
The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency cooperatively leads the effort to preserve, restore and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe region now and in the future.

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2006 THRESHOLD EVALUATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Environmental Threshold Categories for the Lake Tahoe Region

Water Quality – Reduce nutrient and sediment loads from surface runoff, groundwater, and atmosphere to meet 1960s level of algal productivity and water clarity.

Soil Conservation – Preserve natural stream environment zones (SEZ), restore 25% of disturbed SEZ (1100 acres), reduce total land coverage in Region.

Air Quality – Achieve strictest of federal, state, or regional standards for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulates; increase visibility; reduce U.S. 50 traffic; and reduce vehicle miles of travel.

Vegetation – Increase plant diversity in forests, preserve uncommon plant communities including deepwater plants, enhance late seral forests, and maintain minimum populations of sensitive plants including Tahoe Yellowcress.

Wildlife – Provide minimum population sites for special interest species, prevent degradation of habitats of special significance.

Fisheries – Maintain 180 miles of good to excellent stream habitat, achieve nearly 6,000 acres of excellent Lake habitat, and attempt to reintroduce Lahontan Cutthroat Trout.

Scenic Resources – Maintain or improve 1982 roadway and shoreline scenic travel route ratings, maintain or improve views of individual scenic resources, and maintain or improve quality of views from public outdoor recreation areas.

Noise – Minimize noise disturbance from single events, and minimize background noise disturbance in accordance with land use patterns.

Recreation – Preserve and enhance a high quality recreational experience including preservation of undeveloped shorezone and other natural areas, and maintain a fair share of recreational capacity for the general public.

INTRODUCTION

THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN'S EXTRAORDINARY MOUNTAIN BEAUTY is a national treasure. The Lake itself is one of the largest and deepest in the world and the startling clarity of the water has drawn people to its shores for centuries. However, over the last 40 years our enjoyment of this special place has caused changes in the ecosystem and created an altered watershed. In an effort to prevent continued and irreversible degradation, the states of California and Nevada created the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) in 1969 via a Bi-State Compact. The Compact was revised in 1980 and TRPA continues to operate today under its authority. The TRPA has set forth environmental standards known as thresholds to help protect Lake Tahoe for generations to come. These threshold categories include air and water quality, soil conservation, vegetation, noise, recreation, scenic resources, and fish and wildlife.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is a land use planning and regulatory entity charged with collaborating with local, state, and federal partners in the Tahoe Basin to work toward the achievement of environmental thresholds within the context of a regional plan and corresponding code of ordinances. TRPA recognizes the inter-connected nature of the environment, the economy and the community's social well being. By working at the regional level, TRPA's policies cross political boundaries and encompass the entire watershed.

The Bi-State Compact which created TRPA states "Maintenance of the social and economic health of the region depends on maintaining the significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural public health values provided by the Tahoe Basin. There is a public interest in protecting, preserving and enhancing these values for the residents of the region and for visitors to the region." The Compact also calls for the Agency to create a Regional Plan that establishes equilibrium between the natural environment and the human-made environment. TRPA is tasked with allowing opportunities for orderly growth and development consistent with environmental threshold carrying capacities.

The Governing Board of the TRPA adopted the Regional Plan currently in place in 1987 after years of controversy and community unrest. The Regional Plan is made up of several documents. The Goals and Policies provide the overall conditions that the Agency aims to achieve and the Code of Ordinances provides the management strategies to achieve them. TRPA has made tremendous strides toward achieving environmental standards over the last 20 years and is collaborating with partner agencies and the community on the update of the next long-range Regional Plan.

Threshold Evaluation

The environmental threshold carrying capacities and standards for the Lake Tahoe Basin essentially define the capacity of the Region to accommodate additional land development. In the current Regional Plan, 36 threshold indicators are used as the measures of success of the environmental health of the region. This evaluation report provides a five-year update on the status of these threshold indicators.

Beginning in 1991 and every five years thereafter, TRPA is required to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of whether each threshold is being achieved and/or maintained, and to make specific recommendations to address problem areas. The evaluation and recommendations help to direct general planning efforts for the subsequent five-year period. The scientific analysis that provides the basis for this evaluation report was conducted as part of the Pathway 2007/Regional Plan update process over the last several years. The Draft Pathway Evaluation Report was published in September 2005 and much of the information contained within this report is derived from the work of technical experts engaged in the Pathway process.

The information contained within the 2006 Threshold Evaluation:

- presents the Agency's threshold attainment findings
- makes analytical and corrective recommendations
- suggests the Agency's direction for the current Regional Plan
- lays the groundwork for adoption of the next 20-year plan in 2008

Assessment of threshold attainment occurs within the context of TRPA's overall planning strategy. At adoption of the thresholds in 1982, very few were in attainment or anticipated to reach attainment within a short time period; other thresholds were not anticipated to reach attainment for generations. For example, public and private entities have made substantial investment in water quality improvement projects over the last 20 years under the assumption that the benefits to lake clarity of those activities will not likely be seen for decades.

