
Title **0002** 09/14/2024
by **Brice Boland** in **3D Project Destination Development Application - Cohort 3** id. 47505537
brice.boland@walkerbasin.org

Original Submission 09/14/2024

Score n/a

What is the name of the Lead Applicant Organization? Walker Basin Conservancy

Contact Information

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Yerington
NV
89447
US
38.99872
-119.15729

Is the lead applicant organization a 501(c)(3) non-profit? Yes

Please enter your IRS-issued Federal Tax ID Number 471989228.0

Please add your Nevada Secretary of State Corporate ID Number 20141590337.0

Lead Applicant
Organization
Background

What year was the
Lead Applicant
Organization
founded? 2014.0

What is the mission
of the Lead Applicant
Organization The Walker Basin Conservancy is leading the effort to restore and
maintain Walker Lake, while protecting the agricultural, environmental and
recreational interests in the Walker Basin.

Lead Applicant
Organization
Website walkerbasin.org

Lead Applicant
Organization Social
Media www.facebook.com/walkerbasinconservancy

A representative of
the Lead Applicant
Organization has
participated in a Pre-
Application Site Visit
with the Travel
Nevada Industry
Team. No

Organizational
Partnerships This section is not required, however, partnerships are one of they key
aspects of a successful 3D Project and applications will be scored
accordingly. If the Lead Applicant plans to collaborate with partner
agencies or organizations as part of the 3D Project consulting phase or
during implementation of their Destination Plan, they should be included in
this section. Letters of Commitment from partners detailing how they will
support the 3D Project are required for each partner listed in this section.
Letters of Commitment must be uploaded as .pdf files below. Organizational
partners need not meet eligibility requirements.

Does this application
include
Organizational
Partners? Yes

Organizational
Partner Name Yerington Main Street Committee

Organizational Partner Letter of Commitment

[YMSC_Organizational_Letter_of_Support_-_Travel_NV_3D.pdf](#)

How long has this partner been working with the Lead Applicant Organization? 1.0

Would you like to add another Organizational Partner? No

Letters of Support Letters of Support differ from Letters of Commitment submitted by Organizational Partners. A minimum of three unique additional Letters of Support from Territories, community organizations or individuals that are NOT applicants or Organizational Partners must be uploaded as evidence of community support for the Concept. Letters of Support should demonstrate that the proposed concept has the support of local or regional elected officials, decision-makers, stakeholders, and key community/destination organizations. Upload Letters of Support below in .pdf format.

Letter of Support 1

[MV_BG_Letter_of_Support_-_Travel_NV_3D_Project.pdf](#)

Letter of Support 2

[WRSRA_Letter_of_Support_-_Travel_NV_3D_Project.pdf](#)

Letter of Support 3

[Mineral_County_Sportsmens_Club_-_Travel_NV_3D_Letter_of_Support.pdf](#)

Proposed Concept For the 3D Project, we are asking our applicants to submit their CONCEPT for their destination. Your CONCEPT should include the attributes, amenities and attractions (even those which may need additional development) in your destination around which you envision your future tourism economy being built. It should include your vision of what your destination is aiming to be, and the authentic identity of your destination. Please note, a CONCEPT is not a plan. It should not include specific action steps, i.e., a plan. It is critically important that our destination development communities enter into the consulting period with open minds and a genuine curiosity about how best to implement destination development in their specific location. Through the consulting and strategy process, a Multi-Year Plan will be created that will help our awardees prioritize and implement destination development initiatives that have the best chance to bring in desirable visitors that are looking for the types of experiences that your destination has to offer.

Concept Summary

The Walker River Basin is located in rural western Nevada and spans Douglas, Mineral and Lyon Counties. Just over an hour's drive south of Reno, the Basin is home to generational ranching and agricultural families, Native American communities, and residents whose lifestyle is reflective of the Walker River. Nestled in the high desert and home to wide open spaces, public lands, proud and authentic communities, and the serene and picturesque Walker Lake, the Walker Basin is truly one of a kind. The purpose of this proposal is to link the communities connected by the Walker River with a unified place-based tourism experience and marketing campaign. The history, culture, recreation, and economics of communities including Topaz, Smith, Yerington, Schurz, and Hawthorne all blossom from the Walker River.

