

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

CABIN CREEK BIOMASS FACILITY

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Placer County
Planner**

Placer County Biomass Program

- Approved in 2007 with the following goals:
 - Reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires
 - Find beneficial uses for forest management residuals (biomass)
 - Improve air quality in Placer County

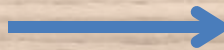
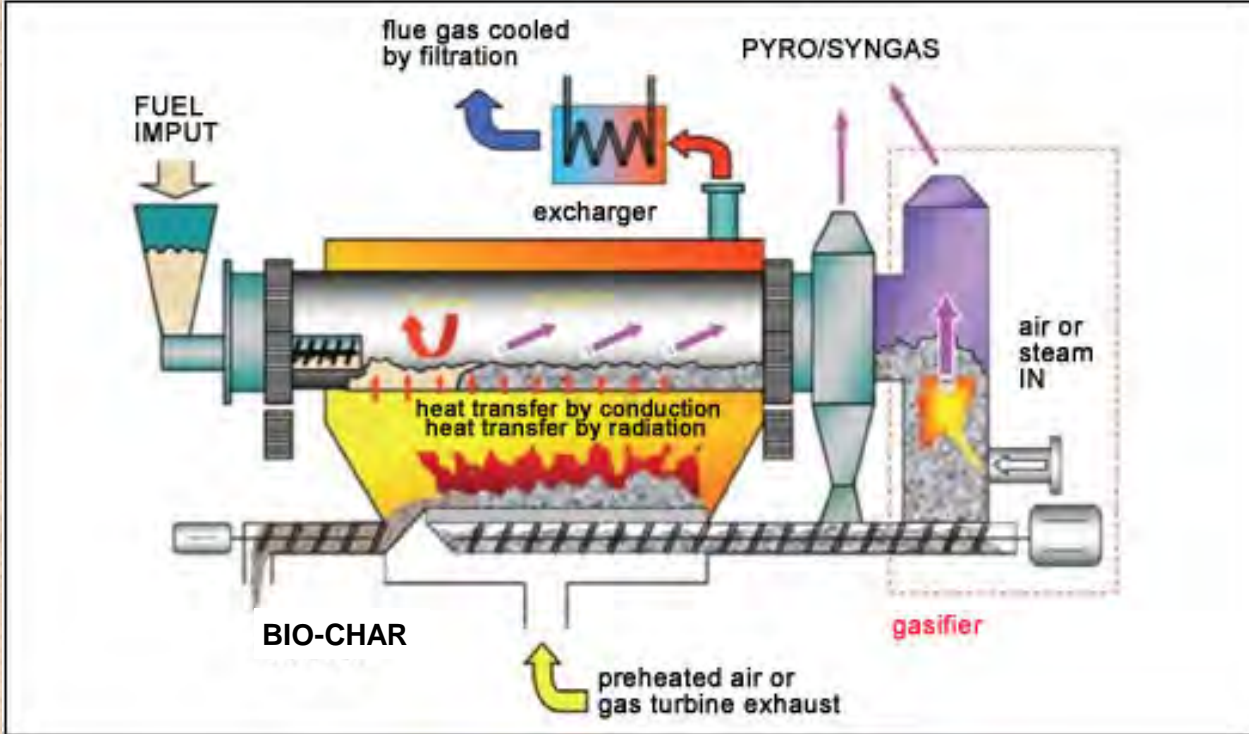


Biomass Program

- Support fuels management activities
- Reduce open pile burning
- Improve regional air quality by reducing emissions
- Use biomass to provide renewable energy