Most of the TRPA environmental thresholds (standards) will take more than our lifetimes to achieve and a sustained commitment is necessary. The key is to move in a positive direction toward





Patton Landing at Carnelian Bay. California Tahoe Conservancy public access and marsh restoration project.

attainment of the thresholds over time while allowing opportunities for orderly development to occur as environmentally protective measures are added for net gain.

The Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) is a critical component of the Regional Plan. The TRPA, along with 50 public and private organizations, joined together to form the EIP nearly 10 years ago to protect Tahoe's unique and valued resources and to make additional progress toward achieving environmental thresholds. The EIP is designed to help heal the environmental mistakes of the past. As an example, approximately 75 percent of the marshes and 50 percent of the meadows within the Tahoe Basin

were altered because of development prior to the adoption of TRPA's Regional Plan. The EIP addresses the past loss of the natural function of these important ecological assets with large-scale restoration projects. The 1997 Presidential Forum at Lake Tahoe gave EIP the jump start it needed to become a reality. President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and others convened here to focus efforts on protecting the lake for future generations. The resulting program encompasses a collaborative partnership of hundreds of environmental improvement projects, research, and program support in the Tahoe Basin, all designed to help restore Lake Tahoe's clarity and environment.

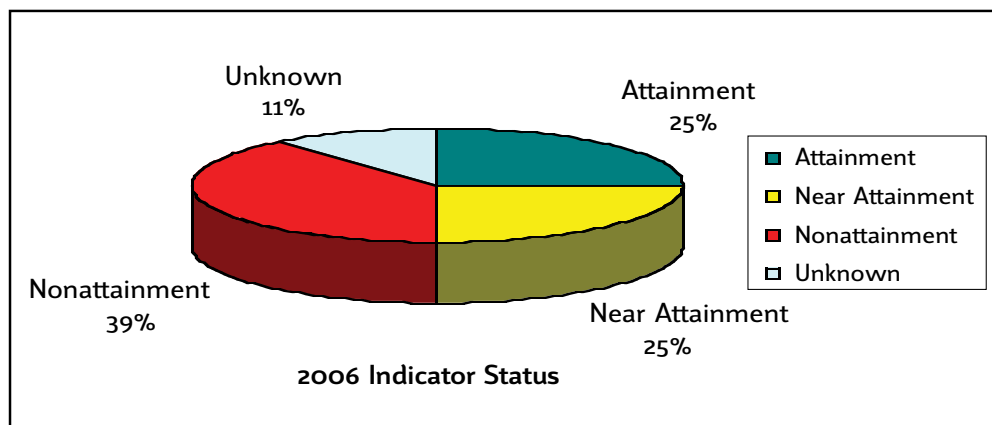


Figure 1. 2006 Threshold Indicator Status

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: POSITIVE TRENDS ARE DOCUMENTED

Twenty of the 36 threshold indicators and standards show a positive trend and three threshold indicators went from non-attainment to attainment. Twenty five percent of the indicators, or nine out of 36, are in attainment. Another nine indicators are close to attainment. The attainment status of four of the 36 indicators is unknown because of technology shifts in measurement criteria or an unavailability of data. Overall, positive changes in the Tahoe Basin have occurred when compared with the 1991, 1996 and 2001 Threshold Evaluations.

TRPA examines the thresholds using scientific evidence and technical information to determine if they are in need of amendment. This Threshold Evaluation Report identifies 31 of the indicators as being in need of re-evaluation and/or updating. Inter-agency teams are working on updated standards and indicators as part of the Pathway 2007 Regional Plan update to adapt indicators to be consistent with the proposed adaptive management strategy and the Tahoe Integrated Information Management System. Findings and recommendations for each threshold are briefly summarized in this document. While socioeconomics is not a threshold, TRPA reports trends in this area as part of the evaluation report.

