

32-year veteran retiring from Lahontan's No. 2 post



Lauri Kemper, left, listens as her boss Executive Director Patty Kouyoumdjian on Nov. 15 reads a proclamation. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Like so many people, Lauri Kemper thought she was going to spend a couple years at Lake Tahoe and then move on.

That didn't happen. Instead she spent the last 32 years with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, 20 of them as a manager. On Dec. 18 she retires as the deputy executive officer from the state agency that is based in South Lake Tahoe, after having started in February 1985.

The place and purpose are what kept her here all these years.

"It's like living in a national park. And the career was focused on making things better for humans and the environment," Kemper, whose background is as an engineer, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The other reason I stayed is the diversity of the region."

Lahontan's jurisdiction, while it covers the California side of the Tahoe basin, extends to the Oregon border and down to the desert.

On Nov. 15 she was recognized by her colleagues and the board of directors for her service. Executive Director Patty Kouyoumdjian read a resolution and presented Kemper with a photo of Lake Tahoe that was signed by her co-workers. Kouyoumdjian was effusive with her praise of Kemper. "All are better for working with her," Kouyoumdjian said.

Kemper will continue to live on the South Shore; she looks forward to having more fun by hitting the slopes, hiking – enjoying the outdoors she has worked so hard to protect.

She said this will feel like the first real ski season she has had since living here. No longer will work get in the way of a powder day.

Taking over for Kemper is Doug Smith, a supervising engineering geologist for Lahontan.