

Attachment C – Response to Comments on the 2011 Threshold Evaluation, April 2012 Draft

TRPA presented the Draft 2011 Threshold Evaluation to the Governing Board and public in April. In the spirit of openness and transparency, Agency staff solicited feedback from the public, agencies, and stakeholders. The following table summarizes comments submitted jointly to TRPA by the Tahoe Area Sierra Club (TASC), Friends of the West Shore, and the League to Save Lake Tahoe on the 2011 Threshold Evaluation, Draft April 2012 (hereinafter, “2011 Draft Report”).¹ TASC submitted two letters dated – June 28, 2012 and July 25, 2012. TRPA grouped comments into generalized areas of concern for response. While TRPA is required to respond to comments submitted for environmental impact disclosure documents (e.g., Environmental Impact Statements), there is no requirement under the Regional Plan or Compact to respond to public comments on a Threshold Evaluation Report. Likewise, there is no requirement in the Compact or Regional Plan to adhere to any particular Report format. TRPA responses are provided in appreciation of the extensive input of the commenters and to aid in clarifying any misunderstandings or errors.

¹ A comment submitted by Michelle Sweeney on June 28, 2012 concerning tracking of management actions for aquatic invasive species did not relate directly to the 2011 Draft Report, and was forwarded to the TRPA Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator for consideration and response

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General Comments and Responses Related to Report and Methodologies	
<p>1. Comments state the timing of 2011 Draft Report relative to the Regional Plan Update (RPU) was not appropriate. Comments assert the 2011 Draft Report was not released to the public well in advance and cannot and should not serve to inform the RPU/Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).</p>	<p>Since adoption of the current 1987 Regional Plan, Threshold Evaluations have been produced every five years -- 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, and again in 2011 -- as required by the Compact. The fifth Threshold Evaluation Report, presented as the 2011 Draft Report, was produced on time according to the Regional Plan mandated schedule. There have been three Threshold Evaluation Reports within the time frame of the planning process for the 2012 RPU: 2001, 2006 and 2011. The 2001 Threshold Evaluation Report first influenced the Pathway working groups where the public and a wide variety of technical advisors made recommendations about Threshold Standard amendments and what should be considered in proposed amendments for a Regional Plan Update (RPU). The 2006 Threshold Evaluation Report was published well in advance of the start of scoping in 2007 for the initial RPU Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) alternatives. It both considered and influenced those alternatives. As the timeline to prepare the next Threshold Evaluation approached while still in the midst of the RPU planning process, TRPA produced the 2011 Threshold Evaluation and again its findings were used to reevaluate whether the planning alternatives in the RPU EIS reflected the strategies needed to address the report's findings. Planning proposals and EIS alternatives were again further refined to target the highest priority threshold areas needing improved strategies to accelerate threshold gains.</p> <p>In sum, work began in 2003 on the development and consideration of possible amendments that eventually culminated in the 2012 proposed Regional Plan Update. TRPA has therefore had the benefit of considering the reported results from the 2001, 2006, and now 2011 Threshold Evaluations and has carefully refined the proposals for updating the current Regional Plan over time. Each of these Threshold Evaluations has been produced according to schedule and considered in advance of the 2012 Regional Plan amendments.</p> <p>In addition to considering previously released Threshold Evaluations to inform the scope of the 2012 proposed Regional Plan Update, TRPA has also considered publically available findings and recommendations resulting from the Pathway planning process, all of the annual UC Davis State of the Lake Reports, the Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment, SNPLMA funded research, and now most recently the most current, complete, and up-to-date peer reviewed technical and scientific information and findings in the 2011 Draft Report.</p> <p>TRPA used all of this information and more to evaluate and reevaluate whether the planning</p>

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	<p>alternatives in the EIS reflected the necessary strategies to address those areas where the series of Threshold Evaluation Reports found that accelerated progress or improvements toward threshold attainment was needed. Indeed, the alternatives were refined several times over many years, and each Threshold Evaluation Report served as a further foundation and basis in advance for each round of revisions and refinements to the Regional Plan EIS alternatives. TRPA therefore rejects commenters' assertion that the 2012 proposed Regional Plan Update was developed without proper or timely consideration of Threshold Evaluation findings or other relevant scientific and technical information.</p>
<p>2. Comments assert that changes made in the form, content, and method of evaluating and reporting status and trends of thresholds is at odds with the Compact and Regional Plan.</p>	<p>A common comment theme advocates that the form and presentation of the 2011 Draft Report is flawed because it does not match the form of past reports. The content in the 2011 Draft Report is consistent with the requirements of TRPA's Regional Plan and Code, and the change in format was made to improve the 1) reporting consistency across Threshold Categories, 2) scientific rigor and objectivity, 3) clarity of presentation, and 4) transparency in level of uncertainty.</p> <p>The 2011 Draft Report directly satisfies and/or addresses all required reporting elements described in the Regional Plan (Code Chapter 16, more specifically Sections 16.4, 16.9.1 and 16.9.1.D). The 2011 Draft Report addresses the current status of indicators relative to each adopted TRPA Threshold Standard (in TRPA Resolution 82-11), applicable state and federal air and water quality standards, and interim targets (collectively referred as "targets") as well as the trends of indicators relative to adopted standards.</p> <p>Changes to the format and content in the 2011 Draft Report improved upon previous methodologies and reporting to make it more consistent, understandable, reliable, and transparent. There are no particularized requirements to which TRPA did not adhere. Principles of continual improvement require periodic evaluation and course corrections in methods, content, and presentation to incorporate improvements and new information. TRPA was careful about the changes in format and content and had them scientifically peer reviewed, and the peer reviewers uniformly concluded that the new reporting methods and format are an improvement over previous threshold status reporting.</p> <p>In the 2011 Draft Report, changes in the evaluation were geared toward improving the transparency of status, trend and confidence determinations. New in the 2011 Draft Report is an estimate of how much confidence the agency has in the status and trend determination for an indicator (confidence</p>

