

# 2020 QUARTERLY REPORT

---

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

Second Quarter: April – June 2020



TAHOE  
REGIONAL  
PLANNING  
AGENCY



*Photo: Jarvis Photography*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### TRPA STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Transportation .....	2
Forest Ecosystem Health.....	3
Tahoe Keys Weeds Management .....	5
Livable and Sustainable Communities .....	6

### ONGOING INITIATIVES AND ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

Long Range & Transportation Planning Division .....	6
Current Planning Division .....	8
Environmental Improvement Program Division .....	9
Research & Analysis Division .....	11
Executive .....	12
External Affairs .....	13
Finance, Information Technology, & Facilities .....	17
Human Resources .....	17



## TRPA STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

---

TRPA is moving forward with strategic initiatives the Governing Board identified as major priorities for the agency. These initiatives align directly with the four objectives in the agency's Strategic Plan.

### TRANSPORTATION

#### **Bi-State Transportation Consultation**

With both California and Nevada Executive Orders calling for reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, the states are emphasizing the importance of transportation system improvements in Tahoe. During the second quarter the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation, led by California and Nevada officials, convened a planning committee for seven meetings. The Committee members identified regionally significant transit enhancements and transportation projects -- the State Route 89 Corridor Plan, U.S. Highway 50 Community Revitalization, State Route 28 Corridor Plan, and the Placer County Resort Triangle Bus Lane -- as priorities for funding and implementation to advance state policies over the next three to five years. The goals of the consultation include development of funding strategies that have bi-state and regional support to fund the identified priorities. The work of the Bi-State Consultation is being incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan Update.

#### **Regional Transportation Plan Outreach**

Tahoe's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is due to be updated again by the end of 2020 and will emphasize improvements to transit, technology, and equity of access to further reduce reliance on the auto and greenhouse gas emissions. This quarter, TRPA concentrated on public outreach and input. A five-week webinar series highlighted the plan updates and projects that could transform the transportation system at Lake Tahoe with webinar topics on transit, trails, technology, communities, and innovative transportation solutions. The webinar platform, necessary during the COVID stay-at-home orders, reached 483 participants and the video recordings cumulatively have over 2,300 views.

More information on the RTP update, including additional opportunities for public input on the draft plan and links to the webinars, can be found at:

<https://trpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=f98e7a6e3d7f4374bf06e4683de4cd90&entry=3>

#### **State Route 89 Corridor Plan**

The State Route 89 transportation corridor includes some of the most heavily visited recreation destinations in Tahoe, including Emerald Bay and the south shore beaches. During this quarter, the State Route 89 Corridor Plan team completed the travel options analysis, developed a preferred framework for the plan, and completed the administrative draft of the plan. Key features of the plan will include enhanced transit access to recreation sites, removal of on roadway parking to improve safety and reduce congestion, and improved parking management. The final project team, stakeholder group, and public

webinars will take place in quarter three with Governing Board consideration of the final plan in September.

### **Tahoe Bike Challenge**

The success of the Region's multi-modal transportation system depends on recruiting new users to choose access without a car. The TRPA-sponsored Bike Challenge is an annual opportunity to change travel behavior in the Tahoe Region. The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Tahoe Bike Challenge took place June 1 to 30, an expansion of the previous two-week challenge held the last 14 years. Throughout the month-long challenge, 300 people participated, riding 45,442 miles, and saving an estimated 1,854 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere. Leaders in ten different categories including overall team, top encourager, top commuter, most trips, top male and female riders, top new rider, most rides with kids, and top overall rider, were awarded prizes donated by or purchased from local businesses.



Due to school closures in June and in place of the traditional bike and walk to school week, TRPA staff worked with the South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition, the South Tahoe High School Climate Crew, and the California Highway Patrol to develop a series of "Safe Routes to School" videos to educate students on the health and environmental benefits of biking and walking. The video series also included safety tips and tricks for biking around town.

## **FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH**

### **Lake Tahoe West Forest and Watershed Health Restoration Partnership**

The West Shore landscape, 60,000 acres of over dense second growth forest, is vulnerable to high-severity wildfire, drought, climate change, and forest insect and disease outbreaks. The Lake Tahoe West Restoration Project will use forest thinning, prescribed burning, reforestation, and habitat restoration of forests, meadows, streams, and wildlife habitat to improve the landscape's resilience to future disturbances.

The Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership released the Scoping Notice and Notice of Preparation for a joint environmental analysis between TRPA, the California Tahoe Conservancy, and the USDA Forest Service in April. The group held two public scoping meetings and has begun public comment analysis to identify key areas of concern to consider in the draft environmental document. The Partnership will continue to engage stakeholders around pertinent issues and environmental document preparation.

Additionally, the Partnership held a "lessons learned" webinar offering recommendations to other large landscape collaborative groups and is developing a white paper and peer-reviewed journal article on the power of collaboration.

