



Mail

PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Location

128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Contact

Phone: 775-588-4547
Fax: 775-588-4527
www.trpa.org

**STATEMENT FROM JOANNE MARCHETTA
TO THE TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY GOVERNING BOARD**

MARCH 25, 2009

Good morning members of the Governing Board, staff and the public.

At the February Governing Board meeting, you asked that I publicly address my qualifications and vision for the Basin and the Agency. I am pleased to have this opportunity to interview.

My remarks this morning will cover those three topics, after which I'll be pleased to answer any questions.

I'd like to start with my qualifications. Throughout my 23-year public service career, I've worked in non-traditional, creative problem-solving settings where controversy and criticism runs high, just as it does here in Tahoe.

I started my career resolving environmental disputes through negotiated settlements at the U.S. Department of Justice. From there, I headed up and managed a multi-disciplinary team of lawyers, consultants, and technical professionals in two of the most innovative Superfund settlements in the state of California. In both instances, my team won awards for the successful outcome. Up to that point, my career had focused on relatively targeted and narrow environmental negotiations and problem-solving.

My next stop broadened my professional outlook. I became more interested in and moved into land use planning and implementation of land use decision-making at a one-of-a-kind federal government corporation called the Presidio Trust, which was created by Congress in 1996. At the Trust, our mission was to use revenue generated from leasing and real estate development of the existing built environment left behind by the Army when the Presidio closed as a military base. We rehabilitated six million square feet of Army buildings, mostly historic structures, and used the leasing and fee revenue we generated to preserve the Presidio of San Francisco as public parkland in perpetuity. That intersection of using wise land use planning and appropriate real estate development to achieve environmental protection of an extremely sensitive and publicly beloved natural resource is similar in parts to the circumstance we now confront here in Tahoe.

When I came to Tahoe in 2005, I'd had seven years of immediate past experience implementing controversial real estate development projects in the context of highly environmentally sensitive public parkland within the setting of the Presidio of San Francisco. At least one board member who sits on this Board and lives nearby the park knows firsthand how successfully the Trust leadership team moved through very contentious land use and real estate decisions, all without litigation.

I've now been at TRPA for almost four years. I arrived here at an extremely active and challenging time, and as Chief Legal Counsel, I've been a participant in the trenches of every major program proposal and activity at the Agency.

These include:

- Adoption of the Shorezone amendments after more than 20 years of debate and development of its implementation programs;
- Development of the Regional Plan Update, including the early Pathway Forum and Place-Based Planning outreach, the threshold amendment proposals, and initiation of the Community Enhancement Program projects;
- I came through the Angora Fire, having evacuated my own home and watched as homes around mine burned. I am therefore both professionally and personally sensitive to the importance of the direction given by the Bi-State Fire Commission to accelerate forest fuels treatments in the Basin, especially in the wildland-urban interface.
- I was in on the initiation of the TRPA's leadership role in acknowledging the threat of aquatic invasive species and building the implementation programs to address the threat of introduction of quagga and zebra mussels, which have devastated other public lakes and water systems. And I am aware of the growing problem of near-shore turbidity and algae growth.
- I've now also become involved in the later stages of developing the Environmental Improvement Program update and reauthorization of Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, a critically important funding strategy for carrying out continued capital improvement projects within the Basin to achieve a broad spectrum of threshold gains.
- And most recently, I have been part of the decision-making to address the severe budget loss and Agency budget development process at the executive and legislative level.

These are only highlights of my knowledge of the Agency's most important initiatives, all of which are mid-stream, and vectoring toward important decision points within the next 12 to 24 months.

This is only an overview of the scope of TRPA policy initiatives in process currently. As you are well aware, as General Counsel to the Agency, I provided primarily legal leadership. In many important instances – Shorezone and the Regional Planning approach being two – the planning course had already been set and, as TRPA's legal

counsel, I was left to react. Nonetheless, Board members and staff alike know that, to the degree possible, given the demands of the General Counsel responsibilities, I weighed-in behind the scenes always mindful that setting policy direction was not my ultimate responsibility at that time. Now I am committed and ready to step out front to take the lead on policy recommendations.

I know from experience that the learning curve at TRPA is 12 to 18 months; I've been through it and know how hard it can be. And so, I believe I have this to offer – I can and already have “hit the ground running.”