Figure 2. Threshold Evaluation Comparisons

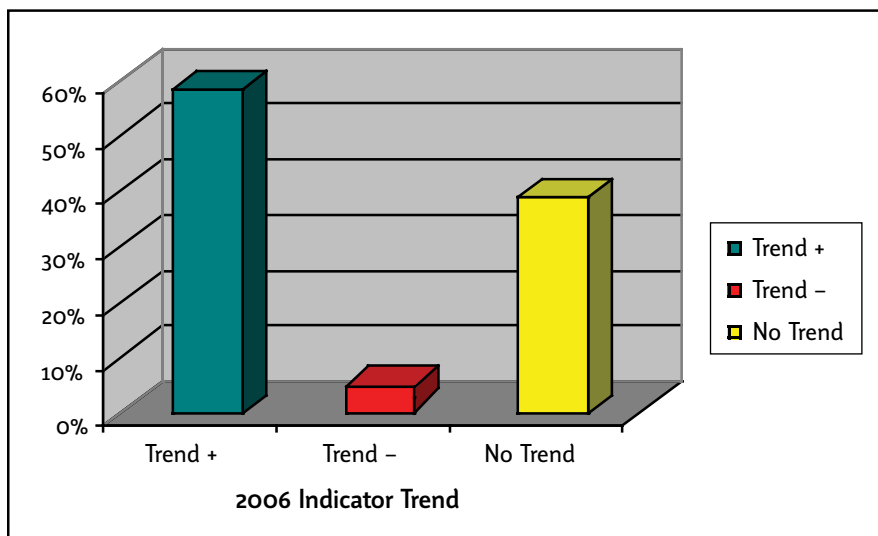
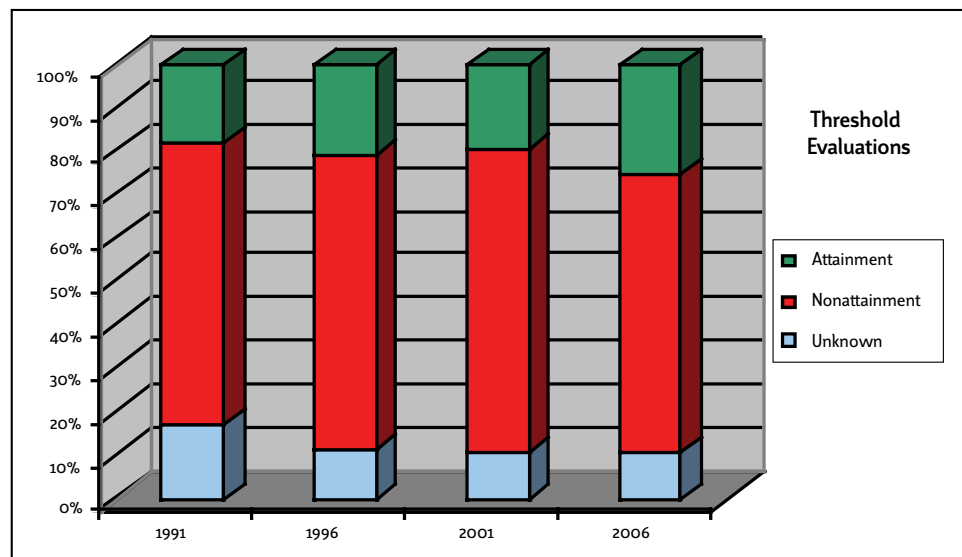


Figure 3. 2006 Trends

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD COMPLIANCE INDICATORS TREND

Positive Trend ↑ Negative Trend ↓ No Trend ≡

Threshold		Evaluations				Trend
		1991	1996	2001	2006	
I. AIR QUALITY						
AQ-1	CO	Nonattainment	Attainment	Attainment	Nonattainment	↑
AQ-2	O ₃	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
AQ-3	Particulate	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Attainment	Nonattainment	≡
AQ-4	Visibility	Attainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Attainment	↑
AQ-5	U.S. 50 Traffic Volume	Nonattainment	Attainment	Unknown	Attainment	↑
AQ-6	Wood Smoke	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Unknown	Unknown	≡
AQ-7	VMT	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
AQ-8	Atmospheric Nutrient Loading	Attainment	Attainment	Unknown	Unknown	≡
II. WATER QUALITY						
WQ-1	Turbidity (Shallow)	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	≡
WQ-2	Clarity, Winter	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↓
WQ-3	Phytoplankton PPr	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↓
WQ-4	Tributary Water Quality	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
WQ-5	Runoff Water Quality	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
WQ-6	Groundwater	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
WQ-7	Other Lakes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Nonattainment	≡
III. SOIL CONSERVATION						
SC-1	Impervious Coverage	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
SC-2	Naturally-Functioning SEZ	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
IV. VEGETATION						
V-1	Relative Abundance and Pattern	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
V-2	Uncommon Plant Communities	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	↑
V-3	Sensitive Vegetation	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Attainment	≡
V-4	Late Seral/Old Growth (New in 2001)			Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
V. FISHERIES						
F-1	Lake Habitat	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
F-2	Stream Habitat	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Unknown	↑
F-3	In-Stream Flows	Unknown	Unknown	Attainment	Attainment	≡
F-4	Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (New in 2001)			Attainment	Attainment	↑
VI. WILDLIFE						
W-1	Special Interest Species	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
W-2	Habitats of Special Significance	Attainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
VII. SCENIC						
SR-1	Travel Route Ratings	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
SR-2	Scenic Quality Ratings	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
SR-3	Public Recreation Area Scenic Quality Ratings	Unknown	Unknown	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
SR-4	Community Design	Unknown	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	↑
VIII. NOISE						
N-1	Single Event (Aircraft)	Unknown	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Unknown	≡
N-2	Single Event (Other)	Attainment	Attainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
N-3	Community Noise	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	≡
IX. RECREATION						
R-1	High Quality Recreational Experience & Access	Unknown	Unknown	Nonattainment	Attainment	↑
R-2	Capacity Available to the General Public	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	Attainment	↑

Indicates changes from 2001 to 2006

Threshold attainment explanation: A threshold indicator is in attainment if 100% of all indicator components are meeting standards. Near attainment represents 96% compliance. For example, under the Scenic Quality Ratings (SR-2) indicator, 364 of 386 resources are in attainment. However, because all 386 are not in attainment, the indicator is listed as in nonattainment.

