts, cars, warming huts, caretaking quarters, parking, vehicles, day lodges, shops for sale and rental of ski equipment, retail shops, first aid stations, ski school facilities and assembly areas, day nurseries, maintenance facilities, lounges, eating and drinking establishments, and other ski-oriented shops. Uses and facilities serving non-skiing activities or operating year-round (tennis courts, swimming pools, hot tubs, restaurants, bars, and retail sales) constructed on lands that serve or are utilized in the operation of a ski area are categorized under the appropriate use classification.

**Golf Courses:** This use includes golf courses, driving ranges, and putting greens. A golf course may include accessory uses such as an eating and drinking place, clubhouse, and general merchandise store.

**Group Facilities:** This category includes establishments that provide overnight accommodations and outdoor recreation to organized groups such as recreational camps, group or organized camps, and religious camps.

**Marinas:** These establishments primarily provide water-oriented services such as moorings; storage and launching facilities; boat rentals; yachting and rowing clubs; sport fishing activities, excursion boat and sightseeing facilities; and other marina-related activities, including, but not limited to, fuel sales and boat and engine repair. Marinas contain water-oriented facilities and structures that are defined in Code Chapter 81.
Condominiums, hotels, restaurants, and other such uses with accessory water-oriented multiple-use facilities are not considered marinas.

**Off-Road Vehicle Areas:** Off-road vehicle areas encompass OHV courses and OHV trail systems that are authorized by TRPA for the use of off-road vehicles; mapped areas and trails utilized in and approved for commercial OHV operations are included in this classification. Off-road vehicle use does not include the use of vehicles associated with timber harvest activities on approved skid trails or maintenance vehicles.

**Participant Sports Facilities:** Facilities under this classification are intended for various outdoor sports and recreation, including, but not limited to, tennis courts, swim and tennis clubs, ice skating rinks, and athletic fields (non-professional).

**Recreation Centers:** Recreation centers include indoor recreation establishments, operated by a public or quasi-public agency, that provide indoor sports and community services, such as swimming pools, ice skating rinks, multi-purpose courts, weight rooms, and meeting and craft rooms.

**Riding and Hiking Trails:** Riding and hiking trails include planned paths that are authorized by TRPA for pedestrian, equestrian, or mountain bike use. This classification includes trailheads.

**Rural Sports:** The Rural Sports category includes establishments that provide for special outdoor recreation group activities, such as equestrian facilities, stables, and exhibition facilities; hunting and fishing clubs; and outdoor archery, pistol, rifle, and skeet clubs and facilities.

**Snowmobile Areas:** Snowmobile areas encompass snowmobile courses and snowmobile trail systems that are authorized by TRPA for the use of snowmobiles; mapped areas and trails utilized in and approved for commercial snowmobile operations are included in this classification.

**Undeveloped Campgrounds:** Undeveloped campgrounds are primarily lands that have been permanently established for temporary occupancy by campers traveling on foot or horse. Associated campsites may contain tent sites, fire rings, and sanitary facilities but do not contain utilities.

**Undeveloped Public Land:** Undeveloped public lands include lands under public ownership (federal, state, county, or local) that have no land coverage and are maintained in a natural condition or landscaped condition consistent with best management practices. Included in this category are undeveloped parklands, which are lands intended for park development that have not yet been improved.

**Visitor Information Centers:** This category includes non-profit establishments providing visitor information and orientation.

Using the categories described above, the Recreation Assessment included estimated design capacities for the number of people who could be recreating at a given point in time (the DCP) for the Region. These numbers were calculated based on facility design standards, where applicable, or parking spaces at a facility. Table 3.11-2 provides the DCP for summer and winter recreation opportunities.
Table 3.11-2. Estimated Number of Recreation Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation Opportunity</th>
<th>Design Capacity for Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaches</td>
<td>36,693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Launching Facilities</td>
<td>4,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-Use Areas</td>
<td>9,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Camping</td>
<td>8,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Courses</td>
<td>1,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Facilities</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marinas</td>
<td>5,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Uses</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Road Vehicle Areas</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped Public Lands</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Sports Facilities</td>
<td>4,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Centers</td>
<td>2,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding and Hiking Trails</td>
<td>5,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paved Multi-Use Trails</td>
<td>2,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Sports</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped Camping</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Centers</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Summer DCP</strong></td>
<td>82,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Country Ski Courses</td>
<td>849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downhill Ski Areas</td>
<td>21,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Facilities</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Centers</td>
<td>2,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobile Courses</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Centers</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Winter DCP</strong></td>
<td>26,211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: DCP=Design Capacity for People; OHV=Off Highway Vehicles
Source: TRPA 2005

