

# TRUCKEE DONNER LAND TRUST

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*The Truckee Donner Land Trust preserves and protects scenic, historic, and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the Truckee Donner region.*



Summer Newsletter  
Volume 45 ❖ June 2014

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# FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

*Dear Friends,*

I'm pleased and honored to be President of this great organization, which does such important work in our area. I've been privileged to be involved for many years on the Stewardship Committee and Advisory Council, and feel lucky to work with such dedicated Board members and talented staff. The concept of land trusts has always impressed me, bringing together willing buyers and sellers to preserve and protect valued land. Land trust projects are not "takings" or "adverse possessions," government intervention or regulation, but rather private, nonprofit, volunteer organizations expressing the priorities of supporters like you.

As the Truckee Donner Land Trust enters its 24th year, stewardship is an increasingly important part of our work. Thanks to strong financial planning and key partnerships, we are well positioned to take on sophisticated projects like meadow and habitat restoration at East Martis Creek, Van Norden Reservoir, and Upper Lacey Meadows. Mountain meadows are considered the most important habitat in the Sierra Nevada for birds, and approximately two-thirds of California's birds and amphibians depend on meadows for the shade and water they provide. Meadows also act as watershed wetlands that store and purify drinking water for millions of Californians – a fact that should get everyone's attention given the current drought.

Last summer, as the "No Trespassing" signs came down after our 3,000-acre Royal Gorge acquisition, we launched an extensive outreach process to understand the interests of more than 1,000 stakeholders. The public process included meetings, workshops, hikes, tours, surveys, and web outreach. While that particular process is complete, we always continue to listen to stakeholders and will value their input



*Anne Chadwick, Board President. Photo by Bob Cunningham.*

as we implement stewardship plans that grow from our findings. We strive to balance the varied interests of recreation, restoration, historic preservation, and conservation – within our financial and regulatory boundaries, of course.

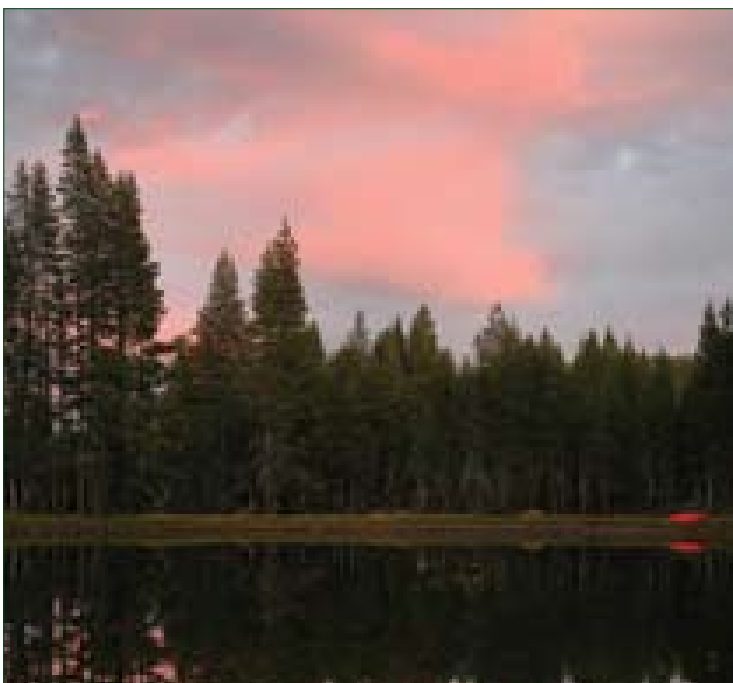
We are not out of the land acquisition business by any means. In fact, this newsletter announces three, new exciting projects: Coppins Meadow, Pendola/Castle Valley and, the iconic Black Wall partnership, off of Old Highway 40. A fourth and very exciting project is in the works, but not yet solid enough to go public. Let me just say that it has potential to be the cornerstone of the Truckee River's revitalization and redevelopment.

Your support of the Land Trust is so vital. Last summer I helped a friend introduce his grandchildren to his beloved Sierra by leading the family on a hike through Summit Canyon, rich with history and stunning vistas. During our hike, he recalled visiting the area with his grandparents, and then as a Boy Scout, and later witnessing the Donner Ridge fire that scorched nearly 45,000 acres in 1960. My friend supports the Truckee Donner Land Trust because he loves this area and wants to preserve it for his grandchildren and for their grandchildren. I'm grateful for his donation and for all of you who enable the Land Trust to pursue its mission.

*Most sincerely yours,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Chadwick".

