



TAHOE AREA
SIERRA CLUB

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Fall Issue: **Send by 12/20/03**

NEWSLETTER VIA E-mail

The Tahoe Area Sierra Club Newsletter is available for download: <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/tahoe>

Send an e-mail to our webmaster (bryanbz@charter.net) with your name and physical address if you prefer the electronic version only. You'll help save a tree!

The South Shore TASC Conservation Group meets the 3rd Thursday of the month Douglas Co. Fire Station at Elks Point (Round Hill), NV 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Chair: Michael Donahoe 775-588-5466 for information

Activities short of endorsement in the presidential election

We are pleased to inform you that the Sierra Club Board of Directors has voted to authorize "Activities Short of Endorsement" for the presidential campaigns of four candidates. Those candidates are Howard Dean, John Kerry, Dennis Kucinich, and Joe Lieberman. The campaigns of these candidates have been informed of this distinction. This authorization grants those candidates' campaigns the following privileges:

1. The ability to rent the Sierra Club's membership mailing list
2. Permission to purchase advertisements in Sierra Club publications
3. Assistance from the Sierra Club in meeting or communicating with Club leaders in the states and obtaining information about events those leaders may be holding.

There are two important points we must emphasize in announcing this authorization:

- 1 This does **NOT** constitute an endorsement of any or all of these candidates by the Sierra Club and should not be construed as such. Therefore, neither the candidates nor their campaigns may use the Sierra Club name or logo in ANY communications. This also means that Sierra Club leaders, members, and staff may NOT use their Sierra Club affiliation in any public document, article, or communication endorsing any or all of these candidates (including for identification purposes only).
2. This process is not completed. All announced candidates have been sent a questionnaire and invited to interview with our committee. Each of the candidates approved for the above activities interviewed with the Political Committee and has demonstrated sufficient support for the environment to warrant this distinction. We continue our efforts to work with each of the remaining major candidates for president and hope to schedule interviews with each of them.

If you have questions or concerns about the Activities Short of Endorsement status or this process, please contact Joe Fox, Deputy Political Director for Electoral Action (contact information below). Our member lists will be made available to the candidates very shortly so please respond immediately with any specific concerns. We will keep you informed of any future actions as they happen. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this authorization, please contact:

Joe Fox

Deputy Political Director for Electoral Action

408 C St. NE

Washington, DC 20002

202-675-7902 (ph) 202-547-6009 (fax)

joe.fox@sierraclub.org

TRPA'S Mike Volmer to speak on PATHWAY 2007

TRPA, the USFS and Lahontan are in the process of developing a new and coordinated 20 year Regional Plan for the Tahoe Basin. It's called PATHWAY 2007. It tied with Burke Creek as the top priority we should be focusing on within the Basin. (Martis Valley is the top priority outside the Basin.)

At our August Conservation meeting, we heard about the overall PATHWAY 2007 process from TRPA Deputy Director **Carl Hasty** and **Gabby Barrett** – TRPA's head of Long Range Planning.

And in September, TRPA's Fisheries and Wildlife Program Manager **Shane Romsos** talked about the Wildlife and Fisheries Thresholds that TRPA will be revising for the new 20 year plan.

Our October meeting will be devoted to Vegetation Management—especially as it relates to fire prevention in our forests at Tahoe. TRPA's Vegetation Program Manager **Mike Volmer** will give a powerpoint presentation on how well we are meeting the Vegetation targets set in 1987, what changes are likely to be needed, and what other considerations and scientific findings are being looked at in developing the targets for the new 20 year plan. You'll be surprised at some of the research he'll share with you regarding the impact of fire on the Lake's clarity.

The meeting is on Thursday October 16th. It goes from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m., at the Fire Station on Elks Pt Rd. in Nevada. (Take Hwy 50 to the stoplight at Round Hill Shopping Center. Turn west on Elks Pt Rd. and go 1/2 block. Turn left into Fire Station parking lot. Meeting is in the classroom there.)

It's not time for formal input yet, but it's a great opportunity for us to get up to speed around the vegetation issues that will be decided on in the next few years.