Gasification Technology



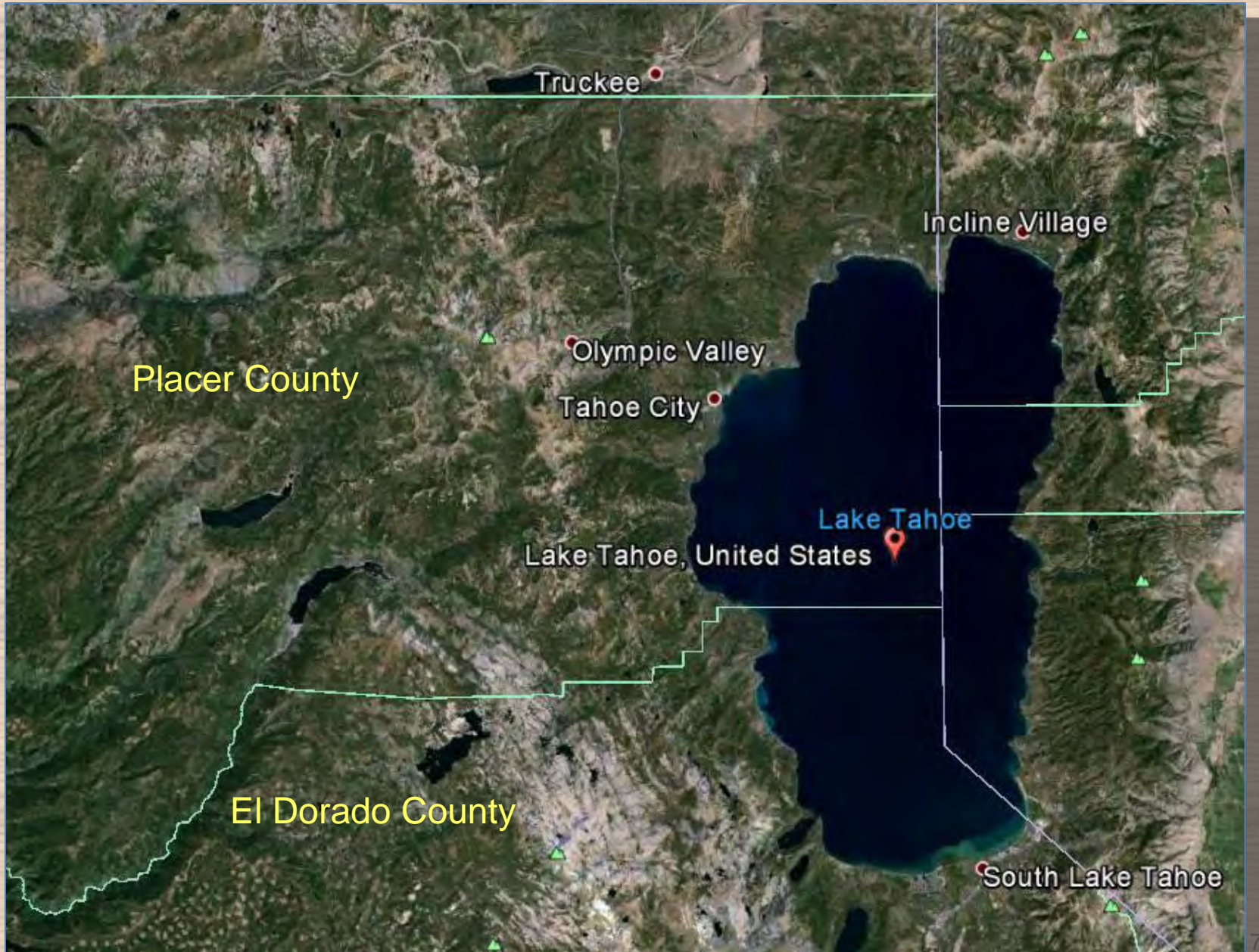
Biomass Project

- **WHAT:** Two MW biomass electric power generation facility
- **WHY:** Emerged as a vital component of the Program because it meets Program goals
- **HOW:** Secured federal matching grant funds through the Department of Energy
- **WHERE:** Board directed staff to search for a viable location

