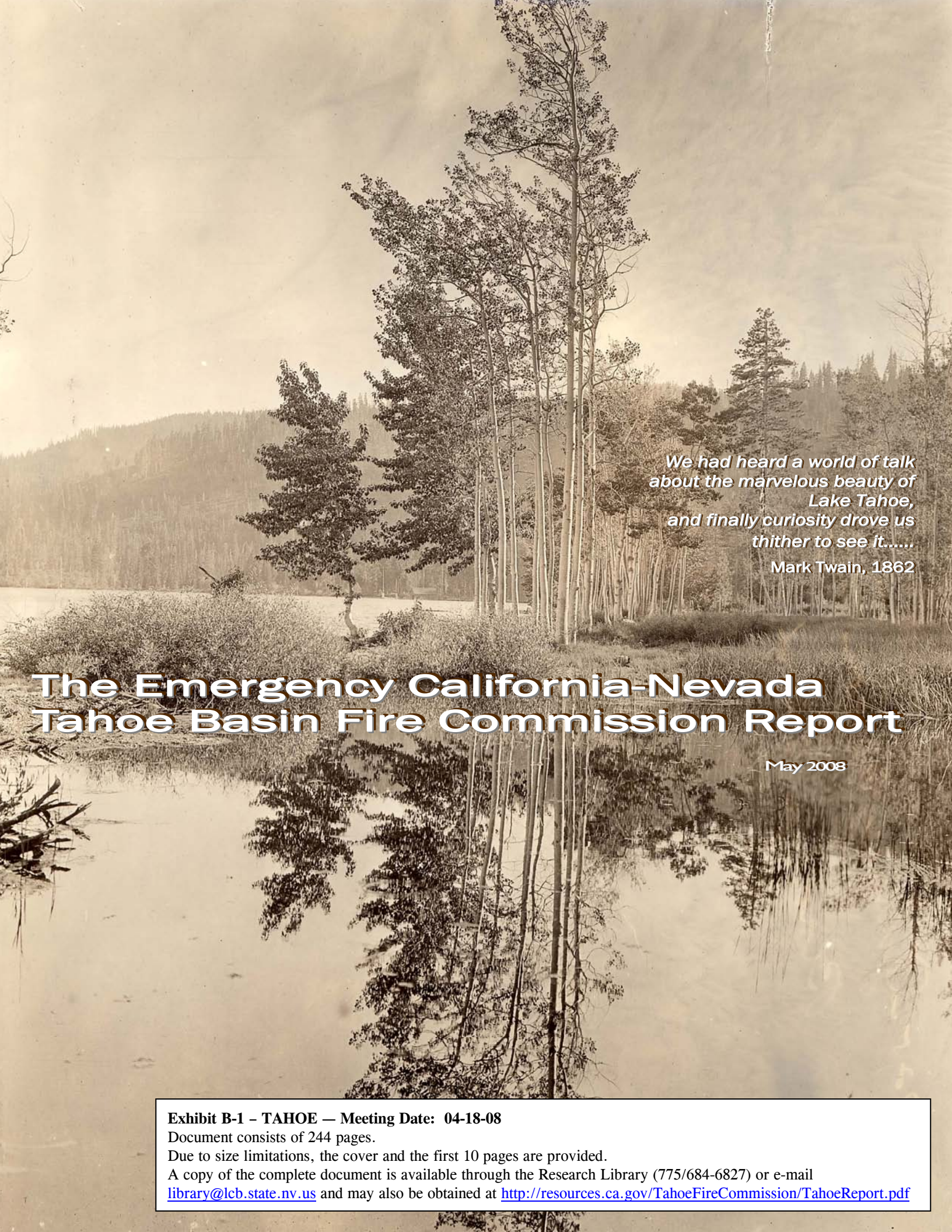




*We had heard a world of talk
about the marvelous beauty of
Lake Tahoe,
and finally curiosity drove us
thither to see it.....*

Mark Twain, 1862

The Emergency California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Report