As described in Section 3.11.2, Regulatory Background, PAOTs describe the number of people that a recreation use can accommodate at a given time. Not all facilities that increase recreational capacity are reflected under the PAOT allocation system. For example, downhill ski facilities require winter day-use PAOT allocations but cross country ski facilities do not; and day-use facilities operated by federal agencies or state departments of parks and recreation (or their permittees) require summer day-use PAOT allocations, but facilities operated by local jurisdictions or other state agencies do not. Table 3.11-3 details the distribution of PAOTs throughout the Region, the total remaining, and the percentage used.
### Table 3.11-3. Distributed PAOTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Summer Day Use</th>
<th>Winter Day Use</th>
<th>Overnight Use</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavenly Mountain Resort</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>4,367</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Sickle Bi-State Park</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rempher Group Facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Tahoe Public Utility District</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Conference Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spooner Lake Cross Country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elks Point</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ski Incline/Diamond Peak</td>
<td></td>
<td>900</td>
<td></td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrah’s Tourboat</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Conference Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar’s Tourboat</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeside Trail (California State Parks)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand Harbor Visitor Center (Nevada State Parks)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavenly (USFS)</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahoe-Baikal Institute (USFS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahoe City Marina Master Plan Expansion</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado Beach Campground</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assigned</strong></td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>5,267</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>6,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remaining</strong></td>
<td>5,569</td>
<td>7,133</td>
<td>5,720</td>
<td>18,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of PAOTs Assigned</strong></td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>58.0%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from data provided by TRPA in 2012

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**RECREATION PROJECTS UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The EIP is a cooperative effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region. The EIP program defines restoration needs for attaining environmental goals or thresholds and, through a substantial investment of resources, increases the pace at which the thresholds will be attained. Key to this strategy is reliance on partnerships with all sectors of the community, including the private sector and local, state, and federal government.

The Regional Plan Recreation Goals and Policies are implemented primarily through application of the Code in the review of proposed projects, and through the EIP. An Initial Environmental Checklist (IEC) must be completed for each proposed project. The IEC contains questions designed to identify whether a proposed project would decrease the quality of recreational experiences or limit access to recreational areas. The EIP includes a recreation program that facilitates implementation of projects that will (1) improve Lake access, (2) develop a comprehensive trail system, (3) improve recreational facilities, and (4) improve educational programs and interpretive facilities. To date, more than 93 recreational facilities have been constructed or rehabilitated as part of the EIP’s recreation program.

The majority of recreation projects have been implemented through the EIP, consisting generally of projects related to public access, a comprehensive trail system, day-use and overnight facilities, and educational programs and interpretive facilities. Projects associated with the EIP are discussed below.
PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to Lake Tahoe’s shoreline represents one of the Basin’s most popular recreational opportunities. EIP partners have made significant strides in improving public access, particularly in the Tahoe Basin’s developed areas. In Tahoe City, the Tahoe City Public Utility District in partnership with CTC and several EIP partner agencies, planned, constructed, and revitalized Commons Beach providing Lake access, a community gathering place, and a Lakefront bike trail that serves as the hub of the town. The nearby Truckee River Outlet project also provided additional Lake access at Lake Tahoe’s outlet structure. Public access projects are primarily implemented through CTC, local governments and utility districts, and USFS.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL SYSTEM

USFS has prepared Road and Trail Access and Travel Management (Road and Trail ATM) plans since 2002. The purpose of the Road and Trail ATM plans is to establish sustainable, adaptable trail systems that balance environmental concerns with the need for public access. Implementation of these plans is intended to reduce use conflicts, improve recreation access on trails throughout National Forest System lands, reduce resource impacts, reduce long-term maintenance costs, and better meet public needs. The focus of this program is on implementation of the Road and Trail ATM plans by providing facilities that will encourage multiple uses and improve recreation access on trails on public lands while reducing resource impacts.