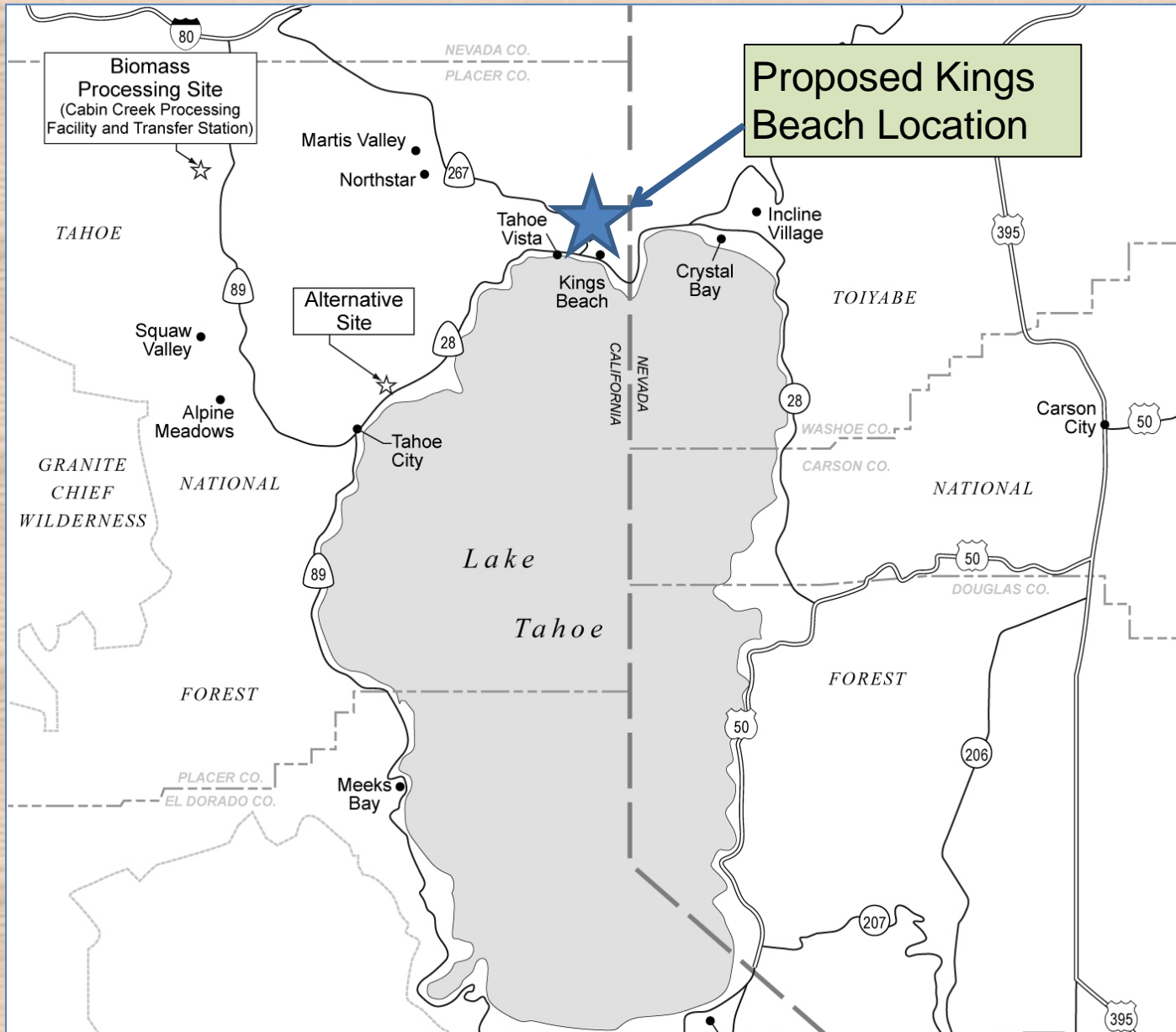
Site Selection Criteria

- Land use compatibility
- Adequate size
- Electric transmission/distribution facilities
- Water/wastewater access
- Transportation network
- Co-located uses for waste heat
- Proximity to fuel sources

