

# New Shoreline Plan for Tahoe Approved

**BY TOM LOTSHAW**

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board adopted a new Shoreline Plan for Lake Tahoe on Oct. 24, following three years of collaboration by the agency and a broad range of partners to develop the plan.

“This plan’s adoption is a landmark achievement for Tahoe,” said Joanne Marchetta, TRPA executive director. “Through this collaborative process we have reached a plan that is fair and will benefit lake recreation and the environment at Tahoe.”

The Shoreline Plan marks the first update to TRPA shorezone regulations in several decades and lifts a longstanding moratorium on new piers and buoys at the lake that was based on outdated science about their impacts on fish habitat.

Developed through a highly collaborative, mediated process, the Shoreline Plan aims to improve recreation access, experiences, and safety on the lake while protecting the environment along the shoreline.

Many partners helped develop the plan, including TRPA, Lake Tahoe Marina Association, Tahoe Lakefront Owners’ Association, League to Save Lake Tahoe, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, Nevada Division of State Lands, and California State Lands Commission.

The plan sets development caps and regulations for new shoreline structures such as piers, buoys, and public boat ramps. It also creates a framework for marinas to enhance their facilities if they incorporate environmental improvements into the project.

“We hope the incentives included in this plan will provide excellent opportunities to improve recreational access and environmental protection for generations to come,” said Jan Brisco, executive director of the Tahoe Lakefront Owners’ Association.

The Shoreline Plan—which takes effect January 2019—also creates programs needed to ensure shoreline structures and boating activity do not harm the environment, scenery, or recreation experiences at Lake Tahoe.

The cost of these programs will be paid for through new shoreline fees that TRPA and its partners worked to fairly apportion to various shoreline users and structures. These include mooring fees, an increase in boat sticker fees, and boat rental concession fees that will take effect leading up to the 2019 boating season.

New programs will include boater education and enforcement of the 600-foot no-wake zone at Lake Tahoe, expansion of the no-wake zone to include all of Emerald Bay, and no-wake zone buffers around all swimmers, paddlers, and shoreline structures to prevent unsafe boating near the shoreline where motor boats, paddlers, and swimmers interact.

TRPA is partnering with the Lake Tahoe Water Trail and the basin-wide Take Care campaign, as well as with the League to Save Lake Tahoe, marinas, concessionaires, and law enforcement agencies to implement these new boater education and enforcement activities.

In addition to strengthening its own presence on the lake with a second watercraft team, TRPA is entering an agreement with all law enforcement agencies on the lake to coordinate and prioritize enforcement strategies and to create a Watercraft Task Force that will meet regularly to focus on improving compliance with boating regulations at Lake Tahoe.

Other new programs provide coordinated TRPA enforcement against illegal boat moorings on the lake with the California State Lands Commission and Nevada Division of State Lands; more monitoring and control projects to prevent the spread of harmful aquatic invasive species; enhanced TRPA monitoring for noise and scenic impacts from boating activity and shoreline structures; and new provisions to keep noisy boats with aftermarket exhaust systems that exceed TRPA, California, and Nevada sound limits from operating on the lake.

“Lake Tahoe was suffering from the lack of a shoreline plan as illegal activity caused environmental degradation and conflicts amongst recreationists on the water,” said Darcie Goodman Collins, Ph.D., chief executive officer of the League to Save Lake Tahoe. “This new plan has stronger protections, more effective enforcement, and a vastly improved education program enhanced by technology that will make everyone’s experience on the lake better.”

People interested in the Shoreline Plan are encouraged to visit [www.shorelineplan.org](http://www.shorelineplan.org) to learn more about the plan, new permitting processes and phases, and fees. At the website, people can also read a report on the Shoreline Implementation Program that details how the new plan will take effect, and sign up for regular email newsletters about upcoming implementation actions.

## Shoreline Plan By the Numbers

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### Shoreline structures:

The Shoreline Plan authorizes up to:

- **128** new private piers, with 12 pier applications accepted every two years. Piers that serve multiple properties will be prioritized, with no more than 25 pier permits available for piers that serve a single property.
- **10** new public piers
- **2** new public boat ramps
- **1,486** new moorings, including buoys and boat lifts, with no more than 15 percent of the moorings permitted in any given year. In 2019, TRPA will focus on ensuring that all existing moorings on the lake are permitted and registered, and new mooring applications will likely not be processed until 2020.
- Up to **330** new moorings for existing marinas, and up to **300** new moorings for public agencies with lakefront facilities.

**Shoreline fees:**

- **\$43** annual mooring registration fee charged for all boat moorings. Pays for enforcement of illegal moorings, no-wake zone education and enforcement, and aquatic invasive species monitoring and control.
- **\$47** annual buoy scenic mitigation fee charged for all buoys. Pays for projects to offset the scenic impacts of buoys.
- **\$12** increase for annual boat sticker fees for all boat inspections. Pays for aquatic invasive species monitoring and control and watercraft inspection costs.
- **\$75** annual boat rental concession fee charged for all rental boats with a 3-star or higher rating by the California Air Resources Board and **\$150** annual boat rental concession fee charged for all rental boats with a lower or no CARB rating. Pays for aquatic invasive species monitoring and control and no-wake zone education and enforcement.

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