PATHWAY 2007 is likely to have a greater impact on the future of Lake Tahoe than anything else that happens this decade. Come learn more about it.

Cookies and coffee will be ready by 6:20, so come early.

Save the Date!
October 16
Pathway 2007 Talk

TASC Position on Vacation Rentals

"Efforts to restore its (Lake Tahoe's) purity have never been more urgent." This according to an article in the 8-01-03 edition of *USA Today*. In the same article, Dr. Charles Goldman, the world's foremost authority on lakes, talks about the critical role TRPA plays in this effort. Without them, Lake Tahoe "would have gone to hell in a handbasket."

Though their efforts and leadership are essential, TRPA's role is not a popular one. That should come as no surprise. They are, after all, a regulatory agency. But they do need to follow the rule of law and be consistent and fair in enforcing their regulations in order to maintain their credibility and the cooperation of the people who live and visit here.

That credibility is not always what it should be. The perception of many in the Basin is that if you have enough money or clout and hire the right consultants and attorneys, you can do pretty much what you want to. That perception is killing TRPA's effectiveness. And if TRPA is ineffective, this Lake will not be saved. It's as simple as that.

The latest attack on TRPA's consistency and credibility revolves around Vacation Rentals. TRPA regulations stipulate that vacation rentals be limited to those areas that are zoned for them. There are those in the community who think that's unfair. But the fact is, just the opposite is the case. Not enforcing the regulations is what's unfair, and at the same time very destructive to TRPA's credibility and effectiveness, and consequently the future of our lake.

Think about it. Do we really want a situation where whoever raises the biggest ruckus can get the rules ignored just for them? Especially when it's at the expense of the property rights of neighbors who have a reasonable expectation that zoning regulations be enforced. I think not.

So you don't think the regulations are correct? Fine. Work to get them altered. There are procedures for changing TRPA zoning ordinances. Probably one of the 1st steps is to study the impact of vacation rentals on the environment. Maybe 10 – 20 people in a house most weekends (and many weekdays during the high seasons) is less impactful than a family of 4 living here full time.

Maybe visitors can be motivated to care about the lake as much as locals do. Maybe the congestion and air pollution is less if we have 4 – 10 cars per household part of the time rather than 2 – 3 cars all of the time. These things need to be studied.

The next step might be public hearings to explore looking at the property rights of citizens who purchased their homes in areas zoned residential and the property rights of investors who purchase property in the same residential areas but want to maximize the return on their investments.

Whatever the specific steps, work to get the laws changed if you

don't agree with them, but don't ignore them. People complain that the zoning laws haven't been enforced in the past, therefore shouldn't be now. In matters of the law, past non-enforcement does not constitute justification for current non-compliance. Can you imagine saying to a judge, "I've been driving 50 miles per hour in that school zone for 5 years, so it's not right to give me a ticket now." Nonsense.

There are other factors involved in the vacation rental debate. Things like the impact of vacation rentals on the composition of the community and the decrease of full time residents and whether that contributes to the closing of schools and the loss of teachers' jobs. Things like the impact of vacation rentals on the inventory of affordable housing and the possibility that there will be increased pressure to build new affordable housing on raw land, which we desperately need to maintain as raw land so as to filter out the pollutants that are ruining the lake's clarity.

It seems to me that these are important but secondary concerns. The core issue here is whether TRPA is going to maintain the integrity and credibility and strength it needs to save this Lake. Narrow special interests, no matter how vocal or politically connected, should not be determining the fate of this NATIONAL treasure that is the birthright of ALL Americans.

People shouldn't get mad at TRPA for doing their job, they should get upset with those who aren't following the law.