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	<p>ratings). The methodology chapter clearly describes the approaches and rules used to make status, trend and confidence determinations at both the indicator/standard scale as well as at an aggregated scale. Science peer-reviewers commented that the 2011 Draft Report reporting of status, trend and confidence is a significant improvement when compared to previous Threshold Evaluation status and trend determinations in terms of scientific rigor and transparency. The peer review panel found that the 2011 Draft Report is “technically sound and provides a credible basis to support ongoing TRPA policy-making.” See also Response to Comment 26 (Noise).</p> <p>The TASC comments demonstrate a misunderstanding of the fact that a new aggregation approach used in the 2011 Draft Report differs from the actual direct threshold standard-specific conclusion on attainment/non-attainment status, which is provided separately from the reported aggregate result. The aggregation approach reported in the 2011 Draft Report provided a generalized status summary of an Indicator Reporting Category and not the status or trend determination for an individual Threshold Standard. The 2011 Draft Report clearly discloses the distinction:</p> <p><i>“...this approach was used solely to characterize the <u>overall</u> status of indicators relative to standards within an Indicator Reporting Category. Status determinations at the Indicator Reporting Category are not to be misconstrued as status and trend determinations made for individual Threshold Standards unless only one standard existed within an Indicator Reporting Category. This approach was also used for the 2011 Threshold Evaluation solely to characterize the <u>overall</u> trends of indicators relative to standards within an Indicator Reporting Category. Trend determinations at the Indicator Reporting Category are not to be misconstrued as a trend determination made for individual Threshold Standards unless only one standard existed within an Indicator Reporting Category.”</i> (Cited in three places in the 2011 Draft Report: Executive Summary - Page 12 in footnote, Introduction - Page 1-7 in footnote, and Methodology – Page 2-13) (Underline added for emphasis).</p> <p>Evaluations and conclusions are drawn at varying scales of refinement. No previous Threshold Evaluation consistently reported conclusions at the individual indicator and standard scale. In that respect, the 2011 Draft Report stands as unique and apart from the others by reporting at a much finer grain of detail. The aggregation approach provides information and analysis at a different, more generalized scale. It cannot be said that one approach is definitively better than the other; they are simply different and can be used differently. Both scales of investigation are reported in the 2011</p>

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	<p data-bbox="703 233 863 261">Draft Report.</p> <p data-bbox="703 305 1885 548">Lastly, the peer review panel too noted that by reporting at different levels of detail, the 2011 Draft Report provided a greater degree of transparency and disclosure than past Threshold Evaluations. Notably, peer reviewers also pointed out that reporting by individual indicator is a dated approach and may fail to adequately account for important ecosystem interrelationships or interactions with natural and social systems. Peer reviewers therefore urged TRPA to consider multivariate and integrative approaches to characterizing environmental conditions at the landscape scale instead of the silo-based evaluation approach dictated by TRPA Resolution 82-11.</p> <p data-bbox="703 592 1864 690">None of these changes in report format, content, or evaluation methods violate the Compact, the Regional Plan, or the Code, but rather were thought by expert reviewers to improve the overall quality and transparency of the 2011 Draft Report.</p>
<p data-bbox="191 732 678 976">3. Comments claim that the 2011 Draft Report requires environmental review in the form of an Environmental Assessment and an environmental analysis is required to justify the analysis approach used in the 2011 Draft Report.</p>	<p data-bbox="703 732 1919 1365">TASC asked why the 2011 Draft Report was not accompanied by an Environmental Assessment or other environmental document as were past Threshold Evaluation Reports. A Threshold Evaluation is a report on the status and trends of environmental indicators relative to adopted Threshold Standards and state and federal air and water quality standards. A Threshold Evaluation also provides a summary of progress on the implementation of the Regional Plan and includes recommendations that are not agency commitments, but actions that could be taken in the future to potentially mitigate impacts to degraded conditions as required by TRPA Code Section 16.9.1. A Threshold Evaluation itself and the data and information presented are not considered a project and the Report by itself does not authorize a project as defined by the Compact. When recommendations are further refined into a proposed action through a public participation process (as was done for those recommendations arising from the 2011 Draft Report), only then is it necessary to complete the appropriate level of environmental impact analysis and documentation. The proposed Regional Plan amendments, some of which were identified in the 2011 Draft Report as among possible strategies for threshold progress and attainment, are proposed as amendments to the Regional Plan Goals, Policies, and implementing Code, and these amendments are fully evaluated in the environmental documents accompanying the 2012 proposed Regional Plan Update and the Regional Transportation Plan, which serve as the necessary environmental review and disclosure documents for the 2012 proposed Regional Plan changes.</p>

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	<p>The 2011 Draft Report’s information and analysis do not independently implicate proposed actions or projects under the Compact that would require environmental review under CEQA, NEPA, or TRPA requirements. Moreover, the analytical and reporting approaches used in the 2011 Draft Report were developed and vetted by qualified experts and were subjected to peer-review and found by the peer-review to be a valid and a substantial improvement over approaches used in previous Threshold Evaluations. Prior Threshold Evaluations have been produced concurrently with Compact Article VII environmental documentation because responsive Regional Plan amendments (e.g., release of new allocations, other code amendments) were being proposed and processed concurrently with the Threshold Evaluations. The environmental document was not therefore reviewing the Threshold Evaluation or any aspect of it, but rather was prepared to support the specific proposed actions to amend the Regional Plan. Similarly today, no independent environmental review of the 2011 Draft Report is required.</p>
<p>4. Comments assert that required “Compliance Forms” presented in past Threshold Evaluations are missing in the 2011 Draft Report.</p>	<p>There is no directive in the TRPA Compact or Regional Plan that requires the use of “compliance forms” in Threshold Evaluations. Likewise, neither the Compact nor the Regional Plan specifically prescribes the framework or structure of the Threshold Evaluation Report. The indicator summaries developed for each standard/indicator serve the same function and effectively replace “compliance forms.” A different reporting format does not indicate a flaw. Indicator summaries include all information previously captured in “compliance forms” plus additional relevant information that is supported by data and references. Thus, the new reporting format is more complete and technically robust when compared to previous Threshold Evaluations, as acknowledged by the scientific peer review.</p>
<p>5. Comments claim TRPA failed to make an “attainment” determination as contemplated by the Compact.</p>	<p>The 2011 Draft Report meets all of the requirements of the Regional Plan (and Compact) for the 5-year evaluation of threshold standard-related indicators. TRPA has substantial discretion to establish the format and content of Threshold Evaluation reporting, and the 2011 Draft Report meets all of the necessary reporting requirements. There is no Regional Plan or Compact requirement to structure the format of each Threshold Evaluation Report in the same way, one to the next, and indeed to do so would or could prevent beneficial improvements in content, format, and rigor. In this instance, the format of the 2011 Draft Report is clearer and more accessible to decision-makers and the lay public. The content has been improved with respect to consistency and scientific rigor, as verified by the findings and conclusions of an independent seven person scientific peer review panel.</p>

