

Opinion: CTC out of step with its original mission

Publisher's note: *The following was read into the record June 20 at the California Tahoe Conservancy meeting by Ann Nichols, president of the North Tahoe Preservation Alliance. She asked for it to be reprinted here.*

When you search for the CTC website, Google states, "Founded to protect, preserve & restore the water quality, wildlife, public access, recreation, and natural beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin."



The Asset Lands program is an ill-conceived radical departure by the CTC that conflicts with these claims. We challenge you to do the right thing and restore public confidence:

1. Cancel the existing program
2. Inaccurate parcel identification information has or is being distributed
 - a) 37 conservation easements not owned by the CTC included
 - b) 18 erosion control facilities included
3. Estimates and inaccuracy erodes public confidence in the selection process
4. Eliminating existing public access, including existing large open space parcels used exclusively for public access and recreation in direct conflict with the primary mission of the CTC, for example:
 - a) 14.56 acres of public access in Tahoe Vista

b) 5.76 acres of public access in Kingswood

c) 9.21 acres of public access off Ward Creek Road

5. Including primarily steep parcels if they have a buildable site is in conflict with the CTC claim that steep properties would not be developed.

a) Sherman Way 15 acres

6. CTC Public outreach has been nil and only in response to public outcry.

7. Starting slow by selling off sites on the South Shore is hardly reassuring.

8. Patrick Wright's claim that only "3-7 parcels on the South Shore are being sold now, so don't worry" is condescending at best. All neighbors should be notified in writing that nearby parcels could be sold to private parties and that those properties could be developed and fenced.

9. Asset Lands program should be vetted in advertised public meetings that are on the North and South Shore locations. The CTC owes it to every California citizen to have a full comparison and review of the CTC's old and new missions, as well as the significant change in course under its current leadership. The CTC owes the public an explanation of the sharp turn it has taken with regard to Tahoe's protected lands.

10. Adjacent open space parcels now having development potential greatly affects neighboring property values.

a.) In the case of the 5.76 acres on Queens Way, property values could swing by as much as \$100k each.

11. Develop new program where adjacent property owners could purchase CTC lands at a discounted price with deed restrictions against new development.

12. Rather than sell of protected lands, perhaps it's time for the CTC to wind down the agency just as the State Coastal Conservancy is doing.

13. At the very least, since the Asset Lands program now promotes "developable parcels in highly urbanized areas that could support sustainable compact development consistent with local area plans", the CTC should eliminate "conservancy" from the title.

14. The new change of mission and use of public bond monies is a breach of public trust.