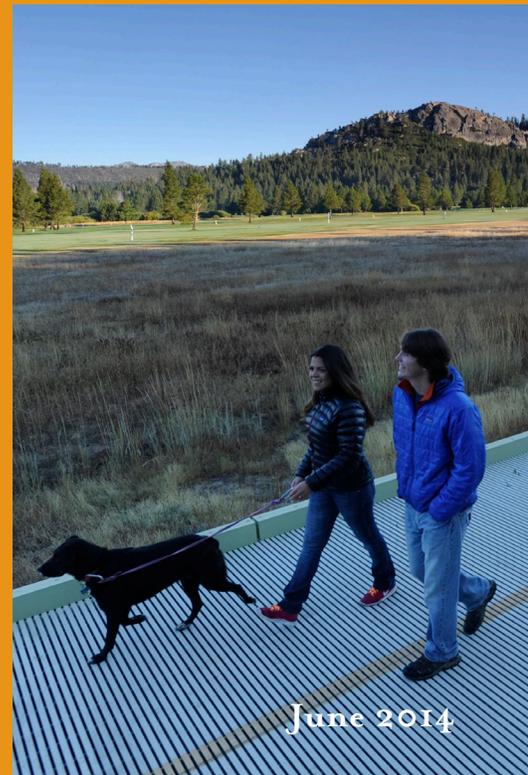




# STRATEGIC PLAN

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

|| *Lake Tahoe*



June 2014



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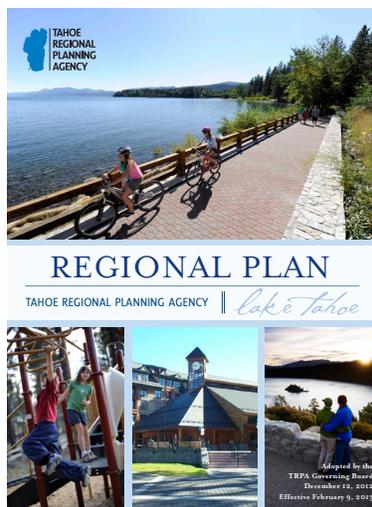
*Cover top photo and top photo by Mike Vollmer. Bottom far left and far right photo by Corey Rich. Bottom center photo by istockphoto.com*

# INTRODUCTION: THE NEW TRPA

The very heart of Lake Tahoe's conservation success story lies at the intersection of policy and politics where collaboration means the difference between losing an irreplaceable natural resource and protecting it for generations to come. The last few years, while barely a dot on the Lake's geologic timescale, have proven to be a major milestone in Lake Tahoe's history. This milestone has helped position the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to return to its core focus of leading the regional effort for Lake Tahoe's conservation and restoration.

Recent public policy events have highlighted the ongoing discussion on how best to manage Lake Tahoe, the world's tenth deepest lake and one of the clearest and most spectacular bodies of water on the planet. These discussions about Tahoe's future fell on the heels of environmental and economic circumstances in which the Lake's survival was threatened on multiple fronts. A failing economy, communities in decline, catastrophic wildfire, invasive species, legacy land use impacts, changing climatic conditions, and the need to strengthen bi-state relations drew out negotiations about Tahoe's future.

After 10 years of unprecedented outreach to build the broadest stakeholder consensus in Tahoe's history, in December 2012, the TRPA Governing Board adopted an updated Regional Plan. The Agency had not made a comprehensive update to the plan since its adoption in 1987; consequently, the action was significant. In adopting the updated plan, the Board acknowledged that failure to act could result in the loss of the Lake's pristine environment, famed clarity, and the nearly \$5 billion economy that the Lake supports.



## TRPA VISION & MISSION

Our **vision** is for a Lake environment that is sustainable, healthy, and safe for the community and future generations.

Our **mission** is to cooperatively lead the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region, while improving local communities, and people's interactions with our irreplaceable environment.

## TRPA IN CONTEXT

The Agency's vision for a Lake environment that is sustainable, healthy, and safe for the community and future generations has not changed. The Bi-State Compact is the Agency's touchstone and framework for achieving this vision. TRPA is directed by the Compact to "establish environmental threshold carrying capacities and to adopt and enforce a regional plan and implementing ordinances which will achieve and maintain such capacities while providing opportunities for orderly growth and development consistent with such capacities," (Compact Article I(b)) and to "ensure an equilibrium between the Region's natural endowment and its manmade environment." Compact Article I(a)(10). Legislation in both California and Nevada in 2013 reaffirmed both California and Nevada's commitment to the preservation of Lake Tahoe.

Over the last five years the Agency has been reinventing itself as a solution-oriented, more collaborative organization poised to solve today's environmental problems. In doing so, TRPA

has continued serving the basic partnership that is the Compact. The Agency's core strategic function is to lead the collaboration among an increasingly broad coalition to implement the goals of the Compact.

To achieve its external goals, the internal agency cultural shifts that began with the 2010 Strategic Plan are fortified for long-term sustainability with the following core principles:

- Solid cross-agency alignment with a team orientation to mission goals
- Integrated decision-making with a problem solving, solution-finding emphasis
- Program and project management with an improved performance management system for clearer accountability
- Best business practices for efficiency.

In sum, excellent performance at every level is the Agency goal, and is responsive to the bi-state call for performance measures associated with budget appropriations. Clear performance measures will form the foundation for an improved culture of accountability to implement TRPA's mission.

### **IMPLEMENTING THE 2012 REGIONAL PLAN**

With the adoption of the 2012 Regional Plan, the Agency now is pivoting more of its time and attention to implementation.

A set of targeted amendments maintain the focus on environmental conservation but in a way that can adapt to current conditions and foster economic revitalization. The three main areas of the plan's focus are:

- Accelerating the restoration of the Lake's clarity and making other environmental threshold gains through redevelopment and the capital investments of the Environmental Improvement Program.
- Improving efficiencies in the permitting process by transitioning more permit review authority to local governments through an Area Plan framework and returning TRPA to a more regional focus.