## Code of Ordinance Changes in Support of Vegetation Protection and Management Provisions

With the severity of fires growing season over season, forest management and fire agencies at every level of government have been looking hard at the efficiency of forest practice rules and regulations. TRPA too has been streamlining, removing redundancy, and adding best practices to its forest practices Code for Tahoe. This quarter staff worked collaboratively with the regulations working group of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team on amendments to Chapter 61.3. Vegetation Protection and Management. In May 2020, staff presented proposed amendments to Chapter 61.3. to the Governing Board Forest Health and Wildfire Committee for discussion and direction. Staff will bring proposed Chapter 61.3. code language back to the committee in July 2020 for approval and recommendation to the full Governing Board.

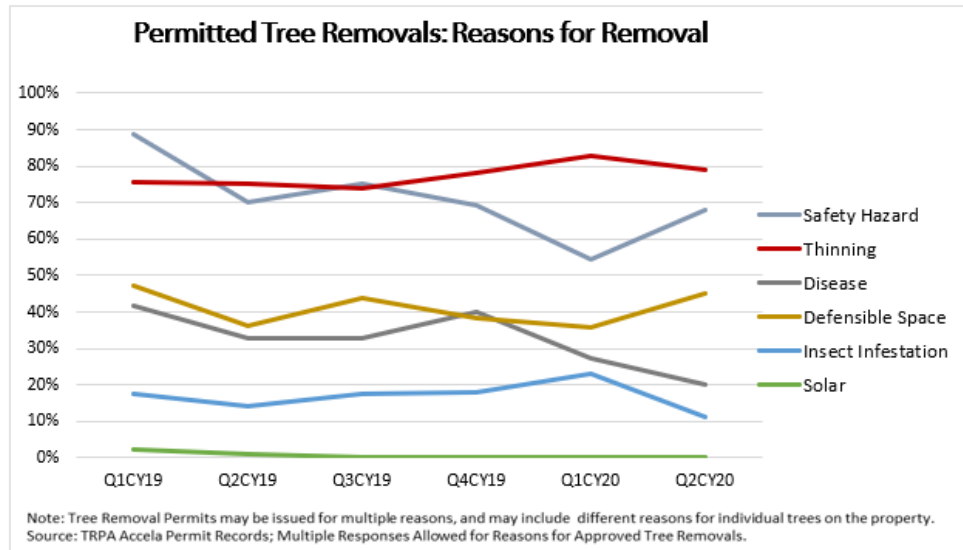
## Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Federal Advisory Committee

Dr. Kat McIntyre, TRPA's Forest Ecosystem Health Program Manager, was appointed this quarter to serve on the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) Federal Advisory Committee. Congress created the committee in 2009 to support large-scale forest restoration and benefit local communities through collaborative approaches. CFLRP has proven to be an effective tool for improving forest conditions, growing rural economies, and leveraging partner investments to improve the quality and scale of forest health work. Congress reauthorized CFLRP in the 2018 Farm Bill, doubling the authorized funding level to \$80 million per year and creating the opportunity for new CFLRP projects. Appointees met virtually in June 2020 to review project proposals and to recommend projects across the United States for investment. TRPA will continue to engage with the CFLRP Federal Advisory Committee to identify recommendations for future project proposals and program implementation.

## Urban Forestry/Tree Removal Permits on Private Property

TRPA's forester, Bruce Barr, is part of the network of forestry and fire professionals in the Tahoe Basin who help private landowners keep their property safe and defensible from wildfire. He provides expertise in tree risk assessment and serves Tahoe's private property owners with thorough tree evaluations. In the second quarter of 2020, TRPA received 485 tree removal applications, a record high number for a quarter and nearly all were submitted electronically, a new milestone for online applications. TRPA permitted the removal of more than 2,000 individual trees during the second quarter and almost 80 percent were permitted for removal for thinning. Trees removed for disease continue to trend down over the past five quarters, with only 20 percent of trees permitted for removal this quarter because of disease.

Summary of TRPA Tree Removal Applications & Permitting Activity Quarter 1 2019 through Quarter 1 2020					
	Q2 CY2019	Q3 CY2019	Q4 CY2019	Q1 CY2020	Q2 CY2020
Tree Removal Applications Received	340	439	188	103	485
Number of Trees Permitted for Removal	1,358	1,611	801	466	2,018
Percent Applications Submitted Online	77%	80%	83%	82%	94%
Source: TRPA Accela Permit Records					



## TAHOE KEYS WEED MANAGEMENT

### Stakeholder Process and Environmental Documentation

Aquatic weeds in the Tahoe Keys lagoons are the highest priority aquatic invasive species control threat in the Tahoe Region. In response to the need to control and prevent the spread of the abundant growth of non-native and nuisance aquatic weeds, the Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association worked with agencies and key stakeholders to develop the Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weeds Control Methods Test. The Control Methods Test will evaluate a range of aquatic weed control methods independently and in combination in the Tahoe Keys Lagoons. The environmental consultant completing the impact analyses finalized the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement for release in early July, reaching a significant milestone in the project schedule.

