

March 29, 2017

To: Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Staff and Governing Board

From: Tahoe Science Advisory Council (TSAC)

**RE: Comments on Threshold Assessment Methodology (version 1.3)**

On February 1, 2017 the Tahoe Science Advisory Council conveyed a memo to TRPA that summarized our comments and suggestions pertaining to the TRPA's proposed Threshold Standards Assessment Methodology, described in pages 14–21 of Chapter 13 in the 2015 Threshold Evaluation (TVAL) Report.

We were pleased to receive a draft update of the Assessment Methodology from TRPA on March 6<sup>th</sup> and welcomed the participation of TRPA staff in a discussion of this revised process at our TSAC meeting last week.

The opinion of Council members at that TSAC meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup> was that the revised Threshold Assessment Methodology v1.3 has incorporated our priority recommendations. We believe this version of the Methodology will adequately support the TRPA in their objective of comparing existing threshold standards against a “SMART” criteria formulation that helps to identify weaknesses and strengths in the current standards.

TSAC does suggest, however, adopting two additional recommendations to strengthen the process and its results.

1) During Standard Categorization it may be useful to identify associations among existing standards. Although this is intrinsically part of the categorization process, we suggest that explicitly linking or loosely bundling standards categorically to specified outcomes will inform the subsequent “SMART” assessment.

2) Our first memo identified the role of conceptual models as part of a broader and longer-term vision for the Threshold Update Initiative. We wish to emphasize, however, that early application of available conceptual models would likely inform the assessment process as well. Incidentally, this also relates to the first comment, which looks to identify associations among existing standards, and it should enhance communication among participants.

We understand that this version of the assessment methodology remains a working draft and that further updates and modifications to the process may occur over the next few months as you begin to work through this process with core stakeholders and other partners in the Tahoe Basin. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or issues that may arise as the assessment process proceeds.

Cc: Joanne Marchetta, Dan Segan, Julie Regan, James Lawrence, Todd Ferrara, Zachary Hymanson and Tahoe Science Advisory Council members.