Trail projects are primarily implemented through CTC, CSP, NSP, NDEP, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, and USFS. Over the last decade, EIP partners have invested in improving the Basin-wide trail system through consolidation of trails, redesign of existing trails and facilities, including rerouting from sensitive areas, and development of new trails and facilities. The completion of the 155-mile Tahoe Rim Trail marks the most significant accomplishment to date. Other notable facilities include the completion of the 3.75-mile Marlette Lake Trail, Sand Harbor to Memorial Point Trail, Eagle Falls trailhead, Rainbow Trail retrofit, and improvements at Inspiration Point and Memorial Point.

DAY-USE AND OVERNIGHT FACILITIES

Day-use and overnight facilities in the Region are in high demand throughout the year. USFS 2005 National Visitor Use Monitoring analysis forecasted that an increase of approximately 50,000 additional visitors could be anticipated over the next 20 years (i.e., by 2025). Some developed recreation sites, such as day-use and overnight facilities near Emerald Bay and Lakefront campgrounds, are commonly at capacity throughout much of the summer season while overnight camping facilities are also in short supply at peak periods.

A variety of improvements have been implemented over the past 10 years. The North Shore has a network of places where the public can enjoy the Lake at high-quality day use facilities, including Commons Beach, Tahoe Vista, Carnelian Bay, Kings Beach, and the Truckee River Outlet. Water quality improvements and visitor enhancements were constructed for campgrounds at Ed Z’berg-Sugar Pine Point and Emerald Bay State Parks, Meeks Bay Resort, and Zephyr Cove. EIP projects improved the Lake Forest, El Dorado, and Tahoe Vista boat launches. Modifications to the Eagle Falls trailhead and Pope Beach enhanced access to day-use facilities. Other notable new facilities and retrofits include significant enhancements to the visitor experience at Vikingsholm and at the new Sand Harbor Visitor Center.

Primary implementing agencies for day-use and overnight facilities include CTC, CSP, NSP, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Homewood Mountain Resort, marinas, local governments and utility districts, and USFS.
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

Educational programs and interpretive facilities are intended to increase visitor information centers, promote environmental literacy and stewardship, improve public understanding of natural resource management, and improve the collaborative capacity for communities to engage in discussions to resolve natural resource issues. Existing facilities include the Meyers Interim Interagency Visitor Center, Sand Harbor Visitor Center, and Explore Tahoe – An Urban Trailhead in the City of South Lake Tahoe. Recently completed projects include upgrades and installation of interpretive signage facilities at Inspiration Point, Eagle Falls, Logan Shoals Vista, Stateline Lookout Overlook and Interpretive Trail, Tallac Historic Site, and the Taylor Creek Visitor Center, which includes the Stream Profile Chamber, Rainbow Trail, and the Lake of the Sky Amphitheater.

Public agencies such as CTC, NDSL, and USFS have active acquisition programs that purchase land and make it available to the public for dispersed recreation. In recent years, the rate of public land acquisition has slowed, but acquisitions are still occurring to increase land availability for low-density recreation. Public agencies and non-profit organizations have been actively increasing the number and quality of access amenities, such as trails and trailheads (TRPA 2012).

Recent examples of newly developed recreation resources include:

- 13 miles of new trail being added to the Tahoe Rim Trail (Tahoe Rim Trail Association and USFS)
- a new trailhead at the Van Sickle Bi-State Park (CTC and NSP)
- numerous trail construction and improvement projects, including the Lam Watah trail and trailhead near Nevada Beach and a new trail connecting High Meadows to Starr Lake (USFS)
- several new trails at the Ward Creek property (in process, DPR)
- river access improvements along the Upper Truckee River (CTC) (TRPA 2012)

In addition, the EIP program maintains a list of priority projects, updated every 5 years, related to public access, trail projects, day and overnight use, and education programs and interpretive facilities.

