

## MEMORANDUM

Date: December 8, 2011

To: TRPA Governing Board

From: Joanne S. Marchetta, Executive Director

Subject: Quarterly Report of Agency Work Program Priorities and Progress as of December 2011

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In this quarterly report, each line and support division of the agency reports on work program priorities and progress, mapped to the primary pillars of the strategic plan: improving operational efficiency, implementing streamlined processes, enhancing community engagement and customer service, and delivering environmental gain on the ground.

### I. PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The Planning Department was restructured this year and now includes Regional Planning, Current Planning, and Transportation Planning.

#### A. Regional Plan Update

##### 1. Regional Plan Update Committee Progress

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency, Implementing Streamlining Processes, Enhancing Community/Customer Service, Improved Delivery of Environmental Gain on the Ground

In the last quarter, the Governing Board elected to form a new working Committee of the Board to accelerate completion of the Regional Plan Update. The RPU Committee has increased its meeting schedule to at least two and often three times per month in order to accelerate consideration of policy proposals and changes to the Regional Plan needed to complete the Update by the Board's endorsed target date of December 2012. With a recent tentative nod of approval by the Board's Regional Plan Update Committee, TRPA staff together with staff from all six local governments and other stakeholders has been developing the details of a proposal for a different regional-scale permitting system for Lake Tahoe. This is the first time in a quarter century we have taken a hard look at whether there may be a different way to make more effective and accelerated environmental gains for Tahoe through revisions to the planning and project permitting system. Under the proposed system, Local Plans developed at the local

government level, in close collaboration with TRPA planning staff, would be allowed greater flexibility to incorporate localized strategies tailored to achieving thresholds and delivering needed environmental gains while at the same time enhancing the economic viability of Tahoe communities. Many of the proposals are designed to remove the historic barriers to rehabilitation of the aging built environment known to be an important contributor to Lake pollutants causing declines in water quality as well as perpetuating other persistent negative effects. The revised planning and permitting system proposed would replace the overly complex and hard to understand system of Community Plans and Plan Area Statements where there are now almost 200 separate TRPA plans in addition to local jurisdictions plans. The goal of these proposed changes is to achieve all four TRPA Strategic Plan goals: improved operational efficiency, streamlining, community/customer service, and improved delivery of environmental gain on the ground.

## **2. Total Maximum Daily Load**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground  
Enhancing Community/Customer Service

TRPA staff is continuing its work with staff from all six local governments and staff from land and water agencies in both states, developing the details of targeted measures in specific areas designed to help local jurisdictions as implementers achieve the TMDL. These proposals will be discussed by the Regional Plan Update Committee as well as the Local Government Committee shortly after the New Year. As adopted by the two states, the TMDL looks primarily to local jurisdictions to develop implementation strategies with TRPA acting to complement local jurisdiction strategies.

## **B. Current Planning**

### **1. Information and Technology System Upgrades**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency, Streamlining Processes

Over the last quarter, Current Planning staff worked with Information Technology staff on upgrading information and technology systems. Processes and technology needs to be positioned to support any approved shift of TRPA's planning, code, zoning and application processing to local governments. These proposed policy changes are being vetted for policy input with the Governing Board's Local Government Committee. In the early part of December, staff completed a successful upgrade to the Accela automated permitting system in anticipation of improved data transfer among Tahoe jurisdictions. The goal of these improvements is to improve not only TRPA's internal operational efficiency but to foster streamlined processes and information transfer between TRPA and other permitting agencies.

### **2. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)**

**Pillar:** Enhancing Community/Customer Service  
Improving Operational Efficiency  
Implementing Streamlined Processes

As an interim measure pending final direction as part of the Regional Plan Update, staff is working with a number of local government and special district representatives on MOU revisions. Some of these revisions have been identified by Compliance Program staff working in collaboration with local government staff and will help streamline local government project completion.

### **3. Code Amendments**

**Pillar:** Enhancing Community/Customer Service  
Improving Operational Efficiency  
Implementing Streamlined Processes

In November 2011, the Board approved reorganization and reformatting of TRPA's Code of Ordinances. The changes in format and presentation have created a more user friendly, understandable regulatory document with the goal of improving customer service and internal efficiency as well as streamlining external stakeholders' ease of use of the regulatory document. The staff from both the Regional Planning Division and Current Planning Division will be conducting public workshops on the new reformatted code that goes into effect March 1, 2012.

