



Tahoe Science Advisory Council

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency 2023 Threshold Evaluation Independent Peer Review

Appendix A – Review Charge

Background

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) has the authority to adopt environmental quality standards, called threshold standards, and to enforce ordinances designed to achieve those standards. The Bi-State Compact defines a threshold standard as “...an environmental standard necessary to maintain a significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific or natural value of the region or to maintain public health and safety within the region.” The TRPA Governing Board adopted the first set of threshold standards in 1982.

Every four years TRPA leads an evaluation of the adopted threshold standards. The information, provided in a web-based dashboard, summarizes TRPA’s assessment of existing standards within the established framework.

This peer review aims to determine whether appropriate methods, the best available science, and accepted best practices were used in conducting the threshold evaluation. Each reviewer’s charge is to provide a critical evaluation that identifies deficiencies and errors and any positive aspects for their respective threshold category.

Threshold Dashboard Structure

TRPA uses a [web-based dashboard](#) to display information about the threshold standards and to summarize the status, trend, and confidence for each indicator based on evaluations conducted every four years. Threshold standards are organized for a general audience based on the focus of the standard.

Categories: There are ten (10) threshold categories:

[Air Quality](#)

[Fisheries](#)

[Noise](#)

[Recreation](#)

[Scenic Resources](#)

[Soil Conservation](#)

[Transportation and Sustainable Communities](#)[Vegetation Preservation](#)

[Water Quality](#)

[Wildlife](#)

Reporting Categories: Each category is divided into 1-8 “reporting categories.” For example, Fisheries includes three reporting categories:

[Instream Flow](#)

[Lake Habitat](#)

[Stream Habitat](#)

Indicators: Within the reporting categories, are the threshold standards themselves, known as “indicators” and a status assessment (“2023 Evaluation”) for each indicator. These elements are the primary subject of the peer review. Each indicator page includes a brief metric description and, where available, a summary of available data. The dashboard uses a set of consistent icons to describe the status and trend of each standard to a general audience. The evaluation page provides an overview of the standards importance, known drivers of the condition, a summary of recent monitoring data, and an explanation of the evaluation’s findings.

Review Charge

Reviewers are asked to consider the breadth of information for each threshold standard with the goal of improving TRPA’s analysis and presentation of the available information. The review should focus on the 2023 evaluation pages for the specified indicators and provide responses to the questions outlined below. Where possible, reviewers should provide solutions or recommendations to address any identified deficiencies or errors. Commentary provided by reviewers should be objective and not indicate the reviewer’s values or preferences.

2023 Indicator Evaluation Page review questions

General presentation for each Indicator Evaluation Page:

1. Does the “Key Points” section summarize the most important points that emerge from the data presented? Are the “Key Points” supported by the data and analysis presented?
2. Does the “Rationale Details” section provide a reasonable explanation of how the standard was evaluated and the status determination was made?
3. Does the “Confidence Details” discussion explain how the confidence determination was made? Is the determination reasonably supported by the information presented?
4. Does the “Delivering and Measuring Success” section provide links to relevant projects that would contribute to standard attainment and the monitoring programs and metrics used to measure progress?

Threshold status determination – for each Indicator:

1. Are the analytical methods appropriately applied to determine the indicator’s status, trend, and confidence?
2. Would you recommend a different method of evaluating indicator status or trend?

Review Product

Reviewers will provide answers to each of the questions outlined above for each Evaluation Page they are charged with reviewing in a simple memorandum along with any additional comments or feedback.

Reviewers may also add comments directly to each Evaluation Page under the “Comments” section – simply click the “Add Comment” button to the right of the “Review Comments” panel. A “New Comment” box will open - add comments and hit “save.” (Note: reviewers will see comments from the preparers, some active and some that have been resolved.)

Lake Tahoe Info Platform

To review the evaluation pages, each reviewer must create an account and log into the [Lake Tahoe Info](#) platform. TRPA staff will send each reviewer an invitation to create an account. Once an account is established, users can log in [here](#).

Once a user is logged into the platform, the links below will lead directly to the applicable 2023 Evaluation Pages.

If you have trouble accessing the pages or need any additional information on a specific indicator or threshold category, please contact the following staff at TRPA:

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