LAKE TAHOE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Connected bicycle paths, sidewalks, and transit can provide the backbone of a people-oriented transportation system that supports neighborhoods, commercial districts, and recreation areas. Local jurisdictions and roadway agencies have identified 162 miles of new infrastructure necessary for a complete bicycle and pedestrian network. Of these identified facilities, those that close gaps, will attract high use and reduce vehicle miles traveled, provide multi-modal connections, and improve safety have been prioritized.

3.11.4 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The following analysis assesses the environmental effects of each Regional Plan Update alternative with respect to the existing or currently proposed recreation uses and facilities in the Region. This analysis is based on review of existing documents, policies, ordinances, and other regulations pertinent to recreation (see Section 3.11.2, Regulatory Background).

Implementation of Alternative 3 would revise the land use classification of recreation lands owned by USFS and the States of California and Nevada from recreation to conservation in most areas of the Region where
developed facilities do not exist. The specific effects of land use classification changes associated with Alternative 3 are addressed in Impact 3.2-2: Land Use Classification Change.

**SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA**

Implementation of the Regional Plan Update would result in a significant adverse effect on recreation if it would:

- have the potential to create significant conflicts between recreation uses, either existing or proposed;
- create substantial additional demand for recreation facilities; or
- reduce availability of outdoor recreation capacity for the general public.

**IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Demand for Recreation Facilities and Availability of Outdoor Recreation Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.11-1</td>
<td>None of the Regional Plan Update alternatives propose changes to recreation goals, policies, or implementation measures, nor would any alternative convert recreation facilities to a non-recreation use. All of the alternatives would allow for increases in residential units and TAUs, increasing resident and tourist populations, and therefore incrementally increasing the demand for recreation facilities and uses. However, continued implementation of existing recreation goals and policies and implementation of new recreation projects from other programs (e.g., EIP) would reserve adequate capacity for recreation, and implementation of the Regional Plan Update would not reduce capacity of existing recreation facilities or opportunities. In addition, each alternative includes transportation strategies that would implement new bicycle and pedestrian trails, which would enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. This impact would therefore be less than significant for all alternatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projecting future recreation needs is difficult because recreation need and use are contingent on many factors, including societal trends, economic conditions, and weather patterns (e.g., years of heavy snow and rain or years of drought). However, it is reasonable to assume that forms of recreation that have been popular in recent years would generally remain popular into the future. As shown in Table 3.11-1, the recreational activities with the highest level of participation are downhill skiing, hiking, and passive forms of recreation (e.g., relaxing, viewing natural features and wildlife). A great many of these types of recreation opportunities are available, as indicated by the analysis of DCP of existing facilities and distribution of PAOTs throughout the Region described in Section 3.11.3, Affected Environment.

Changes in recreation use are typically related to increases in residential population and increases in tourist accommodation units (TAUs). Table 3.11-4 provides a summary of the percentage increase in resident population and overnight visitor population (indicated by percentage of TAU increase) by 2035 under each of the Regional Plan Update alternatives (see Section 3.12, Population, Employment, and Housing).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Percentage Increase in Resident Population by 2035</th>
<th>Percentage Increase in TAU by 2035</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT**

Under Alternative 1, new development would be limited to existing allocations and development rights remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, including 383,600 square feet of CFA; 342 TAU; 874 residential bonus units; and 86 residential allocations. In addition to the unused allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, all legally existing development, including approximately 6.5 million square feet of CFA and 12,399 TAU, would be available for transfer subject to existing transfer requirements. In addition, Alternative 1 would implement Transportation Strategy Package A of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which would implement new bicycle and pedestrian strategies.

The allocations and development rights proposed under Alternative 1 would result in an increase in resident population of approximately 2.2 percent and an increase in TAU (which relates to visitor population) of approximately 1.8 percent in the Tahoe Region by 2035 (Table 3.11-4). This increase in resident and visitor population could lead to increased use of existing recreation facilities or demand for new recreation facilities.