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	<p>Contrary to the comments submitted, the 2011 Draft Report clearly sets out an “attainment”/“non-attainment” status determination for each adopted standard. If an indicator was found to be either “at or somewhat better than target”, “considerably better than target”, or “implemented”, then it was considered in “attainment” with the adopted standard. Otherwise, a status determination of “non-attainment” or “unknown” was reported. Status and trend determinations are clearly documented in the ‘<i>status</i>’ and ‘<i>trend</i>’ subsection of each indicator’s summary and the crosswalk in terminology between previously released Threshold Evaluations and the 2011 Draft Report is clearly set out in the Executive Summary and the Report’s Introduction.</p>
<p>6. Comments assert that best scientific information was not used and comprehensive cause and effect analysis should have been completed and reported.</p>	<p>In every instance, the best data available and accessible at the time of the analysis was used. In some instances, retrieval of all available data was infeasible or cost prohibitive. Furthermore, where very detailed site-specific data may have been theoretically available, which if aggregated and further normalized could have formed a new data source, the financial and staff resources are not currently available to collect, and evaluate every conceivable data set; in these instances the most reasonably available data source was used for analysis. Consequently, contributors to the 2011 Draft Report assembled the best and currently available regionally-scaled monitoring data to directly address the status and trends of various indicators related to adopted threshold standards as directed in the TRPA Regional Plan, Code of Ordinances (Section 16.4.1.A).</p> <p>Due to the timing of report preparation, in some cases (mostly for air quality), the most current information was not available for inclusion because it had not yet been posted by appropriate air quality authorities (e.g., CARB or U.S. EPA) or it simply did not exist. The 2011 Final Report includes updated air quality data that was not previously available when the 2011 Draft Report was being prepared.</p> <p>The commenters incorrectly suggest that the 2011 Draft Report entirely lacks information and reference to cause and effect relationships. The 2011 Draft Report includes a generalized characterization of known factors that affect various indicators based on published research and information. Disclosure of cause and effect information can be found in each indicator summary under the “<i>Human and Environmental Drivers</i>” subsection. Summary of and references to applicable cause and effect studies can also be found in this subsection and in introductory narrative material provided for each indicator category. In addition, the 2011 Draft Report references new conceptual models used to better understand the factors and activities that affect the Region’s ability to achieve</p>

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	<p>certain desired conditions and standards; specifically included in Appendix IE-2 of the 2011 Draft Report is a conceptual model developed for stream biological integrity.</p> <p>It is beyond the scope of the 2011 Draft Report to comprehensively analyze or scientifically research cause and effect relationships for each threshold related indicator as suggested by commenters. Comprehensive cause and effect analysis is typically performed through focused research and can be extremely expensive to complete. For example, research conducted to support the TMDL, which evaluated the causes of lake transparency degradation, involved ten years of focused scientific research by multiple scientists at multiple research and academic institutions and cost over \$10 million to complete. Ultimately, this research determined that fine sediments are the primary cause of impaired Lake transparency. To conduct research at this scale for each of the more than 150 environmental indicators addressed in the 2011 Draft Report is infeasible, impractical, and cost prohibitive.</p> <p>With the aid of funding from SNPLMA for the last decade, between \$3 and \$4 million per year has been invested in scientific inquiries across the nine threshold categories. While detailed cause and effect relationships are not available for all threshold indicators in all categories, targeted and focused scientific investigations influenced the conclusions and recommendations of the 2011 Draft Report. Additionally, further scientific studies are underway on a wide range of topics that will help further inform management and planning priorities to achieve accelerated threshold gains in the highest priority areas in the future. For example, SNPLMA research is on-going to better define the sources of ozone in the basin and nearshore research is looking at both sources and causative relationships.</p>
<p>7. Comments assert the 2011 Draft Report uses inappropriate trend analysis (e.g., simple linear regressions), presents statistics creatively in order to skew the status and trends of environmental conditions, and discounts short term trends.</p>	<p>In some instances it is appropriate to use a simple linear regression as a time series analysis approach to describe indicator trends. This method is commonly used for that purpose, widely accepted, easily understood, and affordable to evaluate. Statistics used in the 2011 Draft Report are also commonly used by the scientific community to numerically and graphically characterize the trend or trajectory of an indicator. For example, the simple linear regression method used for trend characterization of several indicators in the 2011 Draft Report is also used in the most recent UC Davis <i>“State of the Lake Report”</i> (2012). UC Davis also uses a simple linear regression analysis to characterize trends for air temperature, days below freezing, snow as a fraction of precipitation, shift in snowmelt timing, lake stability, and stratified season length. In addition, unlike the UC Davis – <i>State of the Lake Report</i>, the 2011 Draft Report discloses critical statistics important for understanding characteristics of trend</p>

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	<p data-bbox="703 235 1900 267">trajectory and strength of relationship with time to improve the transparency of findings and results.</p> <p data-bbox="703 308 1911 933">Some peer-review comments, as referenced by the commenters, expressed concern that the simple linear regression method used to project interim targets and threshold standard attainment dates should have been bounded by statistical confidence intervals and use of the method for these predictions may lead to unreliable estimates due to unforeseen future changes or uncontrollable natural events in the environment (e.g., wildfire). Peer-review also warned against fitting a best fit trend line to situations where there are too few data points (i.e., short term trends). In the future the Report methodology will heed these recommendations. In some chapters of the 2011 Final Report, chapter contributors removed statistical trend analysis in response to the specific peer-review comments, particularly where there were too few data points or the trend was very likely confounded by natural phenomenon. For example a simple linear regression analysis indicated that tributary pollutant loads are decreasing through time. However, because annual precipitation is intimately linked to pollutant loads, the peer reviewers commented that a decreasing trend determination could not be made. Instead, the peer review recommended that more complex time series and factor analysis be performed to separate the effect of precipitation on pollutant loads. In further response to these comments, and in consultation with scientific experts, specific monitoring and evaluation plans managed by TRPA will either specify the appropriate trend analysis method to be incorporated into future reporting efforts for these types of predictions or report that the prediction is too uncertain to make with any degree of confidence using available methods for prediction.</p> <p data-bbox="703 982 1890 1185">The simple linear regression approach to prediction was used in the 2011 Draft Report to correct a weakness in past Threshold Evaluations where the methodology used to estimate trend, interim targets, and threshold attainment dates was not standardized or well documented. Due to the cost and resource constraints of a more sophisticated analysis, this simple and generally well understood method was selected because it was clear, transparent, and data gaps could be readily disclosed. Nonetheless, the method can be improved upon for future evaluations.</p> <p data-bbox="703 1234 1900 1396">The peer reviewers suggested incorporation of additional multivariate analyses for certain indicators to fully explain factors other than time that are affecting the variation in indicators. It is important to note (and as disclosed in the 2011 Draft Report) that the current requirement to identify ‘interim targets’ and ‘threshold attainment dates’ will require significant investments in science-supported predictive models, as was done for the Lake transparency indicator (TMDL). Even with significant</p>

