

North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance

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Jerry Wotel, Newsletter Editor

NTCAA Newsletter – June 2011

BB, LLC Kings Beach Town Center Project

A Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Kings Beach Town Center Project has been released. The views of interested persons, organizations and agencies as to the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed are requested. Responses should be submitted by July 26, 2011 to Theresa Avance, Project Manager, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Email to tavance@trpa.org.

From 2006 to 2008 BB, LLC acquired approximately four acres of commercial property in the center of Kings Beach and began work on a proposed mixed use project to establish a “Kings Beach Town Center”. The project proposes to include offices, commercial shops and restaurants, housing units including affordable workforce units, a parking structure, public plazas, streetscape and infrastructure improvements and an enhanced bus shelter. The Redevelopment Agency has entered into an Exclusive Negotiating Rights Agreement and a Pre-development Loan Agreement with BB, LLC and has also assisted the project by holding the Agency-owned parcel on Salmon Avenue for eventual inclusion in the project. In 2010, the Agency acquired all mortgage loans secured by the project site property for approximately \$4.3 million. The project is designated as a CEP by TRPA. The project is targeted to begin construction in 2013.



Kings Beach Biomass Plant Allegedly Reduces Open Burning

One of the most commonly repeated claims to justify a biomass power plant in Kings Beach is that by virtue of its location there will be a reduction of forest material that is openly burned. In fact, the air quality baseline they are proposing to use is openly burned forest material compared to the controlled combustion emissions of the power plant. Their intent is to show that the power plant reduces emissions and will therefore produce cleaner air. Make sense? The rhetoric sounds reasonable if the facts didn't get in the way.

NTCAA has recently reviewed official records of all open burning in Placer County's portion in the Lake Tahoe Basin from 2005 through 2010 and discovered some startling facts. During this 6 year period the annual average that was openly burned was only 1585 green tons. And 70% of the burning was south of Tahoe City.

A quick calculation shows an annual average of only 475 green tons are burned openly between Burton Creek and the Nevada Stateline. Even if all this openly burned material were collected and processed into feedstock, it would supply fuel for a 3MW plant just over **THREE DAYS!** Yes, this is not a typo. It takes two green tons (GT) extracted from fuels reduction activity to produce one Bone Dry Ton (BDT) consumed at a biomass power plant.

So a power plant is justified in Kings Beach to displace open burning, but the amount of material each year (averaged over the last six years of records) that has been openly burned east of Tahoe City would only provide about three days of fuel for a power plant burning 365 days a year. Is Placer County planning on trucking into the Tahoe Basin for plant operation, forest material that is gathered outside the basin?

Is the Great Biomass Mystery Revealed - The Choice of Technology and Size?

Since Placer County issued the Notice of Preparation last year on the proposed Biomass Plant in Kings Beach there was no choice made on the type of technology or the size of the power plant. Placer County has continued this cloud of secrecy about whether the proposed plant would use direct combustion (like Loyalton and Carson City) or gasification, and whether the plant would be 1MW (like the failed Carson City Plant), 2MW as has been bandied about, or possibly 3MW.



Recently, the University of California at Berkeley website for the Cooperative Extension published a list of all Biomass Plants in California. Anyone can check this out. The list includes Placer County's Kings Beach site as a 3MW gasification plant. NTCAA has not been able to confirm if this is an inadvertent leak or that Lake Tahoe residents are just the last ones to be officially informed.

If UC Berkeley has some reason to believe this is the plant technology and size, why not tell the residents living next to the power plant?

Placer County apparently prefers to not publicize their final choice until they have to in the Draft EIR as this allows less time for analysis of the technology and the fuel requirements of a particular scale. We'll soon see if the proposed biomass power plant in the Lake Tahoe Basin is a 3MW (utility scale) gasification technology.

Quake Tahoe? Researcher Studies Faults Under The Lake

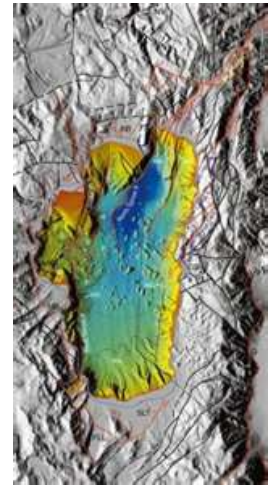
Excerpted from National Public Radio, Monday June 27, 2011. For complete article, go to <http://www.capradio.org/articles/2011/06/27/quake-tahoe-researcher-studies-faults-under-the-lake>

A lot of residents and visitors would have a hard time imagining a devastating earthquake churning up the placid Lake Tahoe waters. But as Graham Kent who heads up University of Nevada at Reno's seismological lab explains calm waters belie a violent past. Kent says *"The west Tahoe fault ruptures about every four to five thousand years. Its last rupture was 4500 years ago. So obviously there's some concern because we're at the end of that earthquake cycle. Doesn't mean its gonna' happen tomorrow. But it wouldn't be a surprise if it did."*

At least three faults run underneath the lake: the Stateline, the Incline Village and the West Tahoe. Now it looks like there is one more. Kent adds, *"We discovered there's a smaller fault in between the West Tahoe and the Stateline."*

To help get answers like that, Kent is deploying a cutting edge tool he and his team developed. It looks like a small yellow submarine, which is submerged alongside the boat. The Compressed High Intensity Radar Pulse (CHIRP) sends a signal to a computer monitor right on the boat giving the seismologists a detailed view of the complex topography under the lake.