The required attention to threshold indicators would minimize any project-related adverse environmental effects associated with increased demand for or use of recreation facilities attributed to an increase in population. TRPA’s existing goals and policies ensure that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region is met by calling for increased access for dispersed recreation, developed recreation, and urban recreation. In addition, they call for managing areas for low-density recreation experiences by expanding trail systems, managing areas for nature study and wildlife observation, separating incompatible recreational uses, and providing for the appropriate type, location, and rate of development of outdoor recreational uses in the Land Use Plan to meet increased demand when consistent with the environmental value and protection of the natural resources. With respect to developed recreation facilities, the goals and policies require that a fair share of the Region’s water and sewer capacity be maintained for the sole purpose of expanding recreation facilities to meet demand. Through the existing PASs, TRPA provides for new capacity for overnight facilities, summer day-use facilities, and winter day-use facilities. At present, TRPA has 18,422 PAOTs remaining for expansion of recreation facilities in the Region (Table 3.11-3).

Tables 3.11-1, 3.11-2, and 3.11-3 indicate that visitors to recreation sites in the Tahoe Region make use of a wide range of developed, undeveloped, and urban activities. Usage data show that the opportunities available for recreation are widely dispersed throughout the Region. Ongoing improvements through various agencies (i.e., USFS, CTC, CSP, NSP, and private property owners) and programs (such as the EIP) and allocation of PAOTs as needed by TRPA would continue to expand and maintain these opportunities and ensure that capacity is available. Because of the number, wide variety, and proximity of existing recreation facilities and opportunities (e.g., parks, hiking trails, beaches, ski areas, boating facilities), the modest increase in residents and visitors to the Tahoe Region resulting from implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in the concentration of recreation users on any single recreation facility such that new or expanded facilities would be required. The increase in population could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.
Implementation of Alternative 1 would not result in the conversion of an existing recreation facility to a non-recreation use, nor designate lands currently used for recreation for another land use or purpose; In addition, TRPA’s goals and policies ensure that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region are met. In particular Developed Recreation Goal 2 provides for the appropriate type, location, and rate of development of outdoor recreational uses, and supporting Policy 1 provides for expansion of recreational facilities and opportunities in response to demand.

Therefore, because the broad range of Regional recreation needs would be accommodated as the population increases over the next 20 years, impacts on the quality of the recreation experience and the capacity for additional outdoor recreation available to the general public would be **less than significant**.

**ALTERNATIVE 2: LOW DEVELOPMENT, INCREASED REGULATION**

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 2 would include 2,600 new residential allocations and an additional 200,000 square feet of CFA. The new CFA would be available to Community Plans under the existing allocation system, but only after the 1987 Regional Plan remainder is used and 70 percent commercial occupancy is achieved. No new TAU allocations would be included. Remaining unassigned residential bonus units would be distributed in accordance with existing procedures, as described above, and no additional residential bonus units would be available. Alternative 2 would implement Transportation Strategy Package B of the RTP, which would include new bicycle and pedestrian projects.

With respect to recreation capacity and demand, Alternative 2 would result in very similar impacts as described for Alternative 1, except that more development is proposed under Alternative 2. The allocations proposed under Alternative 2 would result in an increase in resident population of 6.1 percent and an increase in TAUs (which relates to visitor population) of approximately 7.3 percent in the Tahoe Region by 2035 (see Table 3.11-4). Similar to Alternative 1, the increase in residents and visitors associated with Alternative 2 could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Region, or with expanded facilities and new facilities that are developed consistent with the Recreation and Land Use Elements of the Regional Plan (e.g., proposed EIP projects).

As described for Alternative 1 above, the required attention to threshold indicators would minimize any project-related adverse environmental effects associated with increased demand for or use of recreation facilities attributed to an increase in population. TRPA’s existing goals and policies ensure that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region are met. Through the existing PASs, TRPA provides for new capacity for overnight facilities, summer day-use facilities, and winter day-use facilities. At present, TRPA has 18,422 PAOTS remaining for expansion of recreation facilities in the Region (Table 3.11-3). In addition, implementation of Transportation Strategy Package B under Alternative 2 of the RTP includes new bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These projects would enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities and potentially add new user groups to existing and proposed recreation facilities that are linked through the trail system.

