



FIGHTING TO PROTECT AND RESTORE LAKE TAHOE

UNITED STATES SENATOR HARRY REID, MAJORITY LEADER



Improving the health of Lake Tahoe and the Lake Tahoe Basin has been a priority for Senator Reid for over 20 years. In that time he has championed legislation that ended a century-long water war between Nevada and California, initiated and organized the first Lake Tahoe Summit, and delivered hundreds of millions of dollars to the Basin for vital environmental and transportation projects. Today he is fighting for Lake Tahoe as the lead sponsor of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2010.

Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Settlement

– **1990.** Senator Reid’s leadership in negotiating and passing the Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Settlement (Public Law 101-618) led to the protection of Lake Tahoe, the apportionment of the Truckee and Carson Rivers, and the enhancement of the fish and wildlife areas in these river basins. This legislation also ratified the California and Nevada Compact involving these two rivers. Over the last 20 years - culminating in the signing of the Truckee River Operating Agreement in 2008 - Senator Reid has worked with federal, state, tribal and local officials and other leaders to fully implement this law and protect one of Nevada’s richest ecosystems.



The First Lake Tahoe Summit – 1997. In 1996, Senator Reid called then-President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore and asked if they would join him at Lake Tahoe the next summer. The lake’s clarity was suffering and the health of the Basin was at risk – action was needed. Clinton, Gore and four cabinet secretaries joined Senator Reid the next July for what would become the first annual Lake Tahoe Summit. On July 26, 1997, President Clinton signed an executive order that made Lake Tahoe a national priority and focused the efforts of federal agencies on this critical watershed.

The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act – 2000. One of the primary outcomes of the first Tahoe Summit was the crafting and eventual passage of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act. This bill authorized \$300 million over ten years for high priority environmental and infrastructure projects designed to restore the lake’s clarity and natural systems in the local watersheds. The 10-year authorization expires soon, which prompted Senator Reid and other Lake Tahoe champions to get to work on a reauthorization that extends and strengthens this important effort.

Amendment to the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act – 2003. In 2003, Senator Reid and Senator Ensign amended the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (P.L. 105-263) to make sure that the \$300 million commitment made in the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2000 would be fulfilled in a timely and reliable fashion. As a result of this legislation, nearly \$300 million in funds from southern Nevada lands sales has gone to the Lake Tahoe Basin for key restoration projects.

Washoe Tribe Land Conveyance – 2003. During his visit to the Lake Tahoe Basin, President Clinton made a commitment to the Washoe Tribe that he would work with them and the Nevada and California congressional delegations to make sure the Tribe had land along the shores of Lake Tahoe to conduct

traditional tribal practices and ceremonies. Senator Reid fulfilled this commitment in August 2003 with the passage of Public Law 108-67 which conveyed 23 acres of land along Skunk Harbor to the tribe. The Carson City Vital Community Act (P.L. 111-11), crafted and sponsored by Senator Reid, provided an important correction to the original Skunk Harbor conveyance. The correction became law in March 2009.

SAFETEA-LU/Highway Bill – 2005. During his years in office, Senator Reid has secured substantial funding for the transportation needs of the Basin. In the 2005 Highway Bill he secured \$4 million for Lake Tahoe bus replacement, to allow the Lake Tahoe MPO to replace their aging diesel fueled transit fleet vehicles with compressed Natural Gas vehicles for the Lake Tahoe transit system. He secured another \$8 million to develop a Bi-state Passenger Ferry System utilizing alternative fuel high speed vessels and new intermodal docking facilities. He also authorized the Lake Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization - which he helped establish in 1998 - to receive .5% (approx \$6-8 million per year) of the national Federal Lands Highways Program account. This annual funding is used for transportation related planning activities in the Basin.

White Pine County Bill – 2006. As part of their effort to resolve longstanding public land issues in White Pine County – including the designation of nearly 570,000 acres of wilderness – Senators Reid and Ensign passed an important provision for Lake Tahoe (P.L. 109-432). The legislation called for the development and execution of a 10-year hazardous fuels strategy for the Lake Tahoe Basin, which is now underway and is essential for preventing major and catastrophic fires in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Recovery and Reintroduction – 2000 through 2010. Senator Reid is strongly committed to protecting and improving Nevada’s fish and game resources. He has secured federal funding each of the last ten years to support the recovery and reintroduction of the Lahontan cutthroat trout throughout its native range, with special emphasis in the Lake Tahoe Basin. To date, he has secured over \$4.5 million for these efforts.

Lake Tahoe Rim Trail – 2010. The Tahoe Rim Trail attracts users from around the world, providing unmatched recreational opportunities. While the Forest Service oversees the trail, most of the work to build and maintain it is carried out by thousands of volunteers supported by the Tahoe Rim Trail Association. The trail now has several sections in need of realignment and/or reconstruction. Senator Reid secured \$100,000 in the 2010 Interior Appropriations Bill to fund these projects.

Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2010. Senator Reid’s most recent legislation for Lake Tahoe authorizes \$415 million over 8 years for forest fuels management, watershed restoration, stormwater management, and other vital projects. It also provides major funding for the recovery of the Lahontan cutthroat trout, puts in place a rigorous science program, and takes major strides in protecting Lake Tahoe from invasive species like quagga and zebra mussels. The legislation was recently passed by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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