

North Lake Tahoe Bonanza

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We commend the Legislature for looking into doling out \$2.5 million to reduce the risk of wildfires in Nevada. Fire districts around the basin have spent the past year developing community fire plans, and they may not be able to put their plans into action without this money.

SB497 will put the fire districts' hard work on the ground.

We encourage you to support the bill that gives the Nevada Fire Safe Council \$2 million for projects to reduce the wildfire threat and more than \$500,000 for administrative and operating costs over the next two years.

Sure, we could wait and wait and wait for federal money to come through to fund this cause, but according to council executive director Elwood Miller, federal funding may be drying up in the years to come.

As Nevada is consistently one of the top five states in the number of acres burned each year, the time to act is now. There are 10 times as many trees in the basin today as there were when John Fremont saw Lake Tahoe for the first time in 1844, and four times as much fuel per acre - nature can't support this environment the way it is.

Two and half million dollars will allow the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District and other fire agencies around the basin and throughout the state to put their community plans into action.

"It's important to continue the work that's been federally grant funded to make sure this is a safe community," said Norb Szczurek, fuels chief for the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District. "It's this money that will make the work happen."

Nevada needs to take a proactive stance on fuels management, and you can push the state in that direction. Support SB497 by visiting the Nevada Legislature Web site at www.leg.state.nv.us.

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