## **C. Transportation Planning**

### **1. Regional Transportation Plan**

**Pillar:** Enhancing Community/Customer Service  
Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground

The focus during the last quarter of the Transportation Planning Division has been working "hand-in-glove" with the Regional Planning Division to coordinate the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Plan review processes. The Governing Board will see these two items on the same agendas in the spring. Both Divisions have also been collaborating with other parties in the Basin on the SGC grant tasks. These efforts are providing needed information on transfer ratios for the Regional Plan and greenhouse gas emissions reduction for the Transportation Plan. The monitoring systems that will be set up will complement the development and commodities tracking systems the Current Planning Division is working on.

## **II. IMPLEMENTATION DEPARTMENT**

### **A. Improving the EIP Implementation Framework**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground  
Implementing Streamlined Processes

In October 2011, EIP Working Group staff presented to the Tahoe Interagency Executives Steering Committee (TIE-SC) a proposed EIP Implementation Framework and an annual cycle of

work for the EIP program. The draft implementation framework will facilitate effective and efficient partnerships for the EIP by clearly defining the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of all partners in implementing the EIP. Staff anticipates taking a final version of the Implementation Framework back to the TIE-SC for approval early next year.

## **B. Mitigation Fund Releases**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground

Over the past 12 month, TRPA has released over \$1,208,432 in mitigation funds to local jurisdictions for implementation of various Environmental Improvement Project projects.

These releases included:

- \$18,630 in air quality mitigation funds to Washoe County for construction of the Incline Way Pedestrian Path Project
- \$16,679 in water quality mitigation funds to Washoe county for the Hybrid BMP Roadway Retrofit Project
- \$20,000 in operations and maintenance mitigation funds to El Dorado County for maintenance of various EIP projects
- \$100,000 in SEZ mitigation funds to Douglas County for the Burke Creek Restoration Project
- \$6,936 in water quality mitigation funds to Douglas County for the Warrior Way Water Quality Improvement Project
- \$7,500 in water quality mitigation funds interest to Douglas County for the Hydrologic Modeling Project
- \$120,000 in SEZ mitigation funds to Placer County for the Snow Creek SEZ Restoration project
- \$40,000 in water quality mitigation funds to Placer County for the purchase of a new high-efficiency street sweeper
- \$35,000 in operations and maintenance mitigation funds to Placer County for water quality improvements
- \$40,000 in air quality mitigation funds to the Tahoe Transportation District for construction of transit shelters within the City of South Lake Tahoe
- \$408,687 in air quality mitigation funds to the City of South Lake Tahoe for the purchase of two high-efficiency street sweepers
- \$395,000 in water quality mitigation funds to the City of South Lake Tahoe for the Bijou Area Erosion Control project.]]

## **C. EIP Projects**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground

TRPA is working in collaboration with the Tahoe Transportation District to begin consideration of important transportation projects designed to alleviate congestion at regional choke points and thereby mitigate negative environmental effects as well as make gains toward environmental threshold attainment. Next quarter, environmental scoping of the Highway 89/

Fanny Bridge project will continue with public hearings at TRPA's APC. TTD also recently initiated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the environmental review for the US 50/South Shore Community Revitalization Project, and a scoping hearing was held at APC this month. This project proposes to realign US 50 in the Stateline casino corridor area and convert the existing US 50 roadway, between approximately Pioneer Trail in California and Lake Parkway in Nevada, into a two-lane boulevard type parkway. A vastly improved streetscape with landscaping, visitor amenities, expanded sidewalks and bicycle lanes would be constructed in this section within the casino corridor to improve pedestrian safety, encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, and enhance the visitor experience.

In addition, over 50 EIP projects are currently in progress, from planning to construction. Many of these projects are being guided by Technical Advisory Committees consisting of staff from implementing, funding and regulatory agencies. A small sample of projects and activities currently underway includes:

