

## 2. PROJECT SUMMARY

Lake Almanor Basin sits at the northern end of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Plumas and Lassen Counties, encompassing just under 320,000 acres. With a capacity of 1.1 million acre-feet, Almanor is the third largest reservoir in California. Almanor's idyllic mountain setting has made it a premier destination for recreationists and luxury homeowners. As a result, the Almanor Basin is facing explosive development; up to eleven thousand new lots are ready or near ready to build upon, which would more than triple the current number of homes in the basin.

Urban runoff from construction sites and impermeable surfaces like roads, parking areas, and rooftops is negatively affecting water quality. Sedimentation from new development is a growing problem. Illegal roads created by OHV riders have compacted soil, increased sediment runoff, disrupted breeding birds, and served as a point of entry for exotic species. A lack of coordinated basin management to address critical issues like pollution from stormwater runoff, failing lake-side septic systems, and extensive residential development threatens water quality and critical habitat.

The purpose of this project is to develop a much needed Almanor watershed management plan, work with local citizens to help establish the plan, and work with citizens and agency experts to establish protocols and implement a water quality monitoring program for Lake Almanor. This project will also explore means and advance ways to secure greater investment in the basin through the recovery of ecosystem service values by working with Plumas County, basin residents, PG&E, the U.S. Forest Service, and private land owners like Collins Pine Company.

The total cost of this 18-month project is \$188,335. In-kind support will account for \$41,000 of the total, and we have a match from Plumas County for \$22,334 through June 2008. We request \$125,001 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for this project.

### *Specific components of the project include:*

- ***Develop a comprehensive Almanor Basin watershed management plan*** to protect the water quality of Lake Almanor and its tributaries, and critical basin habitat. The plan will be developed over the first 12 months, and finalized by month 18 working with a citizens advisory group and county and other officials.
- ***Develop and implement a continuous and comprehensive water quality monitoring program*** to identify current conditions and trends in Lake Almanor.
- 3. ***Advance basin stewardship through outreach and education efforts*** including workshops, field trips, educational newspaper articles, and a watershed newsletter to help the public become more involved in the management and monitoring of the lake.
- 3. ***Work with partners to explore ways to secure "ecosystem services" investment.*** Identify mechanisms and work with institutional partners to establish investment associated with ecosystem services in the Almanor Basin to support monitoring, restore damaged land and habitat, support continued basin coordination, and secure easements and conservation dedications where needed to protect biophysical and cultural values.