

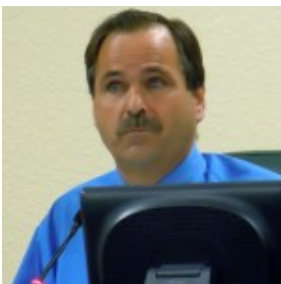
Opinion: El Dorado asks for flexibility to achieve environmental goals

Publisher's note: *The following letter was approved Aug. 2 by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors to be sent to the Governing Board of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.*

Dear Governing Board:

The purpose of this letter is to convey our support for your continued pursuit of lake clarity through environmental threshold gains, transportation enhancements, economic development and expanded public and private partnerships, but, to also bring your attention to the difficult condition of water quality program compliance by local jurisdictions.

Only through partnerships with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the US Forest Service, has the county been able to complete 53 erosion control oriented projects at a cost of \$83 million in the last 28 years. But, sadly, that number pales to what is facing local jurisdictions over the next 15 years. Basin wide, it will cost \$1.5 billion to achieve the goals and objectives of the recent Total Daily Maximum Load mandated improvements at a time when all local jurisdictions suffer from severe fiscal impacts of a state and federal budget crisis and enormous local tax receipt losses.



Ray Nutting

The key to achieving these goals is a committed funding component and a reduced and reasonable dollar match that allows local jurisdictions a better chance to fund the required improvements. The County of El Dorado needs the ability to have operations and maintenance dollars included in the 50% match. Otherwise, these goals will be impossible to reach without affecting every county department, including public health and safety services.

The County supports projects of mutual interest that benefit the ecology and economy for generations to come and greatly appreciates your commitment to lake clarity. We also appreciate any assistance in reaching reasonable solutions to environmental improvements.

Sincerely,

Raymond J. Nutting, Board of Supervisors chairman