

# Guidelines for Letters of Support and Commitment

This information is offered to people who are providing or soliciting letters of support and commitment for the Nevada Tahoe Leadership Group in their application for a Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) 319 Nonpoint Source (NPS) grant. A letter of support indicates that the school, agency, organization, business or individual feels that the grant is a good idea and supports one or more of the elements of the grant. A letter of commitment indicates that actual support will be given to match the grant (the grant requires a 50% match). This commitment might include funds, in-kind services, office space, staff support, or materials.

The Nevada Tahoe Leadership Group will serve as the advisory council for creation and implementation of the grant. The project will include as partners Adopt-A-Watershed, Lake Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Incline Village General Improvement District, and others.

Some of the letters will be used in the grant application to show wide community support for the application. All letters will be used to indicate support to the leadership group for moving forward with the application and to the individuals who will write the application.

Some of the activities support by 319 NPS grants include: implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP); projects that protect waters currently not impaired by nonpoint source pollution; monitoring and assessments that support an on-the-ground project; education projects that raise the level of public awareness about NPS pollution; development and implementation of comprehensive watershed management plans.

## *Ideas to Use in Letters*

### **Teacher**

- Could use services of community coordinator (time constraints and testing have reduced teacher planning and implementation time)
- Would like more locally-based curriculum
- Need more help with science units

### **School Administrator**

- Support concept of place-based learning (request materials on PBL from Dan or Heather if you need them)
- Support teacher training in watershed education
- Need transportation to restoration and monitoring projects

### **Agency & Resource Professionals**

- Will provide staff time for classroom presentations on local environmental and watershed issues
- Will provide expertise in water quality monitoring and watershed restoration to the planning and implementation of projects
- Will be included in Community Leaders in the Classroom database
- Will participate in Community Leaders in the Classroom trainings
- Will provide and support the inclusion of content for students and teachers in the TIIMS database

## **Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships (SWEP)**

- Will provide assistance, mentoring and models for success
- Will meet quarterly to share among community coordinators and the regional coordinator
- Will provide Community Leaders in the Classroom training at least once per year

## **Background on SWEP**

The Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships (SWEP) is an effective educational program which was created by partnership between Adopt-A-Watershed, the Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District and Americorps. Part-time watershed coordinators have brought place-based learning into most of the classrooms in the district, as well as offering training for teachers and for agency personnel who present in the classroom and assist field trips and restoration. Students and teachers involved use the same standards-based content and processes as other as regular classrooms, but apply these to real issues and actions in the local community and environment, resulting in a high level of student motivation and learning.

This grant will replicate the success of SWEP to the Nevada side of the Lake Tahoe basin by establishing community support and coordination for the Incline Village, Zephyr Cove, Stateline, and Crystal Bay communities. A coordinator will work closely with the Washoe and Douglas county school districts, individual teachers and students K-12, and the variety of land management and resource conservation agencies on the Nevada side, as well as other organizations, businesses and individuals. The grant will support classroom learning as well as restoration and monitoring projects specifically designed to protect and enhance water quality.

## ***Letter Template***

The letter template starts on the next page. Modify the text to effectively describe your own interest in the grant and the work it supports. Use bulleted items from the lists above, and/or add your own items and perspective. The template is provided to assist you in thinking about your letter of support and/or commitment, not to constrain your creativity.

Remember that the letter will be used both to support the efforts of the group and grant writers in going ahead with the grant, and to indicate support and commitment to NDEP when it considers the grant application.

We understand that this is a lot of information and detail. **If you only have time to write a short simple letter, then please do so!**