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	<p>investment in models, even models that could incorporate multivariate analysis, there will still be uncertainty in predicted indicator values and attainment dates due to unpredictable future natural events.</p>
<p>8. Comments assert the 2011 Draft Report selectively and intentionally includes data to bias the results so that conditions appear better than they are in actuality in order to support additional development proposals in the RPU. Comments assert recommendations made in the 2011 Draft Report selectively and improperly favor proposed actions in the RPU.</p>	<p>Commenters assert that TRPA intentionally biased the data to skew the outcome of RPU recommendations. To the contrary, TRPA presented available data in a technically appropriate, objective, and transparent manner. Qualified experts contributed on various topics reported in the 2011 Draft Report, including an independent peer-review by experts from outside of the Basin. Experts included academic researchers and environmental professionals cited as chapter contributors or referenced in the acknowledgement section of the 2011 Draft Report. There is no objective or credible basis to suggest that these professional authors and contributors intentionally biased information, results, or recommendations in the 2011 Draft Report.</p> <p>The commenters' also assert without support that recommendations forwarded in the 2011 Draft Report selectively favor proposed actions in the RPU. Recommendations from several past Threshold Evaluation Reports (2001, 2006 and 2011) were all considered when proposing the recommended amendments in the RPU. One of the purposes of Threshold Evaluations is to provide for actionable recommendations to contribute to the attainment and maintenance of adopted Threshold Standards. The fact that there is overlap from the recommendations of the Threshold Evaluations to the RPU is how the system is designed to work. Proposed amendments to the Regional Plan need not encompass the myriad possible recommendations made in each Threshold Evaluation; the agency has the discretion to update its Regional Plan in manageable increments and to select out management proposals and strategies for consideration and environmental review as long as the final regional plan meets its Compact obligation to achieve and maintain thresholds. Recommendations forwarded in the 2011 Draft Report address threshold gains in areas of highest priority need while maintaining the necessary strategies to achieve and maintain thresholds.</p> <p>Furthermore, seven independent scientific peer reviewers concluded that the 2011 Draft Report was credible and well presented. In any instance where suggestions for improved methods, form of presentation, or additional data were offered by peer reviewers, TRPA responded by making changes to the 2011 Draft Report or by setting out plans for future improvements where process changes could not be immediately implemented.</p>

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	<p>A difference of opinion or disagreement over policy direction should not be the basis for calling into question how TRPA carries out a statutory mandate. TRPA has both welcomed and invited suggestions from the commenters on viable alternative management and implementation strategies that could deliver accelerated environmental threshold progress in the areas of highest environmental need.</p>
<p>9. Comments claim the 2011 Draft Report failed to disclose the status of monitoring program budget cuts and did not disclose details related to the reduction of funding for LTIMP tributary monitoring.</p>	<p>The <i>'Implementation and Effectiveness'</i>, and <i>'Recommendation and Conclusion'</i> sections of the 2011 Draft Report discuss the shortfall in funds needed to fully implement the Regional Plan Goals and Policies for monitoring. These sections clearly disclose the significant discrepancy between monitoring/reporting program requirements and available funding. Recommendations are made in the 2011 Draft Report to better align monitoring/reporting programs with available funding.</p> <p>Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting programs are tremendously expensive. Rarely can all desired programs be fully funded. As an example, LTIMP tributary monitoring alone, which measures or addresses only six (4%) of the 151 required indicators identified in Resolution 82-11 or required by state and federal statutes, historically costs more than \$800K annually. LTIMP data has been collected continually since 1979 at an estimated total cost of over \$20M. Many other components of monitoring and reporting are similarly expensive. As a consequence, priorities must be set and limited funds must be allocated across often competing priorities.</p> <p>While in some instances budgets have been reduced, in other important areas, we have been able to secure targeted funding. For example, more monies are now going toward aquatic invasive species (AIS) investigations and monitoring whereas in the past no monitoring, evaluation, and reporting funding had been directed to this area.</p> <p>As priorities change, funding may be shifted, reduced, redirected, or otherwise modified in order to increase monitoring and reporting of higher priority information, to collect data of greater utility, or to fill long-standing data gaps. These are just examples, but there are many competing needs. The LTIMP tributary category of monitoring is one such area where due to the growing shortage of funds and competing priorities, some of the funding that had historically been directed to LTIMP tributary monitoring is now being directed to other needs or is simply no longer available. Ready sources of government funding for data collection that had become expected and routine are simply no longer available. To adjust to fiscal austerity, a comprehensive rethinking of the system may be warranted, and in fact was suggested as part of the peer review recommendations for other reasons. This</p>

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	<p>redesign of a feasible, affordable, streamlined, and technically sound measurement, monitoring, and reporting system for threshold standards and indicators should be among the highest priority work elements following adoption of the 2012 Regional Plan Update.</p>
<p>10. Comments assert the 2011 Draft Report discounts indicators for which an “unknown” determination was made.</p>	<p>Rather than discounting data as the comments claim, the 2011 Draft Report provided more complete data reporting than any past report and followed the direction of TRPA’s Code Chapter 16 when drawing conclusions based on partial or incomplete data. Information is never perfect and is rarely entirely complete. This is particularly true for a system of measurement and monitoring which is broad and complex that was designed decades ago for assessing thresholds without regard to cost, resources, implementation capacity, or feasibility. There are as a consequence, some indicators that have not been fully measured and for which conclusions either could not or have not been drawn. The 2011 Draft Report nonetheless clearly discloses these unknowns and the basis for the “unknown” conclusion consistent with the Code, Chapter 16. In accordance with Code Section 16.4.5, in many instances in the 2011 Draft Report, alternative and related information is presented to provide a surrogate indication of condition relative to the subject Threshold Standard. However, according to Code Section 16.4.5, TRPA cannot use such information to make a determination on Threshold Standard status. In the future, if additional funding or resources can be applied or redirected to these indicators, more complete methods of measuring and reporting in these categories may be possible if the area becomes a high priority.</p> <p>The commenters may be objecting to the 2011 Draft Report’s method of summarizing or aggregating the status and trend of indicators. Nonetheless, the method was fully transparent and reasonable given the availability and variability in the information. The 2011 Draft Report discloses the percent attainment for indicators for which a determination could be made based on available data and clearly noted the number of “unknown” determinations for each Threshold Category or Indicator Reporting Category. We have reported or referenced available data in every indicator reporting category, but data was not always statistically or technically sufficient or aligned to the standard to support a valid status or trend determination. For “unknown” determinations, it was not possible to make a valid determination on status either way (i.e., attainment or non-attainment) due to lacking data. Consequently, it was not accounted for in the percent attainment determination made for an Indicator Reporting Category or Threshold Category. When reporting conclusions in the aggregate, the 2011 Draft Report clearly and directly discloses: 1) the total number of standards/indicators addressed, 2) number of standards “attained”, 3) number of standards “not yet attained”, and 4)</p>