- The Upper Truckee River (UTR) Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration project EIR/EIS/EIS was scheduled for a vote on certification of the final EIS by the TRPA Board on December 14, 2011. Due to litigation filed by adjacent neighbors opposing the golf course realignment, the river restoration project has been taken off calendar and the EIS and project decision by TRPA deferred.
- Several other UTR restoration projects are also under review between Lake Tahoe and the Golf Course reach. Projects on other streams include Rosewood Creek, Third Creek, Incline Creek, Blackwood Creek and Ward Creek.
- Caltrans is moving forward on improving highways in the Tahoe Region including: Highway 50 from Trout Creek to Ski Run Boulevard is currently under construction; Highway 89 from Tahoma to the Tahoe City Y was approved by the Governing Board in April and is scheduled for construction next summer. Future projects include Highway 50 from the airport to the Y; Highway 50 from the Y to Trout Creek, and Highway 89 from the South Y to Cascade Road.
- The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) is continuing its water quality improvement project on Highway 207 (Kingsbury Grade).
- Placer County is currently constructing the Brockway Erosion Control Project, the Tahoe City Residential Water Quality Improvement Project, and the Tahoe Pines Erosion Control Project.
- Washoe County is working on the Central Incline Erosion Control Project in Incline Village to improve water quality.

#### **D. Stormwater Management Program**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground,  
Enhancing Community/Customer Service

TRPA is making headway in delivering greater rates of completion on implementation of stormwater best management practices (BMPs). TRPA issued 1157 BMP Certificates of

Completion between October 2011 and December 2011; of those, 63 were issued to commercial properties, 440 were issued to single-family residential properties and 654 were issued to multi-family residential properties.

Some of the major properties that completed BMP installation and were issued a BMP Certificate of Completion include: all of the common areas in Glenbrook, the Tahoe Verde Mobile Home Park, the Tahoe Tavern HOA, and the North Shore Condominiums. These are significant projects, treating a large amount of stormwater runoff and providing a substantive private contribution to the EIP Program.

To advance customer service and community engagement, the Stormwater Management Program this quarter ran a BMP education and outreach campaign including television and print advertisements.

So that the most up-to-date, state of the art treatments can be put on the ground, staff is moving ahead to complete the update to the Handbook of Best Management Practices, which has not been updated since 1988. The updated Handbook public comment period ended and staff is currently addressing the comments in order to complete the update.

#### **E. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground; Improving Operational Efficiency, Enhancing Community/Customer Service

##### **1. AIS Leadership and Outreach**

The fall quarter means the planning for the next year begins in earnest. The 2011 season was a banner year for the TRPA and our partners in the Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program, with an increase in our participation in regional and national coordination efforts that are expected to increase operational efficiency and threshold gain. Additionally the control program increased both the acres of weeds treated and our public private partnerships, and the prevention program dramatically increased the number of boats decontaminated and rolled out a new online non-motorized self-inspection program. Details of the accomplishments and lessons learned by the Tahoe AIS Program in 2011 are scheduled to be presented to the Governing Board in January 2012.

In addition, in the past quarter

- TRPA staff worked with our agency, academic and private partners on our yearly reporting and subsequent development of the work program for 2012. Part of this yearly reporting will be an evaluation of opportunities to further increase the level of threshold gain and customer service while maintaining the high standard of efficiency in the Program.
- In November, TRPA staff participated in a public forum along with our partners in the Tahoe AIS Program including the Tahoe RCD, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, University of

Nevada Reno and The League to Save Lake Tahoe to engage the community by discussing what the program accomplished in 2011 as well as get feedback from the community on future challenges.

- TRPA staff and our partners are also looking beyond 2012 by beginning a concerted effort to develop a 5 year fiscal plan for the Program that includes diverse and novel funding strategies for each of the areas of Prevention, Control and Monitoring.

## **2. AIS Prevention Program**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground  
Implementing streamlined Processes

This fall the motorized watercraft inspection program moved from the five roadside inspection stations to two public ramp facilities that will remain open for the winter. A third public ramp at Sand Harbor will be open and staffed to launch previously sealed boats.

In 2011 the number of decontaminations performed by Tahoe RCD staff increased dramatically, reflecting increased rigor in the program which was prompted by new information on the proximity of water bodies with positive tests for quagga mussels.

## **3. AIS Control Program**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground  
Enhancing Community/Customer Service

Work has begun with our partners to develop and implement an AIS control strategy for the Tahoe Keys. The Tahoe Keys Property Owners Assoc. is a key partner in this effort providing the private share of funding for the project as well as coordination and other services. This work in the Tahoe Keys marks a significant step forward in the control of weeds and warm water fishes in Lake Tahoe.

Emerald Bay continues to be a focal point of AIS control efforts in Lake Tahoe. Work on the control of weeds, warm water fish and Asian clams by our partner agencies will continue as winter approaches.

### **III. MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING**

#### **A. 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground  
Enhancing Community/Customer Service

The 2011 five-year threshold evaluation report will summarize information on the attainment status of TRPA adopted threshold standards as well as state and federal standards – it is the report that summarizes “environmental gain on the ground”.