- I am in an intensive assessment phase as to both TRPA's internal and external affairs.
- I have the confidence of staff as demonstrated in 360 performance assessments over the last two years.
- I have a keen understanding of the Compact both as to its legal sideboards for decision-making as well as to the policy issues embedded within those legal sideboards.
- I have seen how important working relationships and partnerships are in moving planning and implementation forward within the region. I have seen what doesn't happen when mutual respect among partners is absent. The panoply of past successes in my career would not have happened without the ability to develop strongly supportive working relationships based on mutual respect.
- And I believe I have the support and confidence of many members of this Board who know me because you have worked closely with me. You know how I think, and prepare, and approach issue resolution and problem-solving.

These are extraordinary times for our country, times that leave the Basin in a far more vulnerable circumstance. The next few years are likely to make the difference in how the Region is positioned for the future when full recovery happens, as it will. Will we be ready or will we have let the opportunity pass by? Will we have set a course or will we still be arguing among ourselves about what direction to head? Will we reinvent ourselves to take advantage of new state and federal policies that can connect to new funding for the Basin? Will we be poised and ready to seize opportunities when they are presented? With my leadership vision and the strength of the partnerships that I will create, yes, we will see the future opportunities, we will set the direction, and we will be poised to seize the day when recovery offers new gains for the Basin.

The past is prelude, and everything I have done up to this point has prepared me to lead TRPA at this time and under these circumstances. I've worked for the last decade at the complex intersection of environmental protection, land use planning, and real estate development in sensitive natural environments, a description that fits the challenges Tahoe presents.

Over the next two years, this Board and this Basin will adopt the vision and updated plan for what the Basin expects to become over the next 20 years. We can squander the opportunity by getting lost and confused in the public's criticism characterizing TRPA as misguided. The debate is already lining up its passions on the dissonant sides, is already taking on a political charge and contentiousness, and has already become burdened by misinformed rhetoric. Or, the next Executive Director and this Board can lead the Basin on a path of success through this cross-fire. We can demonstrate the needed leadership and the political will to bring the Basin together, to find principled common ground, and the best path to the future. It is a tremendously challenging time and a dauntingly challenging set of tasks that will require dogged determination, clear purpose and resolve, as well as equanimity and a sense of humor. (Now you know why I traveled to India to meditate for 3 weeks.)

I have built and managed teams to solve intractable environmental and policy debates, I have managed multi-million dollar project budgets, and I know how to set clear goals and objectives, set a course of action, and build and manage a team to execute and get the job done. I am a savvy strategist keenly attuned to political sensitivities and pressures, and can maneuver around the minefields and conflicts to find common ground among the basin partners and stakeholders. I am a relationship builder, and will act with mutual respect for both states' interests. I know how to work collaboratively with agency partners and local jurisdictions that show reciprocal respect for TRPA and its goals. I have the right eclectic mix of skills and expertise and am as capable as anyone of meeting the complex challenges of this time and place in TRPA's history.

I am willing to take this on because this is how I can give back, because Lake Tahoe is a special, some might say almost sacred, environment that deserves concerted and well-intentioned effort. This is "right livelihood," and it is work that must be done and done right. I leave it to you to assess whether I have the necessary skills and competence to lead the Agency at this important time.

With that as backdrop to my qualifications, I'd like your indulgence to move on to address my vision for the Agency and for the Tahoe Region over the next several decades.

My vision for the Agency answers the question as to what management philosophy I bring to the Agency and how the Agency will function to achieve its mission.

First and foremost, I will seek to rebuild strained relationships in this Basin and to find COMMON GROUND. The time is right in this Basin, as in the country, to set aside old and worn dynamics of division, old patterns of complaint, and dated power structures.

My goal is to rebuild how we relate to one another. We cannot solve the continuing challenges of the Basin unless we meet with solution-oriented intentions and collaborate.

The Basin has a bad habit and bad habits need to be broken. TRPA is the entity that everyone loves to hate and to blame for the ills of the day – environmental, economic, and social. What would the Basin be today without TRPA? Less development, a cleaner environment, a happier place to live or work or play? Each person, each agency, each resident, each employer, everyone in this Basin has a responsibility for the quality of life here, for environmental improvements, for economic well-being, and for social stability. Maintaining and improving the Tahoe environment is not my responsibility or TRPA's responsibility alone; it is OUR responsibility – and TRPA will reassert itself as a leader in bringing people together toward that common end.

Some play a larger implementation role than others, but each and every person and entity plays an essential role. Discovering your role, understanding your role, and committing to your role as part of the solution is the challenge we share.

I commit to TRPA doing its part with integrity and respect. I commit to bringing that type of leadership to the Region.

