

Staff Report 15

APPLICANT:

Barbara Ann Oliver, Trustee of the Survivor's Trust under The R. P. Oliver Community Property Trust dated May 5, 1975; and Barbara Ann Oliver, Trustee of the Bypass Trust under The R. P. Oliver Community Property Trust dated May 5, 1975

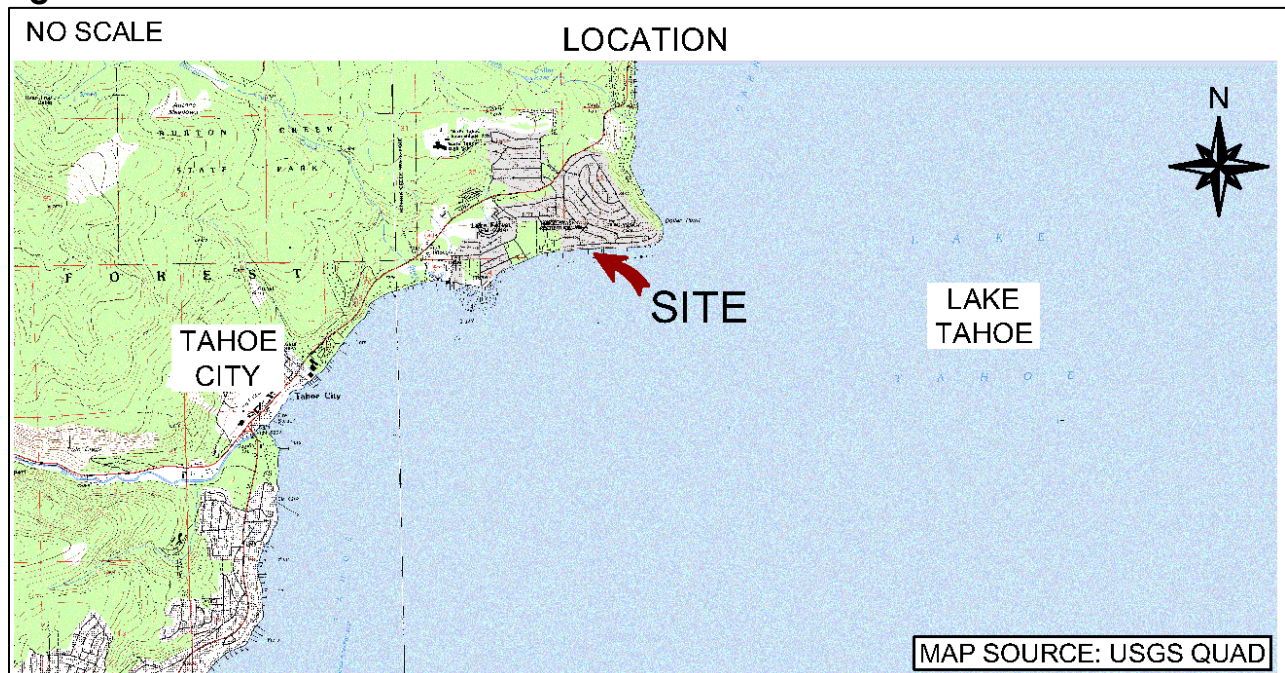
PROPOSED ACTION:

Issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use.

AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign land located in Lake Tahoe, adjacent to 3230 Edgewater Drive, Tahoe City, Placer County (as shown in Figure 1).

