THRESHOLD UPDATE INITIATIVE STAKEHOLDER'S WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

Monday, November 10, 2025

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM TRPA offices

128 Market Street, Stateline, Nevada & Via Zoom Meeting Summary

Meeting Recording

YouTube:

https://youtu.be/tUmlYCusNks?si=8vx0T7Fr15EefBdx

AGENDA ITEM

WELCOME, AGENDA REVIEW

Members present:

Ashley Conrad-Saydah, Garth Ailling, Bob Larsen, Laura Patten, James Settelmeyer, Steve Teshara

Members absent:

Jennifer Carr, Jason Drew

Staff present:

Dan Segan, Mason Bindl, Jessica Gilles

Public present:

None

WATER QUALITY THRESHOLD STANDARDS UPDATE (ADMINISTRATIVE CLEANUP)

Staff presented proposed administrative updates to align water quality standards with the Tahoe Science Advisory Council's recommendations for structuring threshold standards.

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Working Group Direction

- Staff confirmed these changes are administrative and will not alter current monitoring practices or on-the-ground management.
- The Group stressed the necessity of clearly distinguishing administrative cleanup of the water quality standards from the substantive policy revisions of the vegetation preservation when presenting to the Governing Board. The group suggested that additional background be provided in subsequent presentations. That background should include additional details on the Science Council process and the recommendations that led to these recommendations.
- Water Quality standard 10 – Is the standard necessary at all? Review the Regional Plan, and if there is any ambiguity, retain the standard. Document the intent and the Regional Plan review in the staff report.
- The Group supported the proposal to remove several standards classified as broad Goals, Strategies (performance tracking), and Tactics (Code of Ordinances items).

PROPOSED FOREST HEALTH THRESHOLD STANDARDS (SUBSTANTIVE UPDATE)

Staff proposed a substantive update to modernize vegetation preservation standards related to forests, prioritizing wildfire resilience, forest restoration, and community protection.

The four new standards focus on two measurable categories:

- Forest Structure: Setting standards for seral stage & canopy cover as well as stand density to promote open, resilient forests.
- Fire Dynamics: Establishing standards for expected fire behavior, including maintaining conditions for safe, direct attack in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Defense Zone and limiting high-severity patches (>200 acres of high-hazard fire areas) to less than 5% in the General Forest/WUI Threat Zone.

Working Group Direction

- The Group directed staff to reframe the presentation for January APC/GB to center on wildfire risk reduction (supported by maps illustrating current risk levels) while describing forest health as the means to get there. Start with fire-related standards.
- The Group emphasized the need for an adaptive management approach. They directed staff to consider performance measures that reflect year-over-year progress and

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recommended using community- or watershed-scale reporting to visualize local progress.

- During the discussion on how to measure progress over long timescales, members stressed the need to connect day-to-day work to the overarching planning framework. The Group reinforced that project-level actions must be explicitly linked to long-term goals identified in forest health planning documents (e.g. Community Wildfire Protection Plan).
- The Group expressed concern that relying on existing forest type categories could be interpreted as promoting the persistence of shade-tolerant, fire-prone species in Sierra mixed conifer stands, and recommended that we be more explicit that management aims to favor fire-adapted species such as Jeffrey pine, even if we are not setting standards for forest type itself. Staff agreed and clarified that assessments follow the mapped forest type and will shift when that mapping changes.
- The Group discussed shifting from common to scientific names when formulating threshold standards for greater precision.
- The Group asked about how aspen stands, and high elevation pine species, specifically white bark pine, would be protected by the existing standards. The group suggested staff review existing protections and consider non-degradation standards for each. If a non-degradation standard is advanced, the Group emphasized that the standard should not be interpreted as limiting or discouraging active management and encouraged staff to clarify that appropriate treatments, including those needed to maintain resilience in the face of stressors, are consistent with its intent. The group also noted the importance of allowing emergency actions and other necessary management practices while preserving forest integrity.
- The Group requested that the review of protection for aspen stands and high elevation pine species move forward expeditiously.

NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

- The Group unanimously voted to move forward with the draft standards pending the review of protections for hardwood and white bark pine.
- Staff will conduct the requested review of protections for hardwood and white bark pine and circulate the results to the Group.
- Staff will provide additional context on how mapped forest type is defined, applied, and updated for target setting.

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- The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

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