AIR QUALITY

AIR QUALITY		Trend
AQ-1	CO	↑
AQ-2	O ₃	▬
AQ-3	Particulate	▬
AQ-4	Visibility	↑
AQ-5	U.S. 50 Traffic Volume	↑
AQ-6	Wood Smoke	▬
AQ-7	VMT	↑
AQ-8	Atmospheric Nutrient Loading	▬

OF THE EIGHT THRESHOLD INDICATORS under air quality and transportation, four have shown a positive trend over the last five years. The indicators for carbon monoxide, ozone, particulate matter and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), are in non-attainment while visibility and US Highway 50 traffic volume are in attainment. Carbon monoxide was in attainment for the last two years but not for the entire five-year period. The South Stateline area on the south shore is currently meeting the carbon monoxide standard.

Based on data provided by Air Resource Specialists (ARS) from 2002 through 2004, the Basin was shown to be in attainment for our regional and sub-regional visibility standards.

The indicators for wood smoke and atmospheric nutrient loadings are based on a 15 and 20 percent reduction respectively from their 1981 levels. However, because the 1981 or subsequent levels of these pollutants were never established and the methods necessary to measure these pollutants were not developed, the attainment status of these two indicators cannot be determined.

In the transportation area, traffic flow near Stateline, NV on the south shore has improved and the indicator is in attainment. Although the indicator for Vehicle Miles Traveled is out of attainment, the Basin is showing a positive trend with almost a five percent decrease in Vehicle Miles Traveled from the 1981 levels.

TRPA is recommending a new program involving all air quality agencies be established to ensure the resources are committed for a continuous and reliable air quality monitoring network. Because of factors beyond TRPA's control, air quality monitoring stations have been either relocated or removed from the Basin over the last five-year period creating data collection challenges.