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	number of standards for which a status determination could not be made due to Insufficient data (“unknown”). Additionally, when aggregating indicators within an indicator reporting category with and “unknown” determinations, the confidence level assigned to indicator reporting category determination was reduce to reflect unknown indicator determinations.
11. Comments claim “Implemented” is not a valid status determination.	TRPA defends that “Implemented” is an appropriate conclusion to report for certain types of Threshold Standards. Many of the adopted Threshold Standards (as adopted by the TRPA Governing Board in Resolution 82-11) are policy statements or management standards without a specific numerical target and consequently their status cannot be quantified. When these policy statements and management directions were adopted in 1982, the intent then was to assure that the management standards and policy statements were appropriately incorporated into the Regional Plan that would follow threshold adoption (i.e., the 1987 Regional Plan). For these types of standards, the 2011 Draft Report addresses whether the Regional Plan includes adopted policies and implementing Code in line with the adopted threshold management standards and policy standards. In all cases, it was determined that policies and management standards adopted in Resolution 82-11 had been incorporated and adopted in the 1987 Regional Plan and are being implemented through TRPA’s Environmental Improvement Program and/or project review process. Functionally, these policies and standards are being applied and implemented at the project (review) scale and thus it was concluded that the region is implementing the action steps needed to meet these standards and is therefore in “attainment” with the adopted policy statement/management standard.
12. Commenters request access to the spreadsheets used to track responses to peer review input.	Spreadsheets used to track peer-review input and responses are included as an appendix to the 2011 Final Report.
13. TASC claims 2011 Draft Report contributors from scientific institutions merely provided data and had no role in data analysis or 2011 Draft Report content.	All listed contributors made material contributions to all aspects of each chapter and technical sections.
14. Commenters ask for clarification of why graphics in the 2011 Draft	The difference in graphics is based on more data being included in the 2011 Draft Report than the 2011 <i>State of the Lake Report</i> . The 2011 Draft Report included new data (the 2011 annual average

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<p>Report do not match graphics in the 2011 UC Davis – <i>State of the Lake Report</i> for annual average Secchi depth.</p>	<p>data point) that was not reported in the <i>2011 State of the Lake Report</i>, hence the difference in trend trajectory. If the commenters compared annual average and winter average data and trend graphics from the 2012 UC Davis – <i>State of the Lake Report</i> with the 2011 Draft Report, it is apparent that the same data and trend is represented; the only difference is that the 2011 Draft Report shows error bars (i.e., the within year variation in Secchi depth measurements) for each year as recommended by the peer-review. The inclusion of this data point is consistent with Code Section 16.4.3.A, which requires reporting the indicator’s current status for which TRPA has reliable data.</p>
Comments Related to Threshold Standard Amendment Recommendations	
<p>15. Comments suggest that the 2011 Draft Report improperly recommends the update of Threshold Standards without sufficient analysis.</p>	<p>The comments assert a general lack of analysis but do not take into consideration years of evaluation and analysis of the scientific and technical basis of Threshold Standards completed during the Pathway planning process between 2002 and 2006. The need and analytical basis for recommending changes to Threshold Standards is set out in earlier reports and previous Threshold Evaluations and this prior information is referenced in the 2011 Draft Report. The peer review also confirmed that there were many instances in which TRPA should re-evaluate its adopted set of standards.</p> <p>Furthermore, recommendations to modify adopted threshold standards are based on the experience of endeavoring for many years to evaluate compliance with a Threshold Standard when it is apparent that many of the adopted targets are inherently ambiguous. There has been a persistent bias against changing existing Threshold Standards on the claim that it would be “weakening” the system. Consequently, many standards have remained in place long after their utility has been known to be questionable. The standard for littoral Lake Tahoe is just one example: “<i>reduce dissolved inorganic nitrogen loading to Lake Tahoe from all sources by 25 percent of the 1973-81 annual average.</i>” First, as articulated and adopted, it is not clear which pollutant sources are being referenced. Secondly, the 1973-81 levels are not well documented or were based on rough or hypothetical estimates. Lastly, research that contributed to the adoption of the Lake Tahoe TMDL supports the need to target very specific pollutant sources, which the current standard does not reference. If the target to be achieved was never measured and is therefore unknown, the status determination will be forever unknown unless the standard is clarified. This is just one example of the basis for recommending updates to many of the adopted Threshold Standards. The basis for other amendments can be found in cited reports related to the Pathway planning process or the Lake Tahoe TMDL.</p> <p>The recommendations in the 2011 Draft Report are general and wide reaching, presenting a range of</p>

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	available actions. While commenters are concerned that each recommendation is not accompanied by its full analysis, this information would be part of a later proposed action when specific proposals to update Threshold Standards are forwarded. Additional analysis would be performed and publicly discussed and disclosed at that time.
16. Comments claim TRPA has been remiss in updating Threshold Standards as recommended during the Pathway planning process and previous Threshold Evaluations.	TRPA is careful to assure that its proposals for updates to scientific Threshold Standards are well supported before advancing a proposal to change a Threshold Standard. TRPA proposes updates to Threshold Standards and associated indicators only when the basis for the change is fully supported by complete scientific and technical evidence and Tahoe-specific baseline information. The proposed changes to Threshold Standards based on the Pathway working group recommendations frequently had a valid general scientific and/or theoretical basis, but did not have adequate Tahoe-specific basis (e.g., field data) to support the change or other analysis to tailor a new standard to the Region. In such instances, the Pathway working group reports acknowledged that more Tahoe-specific scientific study was needed before specific changes could be proposed or finalized. Only those threshold amendments that have fully adequate scientific backing or technical basis were forwarded from the 2006 Threshold Evaluation and working group process into recommendations for proposed Threshold amendments along with the 2012 Regional Plan Update. Similarly, future Threshold Standard updates will be focused on specific resource issues and only be forwarded after sufficient scientific and technical foundation is documented and provided.
Comments Related to Impervious Surface	
17. Comments claim the RPU EIS and 2011 Draft Report misinterpret the manner in which the impervious cover threshold indicator should be evaluated and reported claiming that both evaluation and reporting of impervious cover must be made not only at the regional scale but also at the parcel, Hydrologic Resource Area (HRA), watershed, and Plan Area scale. Commenters claim that the 2011 Draft Report	The applicable threshold states that “impervious cover shall comply” with the land capability coefficients set forth in the 1974 Bailey Report. The commenters suggest that TRPA is required to measure the status of this indicator on a “parcel-by-parcel” scale. These commenters, however, confuse threshold implementation with measurement. TRPA implements the impervious cover threshold by limiting coverage on parcels to those Bailey coefficients but with some significant exceptions. For example, coverage on high capability lands within commercial centers may, through transfers, exceed the coefficients several times over (e.g., up to 70% coverage). In addition, a vacant residential parcel’s coverage is not metered out by the coefficients but by the coverage system under IPES, which is generally consistent with the Bailey coefficients on a broad scale but not necessarily on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The Regional Plan also addresses over-covered parcels by imposing an incremental excess coverage mitigation requirement. A project proponent, whose parcel contains coverage exceeding the coefficients, must either reduce the coverage by a proportionate amount or