May 2008

Exhibit B-1 - TAHOE — Meeting Date: 04-18-08

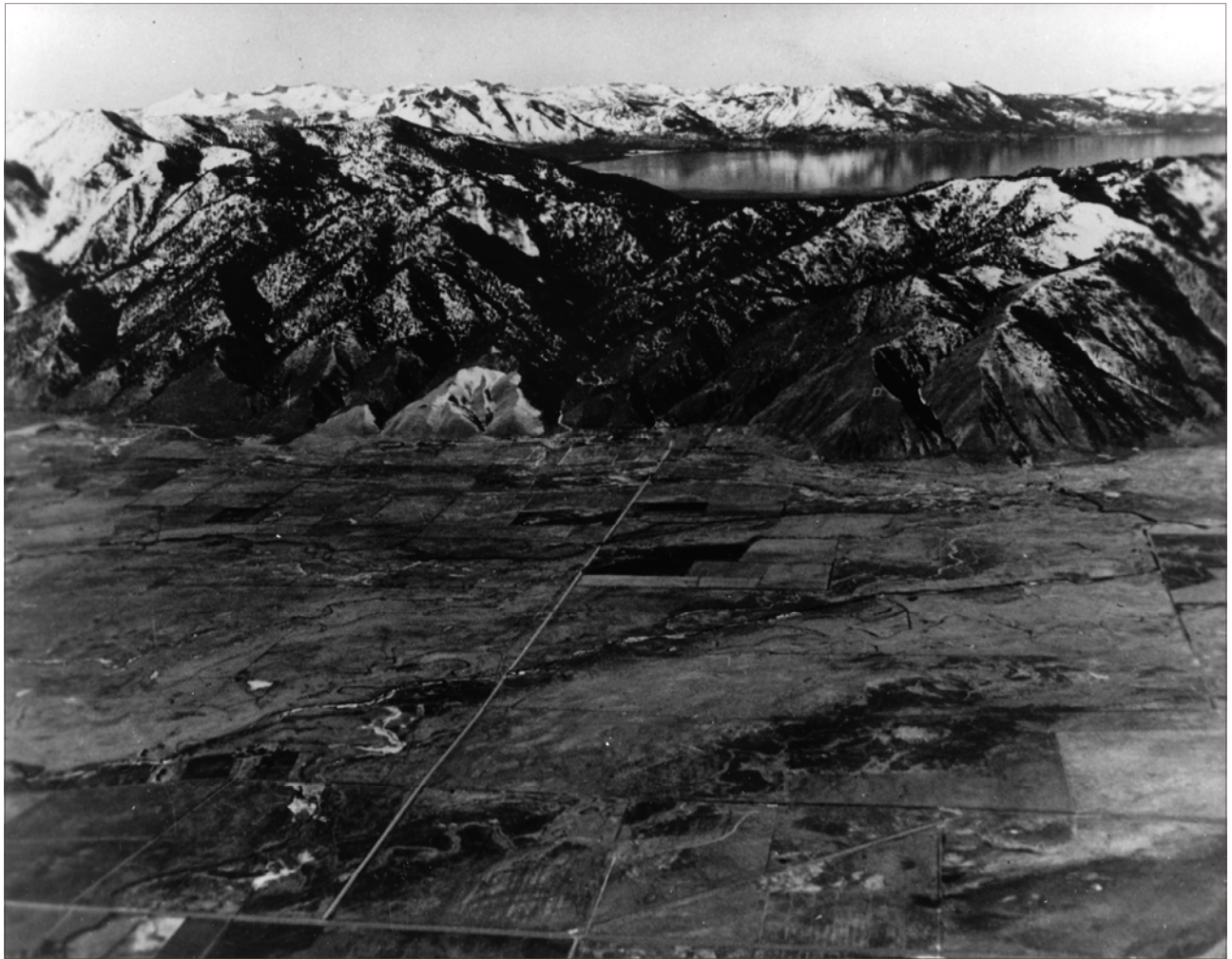
Document consists of 244 pages.

Due to size limitations, the cover and the first 10 pages are provided.

A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775/684-6827) or e-mail

library@lcb.state.nv.us and may also be obtained at <http://resources.ca.gov/TahoeFireCommission/TahoeReport.pdf>

The Emergency California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Report



....at last the lake burst upon us—a noble sheet of blue water lifted six thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and walled in by a rim of snow-clad mountain peaks that towered aloft a full three thousand feet higher still! As it lay there with the shadows of the mountains brilliantly photographed upon its still surface, I thought it must surely be the fairest picture the whole earth affords...

