

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS County of Placer

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DATE: April 21, 2009

FROM: KEN GREHM / BOB BLASER

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION ON THE STATUS OF SNOW REMOVAL OPERATIONS IN PLACER COUNTY

ACTION REQUESTED / RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Public Works (DPW) will present information to the Board of Supervisors on the status of snow removal operations in the Tahoe and Serene Lakes areas. No other action is requested or required.

BACKGROUND / SUMMARY

Snow removal is one of the ongoing responsibilities of Placer County Department of Public Works. The elevation of Placer County ranges from near sea level to over 7,000 feet. The County maintains over 1,100 miles of roadways. About 200 miles of these roads fall within expected "normal" snowfall areas on both sides of the Sierra Crest. Snowfall amounts in these areas can range from less than 100 inches to over 500 inches annually depending on location and elevation. The Tahoe Basin (the east side of the Sierra Crest) has about 135 miles of roads within its boundaries. The terrain in these snowfall areas is often very steep with many curves offering a variety of challenges to driving as well as to snow removal and ice control operations.

It should be noted that areas of Placer County have the highest average annual snowfall of any County in the lower 48 states and in California, Placer County consistently ranks in the top 3, behind CALTRANS, for annual expenditures on snow removal – this includes all Cities and Counties.

It is the goal of Placer County to plow these roads often enough to keep them passable to traffic and as free of snow and ice as possible. To do this, it is often necessary for the County to become a 7-day a week, 24-hour a day operation during storms and throughout the cleanup stages following the storms.

Several improvements have been made over the years to operations, scheduling, equipment, communications, public outreach and customer service. DPW will provide a PowerPoint presentation on the status of operations including:

- Current Board Policy related to snow removal
- Zones of operations
- Equipment types and usages
- Manpower operations
- Cost of snow removal operations
- Citizen outreach and information

ENVIRONMENTAL

This proposed action is not a project as defined by Public Resources Code Section 15378 of the CEQA guidelines and as such it is not subject to review under CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT

The County spends approximately \$2.5M/year in snow removal and ice control. Snow removal operations are funded by the Road Fund.

