



## SAVING LAKE TAHOE IN YOUR BACKYARD

A Property Owner's Guide to Best Management Practices – (BMPs)



## YOU CAN SAVE LAKE TAHOE!

Lake Tahoe is world renowned for its exceptional clarity. Unfortunately, the clarity of Lake Tahoe is declining at an alarming rate of over one foot each year. The loss of clarity is due largely to soil erosion and surface runoff associated with the development of urban areas in the Tahoe Basin.

In an undisturbed watershed, the majority of stormwater is absorbed and filtered through the soil. When a watershed is disturbed and covered with impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways and rooftops, the rain and snowmelt flush pollutants quickly into the nearest stream, ultimately ending up in Lake Tahoe. Once in Lake Tahoe, the sediment causes the water to appear muddy and the nutrients feed algae growth.

Fortunately, there are a few easy things that you, as a homeowner, can do that will not only help stop Lake Tahoe's clarity loss, but will also increase the property value of your home. These lake-saving steps are called Best Management Practices, or BMPs.

### TRPA'S EROSION CONTROL TEAM (ECT)

The Erosion Control Team's mission is to manage stormwater runoff and reduce erosion from developed properties utilizing Best Management Practices (BMPs). By providing the public with quality technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of BMPs, the ECT aims to preserve water quality and the clarity of Lake Tahoe and its tributaries. Through education and assistance, the ECT is committed to heightening public awareness of the unique challenges facing Lake Tahoe and to helping residents get BMPs on the ground.

This brochure is designed to help you understand what BMPs are, why they are required by TRPA, and where you can get assistance implementing BMPs on your property.

### WHAT ARE BMPS

#### AND HOW CAN THEY HELP SAVE LAKE TAHOE?

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are proven methods that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our surface waters. By implementing BMPs, all property owners can help slow or reverse the loss of lake clarity.

BMPs prescribed for residential properties may include:

- Paving dirt driveways and roads.
- Infiltrating stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces.
- Stabilizing or retaining steep slopes and loose soils.
- Vegetating and mulching bare soils.

According to the recently published Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment, scientists have determined that implementing BMPs on existing development is one of the most critical steps toward improving water quality.

The following pictures show examples of a few BMPs that may be prescribed.

The ECT will work closely with you to implement the most effective plan for your property. BMPs can aesthetically improve your landscaping while stopping erosion.

### THE ECT MAKES SAVING LAKE TAHOE EASY

TRPA's Erosion Control Team, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District, the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the

Natural Resource Conservation Service are working collaboratively to assist property owners with the implementation of BMPs.

Through grant funding, the ECT is able to offer free BMP site evaluations, limited field crew implementation assistance and some discounted materials. You must bring your property into compliance and improve Lake Tahoe's clarity by following these easy steps:

#### STEP 1: BMP SITE EVALUATION

Request a free BMP site evaluation by completing the pre-paid reply card enclosed in this brochure and dropping it in the mail. You may also request a BMP site evaluation by contacting the Conservation Districts at (530) 573-2210 or by contacting TRPA's Erosion Control Team at (775) 588-4547 ext. 202.

#### STEP 2: BMP IMPLEMENTATION

You will receive a copy of the completed BMP site evaluation in the mail. You can then install the BMPs yourself, hire a qualified contractor to do the work or request additional assistance from the ECT and the Conservation Districts.

#### STEP 3: CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

When the BMPs are completed, contact TRPA's Erosion Control Team for a final inspection. If the BMPs have been installed as prescribed, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. This signifies that the property is in compliance with the TRPA BMP Retrofit Program. The Certificate will be valid as long as the BMPs are maintained and functional.

If you are interested in receiving a free BMP site evaluation and a complimentary copy of the Home Landscaping Guide for Tahoe and Vicinity, please fill out the following information and return the pre-paid postcard in the mail.

The Home Landscaping Guide for Lake Tahoe and Vicinity is an informative book written by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension that explains how you can have a beautiful landscape while protecting Lake Tahoe.

#### BEGIN THE BMP PROCESS EARLY

Property owners are encouraged to begin the BMP process early. All properties in the Tahoe Basin are required to have BMPs installed. Your property is located within a Priority One, Two or Three watershed. The compliance dates are as follows: October 15, 2000 for Priority One, October 15, 2006 for Priority Two and October 15, 2008 for Priority Three. Corrective action will be taken when necessary against property owners who have not complied with the BMP Retrofit Program by their designated compliance date. To determine which Priority Watershed your property is located within, please visit the TRPA website: [www.trpa.org/BMPInfo/bmp.html](http://www.trpa.org/BMPInfo/bmp.html) or refer to Step 1 in the section entitled, "The ECT Makes Saving Lake Tahoe Easy."

For more information, please contact:

- TRPA's Erosion Control Team: (775) 588-4547 ext. 202
- Tahoe Resource Conservation District and Nevada Tahoe Conservation District Backyard Conservation Program: (530) 573-2210
- The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension:

(775) 832-4150

- The Natural Resource Conservation Service:

(530) 578-2761

The BMP Retrofit Program is a cooperative effort  
of the agencies listed above and is sponsored by:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection

The Nevada Division of State Lands

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