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**Nevada, California Senators Introduce Lake Tahoe Restoration Act***Heller, Reid, Feinstein, Boxer join forces to protect Lake Tahoe***(Washington, DC) –** Today, U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV), Harry Reid (D-NV), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) introduced the *Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2015* (S. 1724). The bipartisan legislation was crafted to protect the Lake Tahoe Region by improving water clarity, reducing wildfire threat, jumpstarting innovative transportation and infrastructure projects, and combating invasive species. Following introduction, the senators issued these statements:“If Nevadans and Californians can all agree upon one issue, it is the protection of Lake Tahoe. Anyone who has been to the Basin understands why it is important we protect its natural beauty for future generations – the *Lake Tahoe Restoration Act* will do just that,” said **Senator Dean Heller**. “As a lifelong Nevadan and an avid outdoorsman, I have grown up enjoying Lake Tahoe, but I have seen firsthand numerous threats take a toll on the region. It is an honor to collaborate with Senators Reid, Feinstein, and Boxer on this critical legislation to secure a healthy and prosperous future for our states shared national treasure.”“Lake Tahoe is truly one of Nevada’s treasures, and I have made its protection and restoration a top priority throughout my career. The *Lake Tahoe Restoration Act* will continue to provide the resources needed to protect its unique ecosystem and natural beauty. By guarding against pollution, wildfires and invasive species, we can ensure the Jewel of the Sierras will continue to be a thriving tourist destination for those who enjoy Lake Tahoe’s crystal clear waters for many years to come,” said **Senator Harry Reid**.“Lake Tahoe is an awe-inspiring natural wonder, and I can think of no other place that is as worthy, or in as much need, of our protection. My fondest memories from childhood are bicycling around the lake, exploring the backcountry by horse and taking in the views at Emerald Bay. Since then I’ve seen pollution and sedimentation reduce its famous water clarity, the threat of wildfires grow and invasive species wreak havoc. Through bipartisan initiatives and exemplary public-private partnerships, we’ve made progress over recent years, but the Jewel of the Sierras deserves our continued care and admiration. This bill—and the funds it authorizes—will work wonders to help restore the lake to greatness and reduce the risk of catastrophic fires. I want all future generations to enjoy its beauty just as I did, in all its pristine glory,” said **Senator Dianne Feinstein**.**“Lake Tahoe has always been one of our country’s most magnificent treasures. Our bill builds on more than a decade of work to help restore the clarity of Lake Tahoe’s waters, reduce the threat of wildfires, and prevent the spread of harmful invasive species,” said Senator Barbara Boxer.**The *Lake Tahoe Restoration Act of 2015* is supported by numerous local stakeholders including the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA):**“Lake Tahoe is a national leader in building public-private partnerships directed toward environmental restoration," said Joanne S. Marchetta, Executive Director of TRPA. “We are grateful to have such strong leadership in Washington to continue the important work that benefits not only Lake Tahoe's irreplaceable environment but also our regional economy.”****Background:**The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act directs $415 million to be spent in the Tahoe Basin over the next 10 years towards:* **Wildfire Prevention** – Provides $150 million for fire risk reduction and forest management. These dollars go toward fuel reduction projects in high risk areas like South Shore, Carnelian Bay, Incline, and West shore stewardship contracts to restore forest health and wildlife habitat, and municipal water infrastructure to support improved flows for firefighting.
* **The Environmental Improvement Program (EIP)** – Provides$80 million to jumpstart projects spanning from new bike trails to creek restoration and fire treatment. Some previous EIP projects that have benefited the region include the Heavenly Gondola and Village, the Angora Fire rehabilitation, Lake View Commons, the Sand Harbor Visitor Center, and the Incline Creek Restoration.
* **The Invasive Species Management Program** – Provides $45 million to prevent the introduction of the quagga mussel and manage other harmful invasive species like the Asian clam. This includes lake-wide aquatic invasive species control and a watercraft inspection program.
* **Stormwater Projects** – Sets aside $113 million to implement storm water management, erosion control, and watershed restoration projects. Storm water runoff from roads and the urban areas in the basin, vehicle exhaust, altered wetlands and streams, and inadequate storm water pollution control have significantly impacted Lake Tahoe’s famous clarity.
* **The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Recovery Program** – Allocates $20 million to recover the Lahontan cutthroat trout – a federally threatened species and Nevada’s state fish.
* **Increases Accountability and Oversight** – Provides $5 million to ensure projects will have monitoring and assessment in order to determine the most cost-effective projects and ensure dollars are properly utilized.
* **Overall Management Improvement** – Sets aside $2 million to cover the cost of land exchanges and sales on both the California and Nevada sides of the Tahoe Basin that will improve efficiencies of public land management.

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