In addition, ongoing improvements through various agencies (i.e., USFS, CTC, CSP, NSP, and private property owners) and programs (such as the EIP) and allocation of PAOTs as needed by TRPA would continue to expand and maintain these opportunities and ensure that capacity is available. Because of the number, wide variety, and proximity of existing recreation facilities and opportunities (e.g., parks, hiking trails, beaches, ski areas, boating facilities), the modest increase in residents and visitors to the Tahoe Region resulting from implementation of Alternative 2 would not result in the concentration of recreation users on any single recreation facility such that new or expanded facilities would be required. The increase in population could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.
For the reasons described above, impacts on the quality of the recreation experience and the capacity for additional outdoor recreation available to the general public would be less than significant.

**ALTERNATIVE 3: LOW DEVELOPMENT, HIGHLY INCENTIVIZED REDEVELOPMENT**

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 3 would include 2,600 new residential allocations, an additional 200,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 600 residential bonus units. No new TAUs would be included. Alternative 3 would also implement Transportation Strategy Package C, which consists of the constrained transportation project list. This package would implement new bicycle and pedestrian projects.

With respect to recreation capacity and demand, Alternative 3 would result in very similar impacts as described for Alternative 1, except that more development is proposed under Alternative 3. The allocations proposed under Alternative 3 would result in an increase in resident population of 10.8 percent and an increase in TAUs (which relates to visitor population) of approximately 8.6 percent in the Tahoe Region by 2035 (see Table 3.11-4). Similar to Alternative 1, the increase in residents and visitors associated with Alternative 3 could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region, or with expanded facilities and new facilities that are developed consistent with the Recreation and Land Use Elements of the Regional Plan.

As described above, required attention to threshold indicators would minimize any project-related adverse environmental effects associated with increased demand for or use of recreation facilities attributed to an increase in population. The goals and policies for Alternative 3 are the same as those that are in place for Alternative 1 with minor amendments to clarify language and reorganize goals and policies without changing policy intent. Therefore, the goals and policies would ensure that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region are met. At present, TRPA has 18,422 PAOTS remaining for expansion of recreation facilities in the Region (Table 3.11-3). Through the existing PASs, the agency provides for new capacity for overnight facilities, summer day-use facilities, and winter day-use facilities. Furthermore, implementation of the Transportation Strategy Package C, under Alternative 3 of the RTP, would enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

In addition, ongoing improvements through various agencies (i.e., USFS, CTC, CSP, NSP, and private property owners) and programs (such as the EIP) and allocation of PAOTS as needed by TRPA would continue to expand and maintain these opportunities and ensure that capacity is available. Because of the number, wide variety, and proximity of existing recreation facilities and opportunities (e.g., parks, hiking trails, beaches, ski areas, boating facilities), the modest increase in residents and visitors to the Tahoe Region resulting from implementation of Alternative 3 would not result in the concentration of recreation users on any single recreation facility such that new or expanded facilities would be required. The increase in population could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.

For the reasons described above, impacts on the quality of the recreation experience and the capacity for additional outdoor recreation available to the general public would be less than significant.

**ALTERNATIVE 4: REDUCED DEVELOPMENT, INCENTIVIZED REDEVELOPMENT**

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 4 would include 4,000 new residential allocations, an additional 400,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 200 TAUs. No new residential bonus units would be added. Like Alternative 3, Alternative 4 would implement Transportation Strategy Package C of the RTP, which consists of the constrained transportation project list. This package would implement new bicycle and pedestrian projects.
With respect to recreation capacity and demand, Alternative 4 would result in very similar impacts as described for Alternative 1, except that more development is proposed under Alternative 4. The allocations proposed under Alternative 4 would result in an increase in resident population of 9.7 percent and an increase in TAUs (which relates to visitor population) of approximately 10.3 percent in the Tahoe Region by 2035 (see Table 3.11-4). Similar to Alternative 1, the increase in residents and visitors associated with Alternative 4 could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region, or with expanded facilities and new facilities that are developed consistent with the Recreation and Land Use Elements of the Regional Plan.