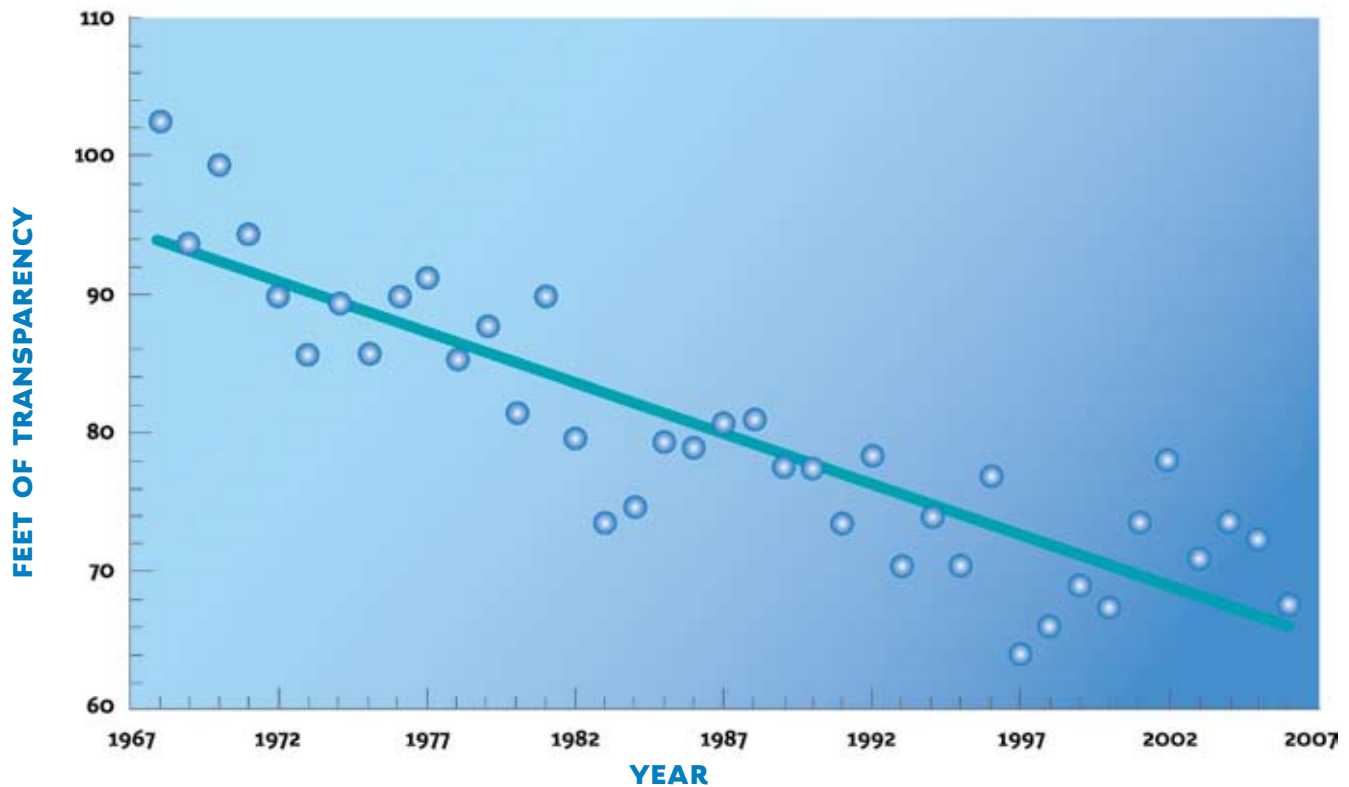
WATER QUALITY

WATER QUALITY		Trend
WQ-1	Turbidity (Shallow)	▬
WQ-2	Clarity, Winter	↓
WQ-3	Phytoplankton PPr	↓
WQ-4	Tributary Water Quality	↑
WQ-5	Runoff Water Quality	▬
WQ-6	Groundwater	▬
WQ-7	Other Lakes	▬

WHILE AGENCY OFFICIALS BELIEVE we're on the right track in our efforts to restore Lake clarity, the declining trend continues. One indicator of water quality is littoral turbidity, or the amount of suspended sediment along the shoreline. Littoral turbidity does attain threshold standards as in past evaluations, however, no trend can be established because of the frequency of sampling and concerns that the current standard is not a useful indicator of Lake Tahoe's nearshore water quality. There is a Pathway proposal to retain

the standards in the near term, but evaluate indicators such as turbidity and light transmission and continuous seasonal monitoring for proposed threshold changes after 2008. In the interim monitoring period, TRPA proposes to focus monitoring in the shallower nearshore areas rather than 25 meter monitoring sites used since the early 1990s.

The winter average Secchi depth (Lake clarity measurement) is in non-attainment, but Lake Tahoe Clarity Model scientific research indicates clarity goals can be achieved with significant pollutant loading reductions. Specifically, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) research suggests the proposed Annual Average Standard Secchi depth (29.7 meters) can be reached over the next 20-plus years if a variety of load reductions in fine particulates, nitrogen, and phosphorus can be met, especially in the urban areas around Lake Tahoe.



Data Source: Annual Secchi Disk Measurements, UC Davis, Tahoe Environmental Research Center.

In the time period of this evaluation, Phytoplankton Primary Productivity measured by the incorporation of carbon is out of attainment and continues to increase at nearly four times the standard. The standard was based on a different algal population dominance from the late 1960s that may not be attainable since the makeup of algal cells in the lake has changed over time.

Recommendations from 2001 remain valid for the deep-water thresholds. These include targeting projects/best management practices for removal of phosphorus and fine sediment and intensifying sweeping and maintenance of road rights-of-way to remove fine sediment. The load reduction targets to be developed through the Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), and the management strategies underway will further focus these efforts as part of the Pathway process.

The status of the interim targets for water quality EIP projects is near attainment. The EIP accomplishments reports and local jurisdiction EIP performance for allocations are the basis of this evaluation.

Interim targets for BMP retrofit implementation and revegetation set in the 2001 Evaluation have not been met although there have been considerable efforts on the part of BMP Retrofit Partners and most local jurisdictions. Washoe County on the Nevada side is close to 50% attainment for BMP retrofit targets and therefore should be used as an example for other communities in the basin.

Tributary water quality is not in attainment of the varying standards for each tributary; however, the new focus on TMDL reduction of fine particulates, nitrogen, and phosphorus from these tributaries and other sources will shift management of the water quality program away from these non-uniform concentration standards.

Stormwater runoff to both surface waters and groundwater met discharge standards for nitrogen, phosphorus, and suspended sediment concentration (surface) in the majority of sample data available. However, these two thresholds are still considered in non-attainment since some samples did not meet

discharge standards. Management of both of these storm water discharge thresholds needs to shift to TMDL based pollutant load reductions, including tracking and modeling these pollutant loads with the Watershed Model developed under the TMDL.

The five other lakes (Fallen Leaf, Upper and Lower Echo, Spooner, and Marlette Lakes) that were part of the early 1990s study were sampled during the ice-free seasons of 2002 and 2003. This threshold is in non-attainment based on some of the specific standards for Fallen Leaf Lake (e.g. Secchi depth) not meeting standards. There did not appear to be a significant decline in the water quality between the two monitoring periods for the other four lakes sampled.