Starting today -- the Compact will be the constant touchstone for TRPA's decision-making, as the Compact is TRPA's Prime Directive. Under my tenure, TRPA will reorient itself around its core mission as defined by the Compact.

The Region has a constitution, and that Constitution is the Compact. As with the larger Constitution – the 1776 version – we may not always agree as individuals as to the constitutional principles that are worthiest of protection, but centuries ago we agreed to maintain order by following the Constitution.

And so too will I remind you as decision-makers of the Compact as the Region's Constitution. At every level – staff's analysis, all our presentations, and all our recommendations will be framed around the sideboards of the Compact as the governing Constitution for the Region. Our plans, programs, processes, and structure will be evaluated and measured against the degree to which we are implementing the Constitution, all parts of it.

We will begin to demonstrate this new rigor as part of the revisions to our strategic plan. We will improve our methods of measuring threshold attainment and bring them up to current scientific standards of rigor; and we will improve the quality of the assessment and reporting in our five-year threshold reviews as well as reporting under the EIP so that we have meaningful information about threshold trends and can be held accountable for the funds coming to the Basin. We will do this so the Basin stakeholders, legislative oversight committees, and those who fund the Compact's mission understand that the Basin's plans, policies, and approaches are effective and are worthy of continued support.

At the same time, I will administer the Compact mandate in its entirety, so as to HARMONIZE the Region's planning policies to the goals and objectives of other federal, state and local jurisdiction's plans, actions, and responsibilities.

Our plans and policies will not and cannot be unilateral or uni-dimensional; they will not be focused solely on threshold gains, but will out of necessity take into account and be consistent with other – increasingly new – policy directives coming from the federal and state governments, initiatives such as AB 32 and SB 375 in California that connect transportation funding for the Basin to land use planning and greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

I will make sure that TRPA plans harmonize with the economic and social goals for the Tahoe Region as a whole, including the sovereignty and self-determination of the sometimes disparate local jurisdictions within the Basin. This means that when TRPA speaks of the “triple-bottom line,” or “sustainability” plans, or the importance of a local jurisdiction's economic development goals, it is not to supplant the Compact's threshold mandate, but to harmonize, as the Compact requires, the wide array of other legitimate governing interests to the Compact's mission. Count on this integrated application of the Compact from me.

The Agency will reorient and focus its limited resources to proposals for action having the greatest regional environmental benefit for the resources spent.

TRPA cannot do everything for everyone, and cannot do everything at once. Budgets are shrinking and staff resources are persistently stretched too thin. The result is that quality of analysis and product has suffered.

During my tenure, I will manage the scope of TRPA's reach. TRPA will focus its resources and efforts on those regional issues where we can have the most significant region-wide environmental benefit for the most efficient resource commitment.

For example, the TMDL science tells us the most important gain we can make over the next 20 years to reverse the trend of clarity loss is to FOCUS on the roads and coverage reduction in over-covered areas in the already developed urbanized cores. It only makes sense then to focus the TRPA's work effort and its Regional Plan revisions to these areas of greatest beneficial effect for water quality threshold gains.

The Agency will reassert its leadership role: TRPA was once and can again be a leader, instigator, visionary, and coalition builder to get the Compact's job done, one step at a time. My goal is to remake the Agency into a Forward Thinking, Regionally Oriented Leader in Land Use Planning and to collaboratively define the Region's collective Implementation Framework for its planning policies

At one time, the Basin's approach represented leading edge land use planning. No more. The perception that the Basin is the most heavily regulated place in the country is false, as is any remaining perception that the Basin's land use strategies are at the leading edge of innovative solutions to environmental and land use policy problems.

Over the next 20 years, beginning today, TRPA will overcome the legacy of resistance and criticism that has limited TRPA's effectiveness. The organizational personality will change from one of victimization and apology to one of policy leadership and innovative achievement. TRPA will no longer be reactive. The Agency will again be proactive as a policy leader, in collaboration with other partners, to discover leading edge, efficient and effective solutions to the Basin's land use policy questions.

TRPA will also be a leader in the collaborative design of a successful implementation framework. Together with Basin partners, the Plan for the Basin will identify the roles and responsibilities and scope of actions expected of each agency, each jurisdiction, each state, each local entity, and each member of the public to successfully implement the regional policies we set. And TRPA will back up that implementation plan with its permit approval authority to effect real beneficial environmental results for the Region.

