

From: [Elisabeth Lernhardt](#)
To: [Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System](#)
Subject: TRPA oversight committee meeting 1. 23. 2024
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Attachments: [TRPA Oversight.odt](#)
[TRPA OVERSIGHT.2.odt](#)

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Hello,
These are my opening and closing comments for the
TRPA committee.
Sincerely
Elisabeth Lernhardt, Zephyr Cove NV

TRPA oversight committee

Ever since the John C. Fremont discovered Lake Tahoe in 1844s, it has been attracting various groups to exploit its natural beauty and resources. From the timber barons, commercial fishing industry, to the tourism industry, Tahoe is still a pawn for profit. When in 1960 the public asked the Federal government to intervene and to halt the onslaught of development, an independent agency to oversee the basin, TRPA and the bistate compact were created. Initially that slowed the development and put rules in place to improve lake clarity by reducing run off. But a lot of damage was already done, such as the repeated introduction of non native species eg Mysis shrimp, Coho salmon etc which led to the extinction of the native Lahontan trout. In recent decades accidental introduction of Asian clams, New Zealand Mudsnaails, Eurasian Milfoil algae and giant size gold fish are just a few more to mention. The effect of all this has been a drastically reduced clarity of the lake. Since 1967 UC Davis has a full limnology research lab to study the effects. They have come up with some surprising answers. In 2022 the indigenous Zooplankton or Daphnia and Bosmina had re-emerged after their predator, the Mysis Shrimp had miraculously disappeared. These microscopic creatures are ingesting contaminants and expelling them in denser form, so they sink to the bottom of the lake. Thereby acting as the cleanup crew. Lake clarity improved from 61 ft to 80.6 ft. in 6 months in 2022! TRPA was quick to claim credit. Pointing to their strict policies for construction, and BMP run offs. TRPA has become an exploitation threat of a new kind: using green slogans to cloak their alliance with large contractors and resorts. Realizing they can retain larger fees from permitting projects like the Boulder Bay, Latitude39, Nine 47 and the Event Center. Reducing car traffic by eliminating parking spaces for housing projects, and joining the NDOT agenda for reducing lanes of the only 4 lane Highway 50 into the basin. Combined with conflicting interest by its members, who stand to profit from these contracts. Under the perceived emergency of lack of low income housing, the remedy was a change in zoning rules allowing larger, higher buildings, with no income restriction requirement. It is time to reexamine TRPA's role and lack of public oversight. Dismissing existing laws to perform environmental impact and emergency evacuation, they have become a threat in itself to the Lake and the residents.

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When the wish to look good prevents us from truly doing good! This is today's predicament for TRPA. With its longstanding policies TRPA has been destroying development and tourism in the Tahoe Basin. Communities like South Lake Tahoe can not survive without tourism. Rather than defining their environmental goals, ideology and moral grandstanding has been the agenda of TRPA. They joined forces with a few large resorts to create entities, that charge for every thing from parking to just having the privilege to drive up here. Their 7-7-7 Plan wants to implement taxes for locals as well as tourist and commuting employees. They have pushed through ACR5 last year, which makes this plan one step closer to getting implicated, without the public being allowed to vote on it, as is required by the compact! Caldor fire and the botched evacuation should have been a wake up call! But when Complete Streets, Road Diets and reducing vehicle miles traveled are the agenda, reducing environmental impact and conducting a comprehensive emergency evacuation plan are not their priority. Just like after the Angora fire it might require a class action law suit to make TRPA change course. I am asking you to say no to any further funding, unless these studies are performed.