*Anne Chadwick  
Board President*



*Serene Lakes sunset. Photo by Anne Chadwick.*



# STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Springtime in the Sierra always leaves the Truckee Donner Land Trust staff guessing when we will be able to hit the dirt with habitat restorations, forestry, and trail work. The glass is always half-full at the Land Trust, as staff are fond of saying. One positive from the historic drought in the Sierra this year is that we have a long stewardship season to complete our extensive “to do” list.

## Donner Summit Canyon

Although this property is now a part of Donner Memorial State Park, the Land Trust remains committed to its stewardship. Besides, the Canyon is a local's favorite for a quick hike or run.

In partnership with California State Parks, we will replace the bridge over Donner Summit Canyon Creek this summer and continue work on the segments of trail heavily damaged by a “500-year” flood event. The trail is currently useable, and there is a new trail bypassing the heavy wash-outs on the damaged trail.

## Elizabethtown Meadows

This summer the Land Trust and the Truckee River Watershed Council (TRWC) will begin a series of meadow and watercourse restorations and construction of a new trail between the Northstar Drive stoplight and Waddle Ranch Preserve. In addition, a large group of partners including the Land Trust, TRWC, Truckee Tahoe Airport

District, Northstar Community Services District, Northstar California, and Caltrans, will restore a currently dry channel of Middle Martis Creek on the east side of State Route 267. Both of these are multi-year projects beginning this year. Waddle Ranch Preserve and Elizabethtown Meadows are open to the public during this work.

## Webber Lake

Staff will install new signage at the trailhead kiosks and continue to develop the plan for the public campground and fishery, which will open in 2017.

## Johnson (Negro) Canyon

The newly realigned portion of the Wendin Way access trail will open in June. This new trail is half the grade of the original alignment, making for an easier climb with beautiful views. In addition, the TRWC begins a restoration project this summer. This project will curb erosion and sedimentation of Gregory Creek and Donner Lake.



*The rickety bridge over Summit Creek will be replaced this summer. Photo by Janet Zipser Zipkin.*

## Independence Lake

### Preserve

Boats are now available for free usage. Weeks alternate for use of motorized and non-motorized boats. (Weeks begin Saturday and end on Friday. Non-motorized boats are always available). Unfortunately, construction of the connecting trail that will make a loop hike around the lake will be postponed another year due to permitting needs on the federal land at the west end of the lake. Construction will begin in 2015.

## Donner Lake Rim Trail

Stewardship Coordinator, Kevin Starr, is making significant progress on Rim Trail planning, working with California State Parks, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Tahoe Donner Association. The goal this summer is to have the entire proposed trail alignment mapped for environmental studies and permitting. In addition, Kevin and volunteers will clear deadfall and maintain the existing trail. See Page 24 for volunteer dates on the Rim Trail and other Land Trust trails.



*A chip processor grinds small trees with no commercial value at Royal Gorge. The chips are then used for ground cover to retain soil moisture.*

# ROYAL GORGE

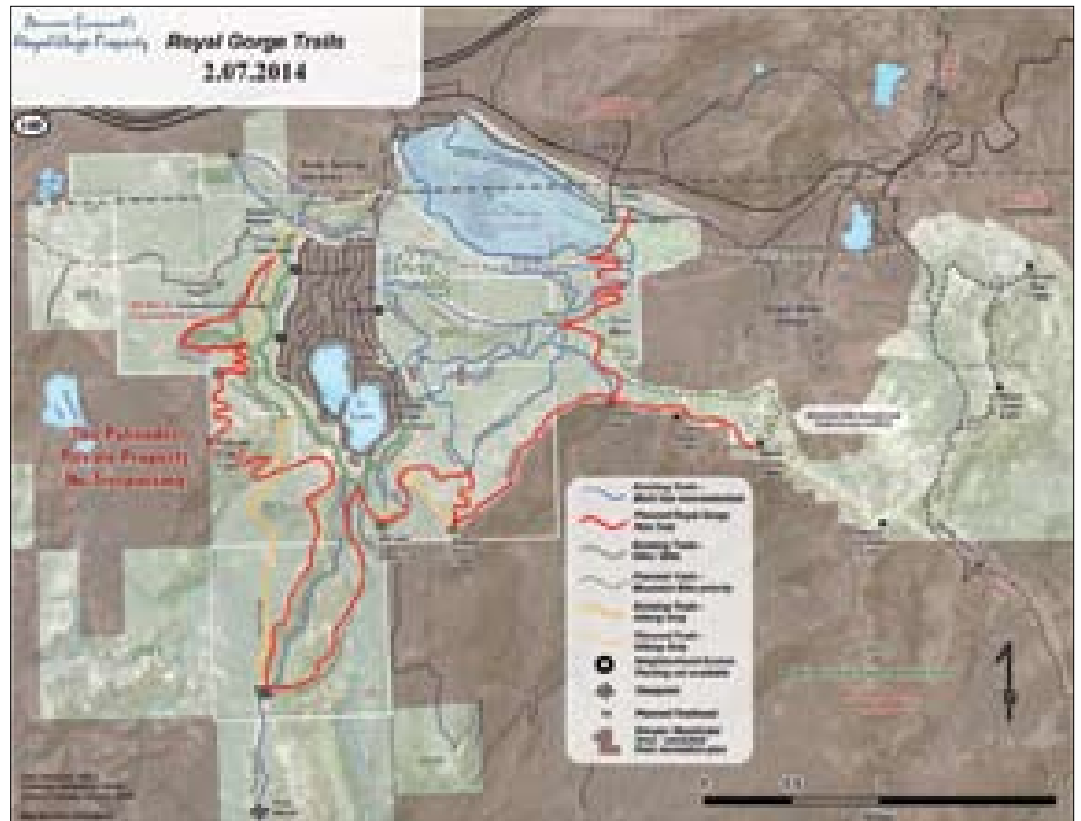
## Royal Gorge Outreach Process Now Complete