- Creating more bikeable and walkable communities throughout the Tahoe Basin to improve the environment and the quality of life for residents and visitors.

The Agency's 1987 Plan focused primarily on growth control, which included specific growth boundaries and development limits. While appropriate at the time, this strategic direction to stop rampant growth and slow but not stop all development has inculcated the general psyche of the Tahoe Basin and painted the Agency as an impediment or negative force to some and too lenient on development for others.

All of the foundations of growth management remain in place in the 2012 Regional Plan. In fact, annual allocations for residential growth are less than half of those authorized in the 1987 Plan and all other forms of development, such as tourist accommodation (hotel) units and commercial floor area, remain capped. Today's problems differ, and the new plan addresses them. With a shrinking workforce and population, aging infrastructure contributing to environmental degradation, and a fiscal cliff looming for continued public funding, the updated plan focuses more on reinvestment and capital improvements as a path to environmental gain, incentivizing the private sector to make a larger share of needed environmental improvements.

# TRPA At-a-Glance

## GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

**Casey Beyer, Chair**

Governor of California Appointee

**James Lawrence, Vice Chair**

Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Representative

**Shelly Aldean**

Carson City Representative

**Marsha Berkgigler**

Washoe County Commissioner

**Mark Bruce**

Governor of Nevada Appointee

**Elizabeth Carmel**

California Assembly Speaker Appointee

**Tim Carlson**

Presidential Appointee

**Timothy Cashman**

Nevada At-Large Member

**Hal Cole**

Council Member, City of South Lake Tahoe

**Nancy McDermid**

Douglas County Commissioner

**Barbara Cegavske**

Nevada Secretary of State

**Sue Novasel**

El Dorado County Supervisor

**Larry Sevison**

Placer County Appointee

**E. Clement Shute, Jr.**

Governor of California Appointee

**William Yeates**

California Senate Rules Committee Appointee

## LEGAL CHARTER AND GOVERNANCE

### Charter

TRPA was created in 1969 as the first bi-state regional land use planning agency in the country with unique land use authority to manage development. It is governed under the Compact enacted by the states of California and Nevada, affirmed by the United States Congress, and then signed by the states' governors and the President of the United States. In 1980, the Compact was amended to bring broader, statewide representation to the Governing Board. Recent bi-state legislation addressed the need to update the Compact with an explicit recognition of economic conditions in environmental planning at Lake Tahoe.

### Governing Board

TRPA is directed by a 15-member Governing Board, seven members from California, seven from Nevada, and one non-voting Presidential Appointee. Four of the members of the governing body from each state constitute a quorum.

### Advisory Planning Commission

In addition to a Governing Board, TRPA is advised by a technical body called the Advisory Planning Commission (APC). This 21-member body, also created by the Compact, reviews technical analysis and proposals for adequacy and recommends plans and approaches to the governing body for adoption by ordinance. This commission includes chief planning officers from all the counties in the Region as well as designees of key water quality and natural resource agencies.

## TRPA ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD CATEGORIES

- Water Quality
- Air Quality
- Soil Conservation
- Vegetation
- Fisheries
- Wildlife
- Scenic Quality
- Recreation
- Noise



# Our Priorities

## WHAT WE DO / MISSION

### ACCELERATE THRESHOLD ATTAINMENT

- **Implement the 2012 Regional Plan**—Focus on regional issues such as adapting to climate change.

**Responsible Lead:**

PLANNING DIVISION

- **Develop and implement new funding strategies for the Environmental Improvement Program**—The Agency is confronted with constrained state funding sources and the decline of multiple federal grants that support restoration, science, and monitoring programs.

**Responsible Lead:**

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT DIVISION

### ESTABLISH TRPA AS A LEADER IN ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS

- **Establish and maintain new cutting-edge, nationally recognized environmental and sustainability programs**—The Agency operates on a world stage and the time is ripe for growing TRPA's reputation nationally and internationally as a leader in environmental restoration and sustainability approaches. We will seek best practices and form new strategic alliances.

**Responsible Lead:**

PLANNING DIVISION

## HOW WE DO IT / EXECUTION

### PROPEL THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BEST INFORMATION, DATA, AND SCIENCE FOR DECISION-MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Provide excellent information for accountability and transparency of policy decisions and operations**—TRPA is committed to continuing strong relations with the science community and improving measurement and reporting for programmatic and fiscal accountability.

**Responsible Lead:**

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS DIVISION

### OPERATE AS A HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION

- **Create an enduring organizational culture of high performance and continuous improvement**—The Agency will implement staff development and leadership programs to build capability, ensure accountability, and grow competencies to deliver on performance targets.

**Responsible Lead:**

EXECUTIVE TEAM

# BACKGROUND

The ability of TRPA to achieve its mission at Lake Tahoe is influenced by geopolitical drivers and is inextricably linked to public opinion. The political compromises forged in the creation of the Agency are hardwired into our culture and general operating philosophies. Therefore, staying connected to external trends and building relationships across multiple jurisdictional boundaries are crucial to achieving success.

## EXTERNAL TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

After an epic effort to bring the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan into a 21st century framework, compromise on Tahoe policy matters occurred in recent years within the context of a deteriorating regional economy. Gaming, the traditional economic driver of the Tahoe Basin, began a steady decline even before the severe national recession. According to the Nevada Gaming Control Board, gaming employment has declined by 27 percent since 2001 on the South Shore. Additional information indicates that regional gaming revenue has declined by 19 percent (adjusted for inflation) since FY 1999-2000, as California Native American Gaming has proliferated. Although gaming in general is on the rise in certain population segments across the nation, competition from neighboring California Native American tribes and the internet are hurting casinos across the Basin. This drop is expected to continue without recovery. In 2010, Tahoe's local governments agreed on a common vision to remake the economic base of Tahoe around outdoor recreation pursuits, health and wellness, and environmental innovation.

Tourism in the Basin is currently seasonally dependent. Typically transient occupancy taxes (TOT or hotel taxes) rise during the peak winter and summer seasons. With gaming historically being the core industry for South Shore's Stateline, these trends have caused substantial



impacts: loss of thousands of jobs, substantial reduction in local spending, declining school enrollment, a demographic heavily skewed to the late career and retired age groups, and overall decline in community investment and revitalization.