SOIL CONSERVATION

SOIL CONSERVATION		Trend
SC-1	Impervious Coverage	↑
SC-2	Naturally-Functioning SEZ	↑

THERE HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS and an upward trend in the area of Soil Conservation. Impervious Coverage, which is referred to as coverage, is any human-made or human-modified surface such as roads, sidewalks, parking lots,

driveways, buildings, and dirt paths and parking areas. As a threshold, it is in non-attainment, although it may be better described as being in partial attainment for several reasons. The threshold is based on different percentages of allowable coverage set by the Bailey Land Classification System. All new projects since the 1987 Regional Plan was adopted are in attainment with Bailey standards. However, the majority of development in the Tahoe Basin occurred prior to the adoption of the current Regional Plan and some areas are dominated by excess coverage. This coverage is constantly being mitigated through Excess Coverage Mitigation Programs, which allow property owners to make financial contributions to water quality and EIP projects in their hydrologic area. The Excess Coverage Mitigation Program has been a success in most hydrologic areas, but a few areas where pre-1969 development has not been fully mitigated cause the Tahoe Basin to be out of attainment.

The threshold standard for Naturally Functioning Stream Environment Zones (SEZs) is not in attainment. However, the restoration of disturbed SEZs shows a positive trend. Progress is being made in restoration efforts through implementation of the EIP. The threshold standard is to restore 25 percent of the 4,400 acres of disturbed, developed, or subdivided stream environment zones which equates to 1,100 acres.

SEZ Restoration

- 2000-2004: Restored 43.05 acres of disturbed, developed, or subdivided SEZ.
- 1980-2004: Restored 378.9 acres.

*Threshold attainment projected for 2026:
Balance of 721.1 acres restored.*



VEGETATION

VEGETATION		Trend
V-1	Relative Abundance and Pattern	↑
V-2	Uncommon Plant Communities	↑
V-3	Sensitive Vegetation	☰
V-4	Late Seral/Old Growth	↑

THE VEGETATION THRESHOLD CATEGORY is showing a positive trend. The standards for species richness and pattern indicators continue to be maintained. However, the standard for the relative abundance indicator has not been met for any of the target vegetation types with the possible exception of yellow pine. The status

of the yellow pine vegetation type is in question because definition of the standard “seral stages other than mature” has not been defined for the threshold and is open to interpretation. The desired wetland types (meadows and deciduous riparian vegetation) are less abundant than the threshold standard and the abundance of shrub communities and mature red fir are greater than the desired condition. The Common Vegetation threshold is not in attainment.

The Uncommon Plant Communities threshold continues to be in attainment. The Sensitive Plants threshold was in attainment through 2005 but was not in attainment in 2006 as a result of the high lake level submerging Tahoe yellow cress populations. The late seral/old growth ecosystems threshold is in non-attainment because of the small amount of forest in late seral or old growth condition. This condition is directly attributable to the clear cutting of timber in the late 1800s for the mining operations in Virginia City, Nevada.

WILDLIFE

WILDLIFE		Trend
W-1	Special Interest Species	☰
W-2	Habitats of Special Significance	↑

DESPITE THE CONTINUED EFFORTS of cooperating agencies, overall threshold indicators for special status wildlife species are not in attainment with the threshold standards.