With strong partnerships rooted in trust and promotion of the region, the Walker Basin Conservancy (Conservancy) is uniquely qualified to successfully lead the development and implementation of a Walker Basin Destination concept and plan. The Conservancy knows the region, and also provides direct impact to local youth, expanding their interest of their backyards through our Environmental Education program. The Yerington Main Street Committee (YMSC), our organizational supporter of the concept, shares similar values in promoting the region for authentic experiences and identifies this proposed project as key to driving more tourism, business, and recognition of Yerington and the surrounding communities along the Walker River in their effort to improve quality of life for area residents.

The Walker River carves a course connecting these communities, and sharing that journey with visitors will help this region tap the growing recreation and tourism segments in the Eastern Sierra and the expanding Reno market to the north. A trip along the Walker brings people to experience unexpected history, pioneer and native cultures, miles of wide open space, and unexpected richness and lushness along Nevada's flowing oasis. The Walker River Corridor's Community Economics Development Strategy (CEDS) identifies recreation and tourism as key areas for investment. There have been significant improvements in recreation access and quality throughout the basin, however there remain critical opportunities to connect local towns and businesses to this potential economic impact.

From the creation of the Walker River State Recreation Area in 2019 to the expansion of Mason Valley Wildlife Management Area, planned OHV trail connections and improvements, and new river trails and singletrack planned for the East Walker River, there has been significant movement in physically connecting communities with natural resources. Economic diversification is essential for the long-term success of these communities. Led by the Conservancy with support from the YMSC and our network of supporting partners, the proposed Walker Basin Destination concept will bring together partners to tell the exciting story of the region to the cultural traveler, the outdoor recreationalist, and the unexpected experience enthusiast. This proposal meets Travel Nevada's Brand Pillars of uninhabited space, inspiring discoveries, unexpected diversity, and rewarding adventure.

Additional Concept Background

[2024_Travel_Nevada_3D_Project_Additional_Concept_Background.pdf](#)

Concept Goals and Objectives Include up to 3 goals for the proposed concept describing what the applicant and partners intend to achieve for the destination through participation in the project. For each goal, clearly state objectives using descriptive statements that specifically discuss what the project team hopes to accomplish.

Would you like to add a Concept Goal? Yes

Goal 1 Our concept will leverage the connection of the communities and economies along the Walker River for collective benefit. The Conservancy and YMSC will establish a basin-wide working group of at least 10 stakeholders by year two to share opportunities, unified strategizes, and to identify gaps in assets.

Would you like to add another goal? Yes

Goal 2 By the end of year two, execute a unified tourism experience and marketing campaign to stimulate visitation and associated economic growth by 20% through the region by increasing overnight stays and providing collaborative support for early stage projects.

Would you like to add another goal? Yes

Goal 3 Starting year two, through partner collaboration, identify at least five additional funding sources to grow the impact of a Walker Basin unified tourism experience and marketing concept to increase destination program funding by 15% for long-term economic impact from tourism.

Impact of the Proposed Concept

What type of visitors are you hoping to attract to your community through your Concept. The Conservancy and YMSC appeal to cultural travelers drawn to this dynamic and rugged region. We promote its remote, wild scenery—where trails are often solitary—and highlight events showcasing the rural but vibrant local culture.. Our target audience are those who seek to find new areas to explore not far from home, but off the beaten path. The ones to be the first to mountain bike a new trail, cowboy camp in the sage, saddle up to the bar with friendly locals, and learn the region’s enthralling history from generational families who still work the rugged landscape.

What changes would you like to see in your community as a result of the 3D Project?

The natural resources, cultural richness, and opportunities for recreation and exploration along the Walker River corridor are endless. With growing visitation interest from seasoned Nevada explorers and curious new locals, the Walker Basin is ripe with potential for substantial tourism-driven growth and economic benefits. Through the 3D Project, we target economic expansion through visitation in Walker River communities where the foundation for growth is already in place. This project will develop a more comprehensive plan to utilize existing resources and embrace broader initiatives, leading to a stronger understanding of the value of tourism to the regional economy and associated quality of life.