After acquiring the Royal Gorge property, the Truckee Donner Land Trust hosted a five-month long public outreach process to guide future management of the property and to develop sustainable recreation opportunities compatible with Royal Gorge conservation objectives. More than 1,000 people participated in the process.

The outreach process offered several means for providing input including community meetings, focus groups, property tours, surveys, and one-on-one meetings. Specific feedback was sought regarding recreation uses, trails, public access points, infrastructure needs, and restoration goals for the property.

The input will help determine areas of consensus and will guide the Land Trust as it develops a master plan for the long-term future of the Royal Gorge property.

Many thanks to those who participated in the outreach process. To the maximum extent possible, the Land Trust intends to incorporate into the Royal Gorge master plan their valuable recommendations.



The Royal Gorge trail map resulting from the public outreach process last summer. The Walter and Esther Hewlett Rim Trail is in red.

## Royal Gorge Stewardship

For the 2014 stewardship season, the Truckee Donner Land Trust is focusing largely on Royal Gorge forestry management, mitigating erosion from existing roads, and trail maintenance.

Forestry work is expensive and slow, largely due to the sheer number of trees per acre, far exceeding the number of trees

considered healthy and natural. In certain cases 600 trees per acre existed where 60 is the natural norm.

In 2014, we will finish 30 acres from last year and begin on the next 100 acres of treatment. The zone planned for treatment this year will continue to focus on reduction of hazardous fuels, enhancing natural species diversity, and reducing the presence of damaging agents. Although the snow will melt earlier this year, operations will not begin before the soils are adequately dry enough to support forestry equipment.

The Land Trust will continue to work on the ski trails and old logging roads by installing 60-80 "grade dips" that will curb the trenching and erosion caused by runoff. In addition, we will continue to add boulders, gates, and cable gates to aid in keeping off-highway vehicles out of the areas in which they are not supposed to be.



Pat Malberg, left, and Heidi Kolbe, Facilitator, the Kolbe Company, explains the public outreach process at the first meeting held at Donner Trails School. Photo by James Johnson.

# STEWARDSHIP

To enhance the recreation experience for visitors, the Land Trust is constructing two new trail heads, installing signage, fixing unsustainable trails, and collecting user data to make informed decisions about future management. A new trailhead at Summit Station and the Hoelter-Hall trailhead off of Soda Springs Road will be complete with informational kiosks, maps, and parking. Also in the works is replacing the decking on the Serena Creek bridge and completion of the hiking-only trail to the top of Mt. Rowton Peak.

Perhaps the most exciting project we'll be starting is the new Walter and Esther Hewlett Rim Trail at Royal Gorge. The Land Trust is proud to honor the Hewlett's for their numerous contributions to conservation in the region. This trail will be roughly 10 miles when complete, showcasing the beautiful views from the Royal Gorge property. Construction will begin in 2015.

*If you would like to volunteer for trail construction and maintenance, or would like to be a trail ambassador, please contact John Svahn at [john@tlandtrust.org](mailto:john@tlandtrust.org).*



*A new trailhead kiosk being installed at the sheep pens in Van Norden Meadow.*

## Waddle Ranch Preserve Forestry and Trails

Katy's Walk, the trail along the south shore of Lake Ella (aka Dry Lake) at Waddle Ranch Preserve, is currently littered with wood chips and slash from a forest fuels management project conducted last year and is now impassible. The trail will be cleared of debris this summer.