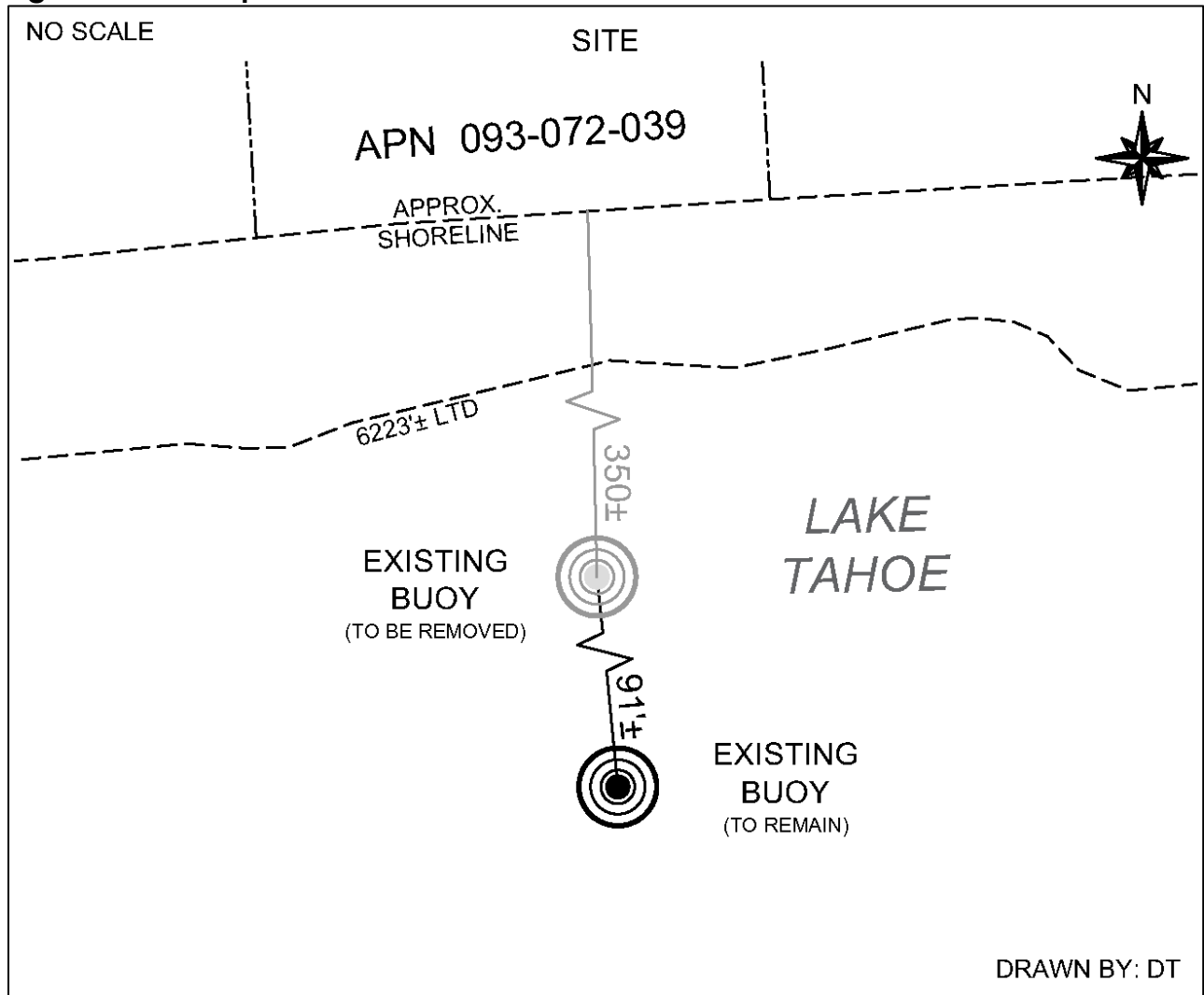
Figure 1. Location



AUTHORIZED USE:

Removal of one existing mooring buoy and continued use of one existing mooring buoy (as shown in Figure 2).

Figure 2. Site Map



NOTE: This depiction of the lease premises is based on unverified information provided by the Applicant or other parties and is not a waiver or limitation of any State interest in the subject or any other property.

TERM:

10 years, beginning June 1, 2026.

CONSIDERATION:

\$546 per year, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment.

SPECIFIC LEASE PROVISIONS:

- A permit or registration from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) may be required for the Authorized Improvements and failure to obtain a permit or registration from TRPA and maintain compliance with that permit or registration may result in TRPA imposing civil penalties and will constitute a breach of this lease.
- Lessee shall not move or relocate the existing mooring buoy authorized under this lease without prior written authorization of the Lessor.
- Lessee shall not store any personal items or construct any improvements in the Public Trust easement which may impair the public's right of access for navigation, fishing, and Public Trust-consistent recreational uses.
- Construction activities will be performed pursuant to the specific terms identified in the Lease, including that the Applicant obtain all necessary permits and authorizations prior to commencing work, including requirements pertaining to construction equipment, debris, and the provision to Lessor of specified documents related to the construction activities.
- Within 60 days of completing the removal of the mooring buoy, Lessee will provide Lessor with photographs as evidence of the removal.
- The provisions of Section 3, Paragraph 11 shall also extend to the period of Lessee's unauthorized occupation of state-owned lands, from December 3, 2023, to August 25, 2026.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:

AUTHORITY:

Public Resources Code sections 6005, 6216, 6301, 6501.1, 6503, 6503.5, and 6505.5; California Code of regulations, title 2, sections 2000 and 2003.