TRPA Will Strengthen Its Business Practices by building a Culture of Discipline

Under my tenure, staff will engage in rigorous analysis of technical and policy questions, and will come fully prepared to public debate and discussion.

I will place a premium on consistency of interpretation and policy application because consistency builds credibility, trust and respect for the Agency and its staff.

The public has become too accustomed to denigrating staff personally as well as professionally. Through our business practices, staff will be able to stand tall and know that they deserve the respect of those with whom we interact.

We will add rigor, focus and direction by reassessing and defining clear strategic goals and objectives for each major Agency Program, from permitting to environmental improvement project implementation to our legislative outreach agenda, and more.

I Will Build a Culture That Delivers Innovation, New Approaches, and Forward Thinking.

Under my tenure, the Agency will develop its staff, improving and where necessary remaking staff expertise to foster clearly stated policy direction, new ideas, innovation, creative problem-solving, and collaborative solutions. I will make development of managerial and technical depth an important staff development principle.

We will over time invite new blood into the Agency and develop those on staff who show the most initiative, drive, and commitment.

Public education will continue being integrated with customer service to inform residents, visitors, agencies, and all entities of the Basin as to their role in threshold attainment and successful Compact implementation

Customer service has been a driving and important Agency ethic, and it has turned around many but not all people's perceptions of the Agency's effectiveness. TRPA will expand the customer service ethic to include a comprehensive program of public education and active participation in Compact implementation.

Each and every employee will be able to answer for any member of the public or agency not only what is required but why. If you must meet a TRPA requirement, even if you don't agree with it, you will at least understand why what you are being asked to do is a valuable and necessary contribution to the short or long-term health of the Lake and the Basin's environment. You will understand, even if you don't agree, what contribution you are making, the part you are playing in Tahoe's future. If we at TRPA can't say why, then we won't make it a requirement.

And if I can ask for a bit more time, let me too move on to give you my thoughts, as you requested, on my **Vision for the Region**. Like the rest of the country and world, the Basin is at a crossroad confronting how to transition to save itself from an economic meltdown that could reverberate to losses in the environment as well as the economic and social structure of the Basin's communities. As with all natural processes, the Basin must adapt or die.

I am confident that the Basin can and will successfully adapt, and when it does Tahoe will be that ring of majestic snow capped mountains with the blue jewel in its center that every day takes my breath away. Tahoe will support a limited number of small sustainable communities befitting the character of each place, communities that can sustain those who wish to live and work here, and communities that provide for visitors of every economic class to visit and play here. And when we play, we will have broad choices – to swim or canoe or kayak or moor a motor boat, to bike or hike well-marked and maintained trails. We will have shuttles and busses and bike routes to get around, in addition to our cars, most of which by then will not use fossil fuels. Our communities will have stronger schools, and restaurants and groceries and hardware stores and services for residents. We will have entertainment for visitors and residents alike. We will have pristine spots to seek solitude and find our spirit. And whether resident, employer, employee, or visitor, all who enjoy Tahoe will respect its diversity of offerings and opportunities AND its environmental limits, and understand that to have sacred majesty there must be shared responsibility to participate in and contribute to its protection. With this shared ethic of responsibility for its protection, we will be able to successfully restore and protect the sensitive environment that makes Tahoe the jewel of the Sierra.

That is the success I envision for Tahoe in 20 years. Here are some of the trends I see that will lead us there:

Redevelopment. Within the framework of the Compact, the already built environment of the Basin will be responsibly remade. The Region is nearly at buildout, and there will not be substantial new development. Redevelopment will be the focus of the next 20 years. There has already begun a strident public debate on the proper role of rehabilitating the already built environment within Tahoe. Often stated is that until thresholds have been attained, all redevelopment projects and new recreation activities should stop so that population and vehicles and visitors will not increase. But it was never expected that all thresholds would have been attained within this first 20 years, only that progress would be made.

The future of the Basin is NOT in keeping people out. Population is growing; the Central Valley of California alone is projected to grow by 10 million residents over the next decade. Some of those folks will want to enjoy Tahoe just as we enjoy Tahoe.

Without tourism and visitors, the Basin has no economic base, and without economic base, there is no source of funds or impetus to fund the high level of environmental investment needed to make environmental gains.

One of the tools – and not the only one – will be the environmentally sensitive remake of the existing built environment to achieve as much environmental gain as private investment can deliver and still be economically feasible.

To those who fear this change, believing it will be overdone, I invite your thoughts for solutions. How will we pay for the estimated \$1.5 billion in investment needed to gain 10 feet of lake clarity?