Multiple virtual workshops/presentations will be held during the draft document comment period from July 6, 2020 through September 3, 2020 to ensure the public has ample opportunity to provide input on the analysis. A public hearing on the draft document is scheduled for the July Governing Board meeting.

## LIVABLE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

### New Workforce Housing Site Added to Tourist Core Area Plan

The lack of housing affordable for local workforce residents impairs the implementation of the Regional Plan. In March and April of 2020, the City of South Lake Tahoe City Council and the TRPA Governing Board approved an amendment to the Tourist Core Area Plan allowing for the additional height, coverage, and density needed to build a new workforce housing project that may serve as mitigation for the U.S. Highway 50 Community Revitalization Project. The project is envisioned to include approximately 79 units of one, two, and three-bedroom units for households that meet California and TRPA's definition of "affordable" housing, and will be located at the corner of Pioneer Trail and Ski Run Boulevard. The parcels which were the subject of the amendment are centrally located and on a major year-round transit line, as well as a winter transit line, and are within walking distance of the services,

shopping, and other amenities on Ski Run Boulevard. They will also be adjacent to planned streetscape improvements on Pioneer Trail within the next two years from Larch to Ski Run Boulevard.

In May, the developer and owner of the parcels, Pacific Development Group, held an online community meeting to gather input and answer questions about the project. Pacific Development Group has been involved in the development and on-going operations of other affordable and workforce housing projects in South



*Conceptual front perspective of proposed workforce housing project at Ski Run Boulevard and Pioneer Trail. Source: Pacific Development Group.*

Lake Tahoe, including Sierra Garden Apartments and Evergreen Apartments. The recording of the community meeting may be found here: <https://vinmeo.com/435865476>.

## ONGOING INITIATIVES AND ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

---

### LONG RANGE & TRANSPORTATION PLANNING DIVISION

#### Meeks Bay Restoration Project

In 2018, the USDA Forest Service, Washoe Tribe, Lahontan Water Board, and Meeks Bay Marina agreed to shut down the marina site due to ongoing environmental problems. With funding from the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, TRPA, in partnership with the USDA Forest Service and a consultant team, completed the first phase of public outreach for the Meeks Bay Restoration Project this quarter. The project team completed a stakeholder assessment and stakeholder engagement strategy to identify concerns about the project and to gather input on alternatives for restoration and redevelopment of the site. Key takeaways from the assessment included overall support of stream restoration, but with concerns that development of a pier and boat ramp could affect the tranquil character of Meeks Bay. Some interviewees also expressed a desire to retain the existing marina for motorized boating access.

Based on input from the scoping comments and the stakeholder assessment, the project team established a stakeholder collaborative forum, which will be facilitated by Consensus Building Institute, an independent third-party public engagement firm. The stakeholder group is comprised of members of the local Meeks Bay property owners' associations, the Washoe Tribe, and community organizations. The stakeholder forum meetings will be held monthly throughout the planning and environmental review process and will be open to the public. The first public workshop is scheduled for this summer to further gain input on strategies and design alternatives that will achieve project goals while preserving the Meeks



Bay recreation experience for a range of users. TRPA anticipates that draft alternatives for the environmental analysis will be completed by fall 2020.

### **Washoe County Tahoe Area Plan**

Washoe County is in process of conforming its plans for all areas of the County within Tahoe's regional boundary to be consistent with Tahoe's Regional Plan and Code. In February 2020, the Washoe County Planning Commission recommended approval of the Washoe County Area Plan based on the January 2020 draft. The County Commissioners



*A screen shot of the Washoe County Area Plan story map webpage.*

completed the first reading of the implementing ordinance, with a few slight modifications, in March. The second reading of the ordinance has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but completion is anticipated when the county is able to resume in-person public hearings. The March 2020 draft of the area plan is the latest version.

Following the county's final action on the area plan in coming months, the TRPA Governing Board will review and consider the plan for approval. This area plan would be the first in Washoe County and help to advance the goals and policies of the Regional Plan and advance threshold attainment.

For the latest information, interested parties can view the Washoe County Tahoe Area Plan story map webpage at this address:

<https://trpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=8b48e824e888427994ace0051b04dd6f>

### **Sustainable Recreation Working Group – COVID-19 Response**

Since the first COVID-19 pandemic stay-at-home orders in March, Tahoe has been seeing intense visitation and use by those who simply want to get outdoors and away from dense urban environments. This trend brought early season pressures to recreation site land managers who had to navigate quickly the new world of closure orders, new hygiene and operating protocols, and now the phased sequence of re-opening that may or may not be uniform across all jurisdictions. The Sustainable Recreation Working Group mobilized in early March to address challenges related to recreation site management and public land access under new COVID health and safety protocols. The working group established an incident command structure within the Tahoe Interagency Executive Steering Committee and meets twice weekly to discuss ongoing challenges and coordinate with agency public information officers for public messaging. This group has been successful in elevating key issues quickly for solution and coordinating consistent public messaging. The working group will continue to meet through summer as needed. The rapid response of the recreation group underscores the value of collaboration and partnerships in the Region.



## CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION

### Permit Application Review

The number of permit applications submitted this quarter was in line with the number submitted during the same period a year ago although both commercial and verification applications are down from the first quarter. COVID-19 closures accelerated the development and availability of on-line application submittals, and more than 67 percent of applications during the second quarter were submitted electronically, up from only 25 percent electronically submitted during the first quarter of 2020.

Summary of TRPA Project Applications Received Quarter 1 2019 through Quarter 1 2020					
	Q2 CY2019	Q3 CY2019	Q4 CY2019	Q1 CY2020	Q2 CY2020
<b>Applications Received<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>230</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>234</b>
Residential Projects <sup>2</sup>	57	68	26	41	64
Commercial Projects <sup>2</sup>	6	4	3	4	0
Recreation/Public Service Projects <sup>2</sup>	12	6	7	9	4
Environmental Improvement Construction Projects	4	3	1	1	1
Shorezone/Lakezone Projects <sup>2</sup>	9	10	15	17	10
Grading Projects	10	11	7	8	11
Verifications and Banking <sup>3</sup>	99	121	126	95	64
Buoys	0	3	26	38	48
Transfers of Development	10	6	3	9	7
Other <sup>4</sup>	23	40	22	22	25
<b>Notes:</b> (Data is sourced from TRPA Accela Permit Records)					
1 Does not include Exempt projects, Qualified Exempt declarations, Tree Removal applications, or Administrative applications					
2 Includes New Development and Additions/Modification					
3 Includes Soils/Hydrology Verifications, IPES, Land Capability Verifications, Land Capability Challenges, Verifications of Coverage, Verifications of Uses, Site Assessments and Standalone Banking Applications					
4 Includes Historic determinations, Lot Line Adjustments, Temporary projects, Scenic, Underground Tank Removal, Subdivision of Existing Uses, Sign, Allocation Assignments, and other miscellaneous project types					

### Hearings Officer Meetings

The Hearings Officer approved six project applications this quarter, including:

- Upgrades and replacement of undersized electrical equipment at a single-family residence in Incline Village, NV
- An addition to a single-family residence in the Al Tahoe-Harrison Tract Historic District
- Repairs to an existing bulkhead within the Tahoe Keys subdivision
- Foundation repair and a shoreline protective structure for an existing single-family lakefront residence in Kings Beach, CA
- Two land capability challenges

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DIVISION

### Stormwater Management Program

**Best Management Practices (BMP) Certificates Issued:** TRPA in partnership with the states and federal government establishes the water quality programs for the Region and looks to implementers in every sector to carry out those programs. The Stormwater Management Program at TRPA targets priority properties for BMP compliance in coordination with local jurisdictions to achieve required pollutant load reductions for the benefit of water quality. TRPA itself issues best management practices (BMP) certificates to private property owners to recognize a parcel's compliance with stormwater management requirements in TRPA's Code of Ordinances. Concentrating BMP compliance on commercial and large multi-family (six units or more) properties reduces more pollutant load compared to single-family residential properties. This quarter, TRPA issued 85 BMP certificates: 75 for single-family residential parcels, seven for multi-family residential parcels, and three for commercial parcels. Of the total, 23 are source control certificates. Cumulative year-to-date BMP certificates issued are shown in the table below:

BMP Certificates issued from January 1 to June 30, 2020					
California	Land Use	Total Certificates Issued Year to Date	Certificates Issued Through Permitted Projects	Certificates Issued Through Voluntary Compliance	Certificates Issued Through Enforced Compliance
	Single Family Residential	57	41	16	0
	Multi-Family Residential	1	1	0	0
	Commercial	4	2	1	1
	<b>California Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>
Nevada	Single Family Residential	36	21	11	4
	Multi-Family Residential	6	0	2	4
	Commercial	1	1	0	0
	<b>Nevada Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>Total Certificates Issued</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>

**Reissued Certificates:** During this quarter, TRPA re-issued 68 BMP certificates (16 for single-family residential parcels, 32 for multi-family residential parcels, and 20 for commercial parcels). These certificates were reissued to these properties following a verification of BMP maintenance and effectiveness.

***Program Funding:*** During the second quarter TRPA contracted with the USDA Forest Service to receive Lake Tahoe Restoration Act watershed funding and initiated the Ski Run “Mountain to Marina” Green Infrastructure Project. The multiple benefit watershed planning project focuses on regional stormwater treatment, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, parking, enhanced recreational access, fuels reduction, and wildlife enhancement within the greater Bijou Park Creek watershed in South Lake Tahoe, California.