While the fuels management project area is unsightly this year, previously treated portions of the property have recovered quickly. The treated area will be more fire-safe, will increase water volume within the ecosystem, and will support aspen growth in the future.

The Land Trust thanks the Truckee Tahoe Airport District for its support and management of the forests at Waddle Ranch Preserve.

## TRUCKEE DONNER LAND TRUST ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

The Truckee Donner Land Trust Board of directors elected Anne Chadwick as its president at the Board's January 21, 2014 meeting.

"I'm excited and honored to serve as President of this great Land Trust," Chadwick said. "We're pleased to have protected more than 33,000 acres in the region, proud of our stewardship, and optimistic about future projects. Our work will benefit this region for many generations to come."

The Land Trust's mission is to preserve and protect scenic, historic, and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the greater Truckee Donner region.

Recent projects include Royal Gorge, Webber Lake/Lacey Meadows, Donner Summit Canyon, and the Martis Valley. The Land Trust is investing in conservation, restoration, and public enjoyment of these beautiful properties.

**The officers, elected to a one-year term, are:**

**Anne Chadwick, President**

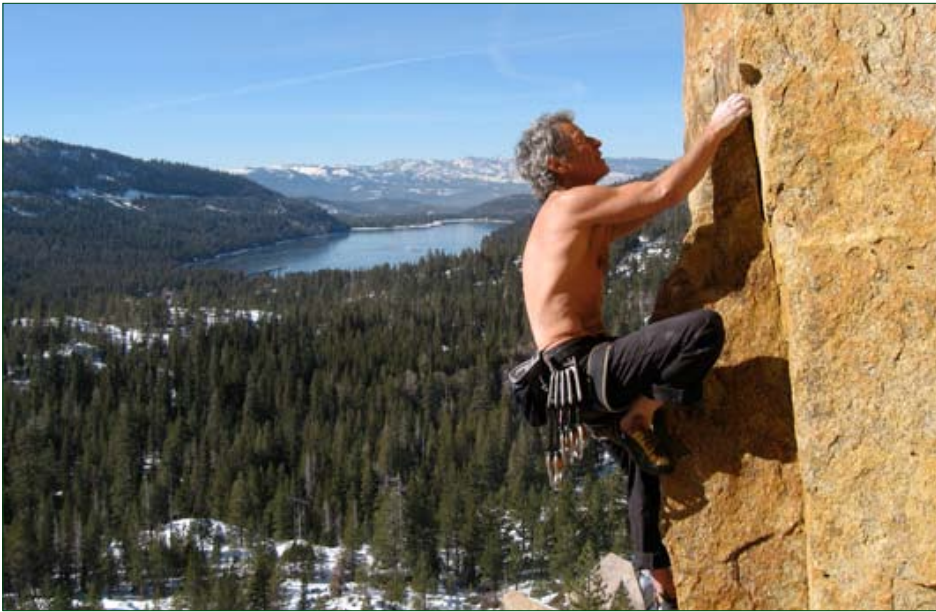
**Janet Zipser Zipkin, Vice President**

**Jeff Brown, Secretary**

**Geoffrey Griffin, Treasurer**



# MOVING TO ACQUIRE ICONIC CLIMBING AREAS ON DONNER SUMMIT



Dr. Denny Chez climbing on a crag included in the acquisition. Photo by Eric Perlman.

With easy access, Yosemite-quality granite, and a variety of climbs from beginner to extreme, Donner Summit has become a world-class rock climbing destination. Black Wall is a 350-foot granite wall off of Old Highway

40 just east of Donner Summit that includes some of the area's longest and most historic rock climbing routes.

The Truckee Donner Land Trust, in partnership with The Access Fund, a national climbing advocacy orga-