Ridership on public transportation has declined on the South Shore since peaking in 2003. While ridership on the North Shore was on a positive trajectory, recent data from the Truckee North Tahoe Transportation Management Association suggests that North Shore ridership has taken a dip in the last two fiscal years. In 2012-2013, ridership for both North and South Shores was at 865,000 riders/year.

Much of the built environment is aging and thus, significantly contributes to the Basin's environmental problems. While other areas of the country experienced robust revitalization during the exuberant run-up to the turn of the century, Tahoe languished and its economy continues to flag on what was already a limited baseline condition.

The Tahoe Prosperity Center's work to diversify the economy continues to be a positive force in the Tahoe Basin community. TRPA has been and remains a full partner in these efforts to improve the quality of life in the Region by encouraging the sustainability of our environment and communities.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

The most recent 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report, reviewed and lauded by an independent scientific peer review panel, showed that more than 60 percent of the Region's measured environmental Threshold Standards are in attainment or trending in a positive direction, while others are in need of more attention. The 2012 Regional Plan and the Agency's strategic focus over the next period will address the most pressing problems identified in that assessment report. While water quality continues to be a concern, scientists declared in 2008 that for the first time since researchers began measuring Lake Tahoe's famed water clarity 40 years ago, the historical rate of decline has slowed. According to UC Davis researchers from the Tahoe Environmental Research Center, Lake clarity in 2013 was 70 feet, and continues the trend of stabilization. While many factors have contributed to this positive change, most believe environmental restoration efforts are taking hold.

Other environmental trends, however, are disturbing. While average Lake clarity is improving overall, summer clarity readings are a concern. Non-native species continue to enter the Lake and water temperatures are rising. Aquatic invasive species are considered one of the biggest threats to the health of the Lake, particularly as certain species have proliferated algal blooms in the nearshore (along the Lake's shoreline). Algae growth has historically been a major concern and that concern is most associated with the growth of periphyton (undesirable algae on rocks). The threat of catastrophic wildfire was most present in the aftermath of the 2007

Angora Wildfire and continues to be a serious threat to the environment and communities of Tahoe.

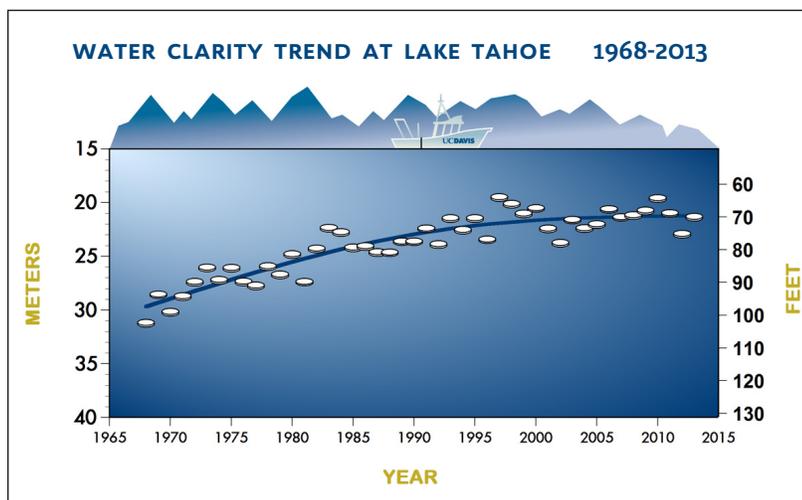
The effects of climate change are gaining widespread attention throughout the nation and the globe, and indicators are already apparent in the Tahoe Region. As a result of climbing global ambient air temperature, weather patterns are changing and Lake Tahoe's surface water temperature has already increased. More precipitation is projected to fall as rain than snow. It is time to begin the policy discussions for how we may adapt management actions to address the indicators and effects at Tahoe of global climate change. This topic—already at play in improved programs and practices for sustainability in the 2012 Regional Plan—will remain a priority to be weaved in throughout multiple strategic initiatives.

While we may not be able to control warming temperatures and declines in snowmelt, reducing the amount of fine sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen in the Lake can have dramatic effects on Lake clarity and water quality. Fine sediment is transported to the Lake via storm-water runoff from the built environment and roadways. A body of recent scientific research as part of the Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, tells us that policies and projects aimed at reducing urban sediment loading and phosphorus could have a significant positive effect on Lake conditions. Because of this \$10-million scientific effort, we know where to focus our efforts to make meaningful environmental gains in Lake water quality and clarity.

Newly adopted policies contained in the Regional Plan are expected to improve deep water clarity along with

conditions in the nearshore. A recent scientific report lays out the extensive research available on nearshore conditions and recommends immediate increased monitoring programs as the basis for possible decisions on new or additional management actions to address concerning nearshore conditions.

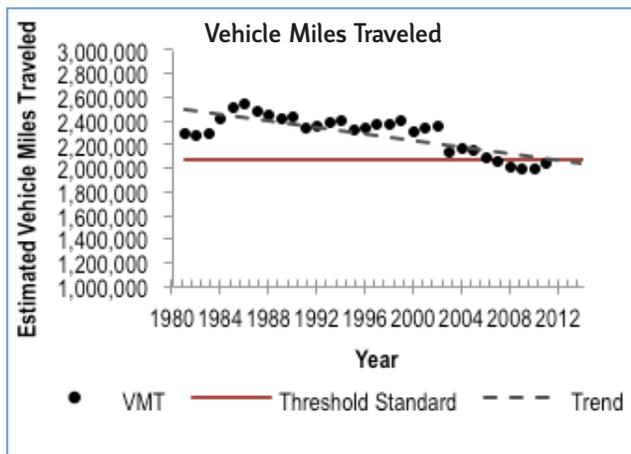
Since 1985, vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) have steadily declined and this important threshold standard is currently in attainment according to the 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report. The shift in year-round residents has created a profound impact on travel and traffic volumes in the Tahoe



Data Source: Annual Secchi Disk Measurements, UC Davis, Tahoe Environmental Research Center.