***Education and Outreach:***

- **Lake-Friendly Business:** As of the end of June 2020, 161 Tahoe businesses (88 in California and 73 in Nevada) are participating as members of the Lake-Friendly Business Program. No new businesses were added during this quarter.
- **Shoreline BMP Handbook Update:** This quarter, TRPA stormwater staff prepared BMP factsheets for exempt and qualified exempt activities approved under TRPA’s adopted Shoreline Plan that do not require inspections. Factsheets when finalized will provide pertinent information directly to the applicant on measures necessary to protect the Lake from sediment pollution as well as address other considerations, including but not limited to, Tahoe Yellow Cress, shoreline tolerance districts, and TRPA scenic requirements.

**Aquatic Invasive Species Program**

***Prevention:*** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, launch facilities were closed and boat inspections were suspended in March. TRPA worked closely with marina partners, and state and local officials on a phased opening of the boating season. Launch facilities began launching “Tahoe Only” boats with an intact inspection seal at the end of May with all launch facilities open by early June.

In June, boat inspections began for Tahoe resident boaters while travel restrictions were still in place. Inspection stations opened to visiting boaters in July. The program partners are reminding the public that delays are likely due to enhanced protocols to ensure the safety of the staff and public. An appointment system for boat inspections is being implemented to account for the limited availability of inspectors and supporting staff during current circumstances surrounding the pandemic.

***Control:*** TRPA and program partners are building a five-year work plan and budget for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) control projects identified in the AIS Control Action Agenda. Locations include Ski Run, Taylor and Tallac Creeks, and the Tahoe Keys.

Testing of the ultraviolet light technology for weed control is continuing with a new vessel that has increased capacity and improved conditions for operating the vessel and equipment.

## RESEARCH & ANALYSIS DIVISION

### Online Permit Applications

TRPA had been slowly transitioning to online permit application submittals through the agency's permitting software, Accela. In response to the office closure in mid-March due to the COVID-19 stay-at-home directives from both the California and Nevada governors, Research and Analysis Division staff accelerated the deployment of additional online permit applications. The agency went from eight online applications to 30 by the end of the June, drastically increasing efficiency and ease of public access to TRPA permit services.

### Parcel Tracker Updates

The Lake Tahoe Info Parcel Tracker (<https://parcels.laketahoeinfo.org/>) is the best source of detailed public information about the land use characteristics of properties in the Lake Tahoe Basin. TRPA staff reviewed and updated information on 764 parcels in the tracker during the quarter, almost double the number of parcels updated during the same quarter in 2019. TRPA responded to 53 unique requests from property owners, real estate agents, and local government partners for updated permitting information on parcels. The number of help requests submitted through the Parcel Tracker and parcels updated is up due in large measure to knowledge of the site's property information becoming more widespread and because TRPA is scanning paper files and updating information for the public while the office is operating virtually.

### Geographic Information Systems Updates

TRPA's operating goal is to be the regional best source of GIS information and service. During this quarter staff made several updates to the agency's geographic information systems. Specifically,

- Updated both hardware and software for GIS servers and databases. Configured a new SQL server and migrated all spatial databases. Built out a new 'ArcGIS for Server' server and configured a new portal. Services and related websites are now responding and drawing much faster.
- Provided Story Map design and service publishing support to staff to create websites for the Regional Transportation Plan, Tahoe Keys, recreation, and Meeks Bay Restoration project.
- Added Lake Tahoe West spatial datasets to Tahoe Open Data.
- Completed the maps for the Lake Tahoe West scoping document and updated the Lake Tahoe West web map <https://gis.trpa.org/LakeTahoeWest> with data related to the proposed action of the project.
- Developed new data integrations between Lake Tahoe Info and TRPA's Enterprise GIS, which allows staff to analyze and display development rights data.
- Deployed field data collection surveys for SEZ meadow/riverine areas, streambank erosion, channel incision, stream headcuts, invasive species, osprey, peregrine falcons, noise monitoring, and stream bioassessment.
- Supported the Accela upgrade through GIS updates.

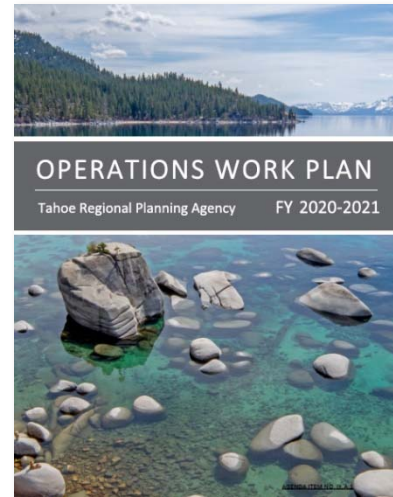


- Completed Conifer Encroachment Analysis for SEZ Initiatives. Updated the Tahoe SEZ Viewer Application to use LiDAR derived tree data and field delineated historic meadow extents to assess the degree of encroachment. Staff is now able to use the 2018 LiDAR derived tree data (and future LiDAR collections) to track temporal change <https://gis.trpa.org/TahoeSEZViewer>.

