
STAFF REPORT

Date: May 20, 2020

To: TRPA Forest Health & Wildfire Committee

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Update of TRPA Code of Ordinances Chapter 61 (Vegetation Management and Forest Health) Section 61.3. Vegetation Protection and Management

Summary and Staff Recommendation:

Chapter 61 of the TRPA Code of Ordinances addresses vegetation management and forest health. Staff will present an overview of potential amendments to Section 61.3. Vegetation Protection and Management. This presentation is informational only. Staff will seek direction on proposed amendments.

Proposed Revisions to Section 61.3. (Vegetation Protection and Management):

Vegetation protection in terms of old growth management and stream environment zones (SEZs) is important for ecosystem management in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Old growth can provide critical habitat for wildlife. Likewise, old growth protection can help the Tahoe Basin achieve a more heterogeneous forest structure with trees of diverse age classes. Additionally, SEZs provide a variety of highly valued services, including water quality maintenance through nutrient cycling and sediment retention, flood attenuation, infiltration and groundwater recharge, open space, scenic and recreational enjoyment, wildlife habitat, and wildfire abatement.

The proposed amendments to 61.3. Vegetation Protection and Management will streamline the code to facilitate user efficiency while ensuring TRPA requirements are met. The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team's Regulations Working Group collaboratively identified areas for amendment to facilitate clarification and reorganization within Section 61.3.

Areas for discussion for modification, clarity, and reorganization:

1. Updating and standardizing references throughout Section 61.3.
2. Standardizing old growth Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) to 30 inches for the entire Basin.
3. Allowing vehicles to operate over "frozen ground" as well as snow in SEZs.
4. Adding language that allows all partners to use innovative technologies once one entity proves its technology is environmentally safe.
5. Consolidating all references to SEZ protection in one section.

Contact Information:

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