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<p>improperly fails to disclose the impacts of impervious cover on various resources.</p>	<p>facilitate offsite coverage reduction (either directly or via a fee). The offsite coverage reduction is not tied to over-covered parcels; rather it is intended to reduce coverage overall. These longstanding Regional Plan provisions therefore establish that the impervious coverage threshold should be measured at a greater scale than at a parcel-by-parcel basis as suggested by the commenters.</p> <p>The court opinion referenced by the commenters is not inconsistent. The decision in that case centered on whether implementation of the 1984 Regional Plan, which permitted new residential development to exceed the Bailey coefficients without coverage reducing transfers, was consistent with the impervious coverage threshold. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held that such unmitigated project exceptions did not promote attainment of the impervious coverage threshold. The Court did not rule, as the commenters suggest, that TRPA had to measure compliance with the threshold at the parcel level. In fact, Robert Bailey (R. Bailey, pers. comm.) indicated that his system as mapped and presented in his 1974 paper was never intended to be measured at the parcel scale due to uncertainties related to site/parcel-specific characteristics and soil types, and the broad mapping methodologies used to delineate land capability districts. Bailey (1974, pg. 25) clearly states that, <i>“the classification system should provide a <u>regional framework for planning</u> by which land uses consistent with the natural capabilities and limits of the land in the Tahoe basin <u>may be identified.</u>”</i> (underline added for emphasis). Nowhere in the Bailey Report is there reference to measuring the status of the land capability system at the parcel scale as suggested in the TASC comments. TRPA therefore did not measure compliance with the impervious coverage threshold standard at a parcel-by-parcel level. Similarly, Resolution 82-11 and the Regional Plan do not prescribe a spatial scale at which the adopted standard should be measured and evaluated (i.e., watershed, Plan Area, HRA).</p> <p>In the 2011 Draft Report, TRPA assessed compliance with the impervious coverage threshold by comparing the amount of hard coverage in each land capability district (as updated with contemporary soil survey data) with the amount permitted under the appropriate Bailey coefficient. The analysis showed that the Region is exceeding coverage levels prescribed by Bailey for 1b land capability types. The results suggest to the agency that more could be done to reduce coverage in the 1b land capability type. Consequently, recommendations are provided in the 2011 Draft Report and amendments are proposed in the 2012 Regional Plan Update intended to reduce coverage in 1b land capability types.</p> <p>Starting with the 2006 Threshold Evaluation, satellite imaging became available to estimate</p>

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	<p>impervious coverage area in the Tahoe Basin. This data allowed TRPA for the first time to estimate the amount of coverage in each land capability district, calculate the percentage of total land in that district, and determine compliance with the Bailey coefficients. Prior to the 1996 Threshold Evaluation, TRPA could only measure coverage through its project review function as an aggregate of new coverage put down over that five year period (TRPA also reported these figures in the 2006 and 2011 Threshold Evaluations). Since TRPA can now more accurately estimate impervious coverage on the landscape, and given that aggregate parcel measurements would not be useful as a result of how TRPA implements the threshold, broader measurements are appropriate.</p> <p>The commenters' claim that impacts of impervious cover were not disclosed in the 2011 Draft Report is mistaken. Impacts of impervious cover on different resources are disclosed in the 2011 Draft Report. For example, in the Soil Conservation Chapter, it is reported:</p> <p><i>“Land coverage effectively short-circuits the watershed’s sediment and pollutant-removal mechanisms. Coverage also reduces or eliminates aquatic and terrestrial habitat that provide ecological value (Roy et al 2003). For instance, the delivery of sediment, a pollutant of concern identified in the Lake Tahoe TMDL (Lahontan and NDEP 2010), can be created by flashy streams with increasing power to erode as impervious cover increases within a basin (Booth 1990)... Impervious cover is a primary indicator of land disturbance. Excessive impervious surface within a watershed can have far-reaching detrimental effects on water quality, surface hydrology, groundwater, soil health, fisheries, wildlife habitat suitability and vegetation growth.”</i></p>
<p>18. Comments claim the 2011 Draft Report should have presented an analysis of how soft coverage can be equated with hard coverage for mitigation purposes.</p>	<p>The analysis requested by this comment is in the response to comments prepared for the RPU Final EIS. The purpose of the 2011 Draft Report is to assess current conditions relative to adopted Threshold Standards and therefore the 2011 Draft Report is not the appropriate platform to analyze the effects of proposed RPU actions.</p>
<p>Comments Related to Air Quality</p>	
<p>19. Comments assert TRPA “fail[ed] to perform an adequate scientific analysis... [and] assumed [the] private automobile to be the</p>	<p>The commenters' assertion is mistaken that TRPA reported the automobile as the primary cause of ozone. The TASC missed important references in the 2011 Draft Report which included the following information related to sources of ozone:</p>