## EXECUTIVE

In May, the TRPA Governing Board accepted the TRPA 2020/2021 Operations Work Plan which includes strategic priorities for the agency. The six strategic priorities include:

1. **Building Resiliency:** Climate Change and Sustainability – This initiative builds upon the 2014 national award-winning Lake Tahoe Sustainability Action Plan that addressed greenhouse gas reduction. It includes a new inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, reflects new policy direction, and covers climate change adaptation and resiliency. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation will be an initial focal point of this initiative.
2. **Keeping Tahoe Moving:** Transportation and Sustainable Recreation – This initiative includes an update of the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy which encompasses greenhouse gas reduction, the Bi-State Consultation on Transportation Action Plan, Sustainable Recreation Planning, and ongoing transportation corridor planning.
3. **Tahoe Living:** Housing and Community Revitalization – This initiative addresses strategies for implementing affordable and “achievable” workforce housing as a key component of the Region’s communities, the TRPA Regional Plan, the housing needs identified in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation.
4. **Restoration Blueprint:** Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) – This initiative includes implementing transportation and community revitalization projects of regional significance, seeking additional funding sources for the EIP, creating forest health implementation tools based on the results from the Lake Tahoe West landscape-scale restoration project, implementing the Aquatic Invasive Species Control Action Plan Agenda, and focusing on areawide stormwater management projects with multiple benefits. EIP restoration programs will be responsive to climate adaptation and resilience measures as they are developed under the Climate Change and Sustainability Initiative.
5. **Measuring What Matters:** Thresholds and Monitoring Update – Using the new, recently approved framework based on science, results, and outcomes, this initiative has prioritized in the near-term updating measures for water quality, transportation, recreation, and stream environment zones.



6. **Digital First:** Innovation Initiative – This initiative will continue TRPA’s transition to digital operations and covers information storage, user applications, transactions between users and TRPA, and internal applications.

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

TRPA supports a culture committed to public education, outreach, and community engagement to implement the Regional Plan. The External Affairs team leads public engagement initiatives in collaboration with a variety of agency and nonprofit stakeholders. This quarter, TRPA continued ongoing virtual education and outreach in the Lake Tahoe Region to raise awareness about Lake Tahoe’s issues and improve public understanding of TRPA’s role and the EIP multi-sector collaborative partnership, particularly amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

### Legislative Affairs

The second quarter saw an extraordinary amount of legislative activity given the COVID crisis. External Affairs tracked all relevant federal, state, and local legislative initiatives spawned by COVID with a keen eye toward funding opportunities for TRPA and basin partner organizations. Some of the legislation the team followed includes the federal CARES Act, California bond act developments, bi-state budget bills, the federal Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), and the federal transportation Moving Forward Act, among others. New provisions included in the WRDA bill could bring new funding to Lake Tahoe through the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The team also engaged with the Tahoe Partnership to support Lake Tahoe Restoration Act funding for the Lake Tahoe Basin in federal fiscal year 2021 appropriations. In addition, the team supported the California Tahoe Alliance’s advocacy in Sacramento for Tahoe funding and infrastructure stimulus opportunities.

### Future of Tourism

TRPA made international news as a signatory on the new Future of Tourism coalition, calling on tourism agencies and travel companies to commit to responsible tourism in the wake of COVID-19. TRPA participates in leading national and international networks to glean and contribute to best practices. This network is directly relevant to TRPA’s Sustainable Recreation Initiative.



### Tahoe In Depth and the Agency’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

TRPA published a special issue of Tahoe In Depth in June 2020, commemorating the agency’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The issue covers many of the agency’s historic wins, and some of the people behind them, over the course of a half-century of work to protect one of America’s national treasures. Now in its eighth year, the award-winning environmental newspaper provides residents, visitors, and policymakers with information about protecting, enjoying, and exploring the Lake Tahoe Basin.

## **Public Outreach**

The External Affairs team supported outreach and public open houses on the Bi-State Transportation Planning Committee, Tahoe Bike Challenge, Meeks Bay Restoration Project, and stakeholder and consultation meetings on proposed test methods for fighting weeds in the Tahoe Keys lagoons.

In April, staff organized a special webinar for Lake Tahoe realtors and consultants to learn more and ask questions about land coverage and development rights. Over 160 people attended the webinar, and staff are currently creating short follow-up videos for social media to address common questions. External Affairs also supported the transportation team in their Regional Transportation Plan webinar series with advertisements, moderating live social media comments, and sharing the recordings following the presentation.

