

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD

In November 2010 the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan) amended their Basin Plan to incorporate a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for sediment and nutrients for Lake Tahoe (Lake). The TMDL focuses on restoring the Lake's deep water transparency. Subsequently, the changes to the Basin Plan and the TMDL were adopted by the State Water Board and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The TMDL established 2004 as the baseline year upon which progress is measured and identified four main pollutant source categories: Urban Upland, Forest Upland, Stream Bank Erosion, and Atmospheric Deposition. The science that was relied upon for the TMDL determined that Urban Upland was the largest contributor of pollutants to the Lake, so Lahontan focused its early implementation efforts on that source category. Lahontan issued new municipal permits under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to the three local jurisdictions on the California side of the Basin in 2011. In addition, the State Water Resources Control Board included TMDL targets for Caltrans in Tahoe as part of their Statewide NPDES permit adopted in 2012. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) entered into agreements with the local jurisdictions in Nevada and the Nevada Department of Transportation using the same criteria and standards.

The municipal NPDES permits required each local jurisdiction to develop a Pollutant Load Reduction Plan (PLRP) describing how they will meet their pollutant load reduction requirements for the permit term, 2011-2016. The three California PLRPs were accepted by the Lahontan Board in June 2013. These plans rely on a variety of methods to meet their targets including erosion control project implementation, road operations, and residential and commercial Best Management Practices implementation. Caltrans staff submitted their PLRP in September 2013, and Lahontan staff is currently reviewing it.

Several meetings occurred over the past year between Lahontan and large land managers of Forested Upland sources, including the Conservancy. The criteria to measure and report progress were recently finalized for this source. Measurement and reporting criteria for the stream bank erosion source were also recently finalized.

Conservancy staff is currently working with Lahontan staff and their consultants to report progress in these two source categories since 2004.

Additionally, Conservancy staff is developing a strategy to inventory its Forested Upland roads to meet future reporting requirements.

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