Region, with peak month traffic volumes estimated to have fallen by 14.6 percent from the highest reported levels recorded in 1986, and average annual daily traffic volumes decreasing by 4.1 percent from the highest reported levels recorded in 1991. Even with these declines, remaining vigilant in developing transportation mode options that provide alternatives to the private automobile, as directed by the Compact, is among the highest strategic priorities.

Integrating land use strategies with transportation mode choice is the centerpiece of creating the sustainable walkable, bikeable communities called for in state policy initiatives like SB 375 in California. With revitalization may come new visitors, and providing alternative means to arrive at recreation destinations once here is central to the successful implementation of the 2012 Regional Plan.



### INTERNAL TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The 2012 Regional Plan committed TRPA to engage at a more regional scale intended by the Bi-State Compact. TRPA is now aligning its resources and priorities to the most pressing regional needs, all in the fiscal context of constrained budgets. Each decade in Tahoe seems to offer new and unique challenges, and each has been overcome and addressed through TRPA's multi-sector regional leadership.

Many examples exist nationwide for how to provide leadership at the regional scale, and TRPA is tapping the lessons learned from others accomplishing similar progressive environmental goals. Germane to the Agency's leadership in preparing the Tahoe Basin for significant climate changes over the next several decades are the many examples of large landscape solutions now

### TAHOE BASIN FACTS AND FIGURES

- Two-thirds of the Region is in California with the remaining one-third in Nevada.
- Total land area is approximately 207,000 acres, with approximately 90 percent in public ownership (75 percent of which is managed by the United States Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit).
- Most of the Region was logged to obtain timber and fuel for the Comstock mines in Nevada. Tree re-growth resulted in an overly dense forest condition which is at great risk of catastrophic wildfire.
- Most development and urbanization of the Region occurred after the Squaw Valley Winter Olympics in 1960. Since that time, the population of the Region grew, with about 75 percent of the population residing on the California side.
- Year-round resident population is about 54,000, a significant decline from a peak more than a decade ago. While there are many developed towns and communities, the City of South Lake Tahoe is the only incorporated city. The Region has about 44,000 developed parcels with 50-65 percent of the homes occupied by part-time or seasonal residents, largely whose primary residences are in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Casino gaming areas are located at the north and south Stateline areas and in Incline Village. These areas provide tourist, commercial, and indoor entertainment facilities.
- The dominant transportation system currently in the Region is the highway system—a fixed two lane roadway circumnavigating the Lake. Seven highways provide access—four in California and three in Nevada. The Reno and Sacramento airports serve the Region. In addition, private general aviation aircraft fly into the Lake Tahoe Airport, located in the City of South Lake Tahoe, and into the Truckee Airport.

developing country-wide. Pertinent too is the 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report's recommendation for a large landscape-scale approach to conservation at Lake Tahoe.

TRPA's structure, as the only entity at Lake Tahoe with land use authority across multi-jurisdictional boundaries, offers the ideal platform for a large landscape ecosystem approach within the Tahoe Basin where we draw in partners both from within and outside the Region to achieve the objectives set by the Compact.

With the 2012 Regional Plan, TRPA is poised to make the most of its role as the only organization at Tahoe charged to maintain the environmental health of the Lake across a multitude of threshold areas—water and air quality, scenic, recreation, wildlife, fisheries, soils, vegetation, and noise. Bringing together the approximately 50 agencies and organizations that work at Tahoe is a crucial and necessary role for TRPA. Also from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy's report: "The common currency in large landscape conservation is regional collaboration—the ability to work across boundaries with people and organizations that have diverse interests yet share a common place." Through this Strategic Plan, TRPA will continue its partnership building role and take it to the next level, growing our own skills in delivering collaborative decision-making solutions and encouraging regional collaboration both within and outside the Basin as the foundation for TRPA's strategy for success.

**As stated in the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Large Landscape Conservation Policy Focus Report, A Strategic Framework for Policy and Action in 2010:**

"The most important land and water conservation issues facing North America—including land use patterns, sustainable water management, biodiversity protection, and adaptation to climate change—require new approaches. While most of these conservation challenges need to be addressed at several scales simultaneously, ranging from the local to the global, it is increasingly imperative to address them at the scale of large landscapes. The territory of these issues often transcends the legal and geographic reach of existing jurisdictions and institutions."

# TRPA POSITIONING

This Strategic Plan serves as a road map for TRPA's shift to a focus of more regional, environmental, and community sustainability issues. It is the guide for the Agency's priority setting and resource allocation and is a cornerstone of the Agency's budgeting process. A key concept of this Strategic Plan is the continuation of the strategy which focuses energy around a common purpose. Called the Hedgehog Strategy, after the mammal with laser-like determination and focus for its survival, TRPA's core strategy for effectiveness is to lead the Region in developing the partnerships to deliver needed environmental gain on the ground.

## HEDGEHOG CONCEPT



**Partnership and collaborative decisions are everything to success in Tahoe.** Because we are the product of an agreement between two different states, as we've seen over the last

two years, finding common ground is the key to clarity of TRPA's mission and its ultimate success. TRPA works across a multiplicity of jurisdictions with concurrent responsibility and overlapping authority whose interests differ across legal boundary lines. TRPA's strategic role is to weave together a successful environmental tapestry of interests consistent with competing political demands.

So the simple statement of TRPA's Hedgehog Concept boils down to this: With a newly updated Regional Plan, TRPA will position itself strategically to be the best at building and convening the partnerships Region-wide and beyond needed to engage collaborative decisions, deliver the funding and environmental gain that will

advance threshold attainment, and sustain Tahoe as a world-class natural treasure.

When partnership was set as the foundation of TRPA's strategic success four years ago, we had a veritable mountain to climb. Where for decades TRPA had faced resistance and recalcitrance to implementation of the Regional Plan, the adoption of the new plan delivered a tectonic shift in the Agency and in our community culture. By doing the hard work to build a strong coalition of shared interests for Tahoe, we also have a more successful way of doing business. That new way improves not only the environment, but also considers the economy and communities without having to pit one against the other.