From Mark Twain's "Roughing it" written in 1862 when he was 27

Cover: Lake Tahoe photographic shoreline survey, 1916
Above: Aerial photograph of Lake Tahoe and the Carson Valley

Photos courtesy of the Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library



Glenbrook Bay, circa 1940

The Emergency California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Report

presented to

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
State of California

Jim Gibbons, Governor
State of Nevada

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California Air Resources Board
California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
California Environmental Protection Agency
California Office of Emergency Services
California Resources Agency
California Tahoe Conservancy

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

Lake Tahoe Community College

Lake Tahoe Resource Conservation District

Nevada Division of Forestry

Nevada Department of Public Safety, Emergency Management Division

Nevada Division of Forestry

Office of the Attorney General of California

Office of the Attorney General of Nevada

Sierra Nevada College

Tahoe Basin Fire Districts

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

University of Nevada

USDA Forest Service

...and the citizens of the Lake Tahoe Basin

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Creating the Commission

Memorandum of Understanding

WHEREAS on June 24, 2007, the Angora Fire began in the North Upper Truckee area in South Lake Tahoe, California. The fire burned out of control, threatening hundreds of residences and commercial structures, and resulted in thousands of evacuations. A total of 3,100 acres were burned and 254 homes were destroyed by this fire.

WHEREAS El Dorado County proclaimed a local emergency June 24, 2007, and subsequently requested state and federal assistance by a separate proclamation issued the next day. In response to El Dorado County's request, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed a State of Emergency for this event on June 25, 2007. The Angora Fire was fully contained on July 2, 2007.

WHEREAS the Angora Fire has underscored the need for a comprehensive review of fire prevention and fuels management practices in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and on July 5, 2007, Nevada Governor Jim Gibbons publicly invited California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to join him in establishing a joint fire commission to review fuels

management of forests in the Tahoe Basin as well as the policies and procedures of the various agencies that govern fuels management within the Basin.

WHEREAS the States of California and Nevada are committed to reducing the threat of wildfires while preserving the unique and treasured environment of the Tahoe region.

NOW, THEREFORE, California and Nevada hereby agree as follows:

1. The California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission (Commission) is hereby created.
2. Voting members of the Commission:
 1. The Governors of California and Nevada shall each appoint eight voting members within the Tahoe Basin, including, but not limited to, representatives from affected state agencies, fire agencies, and the public.
 2. The Governors of California and Nevada hereby request that the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture designate one person from the United States Forest Service to serve as a voting member of the Commission.
3. Three non-voting members of the Commission:
 1. The Governors of California and Nevada may each appoint a maximum of three non-voting ex-officio members to ensure that Tahoe Basin issues, as well as respective State issues, are represented.
4. Commission members shall serve without compensation, but may receive reimbursement of expenses by their respective States. Members shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities.

Timothy D. Rains



Fallen Leaf Lake, June 24, 2007

Between the State of California and the State of Nevada

5. The Governor of California and the Governor of Nevada shall each designate one member from their respective appointees to serve as co-chair of the Commission.
6. California and Nevada will provide resources and staffing to the Commission on a substantially equal basis.
7. The Commission shall perform a comprehensive review of the laws, policies, and practices that affect the vulnerability of the Tahoe Basin to wildfires and/or that pertain to fire prevention and fuels management in the Basin. The Commission shall study and consider various approaches to reducing identified vulnerabilities, and shall submit findings and recommendations to the Governors of California and Nevada by March 21, 2008. These findings and recommendations shall:
 1. Identify the wildfire suppression and fuels management practices that are currently used in the Tahoe Basin, and evaluate the effectiveness of those practices;
 2. Recommend improvements and changes that will reduce the Tahoe Basin's wildfire vulnerability while protecting the environment; and
 3. Recommend ways to effectively educate homeowners and other members of the public on appropriate fuel-reduction and fire-protection measures that they can take.
8. The Commission shall meet as appropriate to fulfill its functions, and shall comply with the open meetings laws of both California and Nevada. In the event of a conflict between these laws, the Commission shall comply with the law that provides the greater right of public access.
9. The Commission may create committees to carry out its mission. Each committee may be comprised of Commission members (including ex-officio members) and a maximum of three individuals who are not members of the Commission.
10. The Commission shall disband 60 days after delivering its findings and recommendations.
11. This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to be legally binding or to impose legal obligations on California or Nevada and will have no legal effect. Neither California nor Nevada is responsible for the actions of third parties or associates who may be involved in activities outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding.