TREND #2 concerns water quality as a priority. Water quality threshold gains and TMDL compliance will drive the next set of regional planning policies and actions in the Region. Over next 20 years, implementation of updated water quality policies and strategies offer the greatest opportunity for environmental gains in the Region. What does this mean?

It means roadway agencies of the two states will be a strategic focus for action. Strategies and agreements for action must be reached to meet water quality and other environmental gains. We've always known the Bailey coverage system we've used for 20 years was not designed to address the adverse environmental effects of roadways. Now the TMDL science verifies that when cars pulverize road sand and other soil runoff that then washes into the Lake, clarity loses. The next 20 years will finally bridge this gap. Over five to ten years, the Region must retrofit all roadways for water quality gains.

The next most effective focus area is coverage reduction in over-covered, urbanized nodes. We will most likely achieve these coverage reductions through redevelopment projects consistent with TRPA water quality policies as well as each local community's desired character. The vision of each local community was collectively developed and successfully expressed in the Place-Based Planning vision statements. TRPA embraces these local desires. One way to achieve the Place-Based vision together with coverage reduction is to add a small amount of height and density appropriate to each jurisdiction's desired community character. With added height and density, the existing coverage footprint can be reduced while leaving the project still financially feasible. Where communities may object to these height or density changes, then they may have to consider higher-cost sediment removal infrastructure or better treatment systems. These are the type of policy choices that will confront the TRPA, each local community ringing the Lake, and the Region as a whole as we move to conclusion on the Regional Plan Update.

We will Rethink and Reorient the erosion-control BMP Program approach to achieve full, faster, more efficient, and effective implementation for water quality gains. Roadway agencies, especially in Nevada, are stepping up to make needed water quality retrofit changes. They are asking for fairness. So that roadway agencies do not have to overdesign the sediment treatment systems for the roads they administer, they are asking that adjacent landowners do their part as well. So, over time we will still focus on parcel treatments, but combine them for efficiency with an area-wide system focus. In the near future, we will build the water quality and BMP treatment system so all entities are designing and paying for only their reasonable share of reductions in runoff and sediment load to the Lake.

TREND #3 concerns the increased importance of integrating Transportation Planning Policy with Land Use Policies.

- Transportation planning for the Region will be better integrated with TRPA's Regional Plan in order to strategically leverage funding for implementation of Basin transportation projects. The Regional Plan Update must not only satisfy the Compact's threshold objectives, but also new state-level climate change initiatives and sustainable communities commitments. These connections must be made to TRPA's Regional Plan Update because transportation funding for the Basin will be legislatively tied to the Region's commitment to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions and smart growth land use changes. We will have to marry the Compact requirements with the State level requirements in legislation such as SB 375 and AB 32 to open funding doors within the State of California. We will need to meet these goals in a manner that is consistent and acceptable across state lines and does not jeopardize a significant new source of funding.

TREND #4 concerns Continuing the Priority of Catastrophic Fire Risk Reduction and Prevention and Treatment of Aquatic Invasive Species -- Forest Fuels

Reduction to reduce the risks of catastrophic fire and Programs to prevent invasive species will continue to be a top priority in the Basin.

- The directives of the Bi-State Fire Commission will drive forest fuels removal within the Basin for years to come. All agencies – local, state, federal, and TRPA – will collaboratively continue to use and refine the very successful joint planning and project delivery process to meet annually updated forest fuels reduction objectives.
- TRPA's collaborative relationship with the Basin's Fire Chiefs will result in implementation of fire defensible space measures on virtually all Basin property within the wildland urban interface, and these actions will be completed consistently with effective water quality BMPs.
- The prevention of catastrophic wildfires will prevent associated adverse water quality, air quality, and climate change effects.
- There will be increased vigilance to prevent the introduction of invasive species, and treatment programs will continue that seek to eliminate existing problems.

TREND #5 concerns Recreation -- Recreation demand in the Basin will remain high and will be managed through a new vision for recreation within the Basin.