A stronger sense of place within these communities is a secondary goal. Over the past few years, the Conservancy has integrated placemaking concepts into both physical and virtual assets, highlighting the Walker Basin's uniqueness and beauty to foster a sense of place among residents and visitors. Additionally, the Conservancy launched an Environmental and Outdoor Education program, funded by individuals, state entities, and foundations, to engage local youth in recreational activities close to home. Through these efforts, fostering passion and pride in the Walker Basin communities has been central to our mission. The 3D Project will further these initiatives, enhancing community pride and keeping residents engaged in shaping the region's future.

How do you think your proposed Concept would support your local economy?

For generations, the Walker Basin has been heavily reliant on agriculture and mining as key economic pillars. As fewer family farms are in existence, mining operations remain unpredictable, and youth look for new employment opportunities, there is a need to diversify the regional economy. The visitation economy, and an associated development plan, is an underdeveloped industry in an area in need of new opportunities.

Our concept will bring the positive economic opportunity that tourism, outdoor recreation, and cultural travel have on rural Nevada economies to the forefront of decision makers minds. Tourism is a sleeping giant in the Walker Basin which makes it unique and untarnished, but with the openness and aptitude to increase it's number of visitors without impacting the remote and serene nature that makes the region such an impactful travel experience.

Target Area

What geographic area is encompassed by your Concept? What region or area will benefit from this project? This may be one community, a coalition of communities working together, a larger geographic area such as a county or territory.

What is the geographic scope of your Concept?

The proposed Concept will have regional or Territory-wide impact.

List the location(s) that are included in your proposed Concept.

Walker Basin. Counties: Lyon, Mineral, and Douglas. Towns: Topaz, Smith, Schurz, Yerington, Hawthorne. Landmarks: Walker River, Walker Lake, Walker River State Recreation Area, Wilson Canyon

<p>Are any of the locations in this proposed Concept in an early stage of destination development?</p>	<p>Yes, this proposal is a combination of locations that are both early stage destinations and more mature destinations.</p>
<p>What is your current annual visitation? How was current annual visitation estimated?</p>	<p>Using State of Nevada tourism data from 2022, this estimate projects 20% growth for Mineral County tourism (\$700,000), and scales 20% growth (\$650,000) to Lyon County tourism proportionate with the population share of Lyon County within the Walker Basin. This projection is based on the sample provided by Travel Nevada and only includes the economic impact of overnight stays and recreation. This is likely an underestimate of expanding regional visitation by 20%. However, our concept focuses on the cultural traveler, unexpected experience enthusiast, and outdoor recreationalist who are best represented in the total annual economic impact of \$1,350,000.</p>
<p>Barriers</p>	<p>Travel Nevada recognizes that many of our communities face barriers that limit their ability to take on new projects or expand existing efforts. Help us understand what issues are the top barriers for your destination.</p>
<p>What barriers are/have been faced by your community that impede tourism development?</p>	<p>The communities along the Walker River are deeply rooted in traditional industries like grazing, crop production, and mining, which continue to drive their economies and shape their perception of opportunity. This focus on traditional outputs can be a barrier to tourism development, as the economic potential of tourism in the Walker Basin is often overlooked. While the communities are welcoming to new neighbors, visitors, and businesses, the benefits of tourism aren't as immediately visible as crop yields or copper extraction. Despite local support for increased area placemaking and promotion, this presents a challenge to recognize tourism's potential as a major economic driver.</p>
<p>How do you envision support from the 3D Project helping you to overcome these barriers?</p>	<p>Led by the Conservancy and supported by the YMSC, along with our partners and community connections, the 3D Project will unite stakeholders across the Walker Basin to prioritize placemaking and tourism development. The project's professionalism will help build trust and encourage investment in diversifying the local economy. Drawing on the program's past successes and expert guidance, the 3D Project will facilitate conversations and inspire creative planning among key community leaders, enabling them to shape the future and showcase the Walker Basin as a prime tourism destination. This combined effort between the Conservancy, YMSC, various stakeholder partners, and Travel Nevada has the potential to integrate tourism as a key economic pillar, diversifying and strengthening the local economy while enhancing the region's sense of place.</p>
<p>Diversity in Travel Experiences</p>	<p>Travel Nevada values and celebrates the diversity across the state of Nevada. Preferential scoring will be awarded to Concepts that showcase diverse cultures, that provide welcoming and inclusive experiences for travelers, and that support underrepresented or underserved communities.</p>

If applicable, share strategies for how your proposed Concept will highlight diversity and diverse cultures in your visitor offerings.