## **Regional Public Information Partnerships**

TRPA convened basin partners for consistent regional communication about outdoor recreation issues and COVID-19 pandemic response. In response to early season regional recreation pressure and varying COVID-19 management practices, the TRPA External Affairs team organized and leads the public information officer (PIO) working group. The PIOs group is a communications companion to the work of the TIE Sustainable Recreation Working Group that TRPA convened to discuss COVID-19 protocols, closures, restrictions, and more in March. Similarly, the PIOs group convenes weekly, and has since the beginning of May, to ensure regional public information and messages are consistent, coordinated, and shared. There are about 25 members in the group including statewide leaders, private industry, destination marketers, and public recreation representatives.

## **Aquatic Invasive Species and Boating Outreach**

Through April and early May 2020, TRPA's External Affairs team provided critical communications counsel and devised the phased boating approach for inspections in conjunction with local government representatives, public health officials, public and private boating facilities operators, and representatives from California and Nevada.

TRPA continues to educate boaters and paddlers on the Clean, Drain, and Dry messaging by using billboards, rack cards, print and online advertising, social media, and TV spots. The campaign is working – boaters are arriving aware of the program, reaching out to TRPA and the Tahoe Resource Conservation District for inspection information, and are supportive of boat inspections.

## **Take Care Tahoe**

Take Care partners have quickly adapted messaging to the COVID-19 crisis to become the go-to source for disseminating the rapidly changing stewardship guidelines related to recreating in Lake Tahoe. They have shared new creative content blending the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Sustainable Recreation Committee's recommendations to the public using the established characters and Tahoe-specific jargon. The placement of digital billboards along every major highway focuses on wearing face coverings while in Tahoe. These billboards will remain in place through most of the busy summer season.

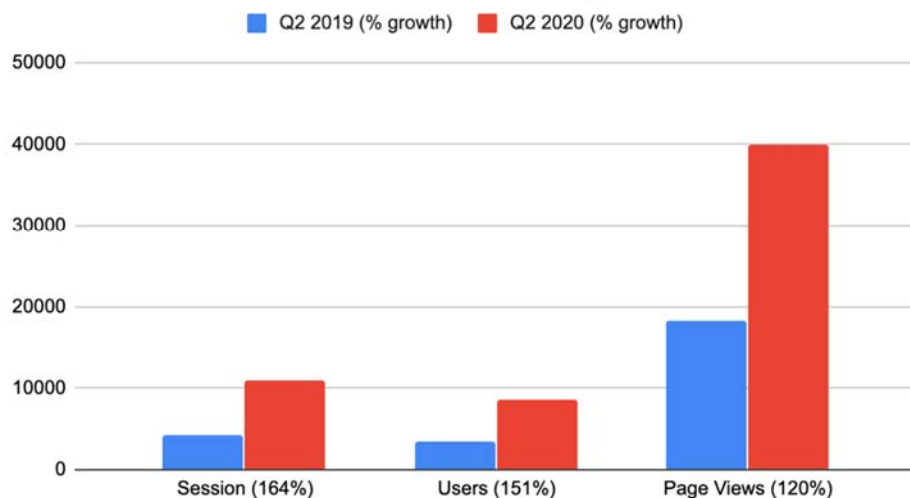
# Everybunny wears a mask in Tahoe

TakeCareTahoe.org



Visitation to the Take Care website spiked this quarter, year over year. Sessions increased 164 percent and page views increased 120 percent. Partners attribute some of this growth to the Earth Week challenge (described below in Environmental Education) which directed traffic to <https://takecaretahoe.org/>.

Q2 2019 vs Q2 2020\* TakeCareTahoe.org Web Traffic



## TRPA Honors Budding Environmental Scholars

TRPA selected two local seniors to receive their \$500 environmental education scholarships:

Logan Chapman (South Tahoe High School) and Maxx Emami (North Tahoe High School). The TRPA Environmental Scholarship Fund, created in 2004, awards scholarships to Lake Tahoe seniors pursuing environmental careers. Since its inception, 27 students have been awarded a total of \$11,950. Funding for the scholarship comes from generous TRPA staff, Governing Board, and





Advisory Planning Commission member contributions, as well as donations from Bike the West and America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride.

## Environmental Education

The South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition (STEEC) moved spring environmental education to virtual platforms. The Earth Day celebration became a week-long campaign of socially distant challenges that were shared online through local news outlets and with Lake Tahoe Unified School District teachers and families. TRPA collaborated with the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition to take the lead on "Transportation Tuesday," which encouraged people to sign up for the Tahoe Bike Challenge, watch one of TRPA's regional transportation plan webinars, and view an educational video to help people get their bikes ready to ride for summer.