Michael Donahoe, Conservation Co-chair – Tahoe Area Sierra Club (TASC)
(Published in the August Tahoe Daily Tribune)

Ed. Note: At the Douglas County Commissioners Meeting and the South Lake Tahoe Town Meetings held in September to specifically address these concerns, it was noted that the ultimate responsibility falls on the owner and the property management agency. The best course of action for resolving complaints is to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency. However, you must be willing to take the responsibility of signing the complaint form. Unless there is eminent threat of harm they can do very little without a signed complaint. Document incidents with photos, videos or written corroboration from a neighbor. Too many complaints may result in loss of the agency's license and legal action against the owner. We have been promised, at least by the Douglas Co. Commissioners and Sheriff, that action will be taken promptly. At both meetings it was felt that TRPA should provide guidelines but other than when environmental infractions are the issue, the law enforcement agency should be the one to handle complaints. This can include too many cars in one spot, illegal parking, undue noise, lewdness, speeding, zone violations, etc. At the October 3rd TRPA Local Government Committee meeting it was agreed to recommend to the TRPA Governing Board that a Stakeholders Committee be formed to define vacation rental use and its role in the Regional Plan. This is expected to take 3 to 6 months.

Van Sickle Bi-State Park: Can one park do it all?

Work is underway by California State Parks, Nevada State Parks and Design Workshop—commissioned by the State Parks—to develop concepts for the Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

The park will be located behind the Casino Area at Stateline where Park Avenue intersects with Lake Parkway and Montreal Road. The land on the Nevada side was donated by the Van Sickle Family and the land on the California side was purchased by the California Tahoe Conservancy. The total size of the park will be 725 acres and based on TRPA land usage requirements only 67 acres can be developed.

Two Public Workshops have been held to obtain input for the concepts to be developed. A third Public Workshop will be held later this fall but a date has not been set.

Both California and Nevada State Parks conducted surveys and concluded that the biggest demand is camping and trails.

The expected camping use is to be evaluated based on current experience at Nevada Beach and Zephyr Cove US Forest Service Camp-grounds



which are not fully utilized now except for peak summer use in July and August.

Concepts have been developed for Day Use emphasis, Camping emphasis and a balanced use. For all concepts it is planned to have hiking and bike trails. The hiking trails are planned to connect to the Tahoe Rim Trail and may also have a trail down from the top of the Heavenly Gondola as well as trails up to scenic view points overlooking Tahoe.

The Day Use areas will include Trail Heads, an Interpretive Center, a small amphitheater and Picnic Areas for individuals and groups.

It is also planned to have winter activities such as snowshoeing, sledging and cross country skiing.

The Sierra Club position is to have the Day Use capabilities of the Bi-State Park emphasized to capitalize on its proximity to the Hotel Casinos. Hiking and Bike trails, should have educational components so people can both have their spirits lifted by experiencing some of Tahoe's natural wildness, and also learn how to help save Lake Tahoe.

The current schedule is to have the Master Plan for the Bi-State Park completed by the end of the year.



TAHOE AREA
SIERRA CLUB

Will you help with LOCAL NEEDS?

Yes, I would like to donate directly
to the Tahoe Area Sierra Club Group to help fund:
TASC Newsletters, Educational Materials for the Lake Tahoe Basin,
Mapping for the Martis Valley Watershed

California Environmental Quality Act for Martis Valley Burke Creek Preservation

Other: _____

\$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500

Please make checks payable to:

Tahoe Area Sierra Club

PO Box 16936

South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151

Thank You!

Executive Committee Nominations

We're looking for a "few good candidates!"

Election time is coming up soon for the Tahoe Area Sierra Club Executive Committee. This is the group that closely interacts with other Local and State groups, and the Sierra Club at a national level. This is one of the best ways to make your membership count and your voice heard!

If you are interested in working on the "ExecCom" or know of someone who would make a good candidate, please contact David Kean at the phone/e-mail address below by October 20:

*David Kean (phone) 530-587-7258
or e-mail: davidmkean@yahoo.com*

This is a great opportunity to get involved on the local level and work to effectively preserve and improve the environment in the Tahoe Basin. You will learn as much as you will give.

Ballots will be mailed in the chapter newsletters when the slate of candidates is finalized.

We need your help and your participation!

Wanted: We need an editor for the newsletter!

As a graphics person, my talents lie in layout design and prepress. I'm not a journalist and have to rely on input from our very busy chairpersons for content. They often have so much on their plates they don't want to deal with writing yet another bit for the newsletter. We need someone who enjoys writing, understands deadlines, and can help develop the content of the TASC Newsletter—together we can keep this alive and focused on the environmental issues of the Tahoe Basin. Interested? Contact Lin Yeazell (phone: 775-588-8216 or E-mail: linyeazell@charter.net).