PUBLIC TRUST AND STATE'S BEST INTERESTS:

On April 20, 2017, the Commission authorized issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use to Robert P. Oliver, as Trustee of the Oliver Community Property Trust dated May 5, 1975, for the use of two mooring buoys ([Item 3](#)). The lease expired May 31, 2026.

Robert P. Oliver resigned as Trustee of The R. P. Oliver Community Property Trust, and Barbara Ann Oliver is acting as the sole Trustee of the Trust. Since the previous lease was issued, the upland property was deeded multiple times and was ultimately deeded to Barbara Ann Oliver, Trustee of the Survivor's Trust under The R. P. Oliver Community Property Trust dated May 5, 1975; and Barbara Ann Oliver, Trustee of the Bypass Trust under The R. P. Oliver Community Property Trust dated May 5, 1975, on December 6, 2023. The Lessee did not notify the staff of deed transfers, despite rent continuing to be paid on the previous lease.

The Applicant is now applying for issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use for the removal of one mooring buoy, and use of one existing mooring buoy. The buoy is being removed in exchange for a boat lift associated with Lease 9788.

Since rent on the previous lease was paid through the end date of the previous lease's term, May 31, 2026, the new lease has a proposed start date of June 1, 2026. The proposed rent reflects the use of two buoys because one buoy is not expected to be removed until later this year. Once staff confirm removal of the buoy, rent will be adjusted to reflect use of a single buoy. The authorization includes a delegation to the executive officer to revise the annual rent and prorate rent as necessary. Because of the upland ownership changes, the proposed lease will require the Applicant to indemnify the State as of December 6, 2023, when the Applicant acquired ownership of the upland parcel, through May 31, 2026, the day before the proposed lease.

On July 26, 2023, the Applicant obtained a conditional permit (No. ERSP2022-0034) from TRPA authorizing a new multiple-use pier that included one 12,000-pound boatlift that is converted from an existing mooring buoy. Issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use for the pier and boat lift will be separately considered for Commission review under Lease 9788. On April 3, 2026, TRPA approved plan revisions to address minor alterations to the previously authorized pierhead dimensions and increased the number of boat lifts being converted from mooring buoys from one to three. Each of the boat lifts are being converted from one mooring buoy from each of the three respective parcels the multiple-use pier will serve.

The mooring buoy that will continue usage under this lease has existed for many years at this location, is located directly lakeward of the upland property, and occupies a relatively small area of the lake. That mooring buoy, along with the one to be removed, were both registered with TRPA on April 20, 2026 (Registration No. 10435).

The remaining existing mooring buoy is privately owned and maintained and facilitates recreational boating. Recreational boating is a water-dependent use that is generally consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine. The California Legislature has identified private recreational boating facilities as an authorized use of Public Trust land. (Pub. Resources Code, § 6503.5.)

The proposed lease does not alienate the State's fee simple interest or permanently impair public rights. The lease is limited to a 10-year term, does not grant the lessee exclusive rights to the lease premises, and reserves an easement to the public for Public Trust-consistent uses. Upon termination of the lease, the lessee may be required to remove all improvements from State land and restore the lease premises to their original condition.

The proposed lease requires the lessee to insure the lease premises and indemnify the State for any liability incurred as a result of the lessee's activities thereon. The lease also requires the payment of annual rent to compensate the people of the State for the occupation of the public land involved.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

INTRODUCTION:

Climate change significantly affects inland non-tidal lakes such as Lake Tahoe, and its effects are increasing throughout the Sierra Nevada mountains. According to [California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment](#) (2018), the most significant impacts of climate change in the Sierra Nevada Region are more intense heat, precipitation extremes, declining snowpacks, and changes in streamflow timing. These impacts create hazardous conditions like flooding, landslides, wildfire, drought, extreme heat, and severe storms. Structures along the shores of inland lakes are particularly vulnerable to the more frequent and extreme weather events, year-to-year changes in total precipitation, and shifts in seasonal characteristics.

DATA & PROJECTIONS:

Temperatures in the Sierra Nevada are expected to increase six to ten degrees Fahrenheit on average by the end of the century, causing the snowline to shift upslope 1,500 to 3,000 feet in elevation (California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, 2018). The long-term warming trend will lead to warmer and shorter winters and longer and drier summers. The warmer winters will reduce winter snowpacks by up to 60 percent across most of the Sierra Nevada and will result in

increased winter streamflows and floods and decreased spring and summer runoff. Loss of snowpack is expected to dry soils 15 to 40 percent below their historical norms. Hotter, drier summer seasons and low water years will increase stress to vegetation, elevating wildfire risk and fire severity in the Tahoe Basin.

