STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Capital Outlay Budget Change Proposal (COBCP) - Cover Sheet
DF-151 (REV 07/21)

Fiscal Year	Business Unit	Department	Priority No.
2026/27	3125	California Tahoe Conservancy	2

Budget Request Name	Capital Outlay Program ID	Capital Outlay Project ID
3125-010-COBCP-2026-GB	2345	0001389

Project Title
Conceptual Feasibility Planning

Project Status and Type
Status: ☐ New ☒ Continuing Type: ☒Major ☐ Minor

Project Category *(Select one)*

☐CRI *(Critical Infrastructure)*	☐WSD *(Workload Space Deficiencies)*	☐ECP *(Enrollment Caseload Population)*	☐SM *(Seismic)*
☐FLS *(Fire Life Safety)*	☐FM *(Facility Modernization)*	☐PAR *(Public Access Recreation)*	☒RC *(Resource Conservation)*

Total Request (in thousands)	Phase(s) to be Funded	Total Project Cost (in thousands)
$ 300	Study	$ 300

Budget Request Summary

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) requests $300,000 from the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Fund (Proposition 4) for conceptual feasibility planning for improving watershed and wildlife habitat and increasing recreational access for disadvantaged communities.

Requires Legislation	Code Section(s) to be Added/Amended/Repealed	CCCI
☐ Yes ☒ No	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Requires Provisional Language	Budget Package Status
☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ Needed ☒ Not Needed ☐ Existing

Impact on Support Budget

One-Time Costs	☐ Yes	☒ No	Swing Space Needed	☐ Yes	☒ No
Future Savings	☐ Yes	☒ No	Generate Surplus Property	☐ Yes	☒ No
Future Costs	☐ Yes	☒ No			

If proposal affects another department, does other department concur with proposal? ☐ Yes ☒ No
Attach comments of affected department, signed and dated by the department director or designee.

Prepared By	Date	Reviewed By	Date
Department Director	**Date**	**Agency Secretary**	**Date**

Department of Finance Use Only

Principal Program Budget Analyst	Date submitted to the Legislature
Michael McGinness	**1/9/2026**

A. COBCP Abstract:

This request is for funds needed for initial conceptual feasibility planning to develop Conservancy projects. Total costs are estimated at $300,000. The current schedule estimates study activities will be carried out between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.

B. Purpose of the Project:

The Conservancy is requesting these funds for conceptual feasibility planning activities for development of potential capital outlay projects over its vast ownership of nearly 4,700 parcels. A total of $300,000 is proposed in fiscal year 2026/27. The Conservancy will use the funding to hire outside contractors and for existing Conservancy staff to carry out planning work. Conceptual feasibility planning will focus on Conservancy ownerships in key watersheds, several potential lakefront access points, and other sites requiring restoration and improvements. It is expected that this planning will lead to future funding proposals for preliminary plans, working drawings, and construction phases for individual projects. Examples of projects that have started from conceptual feasibility planning include restoration at the Upper Truckee Marsh and River, Sunset Stables Reach 6, Elks Club recreation area, and Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

C. Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The Conservancy was established in 1984 for the purposes of protecting and restoring Lake Tahoe's natural environment, including water quality, air quality, and wildlife habitat; acquiring, restoring, and managing lands; preserving the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the region; and providing public access.

The Conservancy's conceptual feasibility planning activities directly advance the Conservancy's Strategic Plan. Specifically, the Conservancy uses conceptual feasibility to identify projects that advance goals of:

Access: Provide Recreational Opportunities and Access for All: The Conservancy is committed to ensuring that the Basin's recreational resources are accessible to all. We are committed to making the Basin a welcoming and inclusive destination while maintaining sustainable and thriving communities. Through conceptual feasibility planning, Conservancy staff will identify opportunities to expand recreational networks, develop effective trail management strategies, and enhance equitable and sustainable access.

Protection: Safeguard the Basin's Environmental, Cultural, Tribal, and Recreational Attributes for Future Generations: The Conservancy is committed to protecting the Basin from the potential harms that future risks (especially those exacerbated by climate change) pose to its environmental, Tribal, cultural, and recreational attributes. Through conceptual feasibility planning, Conservancy staff will work with partners to reduce sediment and nutrients from entering Lake Tahoe through wetland and stream restoration, minimize impacts of projects on Tribal sites during the planning phase, and consider severe weather events when planning restoration and hazardous fuels projects to reduce the impacts of flooding, drought, and increased temperatures on communities and resources.