SIERRA CLUB HAPPY HOUR!

Join us every third Friday of the month between
5:30 and 7:30 p.m. for **HAPPY HOUR** to have fun
and discuss local environmental action and issues.
(Location will alternate between north and south shore)

October 17th	Dixon's 1 Restaurant & Brewery 675 Emerald Bay Rd South Lake Tahoe, CA
November 21st	Bar of America 10042 Donner Pass Rd Truckee CA
December 19th	Dixon's 1 Restaurant and Brewery 675 Emerald Bay Rd South Lake Tahoe, CA
January 16th	Bar of America 10042 Donner Pass Rd Truckee CA

The event is free and members are encouraged
to bring a friend!

email Elizabeth Brady at elizabeth@sigba.org
if you have questions.

C'MON, BE HAPPY!





SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

Sierra Club
PO Box 16936
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151

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Tahoe Area Sierra Club Outings October to December

October 12 (Sunday) Tahoe Group Third Annual FABULOUS FALL FOLIAGE FROLIC Spooner Lake (NV) to Marlette Lake

10 mi. RT approx. 800 ft. gain from about 6,400 to 7,200.ft. If our luck holds and Mother Nature cooperates, we will witness spectacular foliage changes to rival New England (ok, I exaggerate a bit). Meet 10 am at Spooner Lake State Park parking facility; bring 10 essentials and be prepared for Autumn weather. Spooner Lake State Park is on Hwy.28, about 2 miles

North of Hwy. 50, 6 miles S. of Incline Village, and about 15 miles East of S.Lake Tahoe/Stateline NV. www.spoonerlake.com or (775)749 5349. Early confirmation requested—only major rainfall cancels.

Leader: Carl Pearl (530-542-0939, skibummr_98@yahoo.com)

October 18 (Saturday) Tahoe Group. Mountain Bike - Boca, Stamphead, Prosser Lake Area

Mountain bike on dirt roads around the Boca, Stamphead, Prosser Lake area. Basically a high beginner ride.15 miles 800 foot elevation gain. May see Bald eagles Osprey. Great views. Potluck afterwards if desired. Bring the 10 essentials and a good lunch.

Leader: Glenn Polochko(H 530-587-5906, gpolochko@yahoo.com)

November 22 (Saturday) Tahoe Group Bald Eagle Migration Hike.

Come hike to see Bald Eagles fish for Salmon on there annual migration south. This will be a hike or snowshoe, depending on the weather, of 10 miles with 1300 feet elevation gain north of Truckee. We will go rain/shine/snow unless the roads are bad. Bring the 10 essentials a good lunch and something dry to sit on. *DOK Dogs must be kept under control.

Leader: Glenn Polochko(H 530-587-5906, gpolochko@yahoo.com)

December 13 (Saturday) Tahoe Group Snowshoe or hike to Boca Ridge

8 miles and 1200 foot elevation gain. We will see the lake system of Boca Stamphead and Prosser, as well as a different view of the north Sierra. **Spectacular views!**

Leader: Glenn Polochko(H 530-587-5906, gpolochko@yahoo.com).

December 20 (Saturday). Round Lake Snowshoe or Day Hike if no snow.(3B)

This trip will start from Carson Pass and head north to Round Lake. This hike will be about 12 miles and at least 1,500 feet of gain. The hike is limited to 8. Bring the 10 essentials, 3 quarts water, lunch, snacks, and a snow shovel. For fun we will practice building snow shelters. In the event there isn't enough snow the trip will be a hike. Call the leader for meeting time and place. Participants must be in good shape.

Leader: Ted Lenzie (916- 985-6144)

Contact leaders or see TASC Website for detailed information

*DOK = Dogs O.K.
Must be kept under control.

Outings Leader Training

I am looking at the middle of November for an outings leader training/refresher.

At the last meetings evryone said they may know of a person who may like to be an outings leader. If you could please have them contact me or allow me to contact them.

Glenn Polochko
h- 530-587-5906
w- 775-972-4414