The newly affirmed commitment of the two states to continued partnership for the benefit of Tahoe remains also among the highest priority relationships to strengthen and preserve. Nurturing relationships with elected officials and legislative staff members in both states remains a key strategic goal of the Agency. This function is embedded in our external affairs strategy for improved community relations and environmental program implementation.

TRPA is also focused on building relationships and extending outreach to the organized environmental community—a critical stakeholder in the Agency's future success. While TRPA often finds itself in the middle between polar opposite views on controversial plans and



policies, the Agency's goal is to build public collaborative processes to discover widely accepted solutions that deliver both public and private environmental stewardship and make progress on threshold attainment. Current partnerships on invasive species and water quality projects with the League to Save Lake Tahoe are examples of newly improved relationships with this important constituency.

We've made progress, but we still have work to do. This Strategic Plan update takes the Hedgehog concept's partnership foundation to the next level of regional leadership. Conventional wisdom and the overwhelming weight of current literature shows that effective regionalism depends on consensus and not hierarchy and relies on an existing regional organization or governance structure to serve as enablers of collaborative decision-making: bridge-builders, boundary-crossers, conveners finding common ground.

Consequently, the most value-added role TRPA can play within the multitude of organizations and interests that already co-exist in Tahoe is to be the very best at providing collaborative process that bridges mutual gains needed to deliver broadly supported solutions to the inevitable next round of difficult regional policy problems. This leadership will mean enhancing the Agency's internal capacity with improved skills and practices to foster collaborative governance and decision-making as well as the mindset, the skill sets, and the outreach process to support it.

## **"Partnership and collaboration will be the strategic foundation of everything we do."**

### **SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

The updated Regional Plan sets out how to answer the more complicated question of how to create a sustainable balance of environmental protection, a strong economy, and vital communities. This Strategic Plan sets the Agency's operating strategy to deliver that "right balance" on behalf of the Lake.

A central component of the 2012 Regional Plan is a framework to better integrate TRPA's regional planning with the planning of the myriad local jurisdictions in the

Tahoe Basin. The 1987 Regional Plan provided a comprehensive set of land use and environmental ordinances to achieve regional goals, but it did not replace local zoning and ordinances. Each project had to comply with a complicated set of regional and local ordinances that were sometimes inconsistent. The 2012 Regional Plan creates a framework for local jurisdictions and TRPA to cooperatively develop Area Plans for specific geographic areas. Work on Area Plans is well under way, and in fact, the Governing Board adopted the Douglas County South Shore Area Plan in September 2013 and the City's Tourist Core Area Plan in November 2013. Eight others are being developed.



Each Area Plan must be found in conformance with the Regional Plan to ensure that it is consistent with regional environmental goals, but it can be better tailored to meet each local community's unique needs. With a conforming Area Plan in place, TRPA can delegate additional projects to local jurisdictions for review. This action will significantly streamline the permitting process by setting up one-stop permitting for most projects. Projects that have a greater chance of impacting the environment like larger scale projects or projects on the shore of Lake Tahoe will still be reviewed and permitted directly by TRPA. Appeals processes and additional safeguards are in effect to ensure thorough project-level oversight.

Area Plans establish local governments around the Region as front-line partners in implementing the Regional Plan and assuring the environmental improvements needed to achieve and maintain the Region's environmental, economic, and social goals.

## NEW FUNDING IS KEY

As documented in TRPA's 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report, Lake Tahoe's environment is responding to significant investments in ecosystem restoration and sound regulatory policy. Threshold progress is directly threatened by the imminent decline of public funding for the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP).

Since 1997, federal, state, and local governments along with the private sector have invested more than \$1.7 billion in the EIP. As represented in the 2011 Threshold Evaluation Report, the investment is reaping environmental benefits. Federal contributions, largely funded through federal land sales via the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA), are sunset and presently new sources of funds are scarce. Both California and Nevada have experienced significant budget deficits in recent years. While state budgets may be showing some signs of recovery, traditional EIP funding through state bond sales are expected to remain limited. These budget challenges directly threaten the states' availability of sustained restoration funding at Lake Tahoe. Not only does this funding dilemma affect the states and myriad EIP implementing partners, many of TRPA's grant-funded programs are being adversely affected by this fiscal reality.

Lake Tahoe's environmental and economic problems are too large for any one organization to solve. TRPA's role as partner, convener, and holder of the region-wide "big picture" becomes all the more critical. Bringing together the best scientists, environmental groups, businesses, and communities toward a common goal of protecting and preserving the Lake is more important than ever.

TRPA can help set the appropriate policy direction for threshold attainment in partnership with all stakeholders; however, the issues, actions, and funding for progress need to be equally owned by all organizations.

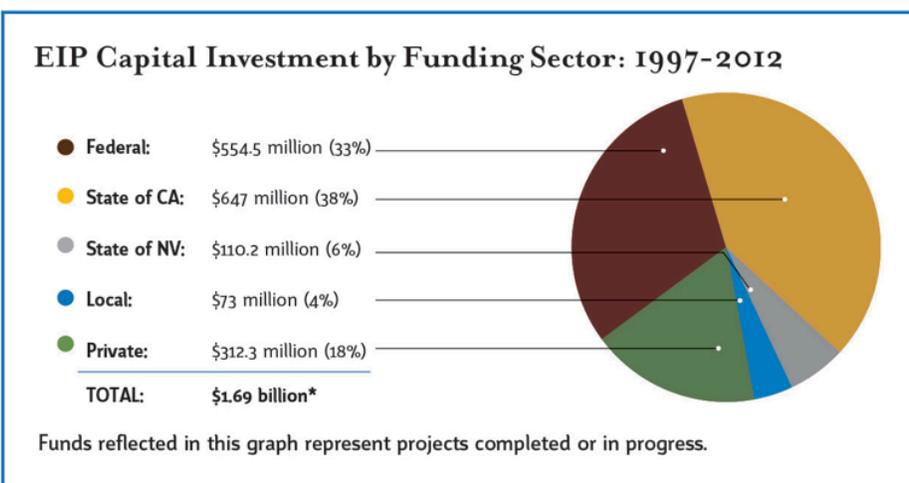
New policies to encourage area-wide water quality solutions are an important step in this direction. Engaging new inter-regional legislative partnerships for strategic impact on new funding initiatives is another approach we are developing. This and more will be needed to reimagine the means for continued funding and success of Tahoe's ongoing restoration work.