Eastern Placer County



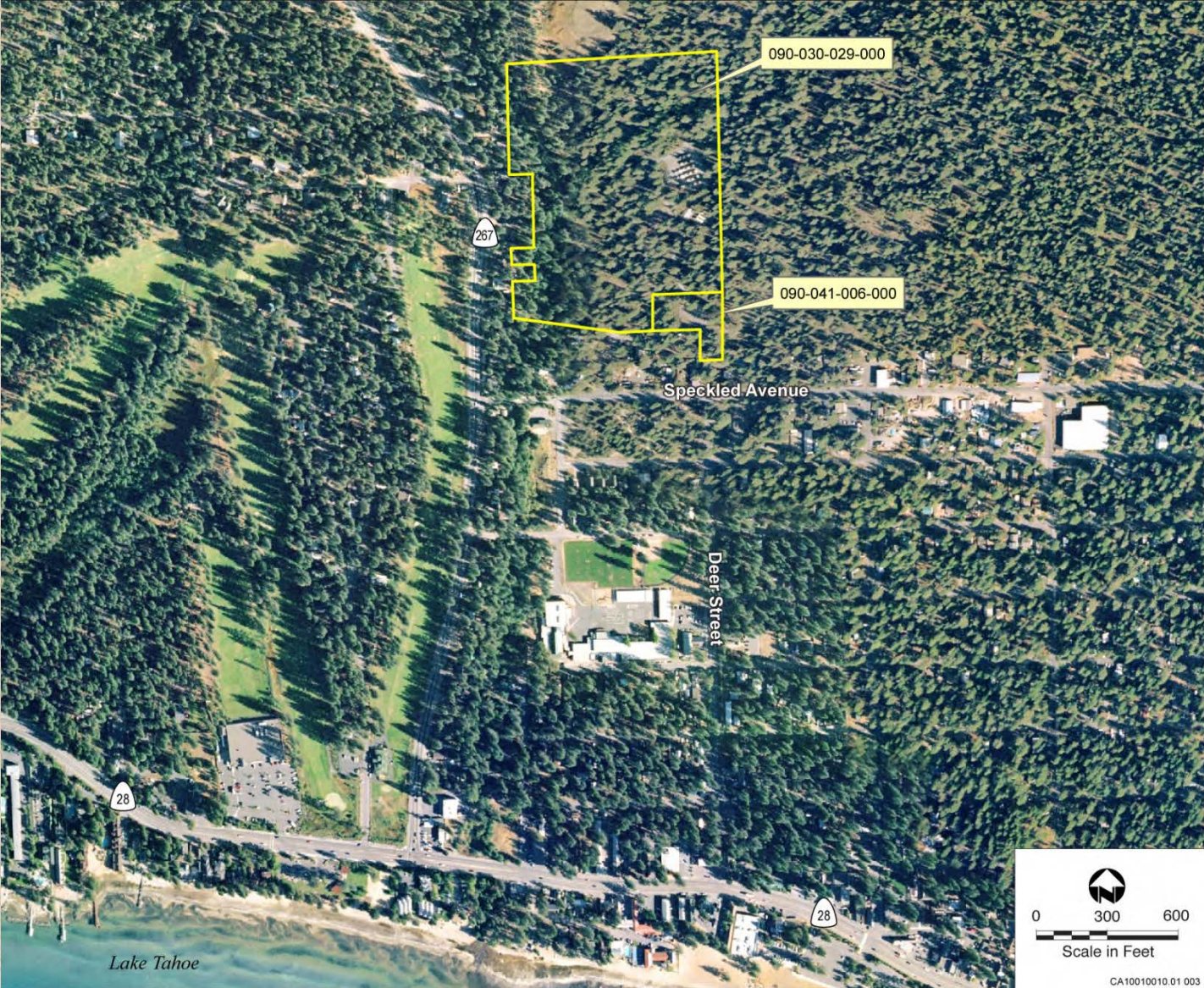
Kings Beach Location



Kings Beach Site Attributes

- Proximity to fuel stock (Tahoe Basin)
- Industrial zone district
- Developed with an 18 MW backup facility
- Power transmission infrastructure
- Site owned by electric company interested in partnership with County
- Waste heat would be sold to local businesses and could also be transferred to local streets and sidewalks for snow melt

