



City of South Lake Tahoe

"making a positive difference now"

May 9, 2011

Dear League to Save Lake Tahoe Board Members:

The League to Save Lake Tahoe is justifiably proud of its 50-year record as a tenacious advocate for the environmental protection at Lake Tahoe. Through its efforts, unregulated growth and garish overdevelopment have been curtailed in the Tahoe Basin.

Which is why we, as elected community leaders, are baffled at your organization's recent contradictory stance to projects and proposals in the Tahoe Basin that achieve the very result of keeping Tahoe blue.

More than a decade of research has shown that water quality decline at Lake Tahoe is the result of fine sediment runoff from the developed areas around the Basin that were built before the benefits of pervious surfaces and storm-water catchments were understood. What we know now is that the best way to keep Tahoe blue is by environmental redevelopment.

Your own executive director, Rochelle Nason, apparently concurred when she wrote in 2009: "Permitting local communities as much latitude as possible about the extent and nature of their future growth within the framework of the regional plan, will all guide the agency to ultimate success: the achievement of the thresholds in a manner that permits orderly development and supports local efforts to create a sustainable economy based on natural-resources tourism."

Yet we as local leaders find ourselves continuously thwarted by the League's efforts to prevent carefully planned and environmentally strategic redevelopment. The League has blocked timely and economically feasible solutions to critical environmental problems.

Further, the League's use of confrontation through veiled threats of litigation or its 11th hour demands for more information or study have made collaboration all but impossible. The League's demands are costly, time-consuming and unnecessary.

As elected leaders from the jurisdictions directly impacted by the mandate to protect Lake Tahoe, we certainly understand the importance of environmental protection and improvement at the lake. But we also understand the necessity of balancing environmental sustainability with economic vitality. The many needless delays and demands of the League are making real change at the Lake impossible.

We would request that the League board reconsider its divisive stance to thwart all change at the Lake and become part of the solution to lake clarity.

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As is stated in the 1980 Tahoe Regional Planning Compact: "It was also recognized that while the beauty and resources of this region are valuable and deserve protection, it is not a place absent of people, nor will it be. There are communities within the Tahoe Region and a local economy dependent upon the built and natural environment."

The elective representatives of the people who live at Lake Tahoe respectfully request the League consider a policy that embraces the environmental and economic wellbeing of those who live here as well as those who visit. We would also request a meeting with the League board to voice our concerns and to better understand the League's position in regard to the future of Lake Tahoe.

Sincerely,




Hal Cole, Mayor




Claire Fortier, Mayor Pro Tem



Bruce Grego, Councilmember



Angela Swanson, Councilmember



Tom Davis,

c: U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Tom McClintock
State Senator Ted Gaines
Assembly Woman Beth Gaines
San Francisco Chronicle
San Jose Mercury
Sacramento Bee
Tahoe Daily Tribune