Issue/Concern Raised	TRPA Response
<p>primary cause of ozone..."</p>	<p><i>"Ozone is considered a secondary pollutant, created by photochemical reactions between hydrocarbons (HC), and oxides of nitrogen (NOx) in sunlight. The primary sources of HC and NOx include in-basin mobile sources (cars, trucks, boats, aircraft, off-road vehicles, etc.), biomass burning (wood stoves, wildfires, prescribed burning), and consumer products such as solvents. Ozone is also transported into the Basin to a lesser extent from populated areas surrounding the Basin, and the ambient concentration of O₃ is highly dependent on meteorological conditions such as sunlight, temperature, wind speed, and mixing conditions. Typically, the greater the volume of sources contributing to precursor gas concentration (e.g., increased traffic volume) during optimal weather conditions (cloudless days), the higher the concentration of Ozone."</i></p> <p>Also referenced in the air quality chapter are reports produced by California Air Resources Board (2006) and others related to the sources of ozone and other air pollutants (Green et al. 2011; Chen et al. 2011; Zhu et al. 2011; Zhu et al. 2009; Gertler et al. 2006; Cliff and Cahill 2000). In addition to these references, in response to these comments, the following additional reference and information is included in the 2011 Final Report: Gertler A., E. Weinroth, L. Menachem, and J. Karacin. 2008. <i>Development of an Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory for the Tahoe Basin that Incorporates Current and Future Land Use Scenarios</i>. Report to EPA.</p>
<p>20. The commenters declare the Theil Regression method used to characterize air pollutant concentration trends is not "technically appropriate."</p>	<p>All air quality trend analysis was performed by Dr. Mark Green of the Desert Research Institute. Peer reviewers did not find fault with the trend analysis methodology used for air quality indicators.</p>
<p>21. Comments state there are insufficient Air Quality monitoring efforts in the Basin to make definitive status determinations.</p>	<p>The 2011 Draft Report's conclusions are based on the best available information from resources available within current funding limitations to monitor air quality. Air quality monitoring requires specialized equipment and it is expensive to operate, calibrate, and maintain. TRPA has been adding to the Regional monitoring network and capacity incrementally over the last five years as resources become available. More recently, the State of Nevada generously provided additional funds that allowed TRPA to add monitoring stations and sensors at Stateline, NV and Bliss State Park, respectively. These funds have also been used to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for criteria air pollutants.</p>

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	<p>As further resources are made available, additional stations and data may be made possible. This report relies on best available data given existing resource constraints at the time the analysis was performed. TRPA acknowledges in the 2011 Draft Report that there are additional monitoring needs to fully satisfy the scope of monitoring and reporting called for in the Regional Plan. Furthermore, the 2011 Draft Report fully discloses the level of confidence in status and trend determinations, the scope of the monitoring effort and locations of all monitoring sites in the Region for each indicator through presentation of mapped information as well as information presented in the ‘<i>confidence</i>’ and ‘<i>monitoring approach</i>’ subsections of each Indicator Summary.</p>
<p>22. Commenters ask TRPA to adopt the most stringent state air quality standards for the Tahoe Region.</p>	<p>Commenters’ request is provided as an alternative proposal for consideration and analysis in the RPU EIS, but is not currently presented within the proposed Plan alternative nor is it being recommended as the preferred approach by the Bi-State consultation stakeholders who made recommendations on the Final RPU. TRPA is not required by the Compact to adopt uniform air quality standards Region-wide. According to TRPA Compact Article V(d), Resolution 82-11, and the Regional Plan, the agency “<i>shall provide for attaining and maintaining local, state, and federal air and water quality standards, whichever is strictest, in the portions of the region where they are applicable.</i>”</p>
<p>23. Commenters assert TRPA failed to include the most recent air quality measurements and did not include air quality data from the Echo Summit monitoring station.</p>	<p>Commenters suggest that TRPA must include air quality data collected from a monitoring station that is located outside of the Compact jurisdiction. This air quality data may not represent conditions in the Lake Tahoe airshed or conditions that could affect higher density human populations in the Basin. TRPA evaluated all air quality data monitored and reported within TRPA jurisdictional boundaries and available at the time the air quality chapter was drafted. Since the completion of the draft air quality chapter, additional data has been released and posted by EPA, CARB and NDEP. In response to comments requesting this data be provided, it has been included in the 2011 Final Report.</p>
<p>24. Comments note concern that particulate matter – and indicator used to judge effects on human health -- was improperly grouped with the visibility indicator category, and that the 2011 Draft Report should have included an analysis of</p>	<p>TRPA followed Regional Plan reporting requirements and reported on the standards as organized in Resolution 82-11, the TRPA Governing Board action that adopted Threshold Standards. Commenters would prefer TRPA to adopt a different set of standards and criteria for visibility and air quality and to report these standards differently, but this approach would be inconsistent with Resolution 82-11. The 2011 Draft Report grouped particulate matter indicators under the “Visibility” indicator reporting category because Resolution 82-11 establishes wood smoke and suspended soil particle indicators under the visibility indicator reporting category.</p>

Issue/Concern Raised	TRPA Response
residential wood smoke levels.	<p>The proposal offered by commenters to report on residential wood smoke is infeasible and the best available alternative data has been used to represent this indicator. The 2011 Draft Report reports particulate matter concentrations because the 1981 baseline conditions, explicitly adopted as the reference point for the Threshold Standard for wood smoke and suspended soil particles, could never be measured or established. Because particulate matter concentrations provides the best surrogate measure of wood smoke and suspended soil particles and are adopted state standards, this best available surrogate was used and reported. Furthermore, science has yet to offer any method to discriminate with any statistical certainty 1) the difference between local and out-of-basin sources of residential wood smoke, and 2) the difference between wood smoke created as a result of residential wood stoves versus wild or prescribed burning.</p>
<p>25. TASC asks TRPA to regulate and restrict watercraft use, off highway vehicle (OHV) use, and lawn equipment to prevent ozone formation and to do more air quality enforcement for non-compliant wood stoves.</p>	<p>TRPA appreciates the suggested additions to the Recommendations and Conclusions section of the 2011 Draft Report. This comment primarily concerns matters related to Shorezone Ordinance amendments, which are not being proposed for update at this time due to pending unresolved litigation on the proposed shorezone program changes adopted in 2008.</p> <p>Matters concerning OHV use are administered primarily by the land management agencies in the Region, primarily the US Forest Service, who manages approximately 78% of the lands in the Region and the vast majority of areas open to OHV use. The matter is best addressed in policies in the ongoing update to the LTBMU Forest Plan.</p> <p>Wood stove enforcement involves police powers not directly within TRPA's authority: to enter and search the interior of homes and citation authority. When the wood stove retrofit provisions were established in the 1980s, these pragmatic limitations in TRPA's enforcement authority were apparently not considered. Nonetheless, TRPA has instituted regional actions to establish baseline information, and continues to require wood heater disclosure forms as part of property transactions and logs this wood heater information into the TRPA Accela database. Any compliance program related to wood stoves would involve coordination with local jurisdictions on policies and enforcement approaches.</p>
Comments Related to Noise	
26. Comments assert the 2011 Draft	Commenters' desire for greater characterization of the exceedances reported by TRPA is unnecessary.