As described above, the required attention to threshold indicators would minimize any project-related adverse environmental effects associated with increased demand for or use of recreation facilities attributed to an increase in population. TRPA’s existing goals and policies ensures that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region is met. Through the existing PASs, TRPA provides for new capacity for overnight facilities, summer day-use facilities, and winter day-use facilities. At present, TRPA has 18,422 PAOTS remaining for expansion of recreation facilities in the Region (Table 3.11-3). Furthermore, implementation of the Transportation Strategy Package C, under Alternative 4 of the RTP, would enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

In addition, ongoing improvements through various agencies (i.e., USFS, CTC, CSP, NSP, and private property owners) and programs (such as the EIP) and allocation of PAOTS as needed by TRPA would continue to expand and maintain these opportunities and ensure that capacity is available. Because of the number, wide variety, and proximity of existing recreation facilities and opportunities (e.g., parks, hiking trails, beaches, ski areas, boating facilities), the modest increase in residents and visitors to the Tahoe Region resulting from implementation of Alternative 4 would not result in the concentration of recreation users on any single recreation facility such that new or expanded facilities would be required. The increase in population could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.

For the reasons described above, impacts on the quality of the recreation experience and the capacity for additional outdoor recreation available to the general public would be less than significant.

**ALTERNATIVE 5: SIMILAR RATE OF DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY STRUCTURE TO 1987 REGIONAL PLAN**

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 5 would include 5,200 new residential allocations (the development of which would be limited to the remaining 4,091 development rights), an additional 600,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 400 TAUs. Transportation strategies under Alternative 5 would be the same as those under Alternative 1.

Because long-term population levels would be similar, Alternative 5 would result in very similar impacts with respect to recreation capacity and demand as described for Alternative 4. The proposed allocations under Alternative 5 would result in an increase in resident population of 10.1 percent and an increase in TAUs (which relates to visitor population) of approximately 10.4 percent in the Tahoe Region by 2035 (see Table 3.11-4). Similar to Alternative 1, the increase in residents and visitors associated with Alternative 5 would be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.

As described above, the required attention to threshold indicators would minimize any project-related adverse environmental effects associated with increased demand for or use of recreation facilities attributed to an increase in population. TRPA’s existing goals and policies ensure that demand for recreation facilities and opportunities in the Region are met. Through the existing PASs, the agency provides for new capacity for overnight facilities, summer day-use facilities, and winter day-use facilities. At present TRPA has 18,422 PAOTS remaining for expansion of recreation facilities in the Region (Table 3.11-3). Furthermore, implementation of the
Transportation Strategy Package A, under Alternative 5 of the RTP, would enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

In addition, ongoing improvements through various agencies (i.e., USFS, CTC, CSP, NSP, and private property owners) and programs (such as the EIP) and allocation of PAOTs as needed by TRPA would continue to expand and maintain these opportunities and ensure that capacity is available. Because of the number, wide variety, and proximity of existing recreation facilities and opportunities (e.g., parks, hiking trails, beaches, ski areas, boating facilities), the modest increase in residents and visitors to the Tahoe Region resulting from implementation of Alternative 5 would not result in the concentration of recreation users on any single recreation facility such that new or expanded facilities would be required. The increase in population could be accommodated by existing facilities in the Tahoe Region.

For the reasons described above, impacts related to increased demand for or a reduction in availability of recreation facilities would be less significant.

**MITIGATION MEASURES**

*No mitigation is required for any of the alternatives.*

| Impact | Compatibility with Existing or Currently Proposed Recreation Uses. All Regional Plan Update alternatives would allow for new development in the Region, within areas designated for residential, commercial, and tourist accommodation uses. The alternatives would not alter the content of the existing Recreation Element Goals and Policies that provide for the appropriate type, location, and rate of development of recreational uses and facilities (Goal #2) and that protect natural resources from overuse and rectify incompatibility between uses (Goal #3). Because these goals, policies, and land use designations were developed to address existing and planned recreational uses, conflict would be avoided. This impact would be less than significant for all alternatives. |

**ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT**

Under Alternative 1, new development would be limited by existing allocations and development rights remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan. These include: 383,600 square feet of CFA; 342 TAUs; 874 residential bonus units; and 86 residential allocations remain from the 1987 Regional Plan. In addition to the unused allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, all legally existing development, including approximately 6.5 million square feet of CFA and 12,399 TAUs, would be available for transfer subject to existing transfer requirements.

