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## STAFF REPORT

Date: May 15, 2024

To: TRPA Governing Board

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Tahoe Science Advisory Council Briefing on Microplastics: Dr. Monica Arienzo, Desert Research Institute

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### Summary and Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational item only; no action is required.

### Background

Microplastics, small (particles < 5mm and >1nm) plastic fragments of fibers from clothing, cosmetics, packaging, and the breakdown of other plastics are an emerging global problem. Microplastics have been found everywhere from Antarctica to the bottom of the ocean. Microplastics have also been documented by scientists in Lake Tahoe, which has raised questions from stakeholders and the scientific and management communities on their sources, impacts, and potential management.

In 2023, the Tahoe Science Advisory Council (Council) convened a Microplastics working group of local and regional experts to review the current research and collaborate on next steps. The working group's charge was to summarize and document microplastics and plastic pollution research in the Lake Tahoe Region and to identify and prioritize next steps for science and management action. Dr. Monica Arienzo chairs the Council's working group and has graciously agreed to provide a summary of the current state of knowledge on microplastics and the working group's activities.

### About Dr. Monica Arienzo

Dr. Monica Arienzo is an Associate Research Professor in the Division of Hydrologic Sciences and leads the Microplastics and Environmental Chemistry lab at the Desert Research Institute (DRI). Dr. Arienzo uses chemical tools to understand how humans have impacted the environment. In 2021, she received the prestigious CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Dr. Arienzo is a global leader in the study of microplastics and has authored more than 25 peer-reviewed papers which have been cited more than 1,400 times.

If you have questions about the presentation, please contact Dan Segan, Chief Science and Policy Advisor at [dsegan@trpa.gov](mailto:dsegan@trpa.gov) or (775) 589-5233.

To submit a written public comment, email [publiccomment@trpa.gov](mailto:publiccomment@trpa.gov) with the appropriate agenda item in the subject line. Written comments received by 4 p.m. the day before a scheduled public meeting will be distributed and posted to the TRPA website before the meeting begins. TRPA does not guarantee written comments received after 4 p.m. the day before a meeting will be distributed and posted in time for the meeting.