

Nevada Assembly panel urged to approve Lake Tahoe bonds

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Nevada Appeal

March 13, 2019



File photo

Lake Tahoe

CARSON CITY, Nev. — The Assembly Government Affairs Committee was told Tuesday, March 12, that approval of the next phase of Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program bonds is critical to the continuation of efforts to restore and improve the environment in the Tahoe Basin.

Assemblyman Mike Sprinkle, D-Sparks, said the \$8 million in this biennium's bonding package will cover Nevada's share of the program for the coming two years.

State Lands Administrator Charlie Donahue said the bonding program was originally authorized for some \$53 million in bonds in 1999 and reauthorized for up to \$100 million in 2009. He said in addition to Nevada's share, money for the environmental programs comes from California, from local and tribal governments in the basin as well as private funding.

He said since its inception, the program has funded 139 capital projects ranging from watershed habitat, water quality, forest health and fire risk mitigation. This past biennium, he said some money also went to address the invasive Asian clam situation at Sand Harbor and water treatment plus improving wildlife habitat.

After he mentioned the removal of more than 5,000 dead trees, Assemblyman John Ellison, R-Elko, praised those efforts saying, "we don't need another California fire."

Alan Biaggi representing the Tahoe Fund, a private fund raising group, said they're in strong support of the bonding in AB220. Kyle Davis representing the League to Save Lake Tahoe

and the Nevada Conservation League as well as a spokesman for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority and Sierra Club also backed the bill.

Steve Walker of the water authority said they have a stake in water quality at Tahoe since the "top six feet" of the lake is essentially a reservoir for the Truckee Meadows.

The committee took no action on the bill.