

# Summary of Recent TRPA Governing Board Meetings

August 26, 2015

John Marshall (legal counsel for TRPA) and I met with the TRPA Operations Committee to propose some amendments to the Agency's Rules of Procedure to make it easier for Governing Board members to participate telephonically in Governing Board meetings from remote locations by easing some of the Agency's in-house rules that impose restrictions more stringent than those imposed by the Brown Act in California.

During the Legal Committee meeting, the performance of the Agency's General Counsel was reviewed. The Committee recommended unanimously that the Governing Board approve a onetime bonus in the amount of \$8,639 for FY 2015. The Board accepted the Committee's recommendation without dissent.

In other business, Dr. Geoff Schladow from UC Davis presented the annual State of the Lake Report. Since UCD has been monitoring water quality at Tahoe for nearly 50 years, its scientific measurements provide a unique perspective on long term trends. Part of this continuous monitoring includes the measurement of lake clarity. The report found that average annual water clarity (at 77.8 feet in 2014) was the best it's been in a decade. Although some of the improvement is undoubtedly related to the drought and the relative lack of runoff, most agree that the improvement in clarity is also the result of the multitude of environmental improvement projects that have been implemented over the last ten years. Surprisingly, the report also identified an inverse relationship between clarity and the Lake's iconic blue coloring. While clarity is related to the input of fine particulate matter from surrounding lands, blueness is most strongly related to algal concentration. Although the assumption that lake clarity is related to blueness has been the driving force behind environmental advocacy and management efforts in the Basin for years, the report's findings show that when clarity increases, blueness declines and vice versa. This is due to "the seasonal interplay between sediment, nutrients and algal production as the lake mixes".

The full State of the Lake Report can be reviewed at

<http://terc.ucdavis.edu/stateofthelake/>.

In response to an increasing anxiousness by some of the Basin's chief stakeholders to revisit the updating of the shorezone ordinance, Executive Director Joanne Marchetta, outlined the Agency's approach to dealing this controversial topic. The first phase will involve a facilitated discussion of establishing baselines (the # of existing boating structures and the effect of drought on lake levels) and identifying the scope of the planning issues to be addressed. The second phase will involve the use of stakeholder working groups and the TRPA's Regional Planning Implementation Committee (RPIC) to set the policy framework which will revolve around the following topics: public health and safety access, public/commercial boating access and private boating access from private littoral parcels. As part of the third phase staff will draft a detailed code linked to the aforementioned framework. During the fourth phase the proposed policy framework and associated alternatives will undergo an environmental analysis followed by Advisory Planning Commission and Regional Plan Implementation Committee review. The process will culminate in the review and certification of the EIS by the Governing Board and (God willing) the adoption of a Shore Zone Plan and Code update. The whole process is projected to take 4 to 5 years which in Tahoe Time is just a blink of an eye!

In other business, staff briefed the Board on its approach to reviewing and commenting on projects (like the Squaw Valley Village Specific Plan and the Martis Valley West Project) that are outside of the Basin but may have impacts requiring mitigation within the Basin.

### September 23, 2015

The meeting began with the presentation of the annual Best in the Basin awards which recognize projects at the Lake that demonstrate exceptional planning, design and compatibility with the Tahoe community and its environment. Recipients included the City of South Lake Tahoe and its partners for the Bijou Erosion Control Project and the Harrison Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, NDOT for the State Route 207/Kingsbury Grade Reconstruction Project and the Incline Pines Homeowners Association Defensible Space Project.

Following a brief reception for the aforementioned award recipients, the Board received an update on the Aquatic Invasive Species Program. In September, Lake

Tahoe hosted the yearly conference of the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species which brought together nearly 100 experts from the public and private sectors in the prevention, detection and removal of harmful invasive infestations. Since Tahoe's collaborative AIS program is frequently touted as a national model, TRPA has been invited to join the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, a federal advisory group that gives guidance on nationwide AIS policies.

Following the aforementioned update, Dr. Lars Anderson reported on the proposed plan to address the invasive weed problem in the Tahoe Keys which includes integrated and long term management strategies. One of the key weapons recommended for controlling these invasive species are aquatic herbicides which, according to Dr. Anderson, have been used successfully in other large water bodies across the U.S. While doing an exceptional job of controlling watermilfoil, these chemicals apparently have a minimal effect on non-target vegetation and no negative impacts on water quality or fish communities. Despite these assurances, a number of people expressed concern about the introduction of herbicides into the ecology of the Lake and the general absence in the plan of mechanical control options (other than mowing which only serves to disperse the plants into other areas). In response to these concerns, more investigation will be done to identify other areas where these chemicals have been used with no adverse effects.

The last planning matter to be discussed was the proposed Brockway Campground Project lakeward of Northstar which envisions the development of 550 campsites with a variety of associated amenities. The project team discussed the history of the property, the need for additional developed campgrounds in the Tahoe Basin, and responded to concerns regarding access, safety and infrastructure.

Later in the meeting, the results of the Executive Directors' 360 degree evaluation were discussed and an incentive bonus of \$8,947 was approved.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this report or any other Agency-related matter.

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