Deer Street Site



Kings Beach

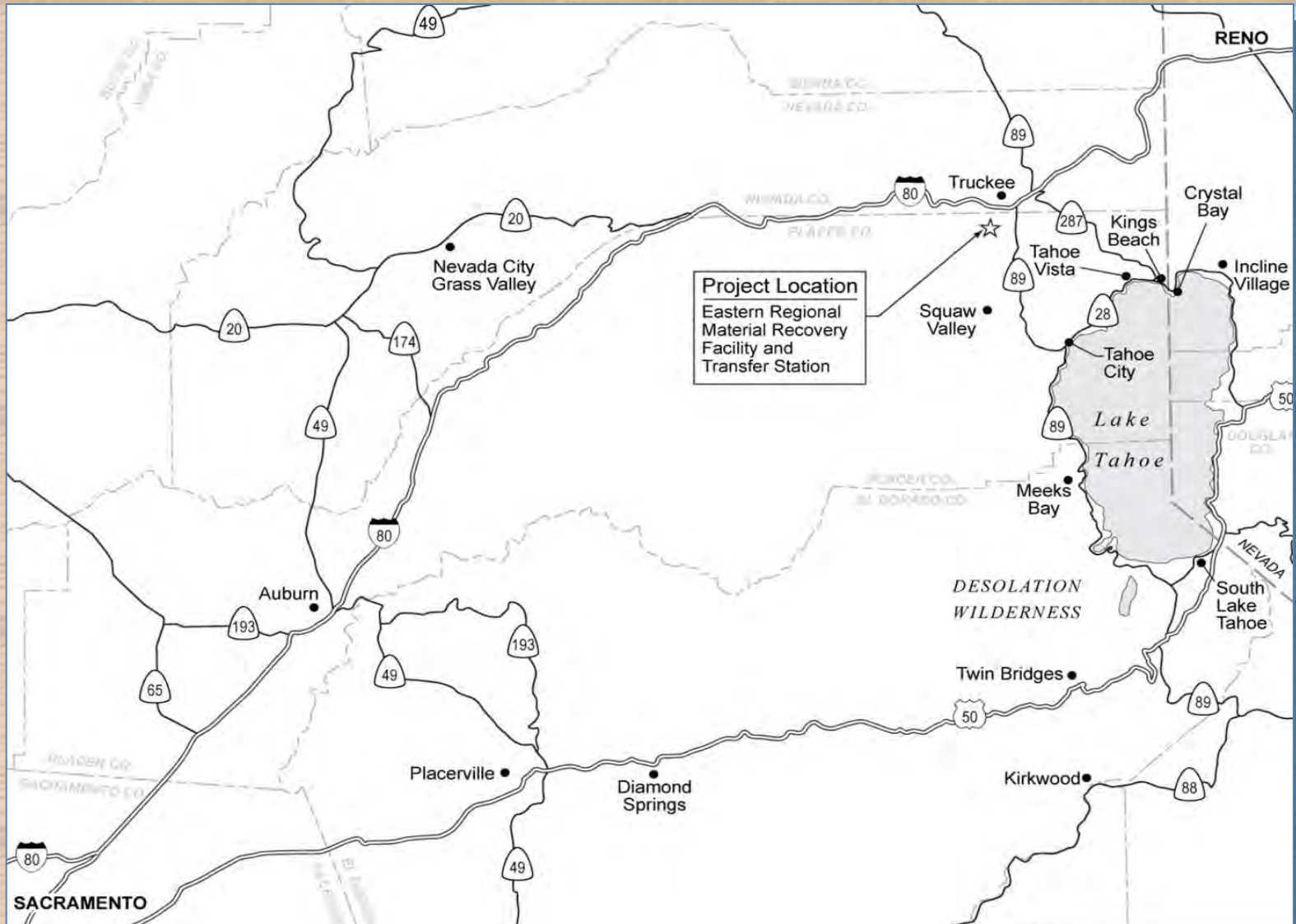


Alternative Site

- BOS directs staff to withdraw Kings Beach application and identify an out-of-basin project site



Cabin Creek Site



Cabin Creek – Placer County Property



Development Rendering



Cabin Creek

- Without significant public opposition, EIR progresses rapidly
- Planning Commission approved Cabin Creek Biomass project use permit and certified the EIR



Planning Commission Decision Appealed

- Project appealed by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Appeal focused on four issues:
 - Inconsistent fuel mix description
 - Combustion efficiency of gasification versus open burning
 - Baseline for EIR evaluation
 - Project impacts on forest habitat

Board of Supervisors Decision

- Staff coordinates with CBD to resolve most important issues
- CBD generally agrees with new proposed conditions of approval
- Board of Supervisors denies the appeal and approves the project
- No litigation



Lessons

- Careful attention to initial site selection
- Early consultation with decision makers
- Provide information early – during NOP
- Conservative analysis
- Potential opposition:
 - Local community
 - Environmental groups
 - Neighboring jurisdictions