Tribal culture in the Walker Basin is central to the region's history and remains a prevalent cultural and economic contributor to the region today. The Conservancy remains a close partner of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, supporting one another's events, working together diligently on water policy, and sharing the exciting local outdoors with tribal youth through the Conservancy's Environmental and Outdoor Education program. As a substantial stakeholder in the region, the Tribe will be invited to participate in the stakeholder planning and implementation of the 3D project, to ensure their voice is heard and their culture can best be represented in a destination development plan.

Additionally, local agriculture has brought a sizeable population of Latino workers and families to Yerington and surrounding communities, further diversifying the region. A result of this change is a lively food scene in Yerington with new offerings for locals and area visitors. Efforts to engage and include this community are critical to long-term success of the 3D proposal and between the Conservancy and YMSC, we are well equipped to reach this audience of community members and engage interested members to participate in the 3D project.

If applicable, share strategies for how your proposed Concept will provide a welcoming and inclusive destination for visitors from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Beyond the inspiring sunsets and outdoor expanses the Walker Basin provides, a critical aspect of what makes the outdoors and tourism economy so impactful for all community members and visitors is a simple fact - the outdoors are for everyone. Regardless of background, anyone can enjoy camping with friends, fishing on the Walker River, or kayaking on Walker Lake.

The Walker Basin is home to a rich diversity of cultures and communities. The Walker River Paiute Tribe and the town of Schurz offer cultural experiences and small businesses for curious travelers. Additionally, the growing Latino community in and around Yerington has introduced new dining options, shops, and cultural influences, enriching the region and fostering greater acceptance of new visitors. The Walker Basin is best served to promote all the different cultures and backgrounds in the region. Our concept will highlight the inclusive and welcoming destination full of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences for all visitors.

Empowering local, diverse, messengers to communicate and share their story of the joy of living and recreating in the Walker Basin is potentially a core focus. Executing a social media campaign highlighting Walker Basin residents and visitors of diverse background and their experience can help those with concerns of inclusivity take the next step and plan their trip. Marketing materials showcasing an eclectic range of age, race, and gender identity from locals and established travelers will only help reinforce Conservancy and partners efforts to build and promote a destination that welcomes all people.

If applicable, share strategies for how your proposed Concept will support and sustain underrepresented or underserved communities and/or businesses.

The Walker Basin is home to underrepresented communities that stand to benefit from our concept. Hawthorne has faced significant economic challenges, largely due to the decline in tourism and recreation at Walker Lake. As the Conservancy works to restore the Lake and build off of years of progress, our plan includes promoting activities like kayaking, wildlife viewing, and dining to boost visitation.

Yerington's Latino population is underrepresented in civic groups, despite being a significant portion of the community and presents a significant opportunity to empower and engage on this project. With most of the town's restaurants offering "Mexican food," there's a huge opportunity to showcase Yerington as a destination for the best and most authentic Mexican cuisine in Nevada. By including the Latino community in the stakeholder group outlined in Goal One, we can attract food enthusiasts and cultural travelers, enhancing this segment of the community's impact. Engaging key members of this community can lead to long-term business sustainability and cultural representation. Additionally, creating marketing materials promoting the region written in Spanish and highlighting the local culture and activities would be a substantial action to overcome language barriers for non-English speaking traveler's curious about visiting the Walker Basin.

The Walker River Paiute Tribe in Schurz has cultural attractions with untapped potential. Our concept, along with the Conservancy's strong relationship with the Tribe, will facilitate open conversations about how the Tribe views tourism, what cultural assets might interest visitors, and how to promote these assets while respecting tribal boundaries and traditions. One strategy for our concept is to interweave the Tribe's history and stories in the overall Walker River experience, highlighting historical points as the river makes it's way to Walker Lake.

Stewardship

Travel Nevada cares about protecting and preserving the special places around our state and is committed to ensuring a positive and authentic travel experience for generations to come.

If applicable, share strategies for how your proposed Concept will support or promote preservation and protection of your community's natural and cultural resources.

