

Community Conservation Plan

By Supervisor Norma Santiago

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Bi-State Tahoe Basin Fire Commission

February 15, 2008

Finding: A comprehensive **Community Conservation Plan (CCP)** should be established to address issues related to residential defensible space and water quality protection through **best management practices (BMP)**, and to promote upgrades and the new construction of homes with ignition-resistant designs and materials.

Background and Supporting Evidence: Despite best efforts by local fire agencies and volunteers prior to the Angora Fire, there was no coordinated effort to develop and implement defensible space and BMPs or to educate the general public regarding utilization of ignition-resistant building materials.

A comprehensive **Community Conservation Plan** can establish a coordinated process to assure that communities, neighborhoods and water quality are better protected from fire. Additionally, this plan will further El Dorado County's goal of enhancing public safety while protecting Lake Tahoe's clarity.

Implementing a **Community Conservation Plan** is consistent with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's "Position Paper on the Prevention of Catastrophic Wildfire at Lake Tahoe" (2004).

Attachment A states:

"The existing BMP (Best Management Practices) Retrofit Program teaches property owners to incorporate water quality treatment on developed parcels. A watershed theme message that addresses water quality and forest health values in harmony is the goal—BMPs and defensible space considerations should be made together when designing an integrated landscape."

Recommendations:

- 1) Develop protocols for interagency coordination of **Community Conservation Plans**.
- 2) CCPs be prioritized as identified in the adopted "Final Fuel Reduction and Forest Restoration Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin" (January, 2007) Section 5 pages 11-14, Attachment B.
- 3) Development and implementation of CCPs be prioritize by watershed risk as determine by Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and high fire risk as determined in the "Final Fuel Reduction and Forest Restoration Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin".

- 4) CCPs be developed in a consensus-based process between the following agencies:
 - a. CalFire
 - b. Fire District representatives
 - c. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
 - d. Soil experts e.g. National Regional Conservation Services (NRCS), Regional Conservation District (RCD) and/or soil scientists
 - e. Local public works department by jurisdiction
- 5) Identify process for adoption of CCPs in identified communities/neighborhoods
- 6) Establish Implementation Team Task Force lead by Fire Safe Council working in conjunction with Regional Conservation Districts to develop timelines, assess workforce needs, identify sources for funding, identify regulatory inconsistencies, etc.
- 7) Link jurisdictional residential allocations to attainment of CCPs.

Impacts of Implementation:

Cost: Costs are described in the adopted "Final Fuel Reduction and Forest Restoration Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin" (January, 2007) Section 7 pages 2-4. (Attachment C) Scope of work for the development of a plan has been already completed (Attachment D) by EDAW at the request of El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago on June 14, 2007.

Funding Source(s): SNPLAMA, Water Quality Bond Money, Private Property Owners, and, possible local government contributions.

Staffing: Staffing for the architects of the CCPs as well as the implementation team are described under "Recommendations" section of this document

Existing regulations or laws: One of the tasks of the implementation team would be to identify existing regulations that are contradictory and/or counterproductive to developing and/or implementing the Community Conservation Plan.