TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

LEGAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2026

TRPA/ZOOM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chair Williamson called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. on March 25, 2026.

Members present: Ms. Aldean, Ms. Faustinos, Ms. Leumer, Mr. Kieckhefer, and Ms. Williamson.

Members absent: None.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

TRPA General Counsel Graham St. Michel stated that there were no changes to the agenda.

Chair Williamson deemed the agenda approved as posted.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Aldean made a motion to approve the January 28, 2026 Legal Committee meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried by voice vote.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION OF ENFORCEMENT ACTION SDA CORP., OFF-SEASON GRADING, VEGETATION DISTURBANCE, FAILURE TO MAINTAIN BMPS, AND UNAUTHORIZED TREE REMOVAL, 6458 DONNER ROAD, PLACER COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER (APN) 112-070-021, TRPA FILE NUMBER CODE2025-0058

TRPA Code Compliance Program Manager, Steve Sweet, presented the Resolution of Enforcement Action involving unauthorized tree removal, grading, and failure to maintain temporary BMPs (Best Management Practices) at the SDA Corp property, a vacant lot located at 6458 Donner Road in Placer County. A correction was noted to the staff report clarifying that the violation involved grading over the allowed amount, not grading past the October 15th deadline.

In June 2025, TRPA received a report of unauthorized tree removal on the property, which is currently under review for a single-family dwelling with the Placer County Building

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Department. TRPA had previously issued a tree removal permit for thinning the parcel in 2024. Following investigation and discussions with SDA Corp representatives, TRPA determined that one Jeffrey Pine, approximately 30 inches in diameter (DBH), was removed without prior authorization from TRPA or Placer County. Additional unauthorized activities were also identified, including removal of tree stumps, unauthorized grading exceeding ten cubic yards, and failure to install temporary BMPs for erosion control and to prevent tracking off-site.

The unauthorized activities violated multiple TRPA codes, including Section 33.61 and 61.15 for unauthorized tree removal of trees over 14 inches, Section 2.3.2 for unauthorized grading exceeding ten cubic yards, and Sections 33.6 and 64.3 for failure to implement and maintain BMPs on construction sites.

SDA Corp has taken responsibility for the unauthorized activities and agreed to a proposed settlement of $10,000 and planting of three native conifers (10-15 feet) to replace the removed tree once the new house is permitted. Staff recommended the Governing Board approve the proposed settlement agreement.

Committee Questions & Comments

Member Kieckhefer asked whether the tree in question had been included in the original tree removal application and denied, or if the application was simply silent on that particular tree.

Steve Sweet explained that the original request was for thinning, during which staff typically visits the property with the owner to assess which trees can be removed. Steve was unsure whether this specific tree was requested during that initial review, but confirmed it was not permitted and would not have qualified for removal under a thinning permit. However, Steve noted the tree could potentially be removed under a construction permit for the house. Ben Kieckhefer confirmed that the tree would likely need to be removed for construction anyway, and staff agreed, explaining that such removal would be permitted through the construction permit process once the project is fully prepared.

Member Aldean asked for clarification on whether the property owner is also the contractor, which staff confirmed. She noted this distinction matters because TRPA typically emphasizes to contractors their vicarious liability when someone they employ violates codes or laws. Ms. Aldean wanted to ensure that contractors are also held accountable in these situations.

Staff confirmed that this is an owner-builder situation where the contractor is part of SDA Corp.

Motion to recommend approval of the Settlement Agreement as noted in Attachment A made by Ben Kieckhefer

Ayes: Ms. Aldean, Ms. Faustinos, Ms. Leumer, Mr. Kieckhefer, and Ms. Williamson
Nays: None.

Motion carried.

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6. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

Steve Sweet took a moment to introduce Jesse Kellogg, TRPA's newest inspector who joined the team almost a year ago. Steve noted that Jesse is a great addition to the team and that this was his first case, so he was invited to attend the meeting to see the process through to completion.

Board members welcomed him warmly, with one member joking that he is a "fledgling," and thanked him for being present.

7. PUBLIC INTEREST COMMENTS

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Aldean moved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Huston
Paralegal

The above meeting was recorded in its entirety. Anyone wishing to listen to the recording may find it at https://www.trpa.gov/meeting-materials/. In addition, written documents submitted at the meeting are available for review. If you require assistance locating this information, please contact the TRPA at (775) 588-4547 or virtualmeetinghelp@trpa.gov.

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