The Measurement Department's primary focus is the delivery of the 2011 Threshold Evaluation. We have been working with various agencies and academic institutions on assembling and summarizing data related to the status assessment of adopted TRPA Threshold Standards and the implementation and effectiveness of the TRPA Regional Plan. Completion of an administrative draft for internal review is targeted for December 23, 2011. A Threshold Evaluation Draft is scheduled for release January 13, 2012. At that time, the draft will be distributed for external and independent peer-review. Measurement Department staff is planning on presenting the Draft Report to the Governing Board at the January Governing Board Meeting. The peer-review is expected to be completed by February 15, 2012 after which, staff will incorporate comments and present the final Threshold Evaluation at the March 2012 Governing Board meeting.

**B. Air Quality Monitoring Plan**

**Pillar:** Delivering Environmental Gain on the Ground

The department recently completed the installation and initiated operations of an air quality monitoring station at TRPA's offices. This site is collecting data on nitrogen oxides (NOx), ozone (O<sup>3</sup>), particulate matter and meteorology. As part of this effort, additional ozone monitoring equipment was installed at Bliss State Park. Staff is also working to complete by April 2012 an Air Quality Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. This plan will be used by basin air quality management agencies to coordinate and guide the collection, analysis and reporting of air quality data.

**IV. FINANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**A. Internal IT**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency  
Implementing Streamlined Processes  
Enhancing Customer Service

IT continues to support internal operations with improvements and upgrades to systems. We have completed upgrading our core operational software package, Accela, to the latest version (7.1). This offers several productivity enhancements and puts us on a current, supported, version for better customer service and streamlining improvements. We have also implemented an in-house fax server to allow desktop faxing for operational efficiency. We've made numerous improvements to other systems, primarily in the areas of GIS and network operations, and will continue to do so throughout the year. Activities for next quarter include switching from our existing timekeeping system to one that is cheaper and scaled appropriately for the agency.

**B. Financial Integrity**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency  
Implementing Streamlined Processes



This quarter, the Finance Department completed the Fiscal Year 2011 audit, and this year again the financial auditor's opinion is unqualified. Due to scheduling issues, the audit will be presented to the Governing Board's Operations Committee in January 2012. The accompanying management letter identified some weaknesses, most of which have already been addressed. Process changes are being or will be made to implement those improvements assuring operational efficiency and process streamlining.

Grants and accounting are operating efficiently. From a cash flow standpoint, we have completed all fiscal year quarter 1 Grant billings, and remain cash positive YTD. All monthly accounting closes were completed on time. Finally, we have returned over \$500K of applicant deposits/securities YTD, closing out over 150 applications. Next quarter's emphasis will be on beginning to prepare our Fiscal Year 2013 work plan and budget.

## **V. COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

### **Pillar: Enhancing Community Engagement**

This quarter the Communications Team's priorities were: (A) the Nevada Legislative Oversight Committee; (B) TRPA Web site revamp; (C) Best in Basin Awards judging tour ; (D) TRPA co-sponsored community engagement events ; (E) the Executive Director's opinion column in the *Tahoe Daily Tribune*; and (F) Blue Ribbon Awards Announcement

#### **A. NV Legislative Oversight Committee meeting – Director's speech and legislative outreach**

The Nevada Legislative Oversight Committee had its first meeting November 14 during this interim period between Nevada legislative sessions. As mandated in SB 271, the committee appointed a delegation, Senator Settelmeyer, Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick, and Assemblyman Kite, to meet with California lawmakers regarding the bill. Senior TRPA staff are working with the Oversight Committee to ensure they have access to key information on Lake Tahoe and the Regional Plan Update, including a well-received presentation that included an overview of TRPA and our high-priority initiative of updating the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan. My presentation to the Nevada Legislative Oversight Committee can be viewed on our homepage at [trpa.org](http://trpa.org).

#### **B. TRPA Web Site Revamp**

The Communications and IT Departments are redesigning the TRPA web site to better educate and engage the public, as well as streamline and improve the process of locating important TRPA information for community stakeholders. Communications staff is working to design a new web platform that will be more user-friendly, visually attractive, intuitive, and easier to navigate. The new web site will include a much-improved search engine that can help viewers more easily locate critical documents, code ordinances, and procedures. Communications staff is working to update content and have met with all TRPA Department heads to gather input on

what information should be kept on the new site, and what has become obsolete. The revamped TRPA web site should be ready to launch in the first quarter of 2012.