TRPA also created a groundwater video for the Woods Water Wildlife Virtual Field Trip for K–2 grade students. This field trip is normally offered every year in May and located at Nevada Beach and Lam Watah Meadow on Forest Service lands. STEEC wanted to ensure that students received an abbreviated version of this fieldtrip this year, while still engaging students safely in an outdoor setting and learning about their local Lake Tahoe environment.

In place of Bike and Walk to School Week, TRPA in partnership with the South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition, California Highway Patrol, and South Tahoe High School Climate Crew, developed a series of "Safe Routes to School" videos detailing the health and environmental benefits of biking and walking, as well as safety tips and tricks for biking around town. The videos are available online at [www.facebook.com/trpatahoe/](https://www.facebook.com/trpatahoe/).



Safe Routes to School: Fitting Your Helmet

3 weeks ago · 163 Views

TRPA staff also presented virtually to the Tahoe Expedition Academy in May about different tree species in the Lake Tahoe Basin, hazard trees, defensible space, and prescribed fire.

### **Social Media Outreach**

Staff continue to be highlighted on social media channels using the hashtag TeamTRPA. Each week short bios and photos of staff are shared to showcase their role and how they serve the community.

TRPA's Facebook followers grew 27 percent this quarter, compared to only four percent last quarter. A lot of this growth can be attributed to increased engagement related to boating. Posts on TRPA's Facebook page between April 1 and June 30 reached over 64,801 users and generated more than 4932, shares, comments, or clicks.

### **Broadcast and Print Media**

Through the COVID-19 shutdown, an External Affairs team member appeared twice weekly on local television station Lake Tahoe Television to keep the public informed about the agency's response to coronavirus, the shift to virtual services, and to deliver updates about outdoor recreation issues and watercraft inspections. The station broadcasts free on North and South Shores and is on cable as the regional Outside Television affiliate in Northern Nevada and California. Interest in TRPA media releases resulted in other broadcast interviews or appearances this quarter including Capitol Public Radio in Sacramento.

## **FINANCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, & FACILITIES**

### **Finance Update**

TRPA refinanced its long-term debt this quarter. This refinance has multiple benefits including: a reduced interest rate which will save TRPA almost \$800,000 on a net present value (NPV) basis; frees up a \$900,000 security deposit that was used to reduce the amount of outstanding debt; and provides \$500,000 to complete long-deferred maintenance and necessary building repairs.

In June, the TRPA Governing Board approved a budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020. The budget is balanced despite significant reductions in funding by Nevada and California as part of the COVID-19 fallout. TRPA will continue to work with the two states to finalize budget numbers for the upcoming fiscal year.

### **Facilities/IT Update**

TRPA has now completed an entire quarter working remotely. TRPA is not closed and is still "open for business." To serve the public remotely, TRPA has significantly increased on-line permitting and pivoted to electronic communications and workflows. Like many other entities, we are now considering if this will be the new normal and a permanent state of affairs.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The second quarter of 2020 saw TRPA responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and changing the way we work. Most staff adjusted smoothly to working from home. A few staff members spend most of their time in the office to manage parts of systems that have not yet been

converted to virtual administration (e.g., some incoming calls, mail, and file requests). A “COVID Communications” team was formed to focus on the ways we can best provide structure, information, and support to staff. Joanne Marchetta began a weekly “Work From Home” email bulletin to all staff about the pandemic to keep everyone informed, connected, and safe. The regular bulletins suggest ways to cope with the stress and pace of change, stay healthy, encourage safe agency operations, promote responsible community engagement and outdoor recreation, and provide ongoing work program updates and recognition for staff contributions under our new circumstances. All Staff monthly meetings shifted to an online platform.

Kacy Davey replaced Robbie Graves as the Current Planning Division’s Administrative Assistant. The boat crew seasonal staff started a little later this boating season due to COVID: Kris Morehead, Ted Truscott, Jeff Miller, Cory Talbot, and Brenden Phillips. Melinda Kolb in the Finance Department, who will retire in July, is being replaced by Caroline Stutzman who was promoted to Finance and Grants Analyst. The finance intern, Tyler Jamieson, is stepping into Caroline’s shoes on a temporary basis, managing payroll and accounts payable.

TRPA staff participated in the regional “Best Places to Work” survey through the Northern Nevada Human Resources Association. The agency’s high survey scores reveal a committed workforce with high morale and mean that we are a finalist in the medium sized employer category. In the coming months, TRPA staff will follow up on the survey to identify ways to continuously improve our culture, programs, and processes.

## **New TRPA Staff**

### ***Kacey Davy, Senior Management Assistant***

Kacey joined TRPA just as the COVID crisis hit. She is a Senior Management Assistant primarily supporting the Current Planning Division and she will also provide support to the Long Range and Transportation Planning Division as needed. She has lived in Tahoe for over six years and is pursuing a certificate of achievement in business from Lake Tahoe Community College.