The Walker Basin Conservancy is dedicated to protecting our community's natural and cultural resources. Stewardship is at the core of our mission and evident in our daily work. This commitment is reflected in our efforts to create the Walker River State Recreation Area, expand the Mason Valley Wildlife Management Area, save Walker Lake, and open new access to the West Walker River in Smith Valley.

As the Conservancy, Yerington Main Street Committee, Walker River State Recreation Area, and other groups implement placemaking strategies through the 3D project we will build local support for both promoting and protecting the region's natural and cultural resources. This dual approach will foster greater local pride in the Walker River corridor and the broader Walker Basin. With strong community partnerships and addressed organizational support of the Yerington Main Street Committee, we are well-positioned to gain community backing and increase understanding of how preservation can drive both visitation and economic growth.

By making this concept a reality, demonstrating its economic benefits, and securing broad support for the tourism industry, we will enhance local sense of place and strengthen the commitment to preserving and protecting our community's resources.

Lead Applicant
Organizational
Capacity

Describe the Lead Applicant Organization's (and organizational partners') experience and expertise in implementing tourism and/or community development projects.

The Conservancy has a strong track record of success in tourism and community development projects. We have organized numerous events ranging from overnight camping trips at the Walker River State Recreation Area to nursery tours in Smith Valley, attracting hundreds of visitors from outside the Walker Basin. These efforts have been well-received by partners like Nevada State Parks and the communities of Hawthorne and Schurz, for example. With a dedicated team of over 25 staff members and effective communication platforms, our initiatives have been successful. We've also collaborated with state and federal land managers on projects like the Wilson Canyon restoration, which attracts hikers and dirt bikers.

The Yerington Main Street Committee (YMSC) benefits from support and funding from the City of Yerington and has completed community beautification projects to enhance the main corridors for residents and visitors. Composed of engaged community stakeholders with diverse experience—from hosting major events like Night in the Country to running local businesses—the YMSC is an established and well respected non-profit in the area with a growing reach. With upcoming projects like a river walk development along the Walker River and ongoing small businesses recruitment, the Conservancy is proud to partner with the committee on the proposed concept.

<p>What is the Lead Applicant's capacity to guide or oversee the planning and implementation of a long-term Destination Development Plan? Describe how you will balance this workload with your organization's existing responsibilities.</p>	<p>As the Conservancy continues to expand and enhance its programs, we see significant opportunities to advance placemaking and implement the Destination Development plan. Recently, the Conservancy launched an Environmental and Outdoor Education program that has grown rapidly due to strong community interest and financial support from both private and public entities. Given the increased demand and funding, we are hiring a full-time employee to manage this program, which will allow our Community Engagement Manager to focus on the Destination Development plan.</p> <p>Our Community Engagement Manager has a proven track record in managing marketing campaigns, including political campaigns, cross-promotions with elected officials, and recreational economic research in rural areas. With this expertise, the support of the Yerington Main Street Committees and additional partners, the Conservancy has the resources to successfully execute the planning and implementation of the Destination Development plan, ensuring its success.</p>
<p>Funding and resources to support the Concept</p>	<p>The Conservancy and the YMSC have community-driven staff , volunteers, and strong relationships with key businesses, elected officials, and government agencies, which will be crucial for developing our concept. Specifically, the Conservancy's Community Engagement Manager and the YMSC's Executive Director and President will dedicate significant time to this project. In 2025, the Conservancy plans to allocate upwards of 50% of the Community Engagement Manager's time to placemaking efforts in the Walker Basin.</p> <p>The Conservancy manages 15 current state and federal grants and has been entrusted with millions of dollars of federal funding over the organization's ten years. With a dedicated Development Director and fundraising strategy, the Conservancy has ample resources to support this concept and the final plan for the long-term. Additionally, with the support of a skilled design consultant, access to supportive unrestricted funds, interest in applying for outside placemaking funding, and a robust network of supporters, including those identified in our letters of support, both the Conservancy and the YMSC are well-equipped with the funding, time, and resources needed to develop and implement our shared concept. As we begin the process and engage more stakeholders, we expect to attract additional resources, expertise, and creativity.</p>
<p>Which range best reflects the size of Lead Applicant Organization's Annual budget?</p>	<p>\$1 Million+</p>
<p>How many staff and volunteers work for the Lead Applicant Organization?</p>	
<p>Full Time Staff (in FTE)</p>	<p>26.0</p>