## MOVING AHEAD: A LEADER IN SUSTAINABILITY

With local governments and the private sector, among others, playing an increased role in delivering environmental gains, TRPA is pivoting to more regional issues impacting Lake Tahoe and will show leadership in the face of difficult challenges such as adapting to climate change effects and the sustainability of Lake Tahoe's communities. Consistent with this vision is the realization that Tahoe's plans, programs, and practices stand as a model for global leadership in sustainability. National and international trailblazers acknowledge the regional model led by TRPA as a best-in-class planning organization, and they urge exporting more widely that reputation for partnership and innovative collaborative solutions.

Lake Tahoe has long captivated the attention of those interested in environmental preservation in the context of a tourism economy. Delegations from around the world flock to Tahoe to learn how to balance multiple economic interests while holding fast to a conserva-

tion ethic based on protecting extraordinary natural resources and view Lake Tahoe as a national and international laboratory for cutting edge policy and environmental innovation. Together with the Sustainable Communities Strategy adopted by TRPA to achieve California's GHG reduction targets, the recently completed Sustainability Action Plan, also funded by the California Strategic Growth Council, is an even broader blueprint for both



public and private sector participants to realize comprehensive regional approaches that address the effects of climate change. TRPA and other partners, both public and private, are collaborating to implement the guidance of the Sustainability Action Plan.

### **AN AGENCY CULTURE TO SUSTAIN THE PROGRESS**

TRPA is acknowledging the growing trend—across all sectors of government—for greater government performance, accountability, and transparency. Responsiveness to the call for added and updated performance measures, more transparent budget reporting to each state, and a comprehensive review and update to 30-year-old threshold standards will be important foundations for relationship building. In addition, sound scientific advice to support good management and policy decisions for Tahoe continues to be an important value.

Coupled with the commitment to greater external accountability, truly effective regional leadership is an empty promise without an internal agency culture and staff capable of delivering it. Crucial changes toward the culture of discipline and accountability promised in the 2010 Strategic Plan are apparent, but need now to be taken to the next level to impart long-lasting excellent performance into TRPA’s mission. To this end, new internal initiatives on performance management and organizational development are underway. There is a new organizational development focus in the human resources function, and a comprehensive performance management system with performance measures and regular quarterly, annual, and four-year reporting being built. The goal of these major new strategic initiatives is to inculcate high performance and excellent customer service throughout the Agency.