Issue/Concern Raised	TRPA Response
<p>Report fails to fully analyze all noise exceedances and questions such as when is [noise] exceedance occurring, why is it occurring, where is it occurring (which monitors are being triggered), and what are the frequencies of exposures to nearby residents and visitors during any given time of year, among others.</p>	<p>A Threshold Evaluation Report is not intended or required to be a detailed scientific inquiry or technical analysis into every aspect of all 150 or more threshold indicators. It is sufficient and complies with the Compact if it provides a meaningful status and trend assessment of threshold related indicators. Furthermore, the quality of monitoring data varies with the capacity of shrinking agency budgets to support investments in all possible monitoring needs when weighed against competing programs and mandates. This comment is likely targeted at the noise effects from the Lake Tahoe Airport. In this instance, TASC would have preferred TRPA to do an in-depth study into the noise effects from the operation of the Lake Tahoe Airport and provide a more comprehensive system to measure noise exceedances related to the airport operations. Costly additional monitoring equipment and established protocols would be needed to accomplish the type of analysis TASC suggests; this level of inquiry may be more appropriate for a focused study related to changes in airport operations but not required for evaluation of the status and trend of noise thresholds. As part of such a master plan analysis, historic airport noise evaluations (such as the BBP Report cited by TASC) as well as public input could be considered and incorporated as appropriate.</p>
<p>27. Comments claim the 2011 Draft Report inadequately addresses single event noise information for sources other than aircraft and watercraft. Comments claim noise was not recognized as an impact on human health in the 2011 Draft Report. Comments further assert that the noise data and analysis is incomplete and should be more fully addressed, noting little is known about the type, location, and extent of monitoring so assessing what actions to take is not possible.</p>	<p>The claims that the 2011 Draft Report should have more fully addressed single event noise sources are noted. As peer review scientists noted, the single event noise standards as currently established can never likely be attained because it is a status determination system based on no exceedances. Peer reviewers also noted that the scope of evaluating the full array of single event noise standards is significant, and the implications of measuring beyond a general survey is cost prohibitive within current resource and funding levels. The peer review further questioned whether pursuing data collection to provide answers to the status of all single event noise standards would result in any meaningful policy or management implications given TRPA's limited authority to enforce single event standards. Nonetheless, measurement and reporting of these indicators by the appropriate state and federal law enforcement entities was included in the recommendations section of the 2011 Draft Report.</p> <p>Although not discussed in the noise chapter introduction, noise affecting human health is addressed in the "relevance" subsections of noise-associated Indicator Summaries. Commenters may have overlooked reported information regarding monitoring locations and scope. Maps of monitoring locations are included in the 2011 Draft Report and exact coordinates can be provided upon request. Also, there is discussion in the 2011 Draft Report regarding the types of noise recorded at different CNEL monitoring sites:</p>

Issue/Concern Raised	TRPA Response
	<p data-bbox="800 269 1871 370"><i>“...primarily generated from automobiles, motorized watercraft, aircraft and other recreational activities (TRPA 2011c). Natural events such as thunderstorms, wave slap, and wind can influence noise levels (TRPA 2011c).”</i></p> <p data-bbox="705 412 1866 513">In addition, the CNEL monitoring effort measured a broad suite of land use types/transportation corridors (n=16) and the average weighted noise over a 24-hour period and thus characterizes the extent of noise throughout the day/night.</p> <p data-bbox="705 555 1902 727">Given the analysis and disclosure in the 2011 Draft Report, current fiscal constraints on fully monitoring all noise indicators, peer review admonitions about the utility of complete data collection to management decision-making, questions raised by the peer review about the advisability of the number of the noise standards and the questionable protocols for interpreting attainment, the 2011 Draft Report represents an adequate assessment of the status and trend of noise in the Basin.</p>
<p data-bbox="191 773 632 833">28. Comments declare that TRPA has failed to enforce noise standards.</p>	<p data-bbox="705 773 1913 1295">Enforcement of noise standards is shared among agency and government partners, and TRPA takes into account many factors in determining whether to exercise its enforcement discretion. For TRPA’s part, during the permit review process, TRPA includes permit conditions to assure that projects, when implemented according to the permit, will not result in the exceedance of adopted threshold standards. TRPA monitors permits for compliance with permit conditions, and has the enforcement discretion to address through a variety of methods instances of non-compliance. As reported in the 2011 Draft Report, other entities also share enforcement responsibility and authority. They often establish independent and mostly equivalent standards, and have the authority and police power to enforce many of the single event noise standards included in Resolution 82-11. TRPA accomplishes threshold compliance through this sharing of roles and responsibilities, and is not required to enforce its standards in the ways most preferred by commenters. In sum, TRPA may in its exercise of its discretionary authority legitimately consider the rate of exceedances of noise standards (which TASC concedes for the Airport is less than 1% of non military/medical flights, and is less than 0.001% of boat trips), the cost of enforcement efforts in an era of constrained budgets, the societal costs of obtaining the last 1% compliance, and competing resource needs.</p>
<p data-bbox="191 1341 495 1365">Comments on Recreation</p>	
<p data-bbox="191 1380 632 1404">29. Comments propose that the 2011</p>	<p data-bbox="705 1380 1885 1404">TRPA appreciates the suggestion to provide additional analysis; however, it is not required, needed,</p>

Issue/Concern Raised	TRPA Response
<p>Draft Report: 1) provide a regional recreation carrying capacity analysis and, 2) evaluate the impacts of existing and potential future recreation resort and facilities projects on environmental resources.</p>	<p>or appropriate as part of a Threshold Evaluation. It is beyond the scope of a Threshold Evaluation to conduct an in-depth recreation user capacity analysis. The purpose of a Threshold Evaluation is more limited: to evaluate the current status of indicators relative to adopted Threshold Standards and state and federal air and water quality standards. Such an analysis would be more appropriately carried out through a focused research project. The 2011 Draft Report nonetheless provides throughout the document a general discussion of the potential impacts of recreational activities on various environmental resources. For example, it is clearly noted in the Wildlife Chapter that the density of roads and trails in forested and wetland settings should be appropriately reduced to improve the suitability of different wildlife habitats and improve soil and water quality.</p> <p>It is beyond the scope of and not possible within a Threshold Evaluation to analyze the impacts of specific potential future projects or planning proposals, such as the effects of yet unknown potential resort facilities on environmental resources. Such analyses might more appropriately be made part of a specific area plan update related to recreation and could more typically be documented in a detailed Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement/Report per NEPA, CEQA or TRPA rules and requirements accompanying a future update to the Recreation element of the Regional Plan.</p>
<p>Comments on the Regional Plan Update Environmental Impact Statement</p>	
<p>30. TASC letters on the 2011 Draft Report also commented on the adequacy of the RPU–EIS analysis.</p>	<p>Comments on the adequacy of RPU EIS are addressed in the Final RPU EIS Response to Comments.</p>