

TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

308 Dorla Court
Elks Point, Nevada
www.trpa.org

P.O. Box 1038
Zephyr Cove, Nevada 89448-1038

Phone: (775) 588-4547
Fax (775) 588-4527
Email: trpa@trpa.org

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Dear Friend of the Lake:

SCENIC QUALITY IN LAKE TAHOE IS THREATENED

You may have heard about the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's proposal to refine the way we review shoreline housing projects to ensure protection of the scenic quality in the Lake Tahoe Basin. We hope you will hear from all interested parties, including both the lakefront property owners and the organizations and individuals representing the public interests. We have worked with all stakeholders for more than six months and think the proposed solution is balanced and fair and will effectively protect the valuable scenic resources of this national treasure.

The following facts may help you to understand this issue:

- The Compact states that the social and economic health of the region depends on maintaining significant scenic and other values of the Basin and that there is a public interest in enhancing these values. TRPA's scenic quality proposal allows continued development of private property while protecting the public interest.
- Tahoe's scenic resource protection program is not new. The scenic thresholds and the system in which threshold attainment is evaluated was established in 1982.
- Impartial monitoring has revealed significant increases in the dominance of man-made structures over the natural character of the Lake's shoreline, primarily due to large mass and high contrast, *not individual perceptions of scenic beauty.*
- The current system of measuring the cumulative impacts of individual structures has not been effective. Therefore, we have adapted a recognized assessment tool that allows shoreline development to continue through the use of design principles that reduce the amount of contrast these structures have with the natural backdrop.
- Nationwide studies show that environmental regulations tend to increase home values. TRPA expects its scenic threshold and proposed ordinances to preserve long-term community property values rather than maximize individual short-term profits.

In a message given in February 1968 by Ronald Reagan, then Governor of California, during the adoption process that created the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact, he said "Governor Paul Laxalt of Nevada recently stated, 'Every possible step should be taken by all parties involved to assure that Lake Tahoe retains its crystal clear quality and the beautiful basin not be destroyed by so-called progress.' I endorse Governor Laxalt's statement without qualification. We will work together, citizens of California and Nevada, to preserve the priceless treasure that is Lake Tahoe."

Now, perhaps more than ever, we need to work together to protect Lake Tahoe – it's in everyone's best interest.

Thank You,



Juan Palma,
Executive Director