### **C. Best in the Basin Awards Judging Tour**

The TRPA Communications Team spent two days this month guiding a panel of judges around the Tahoe Region reviewing a long list of projects that have been nominated for Best in the Basin awards this year. The judges were delighted by the crop of outstanding projects up for awards this year and the communications team is looking forward to presenting the winners at the Governing Board meeting in January. Four residential projects, six BMP retrofit projects, one commercial project, two defensible space projects, and seven public/restoration projects were on the tour this year. This will be the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Best in the Basin awards and TRPA is proud to honor property owners and project managers who are setting new standards for environmental planning and design to help us live in harmony with our surroundings.

### **D. TRPA Co-sponsored Community Engagement Events**

In our continued commitment to community engagement, the TRPA Communications Team participated in three critical community forums in November: The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Workshops on November 1 and 3 on the North and South Shores, and the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Forum on November 16 at the Lake Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

At the RTP Workshops, the Communications Team held a land use demonstration to help engage the community in what land use options exist as part of the Regional Plan Update. For the AIS Forum, Communications helped organize the event with partnering organizations, engaged the community at the welcome booth, oriented them to the evening's agenda, and helped gather data from community participants on how to improve the AIS program and forum for the following year.

### **E. Tahoe Daily Tribune Column**

The Communications Team worked with Joanne to draft a well-received opinion column that ran in the *Tahoe Daily Tribune* on Saturday, November 5, the *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza* on Monday, November 7, and the *Sierra Sun* on Tuesday, November 8. Entitled, "How We're Restoring Lake Tahoe While Creating Sustainable Communities," the op-ed defined in clear and compelling terms, what is working in today's Regional Plan, and what could change in the Regional Plan Update.

### **F. Blue Ribbon Awards**

The Communication's Team had the pleasure of publicizing a special honor given to a TRPA employee. Gary Weigel, TRPA's Senior Front Counter Planner, won a Blue Ribbon Award in the Public Agency Service category for his outstanding customer service. His work exemplifies the level of commitment to public service and community engagement that TRPA is striving for as part of our Strategic Plan.

The Blue Ribbon Awards were initiated four years ago by the South Shore Tahoe Chamber to honor people, businesses, and organizations that have made significant contributions to the South Shore community. Weigel had been nominated three out of the last four years, and this year took top honors. Congratulations Gary!

## **VI. HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **A. Leadership Development**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency  
Enhancing Community Engagement

Effective communication and leadership skills are two key employee competencies identified in the Strategic Plan. This fall the Agency's Management team participated in a two day Leadership Training Retreat for the purpose of building key organizational cultural concepts that will ensure successful implementation of the Agency's goals. The program was presented to the Implementation Department staff this quarter and will be presented to all departments over the next six months. Eighteen employees are participating in a two day workshop on Public Speaking and Presentation Skills in December.

### **B. Employee Health and Wellness**

**Pillar:** Enhancing Community Engagement

The Agency offered all employees and dependents an opportunity to take part in a WellCheck Health Fair presented by Saint Mary's Health System to insure that employees have easy access to health screening, testing and immunizations. Identifying and addressing health issues promotes employee satisfaction and reduces health care costs.

### **C. Performance and Goal Management**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency  
Implementing Streamlined Processes

Success Factors is a web-based performance and goal management system that the Agency implemented to clearly identify and evaluate program goals that support the Strategic Plan. This quarter all employees completed an evaluation of personal competencies and accomplishments. These evaluations, in combination with the manager's evaluation, will help provide a clearer picture of how well Agency employees as well as the Agency overall is meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan.

### **D. Staff Recruitment**

**Pillar:** Improving Operational Efficiency

This year the Agency focused on designing and implementing a high quality recruitment, assessment and selection program. To fill vacancies, during the past quarter the Planning Department recruited and hired two outstanding employees with superior technical skills as

well as critical core competencies that support the Agency's priorities. Panel interviews, behavioral assessments and work samples are important aspects of the selection process.

**E. Employee Community Service**

**Pillar:** Enhancing Community Engagement

The Agency recognizes that having a higher purpose is important and identified core values and competencies that reflect that commitment. As active members of the community, TRPA employees donated to the TRPA Blood Drive and organized a collection program to support, Saint Theresa's Food bank and the Christmas Cheer program, two community based programs that provide services to local residents.