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NEWS RELEASE

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TRPA CHAIR SPEAKS OUT ON BI-STATE FIRE COMMISSION

Lake Tahoe-CA/NV – The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Governing Board Chair Julie Motamedi reflected this week on the creation of the Bi-State Fire Commission as a result of the Angora Fire with a statement of support. Both Motamedi and Allen Biaggi, TRPA Governing Board Vice Chair, were recently appointed to the commission by Governors Schwarzenegger and Gibbons.

“We are very pleased both governors value our role and input in managing the Basin,” said TRPA Governing Board Chair Julie Motamedi. “We are committed to creating consistent policies that incorporate the advice of wildfire experts in ways that promote lake clarity and I believe the governors see that we are uniquely able to do this.”

The Bi-State Fire Commission is slated to perform a comprehensive review of federal, state and regional policies relating to forest management at Lake Tahoe. Governors Schwarzenegger and Gibbons formed the Commission following the Angora Wildfire and have made TRPA integral to the solution by appointing current and former TRPA Governing Board members to the panel.

Motamedi, current TRPA board chair, is an appointee of California Governor Schwarzenegger. Biaggi, current TRPA board co-chair, serves on the board as the Director of Nevada’s Department of Conservation Natural Resources. Former TRPA board member John Upton is also a member of the bi-state commission and is a victim of the Angora Wildfire. The Fire Commission is charged with examining ways to reduce the threat of wildfire while protecting the fragile environment at Lake Tahoe. A report of the commission’s findings is due out in March 2008.

FIRE COMMISSION 2-2-2

“It’s important that TRPA and all agencies strengthen our partnerships as we assist the commission and we plan to make communication and public education even higher of a priority,” Motamedi said. “We must educate the public to promote defensible space and forest fuels management. There may be changes in direction that help achieve all of our goals and we are committed to communicating any changes that may follow the commission’s report.”

The TRPA is working closely with Lake Tahoe agencies to do everything possible to help the community rebuild and move forward. Fire victims can rebuild what previously existed through a fast-track application process through which filing and mitigation fees are also being waived by TRPA and El Dorado County. The County has taken the lead on processing rebuild permits and TRPA is supporting the process.

“Everyone wants to help the fire victims and this is one way that we can help,” TRPA Chair Motamedi said. “It’s the first step in a good faith effort by the Agency and it shows the commitment from TRPA, the governors and El Dorado County to work together to make the community whole again.”

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is a bi-state environmental planning and regulatory agency at Lake Tahoe. Our mission is to cooperatively lead the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region now and in the future. The Agency regulates development at Lake Tahoe and spearheads an environmental restoration program for the Tahoe Basin. For more information, contact Julie Regan at (775) 589-5237 or Jeff Cowen at (775) 589-5278.

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