Sacramento Bee/Hector Amezcua

Remains of a home destroyed by the Angora Fire in the Shoshone Community of South Lake Tahoe

The Commissioners' Challenge

The Challenge: It was just a matter of time before a catastrophic fire torched the landscape of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Fire has always been embedded in the western environment, but with increasing frequency in recent years it has exploded beyond its natural ecological role to burn wildlands, communities, and destroy lives. Lake Tahoe's moment arrived on the windy, dry afternoon of June 24, 2007. By nightfall the Angora Fire had burned 254 homes and 3,100 acres of forested land near South Lake Tahoe. The fire burned for another few days before it was contained, but most of the damage occurred in one conflagration afternoon and evening. The destruction was devastating, but thankfully, no lives were lost. Many fire experts stated that if the winds had kept blowing through that first night, the fire would have run up the west side of the Lake for miles.

With the fire extinguished, and immediate erosion plans in place to help protect the

grandeur of Lake Tahoe, Nevada Governor Jim Gibbons and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger acted upon the communities' requests for a fire and fuels policy review. Together, they created the California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission to review the laws, policies, and practices that contribute to the vulnerability of the Tahoe Basin to wildfires.

Lake Tahoe is a natural treasure uniquely shared by the people of Nevada and California. It warrants every effort to protect and preserve its natural beauty, environmental health, and long-term lake clarity. Yet because Lake Tahoe is also a community of people, businesses, visitors, and homes, it also requires fire protection and safety. And in the end, the question comes to this: how can we prevent catastrophic wildfires that threaten both the people *and* the Lake Tahoe environment?

The Commission's Approach: The Commission was formed in August 2007 and met for eight months. The first two meetings were dedicated to listening to fire responders, agency directors and staff, technical experts, and, most of all, the public and residents of the Lake Tahoe Basin, as they explained their problems, concerns, and hopes in the wake of the disaster.

The Commission spent a little time on analyzing the Angora Fire itself, and much more on the efforts that had gone into preparing for the inevitable wildfires, wherever and whenever they might occur in the Basin. At those first meetings, the Commission also considered at length how the elements of environmental protection interplay with public safety. Three primary areas of discussion emerged, and committees were created to further explore the multitude of topics in each of these areas: Wildland Fuels Management, Community Fire Safety, and Legislation and Funding Policies.

The Commissioners all agreed that a universal goal was to have the most open, participative, and collaborative process possible – the Commission felt strongly that any member of the public should have a chance to have input. Toward that end the Commission developed an approach that invited any individual or organization to submit a 'Finding and Recommendations' suggestion that would be considered by one of the three committees, and then brought to the Commission for action. Altogether, 120 proposed findings and

nearly 200 recommendations were submitted by a variety of experts, stakeholders, organizations, and individuals, including Commissioners themselves. They were all reviewed and analyzed, and many were incorporated into the Commission's report.

The Commission spent much of its time listening to the Lake Tahoe community at its meetings. The Commissioners did not all agree on every proposed solution, but consensus emerged on most of the pressing fire safety and environmental issues impacting the Tahoe Basin. All agreed that Lake Tahoe continues to be at risk from catastrophic wildfire and everyone recognizes that a large-scale, destructive forest fire is, in itself, a significant threat to the clarity of Lake Tahoe and the Basin's environment. Catastrophic fire causes deleterious impacts to the surrounding forests, the crystal blue clarity of the Lake, the economic livelihood of the Basin, and the people that live or visit there.

The Recommendations: The Commission's findings and recommendations are presented in six categories that address both short and long-term needs, policy changes, education, funding, governmental structures, and environmental practices related to Lake Tahoe's



California-Nevada Tahoe Basin
Fire Commissioners meeting
at the South Lake Tahoe
Community College
January 25, 2008

vulnerability to wildfire. This report recommends some change from past practices, and change can be challenging for some. But the Commission's challenge from the Governors was to take a treasured jewel, two states, a diverse community, strongly held beliefs, the work of many regulatory agencies, and the input of a concerned public to create a set of recommendations to reduce the risk of wildfire to Lake Tahoe. We believe we have done that and submit to you the final report of the California-Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission.

We thank the Governors for the opportunity to offer recommendations for preserving the majestic shared resource that is Lake Tahoe, while protecting its community.

The forest about us was dense and cool, the sky above us was cloudless and brilliant with sunshine, the broad lake before us was glassy and clear, or rippled and breezy, or black and storm-tossed, according to Nature's mood; and its circling border of mountain domes, clothed with forest, scarred with landslides, cloven by canyons and valleys, and helmeted with glittering snow, fitly framed and finished the noble picture.

Mark Twain



Harold A. Parker, Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library

Emerald Bay, circa 1911