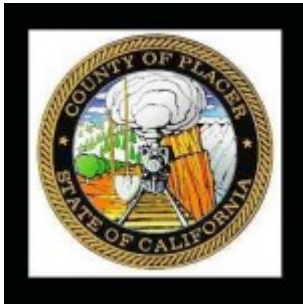


Placer County changes sand mixture for snowy roads

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

Placer County supervisors approved a plan Tuesday that is expected to keep many thousands of pounds of fine sediment from entering Lake Tahoe.

The plan, to be submitted to the state Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, includes the use of coarser sand on roads this winter to improve vehicle traction.



The sand is expected to reduce the amount of fine sediment reaching the lake in snow and rain runoff by nearly 5,000 pounds annually, according to county officials. The county will also purchase a high-efficiency, vacuum-assisted sweeper.

“Our choice of sand material was based on a Caltrans study of different abrasives ... comparing fine-sediment content and durability,” said Robert Costa, manager of the county’s Department of Public Works.

The county’s plan is required under a recently updated federal permit regulating storm runoff into the lake. Ongoing since 1992, it is renewed every five years, each time with new requirements, Costa said.

Six additional Placer sediment-reduction projects have begun. Projects in Kings Beach and Tahoe City are expected to prevent nearly 17,000 pounds of pollutants from entering the lake when completed, according to a county news release.