- Recreation demands for the Basin are going through rapid change. Casinos are in rapid decline from competition outside the Basin. There is reduced reliance on gaming as either a revenue or visitor source, and major work will go into re-visioning the casino space and uses.
- Over the next 20 years, we will be remaking, collaboratively with our state and federal agency partners who administer many of the recreation lands and sites of the Basin, the Region's recreation paradigm. We will provide different recreation amenities in the future than exist today to meet high recreation demands.
- Trail and bikeway system will be completed and well maintained as both a transportation alternative as well as an outdoor recreation amenity for visitors. A Bikeway that circumnavigates the Lake is a priority amenity to be completed.
- Short-term visitor accommodations (i.e., tourist accommodation units or TAUs) will be provided to meet demands, but vary enough in type to provide visitation opportunity to all economic classes.
- The gateways to the Basin will have information and amenities to direct and inform the visitor.

TREND #6 concerns Reaffirming Limits on Development Potential -- We will not expand, and in some instances we will retract, the urban boundary in order to maintain the existing controls on development potential within the Basin.

- The Region will look at anew and assess our public lands acquisition framework.
- We will maintain in public ownership already acquired public lands and assure that these lands will not be developed in the future.
- We will identify future acquisition potential and develop new strategies, outside the shrinking SNPLMA funding mechanism, to meet future acquisition potential.

TREND #7 concerns Re-strategizing Funding for Environmental Gains in the Basin – We will rethink our funding strategy for Basin – In order to get anything done in these troubled and difficult economic times where budgets are shrinking and funding sources are stretched, we must rethink the implementation strategies for funding the Regional Plan.

- The Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) is a shrinking source of funds. We will need to lower our expectations as to what can be accomplished with these funds. And, therefore, a new financial plan for the Basin must be adopted.
- The EIP Update must be completed and adopted to support funding requests from all sectors. The Update will be an essential part of the implementation strategy of the Regional Plan.
- In order to leverage future funding commitments at the federal and state level, local jurisdictions in collaboration with Basin partners will solve the issue of how to fund the long-term operations and maintenance (O & M) of capital projects for water quality treatment. The concepts of a Council of Governments and Stormwater Assessment Districts will be among the strategies considered to address the O & M funding issue.
- The Region will reactivate its legislative agenda and rebuild legislative partnerships for effective action and funding commitments.

TREND #8 – The final trend, albeit an unconventional outlier in the list, concerns the interplay of the Executive Director and this Board – In order to realize the trends I've outlined – to effect the decisions needed to realize clear objectives and trends – I will commit to bring before the Board to the greatest extent possible the larger picture issues outside of the context of project-level decisions, present them with analysis of the full policy context for discussion and debate, and offer clear choices and solutions. This is how staff can be most respectful of your time.

CLOSING SUMMATION: In closing, what are my take-away points? It is time for the Basin to come together to determine a collective future. That unity will require a leader who can build coalitions and bring people together; a leader who is a pragmatist and can see all sides; a leader who can negotiate based on principles, not positions; and a leader who has mastered listening and communication to reach true understanding of disparate interests in the search for common ground. I am that leader.

There was an editorial in the Tahoe papers just after last Governing Board meeting. The commenter criticized me without knowing me based on the label I have worn as “lawyer” for the Agency. The comment assumed that as a lawyer, I am adversarial by nature. In fact, I am far more a collaborator than a litigator. I come to this opportunity with the recognition that TRPA cannot alone achieve thresholds, cannot alone implement the Compact, cannot alone protect the majesty or sensitive environments of Tahoe, and therefore cannot alone succeed. Relationships in this Basin are everything – TRPA succeeds only to the degree to which we can build effective partnerships, with the two States, with Governor’s Offices, with agencies, with stakeholders and interest groups, with legislators, with local jurisdictions, and with the public.

As TRPA’s Executive Director, I will build a powerful coalition of interests. I invite and welcome the participation of and suggestions from any person or any organization that wishes to work with us. I will challenge efforts to divide in a world that is increasingly seeking paths to unity. Division and the use of polarizing rhetoric is a bankrupt tactic. My approach will be to invite collaboration and the search for common ground in solving a set of monumental policy and implementation questions for the Region, questions that confront us all. I invite your better idea, your solution. Make it a public suggestion, deliver it into the public fishbowl so it can become part of the debate, part of the collection of good ideas that can lead to better plans for the Region and improved solutions. It does us no good after a long public policy debate to have withheld your constructive suggestions in order to exercise an old and dated tactic – sue to make your point. I invite all parties to the large problem-solving table.

I’ll say it again, it is time for the Basin to come together, and TRPA under my leadership and the leadership of this Board intends to lead that charge. Please join me in successfully moving the Basin through the next two decades toward the healthier environment that we need to support a thriving mountain economy and a socially content future for the Tahoe Region.

Thank you for your patience in hearing me out. I am happy to answer questions.