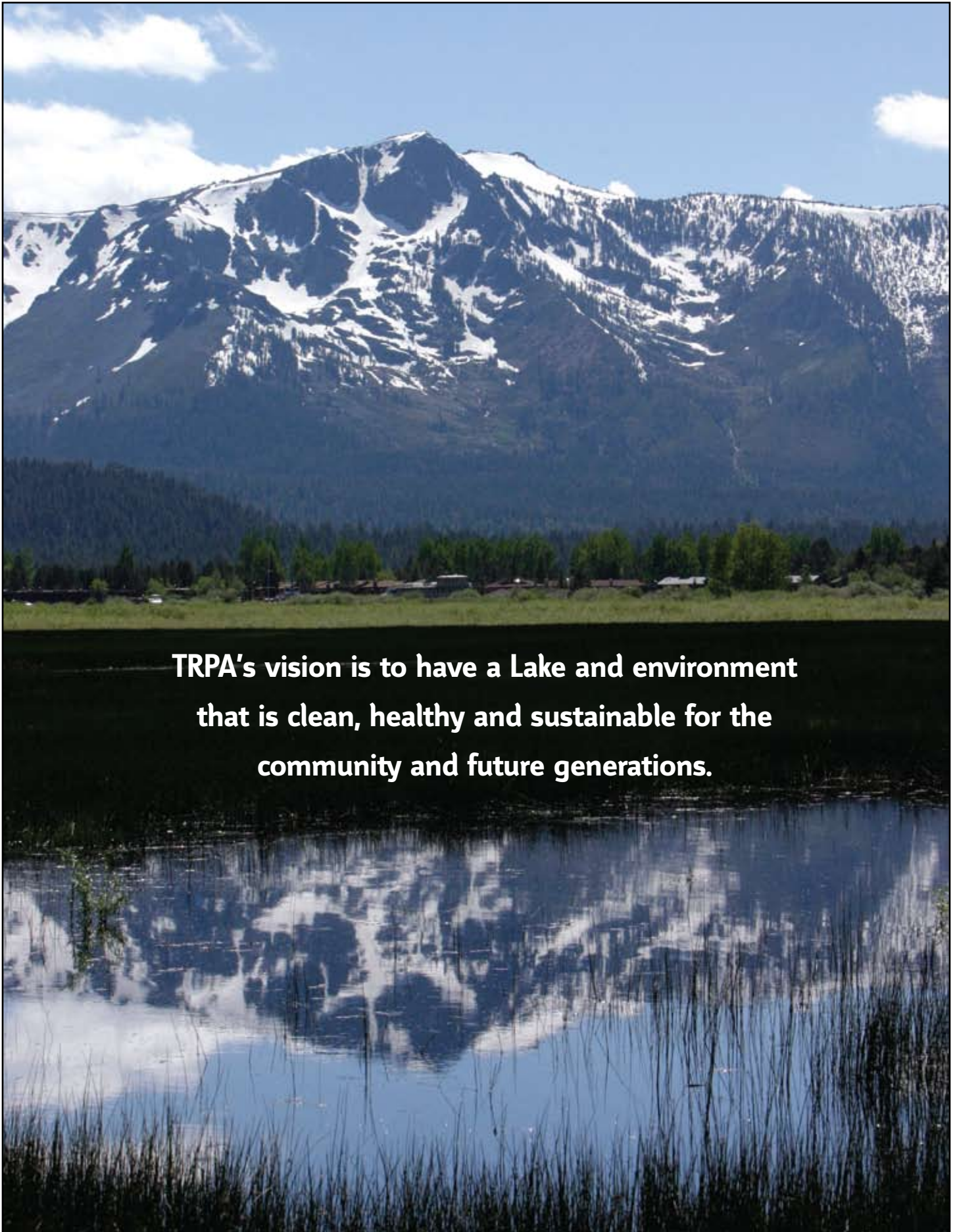
While the Northern Goshawk indicator is

near attainment and showing a positive trend, the region is in compliance with the standards for only one of the eight species: Osprey.

Though spatial and temporal buffers exist for these species to limit the impacts of recreation and development, local recreational activities many contribute to the degradation of habitats for Northern Goshawk, waterfowl, deer, and nesting and wintering Bald Eagles. For those species that migrate into the Lake Tahoe Basin, outside impacts may affect attainment of threshold standards.

The threshold standards adopted for Golden Eagle and Peregrine Falcon will not likely be realized due to sub-optimal habitat conditions found in the Lake Tahoe Basin (i.e., unlikely to nest over 4,000 ft above sea level).

Although considerable momentum was made toward the restoration of habitats of special significance (riparian habitats), restoration has not kept pace with identified interim targets and the adopted threshold standard.



**TRPA's vision is to have a Lake and environment
that is clean, healthy and sustainable for the
community and future generations.**

FISHERIES

FISHERIES		Trend
F-1	Lake Habitat	↑
F-2	Stream Habitat	↑
F-3	In-Stream Flows	≡
F-4	Lahontan Cutthroat Trout	↑

OF THE FOUR THRESHOLD STANDARDS for fisheries, three indicate a positive trend and the region is in compliance with two threshold standards: in-stream flow and Lahontan cutthroat trout. The status of one standard is unknown and one standard is out of attainment—lake fish habitat.

The quantity of Lake Tahoe’s fish habitat has not significantly changed since the 1996 threshold evaluation and falls short of attainment with the threshold standard. However, research suggests that the extent of physical disturbance is considerably less than that reported in the 1996 Threshold Evaluation. Therefore, the region is close to achieving the threshold standard for lake habitat although additional research is needed to verify this conclusion.

Although insufficient data exist to evaluate the stream habitat threshold, preliminary data from a small number of streams indicate that a majority of those habitats surveyed are in good to excellent ecological condition.

SCENIC RESOURCES

SCENIC		Trend
SR-1	Travel Route Ratings	↑
SR-2	Scenic Quality Ratings	↑
SR-3	Public Recreation Area Scenic Quality Ratings	↑
SR-4	Community Design	↑

OVERALL, THREE OF THE THRESHOLD standards for scenic resources are near attainment and one is in non-attainment. The 2001 Threshold Evaluation reported negative trends, however, in the last five years, all four threshold indicators

have shown positive trends. SR-1, Scenic Threshold Travel Route Ratings is still in non-attainment status; however, the trend within the travel routes continues to be positive in all areas of the Tahoe Basin with the most dramatic improvement occurring along the scenic roadway corridors within the urban core areas. Major redevelopment projects and improvements to the built environment through private investment have improved scenic quality in those areas. The trend in the shoreline units is positive at the parcel level as a result of the adoption of the Scenic Shoreland Ordinances following the 2001 Threshold Evaluation. However, a critical massing of projects has not been realized in individual shoreline units to directly result in scenic quality rating increases at the unit level.

