

MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer
Submitted by: Jennifer Merchant, Principal Management Analyst

DATE: July 27, 2010

SUBJECT: Placer County Position on Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan Update

ACTION REQUESTED

Direct staff to present comments reflecting Placer County's position on the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan Update related to Conservation Element policies.

BACKGROUND

The TRPA is a regulatory and planning agency charged with protecting Lake Tahoe's famed clarity and the region's environment. The TRPA is in the process of updating its Regional Plan and making minor revisions to existing Environmental Threshold Carrying Capacities (Thresholds). The Regional Plan provides an overview of land use, conservation, restoration, forest health, wildlife management, air quality, and related goals and policies and implementation strategies that, when combined, are designed to accelerate threshold attainment over the next 20 years.

CURRENT STATUS

County Executive Office and Planning Department staff presented an informational briefing to your Board on May 18, 2010 regarding input on the Regional Plan Update provided by County staff at various stakeholder meetings, TRPA Advisory Planning Commission hearings and TRPA Governing Board hearings and in written form. The update generated discussion and feedback from your Board and provided confirmation that the County staff is implementing your Board's direction thus far in providing comments on the Regional Plan.

On June 22, 2010 your Board directed staff to provide specific input regarding proposed changes to the Regional Plan in the areas of Land Use, Air Quality, Transportation, Noise, and Energy/Climate Change. Staff is now requesting that your Board endorse Placer County's position on policy concepts contained in the proposed Conservation Element. The Element consists of subelements on vegetation, wildlife, fisheries, soils, shoreline, scenic resources, open space, SEZ (Stream Environment Zones), cultural resources, and energy. This Element is the last in a series of policy considerations to be reviewed by the TRPA Governing Board. Implementation Measure proposals will come forward in the fall, at which time we expect to provide additional information and request further Board direction.

Vegetation

- Eliminate restrictions on sales of non-native plants within the Tahoe Basin as it directly impacts the free market of local businesses and will not be effective due to the inability to impose restrictions on nurseries external to the Basin.
- Remove any reference to require enforcement of TRPA vegetation regulations by local Public Utility Districts, which could also include private water companies. Concerns include capacity for PUDs and private water companies to manage enforcement and potential for inconsistent enforcement.
- Consider moving proposed Alternative 3 implementation measures to Alternative 4, as they are very restrictive and are more appropriately placed in the most conservative analysis. Proposed Alternative 3 implementation measures require property owners to eliminate invasive weeds, establish a maximum area for lawns, and require landscapers, public agencies, developers and plant vendors to sell only noninvasive vegetation and plants.

Soil Conservation

- The environmental impact statement that will be prepared for the Regional Plan Update should evaluate the effectiveness of the mathematical calculation that has inadvertently led to Placer County's high IPES score which has consequently resulted in a reduction of the inventory of buildable lots. This process does not meet the intent of the goals and policies in this section and unfairly limits development on land that is developable in other jurisdictions.
- Placer County does not support discretionary or mandatory site-specific soils analysis requirements on all projects which include but are not limited to single family residential additions and construction of new decks until reasonable criteria are developed and a cost/benefit analysis is completed.

Wildlife and Fisheries

- Remove language that sets specific requirements for non-disturbance zones for special status species in urbanized areas and allow any requirements to be based on TRPA and local agency project review, including assessment of specific site conditions in consultation with respective wildlife agencies/experts.
- Move proposed limitations to operating periods for projects (including development and organized recreation centers and activities) within non-disturbance zones from Alternative 2 to Alternative 4, which takes the approach that an increased amount of regulation is the best way to ensure that the Thresholds are attained.

FISCAL IMPACT

None