Part-time Staff (in FTE)	0.0
Volunteers	42.0
Volunteer Hours	8.0
Existing Tourism-related Amenities in the area of the proposed Concept.	Applications will be evaluated on the range and quality of existing tourism infrastructure in the area of the proposed Concept. This includes tourism-related amenities such as accommodations, food and beverage facilities, retail services, and other visitor-related attractions and experiences.
What sets your proposed Concept area apart from other destinations?	One can follow the path of the Walker River, a world-renowned fly fishing destination, as it winds its way through rugged cliffs, past remote hiking and OHV trails, and through farmers fields. The contrast in scenery is special to the Walker Basin, and one that is hard to capture anywhere else in Nevada. The river arrives and ends at Walker Lake, the “Desert Jewel”, where visitors find a reflective recreation oasis of water with sunsets and sunrises that need no filter. Along the river’s path, communities rich with history provide lodging and delicious local fare to travelers. The East Walker cuts a canyon in the landscape, providing an oasis in rugged yet accessible, remote mountains. Cultural travelers can visit museums, ghost towns, or attend cultural events through their travel. With a unified tourism experience and marketing campaign, this region’s story will be told comprehensively to inspire visitors from nearby and afar, from the cultural traveler to the outdoor recreationalist, and to those seeking an unexpected experience to plan their next trip to the Walker Basin. It’s essentially all on the table in the Walker Basin already, it just needs someone to tell the story.
What amenities or experiences might the destination need to develop to help advance your proposed Concept?	<p>The foundation is already in place for our concept, including amenities and experiences. However, the packaged coordination and promotion of the region’s existing assets is in early stage development. Travelers can drive right through Yerington without even knowing they can camp, stargaze, or view wildlife at the Walker River State Recreation Area just a few minutes away. Anglers near Bridgeport, CA may be unaware that the best fishing on the East Walker River is 30 minutes away at “The Elbow” in the WRSRA.</p> <p>While the amenities and experiences are prevalent, the Walker Basin visitation regional story is in the early stage of development. The options to build on this foundation are limitless. From singletrack mountain bike trails that the Conservancy is already developing, to potential paddleboard and kayak rentals at Walker Lake, to a cultural heritage visitors center focused on the indigenous peoples who have called the region home for hundreds of years. There are destinations and experiences in place with substantive plans for new options to stimulate the imagination and truly develop a Walker Basin experience.</p>
Select the types of accommodations that currently exist in the Concept area.	Hotels and motels Vacation rentals (VRBO, Air BnB) RV parking or camping spots

Estimate the number of hotel rooms.	425.0
Estimate the number of vacation rentals (e.g. VRBO, Air BnB).	45.0
Estimate the number of RV spaces.	680.0
Select the types of food and beverage facilities in the proposed concept area.	Locally owned Fast food chain Coffee/ Bakery Bar/ Saloon Grocery/ Market
Select the types of retail establishments in the proposed concept area.	Gift Shops, Galleries, Specialty shops Gear/ Outfitter Clothing/ Apparel Supermarket/ Big box/ Department store Fuel/ Convenience store
Attractions and Experiences	In this section, describe the existing attractions that would draw tourists to their area. Be sure to include key details about the attraction that help those reviewing the application to assess the quality and range of existing infrastructure. If you have metrics about the attraction, you may note them in this section.
Please select all the types of existing attractions in your area that you want to leverage support your Concept.	Arts and Culture (Examples: galleries, conservatories, theaters, artisan workshops, concert venues, cultural sites) History (Examples: history museums, historic sites, battlefields, fossils, ghost towns) Outdoor Recreation/ Nature (Examples: stargazing, wildlife viewing, mountain biking, hiking, off-roading) Special Events (Examples: fairs and festivals, farmers markets, exhibitions) Sports (Examples: spectator sports venues and tournaments, golf, yoga, skiing, competitions)