Scenic Quality Ratings for individual resources visible from the travel routes (SR-2) and from public recreation areas and bicycle trails (SR-3) are near attainment. The trend of developing regionally appropriate designs visible from the travel routes is having a direct positive effect on the resources visible from the travel routes. Important improvements to recreation areas and bike trails have been funded since 2001, resulting in upgraded and new facilities available to the general public. Substantial investment



Tahoe City Commons Beach, EIP Project.

leading up to the 2006 Threshold Evaluation greatly improved the maintenance of many facilities and added needed new ones.

Field observations, site visits, and permit reviews were used to assess the 2001 condition relative to producing buildings compatible with the natural, scenic and recreational values of the region. Although a numerical standard to assess threshold attainment for community design does not exist, it is possible to draw conclusions from other numerical ratings. Overall, the contributions from the built environment toward attainment for travel route and scenic quality ratings have increased dramatically since the beginning with the last evaluation. Specifically, the quality of the built environment is being enhanced in most areas of the basin with the majority occurring within the urban/commercial centers. The goal of maintaining desired character cannot be attained because of the failure to specify desired community character in many communities. This threshold is not in attainment.

NOISE

NOISE		Trend
N-1	Single Event (Aircraft)	=
N-2	Single Event (Other)	=
N-3	Community Noise	=

THE STATUS OF THE INDICATOR for single event aircraft noise as measured at the South Lake Tahoe Airport is unknown because of a lack of sufficient monitoring equipment at the airport. However, it is unlikely that noise levels have significantly changed since the last reporting period.

Indicators for single event noises and community noise equivalent levels (CNEL) both exceeded the applicable standards; however, it should be noted that monitoring data for the reporting period are extremely limited, and this may affect the attainment status determination.

Many of the noise threshold standards and policies require additional clarification and/or minor adjustments. It is recommended that improved procedures and an ongoing noise-monitoring program for evaluating noise thresholds be developed as part of the Pathway 2007 Regional Plan update process.

RECREATION

RECREATION		Trend
R-1	High Quality Recreational Experience & Additional Access	↑
R-2	Capacity Available to the General Public	↑

BOTH INDICATORS OF THE RECREATION threshold are in attainment and show a positive trend. Based on user surveys completed

during the evaluation period, recreational expectations of visitors and residents are being met. This shows that the recreation experience component of R-1 is in attainment. The additional access component of R-1 has also seen positive improvement. Greater access to the lake and other natural features by the general public is being supported by public land acquisition programs and construction of additional trails and trailheads, including bicycle trail segments and their supporting amenities.

The recreation capacity indicator (R-2) is in attainment. This has been shown by land acquisitions, a cumulative evaluation of 'Persons At One Time' (PAOT) allocations, and development of recreation facilities that do not require PAOTs. PAOT allocations are used similarly to residential and tourist accommodation allocations to manage growth of recreation in the Region. Although few projects requiring additional PAOTs are being constructed, TRPA is reserving capacity with the PAOT allocations. Additionally, significant facility development for recreation projects that do not require PAOT assignments has occurred, and public land acquisition programs have resulted in key acquisitions of lands that support recreation purposes.

THRESHOLD EVALUATION RESULTS: NEXT STEPS

AS SUMMARIZED, TRPA CONCLUDES that although 20 of the 36 threshold indicators show a positive trend, the majority of thresholds remain out of full attainment and significant work remains to achieve the goals of the Compact. Recommendations identified in this evaluation call for reducing impacts associated with human activities, a comprehensive review of threshold standards and indicators within the context of new information, and an acceleration of EIP project implementation.

Intensify Implementation of the EIP

In the 1996 Threshold Evaluation, TRPA identified the EIP restoration effort as key to the long-term achievement and maintenance of thresholds. TRPA must ensure that the resources flowing into the Tahoe Basin for EIP implementation are efficiently and effectively utilized. TRPA must also continue to implement its adaptive management and real-time monitoring programs.

Plan for the Future

TRPA will use the recommended threshold updates as the platform to construct the new Regional Plan. The incorporation of recommended threshold updates into the Regional Plan will occur using a phased approach because additional research is required to update standards. Initial updates to thresholds in the first phase will be small, with broader changes anticipated in the second phase. Basic to this strategy is that TRPA and its partners will develop and implement the new Regional Plan Package including the needed institutional relationships, the adaptive management system, and the financing package for the EIP update.

The future holds great promise for the Tahoe Basin. TRPA and its many partners are making progress toward attaining the environmental thresholds but challenges lie ahead. A continued commitment to environmental improvements will be necessary to realize our vision for a healthy and sustainable Lake Tahoe Region. TRPA will be relying on cutting-edge science to guide policy decisions during the Regional Plan update process over the next year.

