
January 2, 2026

Robert Lorens
NEPA Coordinator
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

**TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY COMMENTS ON THE CALDOR FIRE RESTORATION PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Dear Robert Lorens:

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) appreciates the opportunity to review the Caldor Fire Restoration Project Proposed Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and provide feedback. TRPA supports the proposed action. Once implemented, the project will advance Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) goals and help return the Caldor fire burn area to a healthier and more resilient forest ecosystem.

TRPA has reviewed the draft EA through the lens of the TRPA Regional Plan and environmental threshold standards, which all projects in the basin must maintain or attain. The USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) and TRPA executed a Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2009 following the Blue-Ribbon Commission recommendations after the 2007 Angora Fire (Attachment A). The MOU exempts fuels reduction projects and supporting activities from TRPA review and permitting as long as agreements in the MOU are followed and upheld. Please reference the 2009 MOU in the EA as it is the MOU version applicable to this project.

Under the MOU, TRPA is responsible for identifying opportunities to avoid environmental impacts and how TRPA threshold standards may be maintained and attained by project implementation. TRPA is responsible for making TRPA-specific findings based on the LTBMU NEPA review and project plans. The LTBMU will consider TRPA input on a project basis for opportunities where environmental effects may be avoided or reduced, and TRPA thresholds may be improved or maintained.

New permanent and temporary roads are not considered supporting activities and require TRPA review and approval. The review will focus on reducing water quality and habitat impacts road placement and Best Management Practices (BMP). Review and approval of roads will be consistent with other large fuels reduction and forest health approvals from TRPA.

Proposed Action

2.1.1.3 Herbicide Treatment

- Herbicide use is allowed but should be consistent with the TRPA Regional Plan, including the TRPA Handbook of Best Management Practices (BMP Handbook), and should limit use in and around stream environment zones, as explained in the proposed action. The BMP Handbook may be found here: <https://tahoebmp.org/bmphandbook.aspx>.
- The area is a popular recreation area. TRPA would like the LTBMU to notify the public where herbicide applications have occurred, so people are aware of the recent applications. This could be accomplished through signage and published maps identifying herbicide application.

2.1.2 Aquatic Habitat Improvements

- Can you provide specific locations for the restoration work on Upper Echo Creek, Saxon Creek, Trout Creek, and Upper Truckee River?
- Please provide more information on why Osgood Swamp is included in the proposed action, as it is not within or downstream of the fire, so it seems outside the scope of this EA.

Impacts on Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat

- TRPA has some concerns regarding potential impacts to northern goshawk habitat, including risk of fragmentation and effects from mechanical thinning within goshawk territories. TRPA recommends incorporating ongoing monitoring into the proposed action to minimize impacts and confirm that TRPA wildlife threshold standards are maintained.

Project Monitoring

- TRPA appreciates the inclusion of monitoring as a resource protection measure. that monitoring is part of the resource protection measures. There are a few places where state monitoring will occur if funding and resources are available. TRPA recommends clarifying and strengthening the monitoring. Pre-project, in-project, and post-project monitoring are critical to ensure that project objectives are met and that impacts to threshold resources remain minimized.

Most components of the proposed action will most likely be covered under the TRPA/LTBMU Memorandum of Understanding. Please continue to coordinate with TRPA as the Caldor Fire Restoration Plan progresses so TRPA can support LTBMU in this crucial effort. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or if further discussion on TRPA's comments is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shannon Friedman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shannon" and last name "Friedman" clearly legible.

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Attachment A: Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Memorandum of Understanding (2009).