Arts and Culture

Walker Lake's vibrant colors are apparent and represented for those seeking arts and culture. Galleries, rare rock shops, and unique stores are spread around the lake from Schurz to Hawthorne utilizing the Lake's vibrant colors to establish a setting of an aesthetic, shifting dynamic. The Yerington Theater of Arts, a historic building in the heart of Yerington, hosts regular concerts, art showings and the annual highly anticipated Art of Brewing craft beer festival. The uninhabited landscape sprawling across and encircling the town of Schurz features petroglyph sites and areas of cultural significance to the Agai Dicutta Numa, the name of the people of the Walker River Paiute Tribe. One wouldn't want to miss these remarkable areas that fall along the path of the Walker River, and with a developed and unified story, they can have their uniqueness amplified to heighten visibility of the region and increase visitation as guests to the region follow along the winding Walker River.

History

Cultural travelers visiting the Ordnance Museum in Hawthorne will learn about the storied historical significance and the community that has developed around this military outpost, which remains active today. Visiting Hawthorne during the annual Armed Forces Day offers a deeply patriotic experience in "America's Most Patriotic Town." Ghost towns, like the Aurora mining camp near the California border, are scattered throughout the region and appeal to those with a spirit of exploration. These attractions in Mineral County are unique on their own, but together, they form a rich tourism experience.

The Lyon County Museum in Yerington and the Mineral County Museum in Hawthorne showcase fossils, Native American artifacts, and a robust collection of historical items, connecting the past to the present. As part of the Conservancy's concept, these local assets can gain further recognition and be integrated into a unified tourism experience by connecting these historical treasures with the path of the Walker River.

Outdoor Recreation and Nature

The Walker River and Walker Lake are inspiring centers of outdoor recreation that invoke a deep connection in the hearts of locals and those who frequent the region for the world class flyfishing on the Walker River to the unbeatable sunsets at Walker Lake. With the establishment of the Walker River State Recreation Area, families can camp, kayak, fish, and enjoy the splendor the park provides. Mountain biking singletrack trails, currently in the early stage of development, will provide connectivity to communities and landmarks. Increased OHV trail routes, a major potential economic driver to the region, bring rewarding adventures and new discoveries for those seeking new challenges in diverse landscapes. As the Conservancy and the YMSC continue to work with partners on advancing these programs past early stage development, the focus on connectivity between nature and the communities whose lifestyle is inherently intertwined will remain a central component to our concept.

Special Events

Fans of country music will find one of the largest country music festivals in Nevada in Yerington, home of Night in the Country. This annual 3-day event draws over 10,000 eventgoers annually and serves as the principal fundraiser for the Mason Valley Boys and Girls Club, a close partner of the Conservancy and the YMSC. The Walker River Paiute Tribe's Pinenut Festival in Schurz draws thousands for a visually stunning cultural experience and display of the tribe's heritage and significant historical and contemporary role in the Walker Basin. Smith Valley Fun Days includes a car show, vendors, and local food to celebrate the agricultural lifestyle that has been a staple of the local economy for generations. Spectators can enjoy tractor pulls, knife throwing contests, and more that highlight an iconic wild west lifestyle while showcasing the welcoming culture only found in Smith Valley. These are just a few of the many special events in the Walker Basin that a unified tourism experience and marketing campaign can highlight as our concept aims to craft a story of the vibrant communities through the path of the Walker River.

Sports

The Lyon County Fairgrounds in Yerington is home to the annual Lyon County Fair and Rodeo that draws in the crowds for featured events like bull riding to the anticipated parade that rolls through downtown. The Valley Off Road Racing Association (VORRA) brings challengers and spectators from near and far to compete and enjoy in OHV races near Yerington and Hawthorne. Early stage planning conversations are ongoing to include distance running competitions along the East Walker River, mountain bike contests through the hills between Yerington and Hawthorne, and disc golf contests in Hawthorne and at the Walker River State Recreation Area. Last summer was the second annual Walker Lake Days, bringing in hundred's to celebrate the Lake's recovery and to watch the anticipated and challenging Great Walker Lake Kayak Race. Our concept is inclusive and for the nature hiker who values silence, there is an option and for the motorhead looking for the thrill of competition, there's a welcoming place for that to in the Walker Basin.

Project Agreement

If selected, I agree to commit to the applicant expectations outlined below.