Kent continues, *"On land that field of study is called Paleoseismology. But they tend to use backhoes, and backhoes don't work so well in the water. So this CHIRP profiler is a acoustic backhoe. So as you saw out on the lake today, you get unbelievable pictures in real time of what the sediments look like and how they're warped and deformed and faulted. So we go out there and make maps to understand the history of those ruptures and that gives us a sense of when the next big one in the Tahoe Basin might occur."*



The CHIRP profiler is helping unravel all kinds of mysteries. For instance, Kent says we now know that that the faults sometimes erupt together, creating earthquakes as large as 7.0-7.5. A quake that big would mean a potentially deadly tsunami up to thirty feet high.

So what should you do if an earthquake on occurs at Lake Tahoe. Kent recommends you duck and take cover waiting out the shaking and then, in a reasoned way get as high as you can.

Kent says he is working with officials in California and Nevada and hopes to see tsunami warning signs on the lake in the not too distant future.

California Legislature Leaves Redevelopment Agencies in Limbo

By Adam Weintraub Associated Press, Posted 6/18/2011

Gov. Jerry Brown has been pushing since January to abolish California's redevelopment agencies, and last week's flurry of budget activity pushed them one step closer to the brink. What's beyond that brink? Progress, unemployment, or a lawsuit against the state, depending on whom you ask. In the meantime, the uncertainty is disrupting work on development projects throughout the state.

The Legislature approved a state budget backed by Democrats. While the main bills were vetoed swiftly by Brown, two bills that would eliminate some 400 redevelopment agencies and allow creation of new agencies were passed but not transmitted to the governor. Supporters said the overhaul of the state's redevelopment agencies would bring in \$1.7 billion, money that would be directed primarily to schools, law enforcement and other local services. The legislation also would tighten the rules for agencies that often are seen as providing easy money to private developers for projects that may do little to fight blight.

If Brown signs them, dozens of agencies believe they will not be able to make the payments required to continue operation under the new system. Hundreds more are still crunching the numbers but fear the worst.

Upcoming Events/Key Dates

Agendas for TRPA Governing Board and APC, and also Placer County BOS are not available until a few days before the meeting. Therefore, it is difficult to provide a meaningful emphasis to the meetings. Other meetings/events not shown here, or changes, will be announced by email.

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| July 6, Wednesday | NLTRA Board Meeting | 8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room |
| July 12, Tuesday | NTPUD Board Meeting | 9 am, NTEC, Kings Beach |
| July 13, Wednesday | TRPA APC Meeting <i>Kings Beach Town Center Scoping Mtg.</i> | 9:30 am, TRPA Stateline Office |
| July 14, Thursday | NTRAC Meeting | 6 pm, NTEC, Kings Beach |
| July 15, Friday | TCPUD Board Meeting | 8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room |
| July 19, Tuesday | Placer Cty Scoping Mtg <i>Kings Beach Town Center Scoping Mtg.</i> | 6 pm, NTEC, Kings Beach |
| July 20, Wednesday | NTFPD Board Meeting | 6 pm, TCPUD Board Room |
| July 27, Wednesday | TRPA Governing Board | 9:30 am, NTEC, Kings Beach |

TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
 NLTRA – North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
 TCPUD – Tahoe City Public Utility District
 NTEC – North Tahoe Event Center
 BOS – Placer County Board of Supervisors

APC – Advisory Planning Commission
 NTPUD – North Tahoe Public Utility District
 NTFPD – North Tahoe Fire Protection District
 NTRAC- North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council

“A government or an administration, who means and acts honestly, has nothing to fear, and consequently has nothing to conceal.”.....Thomas Paine 1782

Contributors to this newsletter: Dave McClure, Susan Gearhart, and Jerry Wotel

The North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance (NTCAA) seeks to provide an ongoing voice for ordinary citizens. Planning the future of our communities and providing for communication and education on key issues affecting our communities is of prime importance. We serve the North Lake Tahoe area from Kings Beach to Tahoma. NTCAA is a tax-exempt California Public Benefit Nonprofit Corporation formed in May 2007, staffed by community volunteers. Membership is limited to those who subscribe to the NTCAA Goals and Objectives and are willing to participate in the organization's activities.