Dry winters will be punctuated with exceedingly wet years and higher temperatures will result in more rain-on-snow events ([Integrated Vulnerability Assessment of Climate Change in the Lake Tahoe Basin](#), 2020). Atmospheric river systems will become more common. These events produce both flash floods and higher than normal seasonal flooding which may shift earlier in the year. Higher soil moisture will increase erosion and elevate landslide risk, particularly following intense wildfire seasons.

ANALYSIS:

The greatest vulnerability to recreational facilities is from flooding, landslides, and wildfire hazards (Integrated Vulnerability Assessment of Climate Change in the Lake Tahoe Basin, 2020). The Sierra Nevada is expected to experience year-to-year variability in precipitation and may shift between extreme wet and dry periods. High precipitation years or successive years will result in higher lake levels, causing beaches to narrow and reducing public access. Surface runoff may carry more sediment into the lake, adversely impacting water quality, clarity, and increasing risk of algal blooms ([UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center](#), 2024). Conversely, low lake levels will become normal during periods of extended drought. Low lake level conditions can create more expansive beaches and increased shoreline access in dry months. However, these conditions could make some shoreline areas too shallow for effective recreational use of mooring buoys. During drought, structures will also be exposed to heat and wind that may accelerate deterioration or reduce the structural integrity of certain structures.

Additionally, atmospheric rivers and extreme weather events are expected to increase in the high Sierra. Storms may deviate from prevailing wind patterns for the region. Wind-driven waves can accelerate shoreline erosion in some areas or cause erosion in areas not typically subject to erosion. Winds can also increase wave damage on structures and boats along the lake.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Improvements authorized under this lease may require more frequent inspection and maintenance to ensure they are not displaced during storm events. Watercraft moored to buoys are also vulnerable to high wind events and damaging waves.

Replacing older structural components with materials designed to better withstand extreme heat, wind events, and storms can reduce the likelihood of degradation and damage to structures. Any future construction or activities on State land would require a separate authorization from the Commission.

Regular maintenance, as required by the lease, may reduce the risks from extreme temperatures and rain. Pursuant to the proposed lease, the Applicant acknowledges that the lease premises and adjacent upland are located in an area that may be subject to the effects of climate change.

CONCLUSION:

For all the reasons above, staff believes the issuance of this lease will not substantially interfere with Public Trust needs at this location, at this time, and for the foreseeable term of the proposed lease; is consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. Approval or denial of the application is a discretionary action by the Commission. Each time the Commission approves or rejects a use of sovereign land, it exercises legislatively delegated authority and responsibility as trustee of the State's Public Trust lands as authorized by law. The lessee has no right to a new lease or to renewal of any previous lease.
2. This action is consistent with the "Leading Climate Activism" and "Meeting Evolving Public Trust Needs" Strategic Focus Areas of the Commission's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.
3. **Existing Buoy:** Staff recommends that the Commission find that this activity is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a categorically exempt project. The project is exempt under Class 1, Existing Facilities; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (a)(2).

Buoy Removal: Staff recommends that the Commission find that this activity is exempt from the requirements of CEQA as a categorically exempt project. The project is exempt under Class 4, Minor Alteration to Land; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (d)(3).

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21084 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905.

APPROVAL OBTAINED:

- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (ESRP2022-0034)

APPROVALS REQUIRED:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is recommended that the Commission:

CEQA FINDING:

Find that these activities are exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061 as a categorically exempt project through the combination of the following exemptions: Class 1, Existing Facilities; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (a)(2) and Class 4, Minor Alteration to Land; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (d)(3).

PUBLIC TRUST AND STATE'S BEST INTERESTS:

Find that the proposed and existing improvements will not substantially impair the public rights to navigation and fishing or substantially interfere with Public Trust needs and values at this location, at this time, and for the foreseeable term of the lease; is consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.

AUTHORIZATION:

1. Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use to the Applicant beginning June 1, 2026, for a term of 10 years, for the removal of one existing

mooring buoy; and use of one existing mooring buoy; annual rent in the amount of \$273, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment; and liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

2. Authorize the Executive Officer or designee to revise the annual rent upon confirmation that one buoy has been removed and prorate rent as necessary.