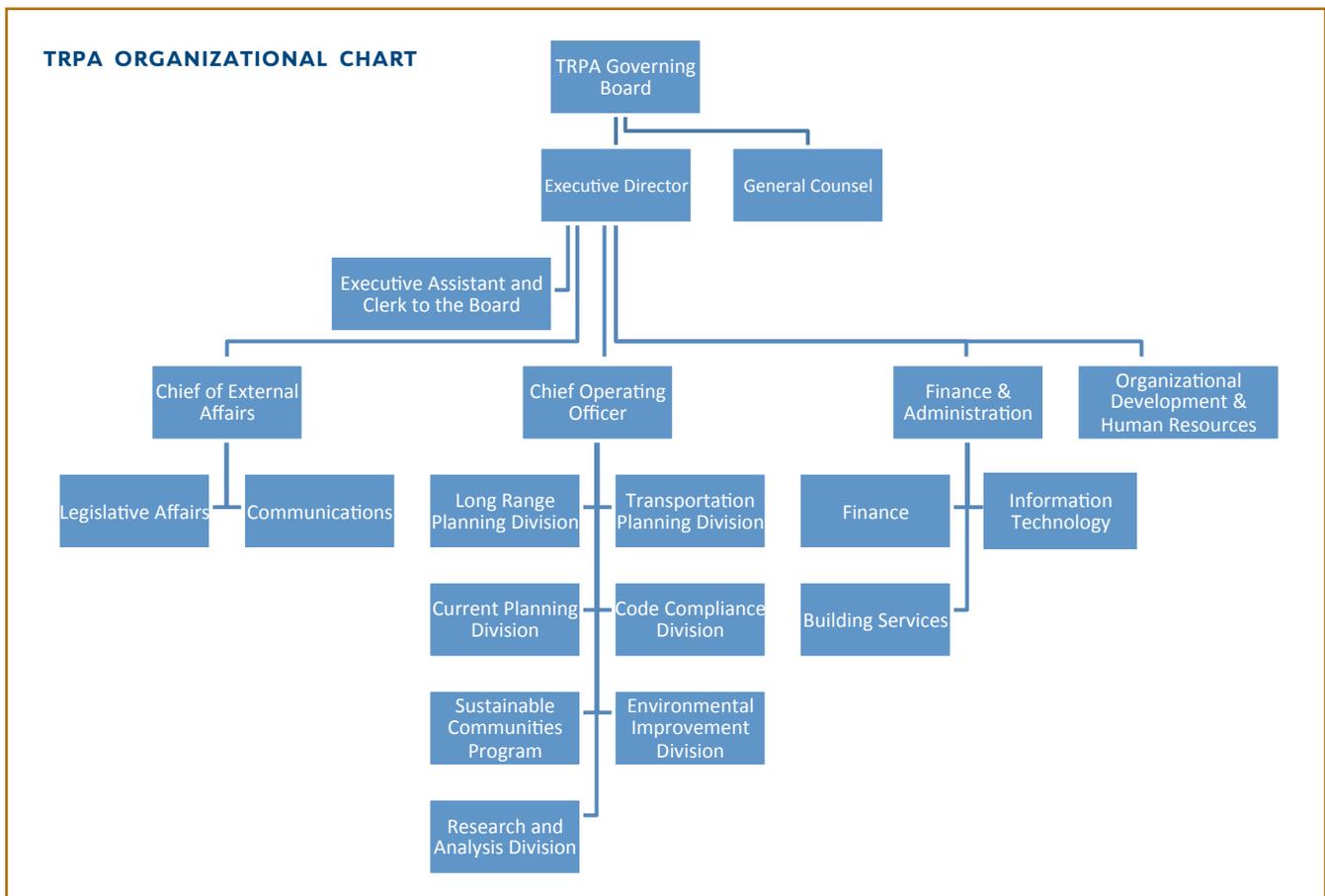
Photo by: Mike Vollmer

# ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Compact defines TRPA as more than a regulatory agency. It creates accountability not just for the rules and the plan to achieve and maintain thresholds, but also for the implementation and the incremental results over time that will lead to success. The current Agency organizational structure, implemented in 2010, is built around the results-oriented programs compelled by the Compact mandates: PLAN – IMPLEMENT – CHECK AND ADJUST for continual improvement based on new or better

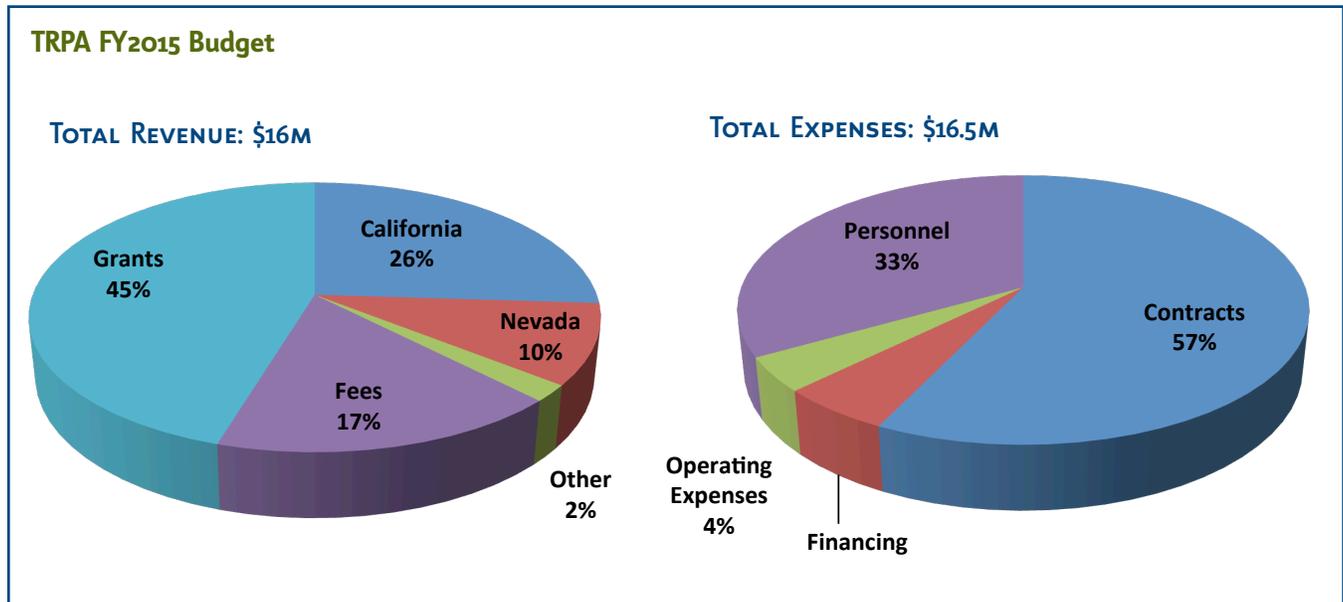
information. This structure expresses an accepted program or project management model and best describes the adaptive management approach of the updated Regional Plan. Rather than waiting another 20 years to update the plan comprehensively, TRPA committed to more frequent, and therefore smaller-scale Regional Plan updates, and is moving to a four-year cycle of reviewing threshold progress and adopting accompanying policy changes, as needed, to maintain the plan more continuously up to date.



## FINANCE STRUCTURE

TRPA is organized to reflect the three core functions it performs: Planning, Implementation, and Research & Analysis in a 'Plan, Do, Check' framework. Funding for these functions comes from a variety of sources including the State of California, State of Nevada, fees for services, and competitive grants. TRPA is currently staffed with 63 year-round employees, down from almost 90 in 2007.

With the sunset of SNPLMA funds for EIP programs, the grant revenue trend is expected to decline significantly along with contract expenses, which are largely passed through funds to EIP implementation agencies. Consequently, the pressure is growing on state appropriated monies to accomplish high-priority programs, which for years have been supported largely by federal and state grant monies.



# PLANNING DIVISION

BE A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEADER OF WELL INTEGRATED, STATE-OF-THE-ART REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAMS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THRESHOLDS.

	Accelerating Threshold Attainment	Reporting & Using Best Science & Data	Being a Leader in Sustainability	Operating as a High-Performance Organization
Grow nationally recognized environmental and sustainability approaches and programs across all plans including the Regional Plan and Regional Transportation Plan implementation tools, mitigation programs, and development of local government area plans.	✓		✓	
Participate in and formulate national transportation policy to benefit the Tahoe Region's planning and environmental goals.	✓		✓	
Reposition planning activities from the long-standing emphasis on single projects and local issues to more frequent, concentrated attention on issues of a regional scale.	✓		✓	
Build and strengthen local jurisdiction capacity to successfully administer and implement the Regional Plan and Regional Transportation Plan.	✓			
Improve project management, enhance public outreach and communications, build collaborative decision-making strength, and deliver higher quality presentations.				✓
Meet public satisfaction metrics and deliver excellent customer service.	✓			✓

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT DIVISION

LEAD THE REGIONAL PLAN'S EIP ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION INITIATIVE.