Although it is not possible to speculate on the specific type, number, location, or timing of future projects that would be proposed over the planning horizon of the Regional Plan, it is nonetheless understood that existing Regional Plan policies related to avoidance of recreational land use conflicts would be implemented and maintenance of existing threshold attainment would be evaluated when considering approval of future projects. Projects associated with this alternative may include development, redevelopment, commercial and tourist uses, transit and transportation, recreation, public/quasi-public facilities, and natural resources restoration.

Under Alternative 1, existing land use designations would be retained. Future projects would be consistent with these existing designations, which provide for avoidance of land use conflicts. Furthermore, implementation of Developed Recreation Goal 3, “Protect natural resources from overuse and rectify incompatibility between uses,” and supporting policies would ensure that conflicts with existing or planned recreational uses would be avoided. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.
ALTERNATIVE 2: LOW DEVELOPMENT, INCREASED REGULATION

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 2 would include 2,600 new residential allocations and an additional 200,000 square feet of CFA. The new CFA would be available to Community Plans under the existing allocation system, but only after the 1987 Regional Plan remainder is used and 70 percent commercial occupancy is achieved. No new TAU allocations would be included. Remaining unassigned residential bonus units would be distributed in accordance with existing procedures, as described above, and no additional residential bonus units would be available.

As described above for Alternative 1, existing Regional Plan policies related to avoiding recreational land use conflicts would be implemented and maintenance of existing threshold attainment would be evaluated when considering approval of future projects. Under Alternative 2, new development would be located in areas designated for residential, tourist, and commercial uses, such that it would not conflict with existing recreational resources. Because existing policies and land use designations would ensure that conflicts with existing or planned recreational uses would be avoided, this impact would be less than significant.

ALTERNATIVE 3: LOW DEVELOPMENT, HIGHLY INCENTIVIZED REDEVELOPMENT

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 3 would include 2,600 new residential allocations, an additional 200,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 600 residential bonus units. No new TAUs would be included.

As described above for Alternative 1, existing Regional Plan policies related to avoiding recreational land use conflicts would be implemented and maintenance of existing threshold attainment would be evaluated when considering approval of future projects. While Alternative 3 would encourage transfer of development into identified urbanized areas, these areas are already designated for residential, tourist, and commercial uses because developed uses in these areas would minimize conflicts with existing recreational resources. Because existing policies and land use designations would ensure that conflicts with existing or planned recreational uses would be avoided, this impact would be less than significant.

ALTERNATIVE 4: REDUCED DEVELOPMENT, INCENTIVIZED REDEVELOPMENT

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 4 would include 4,000 new residential allocations, an additional 400,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 200 TAUs. No new residential bonus units would be added.

As described above for Alternative 1, existing Regional Plan policies related to avoiding recreational land use conflicts would be implemented and maintenance of existing threshold attainment would be evaluated when considering approval of future projects. Alternative 4 would combine higher levels of development with incentives for environmentally beneficial redevelopment. New development would be located in areas designated for residential, tourist, and commercial uses, such that it would not conflict with existing recreational resources. Because existing policies and land use designations would ensure that conflicts with existing or planned recreational uses would be avoided, this impact would be less than significant.

ALTERNATIVE 5: SIMILAR RATE OF DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY STRUCTURE TO 1987 REGIONAL PLAN

In addition to development rights and allocations remaining from the 1987 Regional Plan, Alternative 5 would include 5,200 new residential allocations (limited by the 4,091 development rights), an additional 600,000 square feet of CFA, and an additional 400 TAUs.
As described above for Alternative 1, existing Regional Plan policies related to avoiding recreational land use conflicts would be implemented and maintenance of existing threshold attainment would be evaluated when considering approval of future projects. Alternative 5 would combine the highest levels of development with the same land use designations, zoning and regulatory structure as with the existing Regional plan. New development would be located in areas designated for residential, tourist, and commercial uses, such that it would not conflict with existing recreational resources. Because existing policies and land use designations would ensure that conflicts with existing or planned recreational uses would be avoided, this impact would be less than significant.

**MITIGATION MEASURES**

*No mitigation is required for any of the alternatives.*
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