Restoration: Restore the Basin's Social and Ecological Resilience: The Conservancy is committed to restoring the Basin's social and ecological resilience by addressing and ameliorating longstanding environmental impacts from the past. We will advance comprehensive restoration projects and engage with local communities to revitalize the Basin's biodiversity and wildlife habitats and promote sustainable practices for the long-term wellbeing of the region. Through conceptual feasibility planning, Conservancy staff will work to identify projects that restore the Basin's social and ecological resilience including planning projects that increase wildlife crossings and connectivity, wetlands, and shared use trails.

Stewardship: Care for the Basin's Natural, Tribal, and Cultural Resources: The Conservancy is committed to caring for the Basin's natural, Tribal, and cultural resources through our immediate and continuous responsibilities to maintain Conservancy lands. Through conceptual feasibility planning, Conservancy staff will modernize land management policies, enhance community engagement and partnerships, and promote Tribal presence.

Additionally, the implementation of the Conservancy's programs supports the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP), the Basin's environmental restoration strategy. In 1997, the State of California joined the State of Nevada, the federal government, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), and other partners in a commitment to fund and implement the EIP to meet Lake Tahoe Regional Plan environmental goals. This unique strategy identified hundreds of millions in funding needs for projects and programs to protect and restore the Lake and surrounding forests and watersheds. These funding commitments, broken out by federal, state, local, and private sectors, were agreed to through memoranda of understandings and are reconfirmed annually at the Lake Tahoe Summit.

Since 1998/99, the Conservancy has received appropriations totaling over $500 million for EIP implementation purposes. The request for funding for conceptual feasibility studies and activities in support of new project proposals and opportunities is consistent with continuation of this commitment.

This work also implements key statewide executive orders and direction including the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), Governor Brown's Greenhouse Gas Reductions Executive Order B-30-15, Governor Newsom's Nature-Based Solutions Executive Order N-82- 20, and the State Adaptation and Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart strategies.

D. Alternatives:

Alternative 1. Conceptual and Feasibility Studies
This alternative provides funding for the conceptual development of new project proposals. The Conservancy has identified over $80 million in project needs and opportunities that support the State of California's longer-term funding responsibilities under the EIP. This involves projects and programs to meet the goals of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan.

Alternative 2. No Project/No Action

This alternative does not fund new and continuing conceptual development of additional Conservancy EIP projects. This in turn prevents the Conservancy and State of California from implementing new projects needed to preserve and protect the unique environmental, resource, and recreational values at Lake Tahoe.

E. Recommended Solution:

1. Which alternative and why?

The recommended alternative is approval of funding for feasibility studies and conceptual planning for additional Conservancy EIP projects (Alternative 1). The initiation of these projects is consistent with the Conservancy's mission and five-year capital outlay plan and supports the State of California's commitment to fund and implement EIP projects. The Conservancy, through its various programs, continues to identify, design, fund and implement new EIP projects. The requested conceptual and feasibility studies funding will lead to the initiation of additional site improvement projects as soon as the 2025/26 budget cycle.

2. Basis for cost information.

Total project costs are estimated at $300,000. The current project schedule estimates study activities will begin July 1, 2026, and will be completed on June 30, 2027.

3. Factors/benefits for recommended solution other than the least expensive alternative.

Should new and continuing funding not be appropriated, there would be an increased risk of wildfire, an increased risk for public safety, as well as a diminished role in EIP activities. This would put the public

at greater risk in the Lake Tahoe Basin and it would send a negative signal regarding the State's continued obligations to provide its share of funding for the EIP just as the various partners are working to renew or expand their commitments. It will also result in the loss of unique project opportunities and disrupt efforts to maintain viable staffing and other support resources, among both the Conservancy and its grantees, necessary to identify, plan, and carry out the projects (e.g., re-establish positions and re-hire staff should funding ultimately be restored in the future).

4. Complete description of impact on support budget.

The conceptual and feasibility studies identified in this proposal will have no impact on the support budget.

5. Identify and explain any project risks.

It is anticipated that the conceptual and feasibility studies are one year in duration and contain minimal project risks. The nature of the studies will lead to the creation of future funding proposals and more fully identified project risks.

F. Consistency with Government Code Section 65041.1:

While the principal focus of the Conservancy's programs has been the implementation of the EIP, this work is also consistent with and supportive of the objectives of Government Code Section 65041.1 and several State resource and land use planning efforts including greenhouse gas reduction, climate change, and sustainability initiatives. For example, the Conservancy's programs further the goals of:

Executive Order N-82-20: This order elevates the role of nature-based solutions in California's efforts to address climate change, protect biodiversity, and provide access to all Californians to the state's precious natural areas.

Pathways to 30x30: This goal aims to conserve 30 percent of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030.

Outdoor Access for All Strategy, which aims to expand parks and outdoor spaces in communities that need them most, supporting programs to connect people who lack access, and fostering a sense of belonging for all Californians in the outdoors.