

# Changing landscape of Tahoe's environmental movement

By Kara Fox, Moonshine Ink

After decades of development lawsuits throughout the Tahoe basin and Truckee, change has quietly been happening over the last few years as conservation groups and developers come together on projects. While environmental leaders say litigation can be necessary to protect the environment, they believe working with the developers is a better strategy to advance their cause.

Since 2012, when new executive directors took the helm of both the League to Save Lake Tahoe and Mountain Area Preservation – two local environmental groups historically known for litigation – the environmental movement shifted. The new leaders have ushered in a more collaborative form of environmentalism. In this new model, litigation is used as a last resort and meetings with developers are commonplace to come to a consensus on development projects. In addition to advocacy, the groups are also focusing on community education, outreach, and awareness, which they say was needed to change the community's perception of the organizations.

"The environmental movement has changed," said MAP Executive Director Alexis Ollar. "It seemed like we were the 'no, no, no' group. You can't say no to everything. Change is inevitable."

Jesse Patterson, deputy director for the League, agreed.

"It is [about] trying to be pragmatic about environmental problems at Lake Tahoe," Patterson said. "You have to grow with the times; we want to remain effective."

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