ACHIEVE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAMS TO ACCELERATE THRESHOLD ATTAINMENT.

	Accelerating Threshold Attainment	Reporting & Using Best Science & Data	Being a Leader in Sustainability	Operating as a High-Performance Organization
<b>Collaborate for Funding</b>				
<b>Stormwater Program:</b> Support implementing partners in pursuit of resources to achieve targets set out in the Total Maximum Daily Load implementation framework for sediment load reduction and crediting. Deploy resources on highest priority stormwater program needs.	✓	✓		
<b>AIS Program:</b> Coordinate comprehensive fundraising campaign to secure long-term stable funding no later than 2016 for a permanent Lake Tahoe prevention program and for continued operation of the Lake Tahoe control and early detection/rapid response programs.	✓		✓	
<b>Forest Health/Fuels Program:</b> Secure new sources of funding for implementation of the Forest Management Program.	✓		✓	
<b>Strengthen Governance, Leadership, and Partnerships for the Environmental Improvement Program</b>				
Revise the BMP Retrofit implementation program for accelerated compliance.	✓	✓		
Address nearshore conditions through scientific research, monitoring, and targeted management actions.	✓	✓	✓	
Continue to lead the implementation of the Lake Tahoe Region Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan and national AIS policy through innovation and employing best practices for AIS prevention and control.	✓			
Maintain highest quality and scope of effective AIS education and outreach.	✓		✓	
Update Fuels Reduction Plans -- Address continuing threat of catastrophic fire through collaboration on the update of the 10-Year Fuels Strategy.	✓			

# RESEARCH & ANALYSIS DIVISION

DRIVE THE USE OF BEST SCIENCE AND DATA FOR DECISION-MAKING, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

	Accelerating Threshold Attainment	Reporting & Using Best Science & Data	Being a Leader in Sustainability	Operating as a High-Performance Organization
Create a new organizational unit for better science integration, improved accountability, and performance assessment	✓	✓		
Implement updated, fully coordinated, and achievable 4-year, Annual, and Quarterly Reports to the Governing Board and public on key thresholds, Regional Plan performance measures, monitoring programs, EIP programs, and internal TRPA activities.	✓	✓		
Support a Science Advisory Council for continued scientific advice for TRPA and EIP policy and management decisions.	✓	✓		
Develop streamlined and state-of-the-art approaches to data management.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Become the authoritative source for best, most current and up to date information related to regional sustainability.			✓	
Based on a scientific review of environmental thresholds, update, prioritize, and streamline indicators to those that are scientifically supported, most meaningful to assess ecosystem conditions, and capable of being monitored within funding limitations.	✓	✓	✓	✓

# SUPPORT UNITS

## LEAD PROCESS AND SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENTS FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND COST SAVINGS.

	Accelerating Threshold Attainment	Reporting & Using Best Science & Data	Being a Leader in Sustainability	Operating as a High-Performance Organization
<b>FINANCE</b>				
Improve efficiency in grant reporting and tracking.	✓			✓
Sharpen procurement processes for efficiency and internal controls.	✓			✓
Secure unqualified audit of financial controls.	✓			✓
Reduce costs where feasible without impairing Agency effectiveness.	✓			✓
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>				
Maintain 99 percent up-time on all internal and outsourced systems.	✓			✓
Evaluate system hosting options and manage IT risks.	✓			✓
<b>FACILITIES</b>				
Contain building management and maintenance costs while maintaining facilities in good working order.	✓			✓
Plan for deferred building maintenance.	✓			✓
Reduce building carrying cost, if feasible.	✓			✓
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>				
Cultivate a results-focused culture of accountability through Pay for Performance practices.	✓			✓
Evaluate and revise the compensation system to incentivize retention, attract talent, and align with market rates.	✓			✓
Evaluate and revise benefit services delivery system and manage health care benefits costs.	✓			✓
Improve talent acquisition and retention programs in support of the Agency's shifting needs.	✓			✓
Develop and execute an employee training program for high performance aligned to the Agency's top priorities and needs.	✓			✓
Develop talent management and succession planning for key Agency positions.	✓			✓

# EXECUTIVE, LEGAL, & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

EXECUTIVE & LEGAL: ADVANCE THE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND OPERATE AS A HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: GROW TRPA'S REPUTATION AS A RESPECTED ENVIRONMENTAL VOICE.

	Accelerating Threshold Attainment	Reporting & Using Best Science & Data	Being a Leader in Sustainability	Operating as a High-Performance Organization
<b>EXECUTIVE &amp; LEGAL</b>				
Provide leadership among Basin partners to collaboratively revamp key EIP programs and develop new financing strategies in light of funding shortfalls.	✓			
Operate as a high performance organization by strengthening staff's core competencies and collaborative practices.	✓			✓
Upgrade science integration, performance accountability, and reporting through successful implementation of the Research and Analysis division.	✓	✓		✓
Strengthen Agency governance by clarifying the role of the Advisory Planning Commission and strengthening Governing Board and staff relations.	✓			✓
Ensure legal defensibility of Agency decisions and actions. Successfully resolve pending litigation and bring to conclusion the long-standing impasse over shorezone policies and regulatory approaches.	✓			✓
Meet customer service and community engagement agency-wide targets.	✓			✓
<b>EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (Legislative &amp; Communications)</b>				
Collaborate with Tahoe stakeholders to support and secure new financing sources for high-priority restoration programs and projects.	✓			
Continue to build legislative and executive branch relationships with California, Nevada, federal, and local officials.	✓			
Execute proactive, educational media coverage to target audiences for understanding of Regional Plan implementation.	✓			
Constantly evolve and enhance communication platforms and strategies. Continue publishing Tahoe In Depth twice annually as a leading source of information on environmental restoration and stewardship in the Tahoe Basin.	✓		✓	
Maintain community support within target audiences such as local residents and seasonal homeowners who reside full-time outside the Tahoe Basin.	✓			✓



**TRPA updates this plan periodically and invites comments at any time. Address your comments to:**

Executive Director  
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
P.O. Box 5310, Stateline, NV 89449