



NEWS RELEASE

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TAHOE LOCAL BMP REBATE PROGRAM PUTS MONEY BACK IN THE POCKETS OF RESIDENTS

South Lake Tahoe, CA – To help offset the cost of controlling stormwater and erosion on private properties, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District (TRCD) and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) have created a rebate program for qualifying homeowners in El Dorado County that will run from July 20 to September 1 this year.

The deadline to complete Best Management Practices (BMPs) on most homes in El Dorado County and the City of South Lake Tahoe passed last year although the majority of property owners have not completed them. BMPs are mandatory measures to stop pollutants like fine sediment from leaving private property and entering Lake Tahoe. The Lake's renowned clarity has been decreasing about one foot per year since the 1960s and science shows that 60 to 70 percent of pollutants come from urban areas like neighborhoods and commercial centers. TRCD and TRPA are working together to help offset the impacts of human development for the benefit of the Lake and the community.

The \$500 per property rebate program is available for local homeowners at or below the county median income level and who receive a BMP completion certificate between July 20 and October 15 this year. The bulk of the funding is provided through the TRCD's State of California Proposition 13 Watershed Protection Nonpoint Source Grant Program (Proposition 13). TRPA is providing additional funding and administrative support.

"Grant funding is available from the state of California and we thought a program to help Tahoe locals would be a tremendous use of the funds," said Eben Swain, Resource Conservationist for the TRCD. "We recognize cost may be a factor for many homeowners trying to complete their BMPs. By lowering the cost of BMPs we can help local working homeowners who want to do the right thing but who may not have the means."

Only full time residents who meet income criteria and receive a BMP completion certificate between July 20 and October 15, 2007 are eligible for the program. Second homes, rental properties and properties that have already completed their BMPs are not eligible. Interested property owners must fill out an application to show that they are eligible to participate and include a BMP plan and proof of income. Applications will be accepted through September 1. Early application is encouraged as only the first 80

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applicants that meet the criteria will be accepted because of the limited funding available. Applications will be available at www.tahoebmp.org or at the TRPA and TRCD offices.

BMPs can be as simple as planting native grasses in your yard, installing some parking barriers or adding a layer of gravel under roof driplines. TRPA and the Conservation District are continually working to find the most cost-effective ways of implementing BMPs on residential properties. Additionally, there is information available on how to combine BMPs with fire defensible space. Homeowners should request a defensible space inspection from their local fire department but can also consult the free Home Landscaping Guide provided by TRCD or the “Living With Fire” guide from the Nevada Fire Safe Council. These guidebooks explain how erosion control and defensible space are compatible and not in conflict with one another. The “Living With Fire” guide is also available at TRPA or TRCD offices and online at <http://livingwithfire.info/>.

“It’s important for the community to know that what happens on their property does make a difference and that there is a lot of assistance available to help them protect the environment while also providing for defensible space,” said Jeff Cowen, Community Liaison for TRPA. “We hope to expand on this grant program in the future to help even more locals.”

The Tahoe Resource Conservation District offers free technical assistance to property owners on all questions about BMP implementation and related backyard conservation issues. To find out more about BMPs on single-family residences visit <http://tahoercd.org> or call the BMP hotline at (530) 543-1501 ext. 110.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency cooperatively leads the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe region now and in the future. For information on BMPs for commercial and multi-family properties, contact the TRPA Erosion Control Team at 775-589-5202 or visit the website at www.tahoebmp.org

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