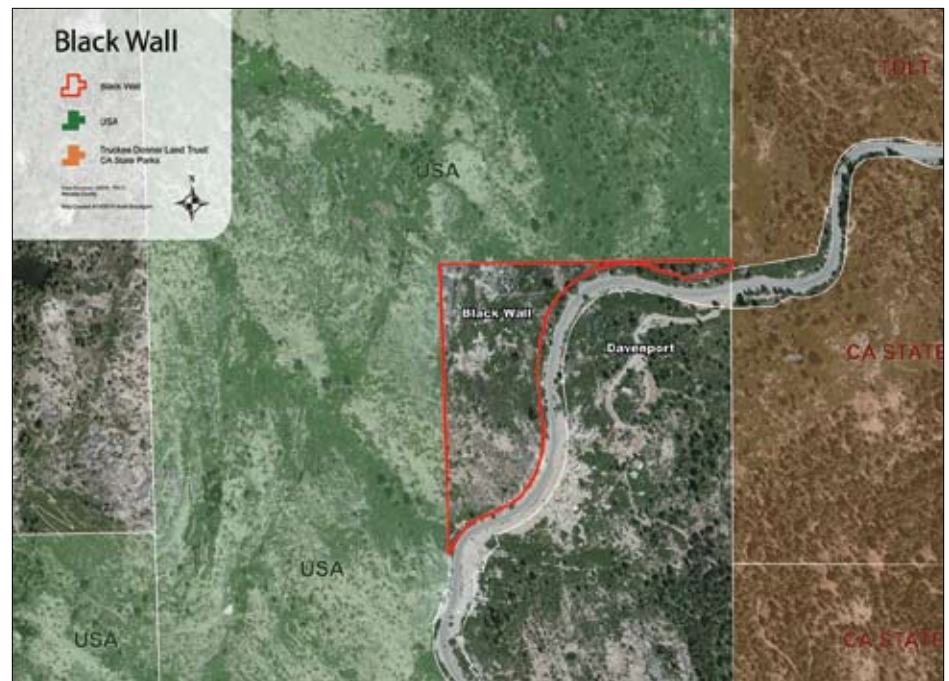
nization, has signed a letter of intent to purchase 10 acres west of Donner Lake that includes Black Wall. The acquisition also includes two other well-known and popular climbing areas: Peanut Gallery and Road Cut.

Black Wall has been in private ownership for decades. While current and previous owners have been "climber friendly" (or perhaps unaware of the extent of climbing on their property), this historic climbing area faces potential closure in the future. There is now an opportunity to ensure that Black Wall, Peanut Gallery, and Road Cut remain open forever.

The Land Trust and The Access Fund, as buyers, have agreed to purchase the property from a willing seller for appraised value. The total budget is projected to be around \$100,000 to include due diligence, campaign costs, purchase of the property, closing costs, trail network improvements, and establishment of sustainable access points to the numerous climbs. Escrow will close sometime in 2015, providing ample time to fundraise



The Land Trust and local climbers instituted a voluntary closure on a number of routes to protect nesting peregrin falcons.



Through a minor boundary adjustment, the Black Wall property will be added to a parcel in Billy Mack Canyon already owned by the Land Trust.

## MOVING TO ACQUIRE ICONIC CLIMBING AREAS ON DONNER SUMMIT CONT'D

among climbers, industry friends, and conservationists. The Land Trust Board has already pledged \$25,000.

Three unnamed small creeks that spill into Billy Mack and Summit Creeks run through the property.

*The acquisition of Black Wall supports the Land Trust's longstanding efforts to protect all tributaries to Donner Lake, and leaves only a handful of private acreages outstanding in meeting our goal.*



*A peregrin falcon returns to its nest on the Black Wall property. Climbers have reported seeing three chicks in the nest. Photo by Will Richardson, Tahoe Institute for Natural Science.*



*Dawit Zeleke. Photo by © Rose Hodges.*

scientifically test our ideas in the real world and use the results to inspire change in California and around the world. We are not much different from most land trusts; we have been around longer than most and work in all 50 states and 34 countries. In the end, the results are on the ground in communities.

### **What makes the Sierra unique in terms of its ecology or biodiversity?**

The Sierras provide water for most of the state of California for drinking and growing food. The Sierras are an amazingly beautiful place, with meadows, peaks, and rivers. The recreation opportunities are endless.

### **What do you view as TNC's most important work in the Sierra?**

TNC did the initial conservation planning for the Northern Sierra Partnership. We also bring acquisition talent to the table. Beyond that, I consider our role in the Partnership as the most important work we are doing. Partnerships are the future; we cannot conserve the Sierras by ourselves. We need everybody at the table to make big things happen.

## MEET OUR PARTNER Dawit Zeleke of The Nature Conservancy

The mission of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We find new ways for nature and people to thrive. We

### **Why is TNC involved in the Northern Sierra Partnership?**

The conservation world is running out of time. It requires all of us. The Partnership allows us to leverage one another's strengths. Partners like the Truckee Donner Land Trust who live in the communities where the conservation is happening are critical to succeeding in the Sierras.

### **TNC is doing great forestry work at Independence Lake Preserve. Do you ever see using prescribed burn as management tool?**

Fire is part of the forest, but it is also very scary. If we can make it happen without endangering life or our neighbor's properties, we will be burning. We have seen what happens when we repress fire in the Sierras; we degrade the ecosystem and increase the chances of harming people and resources.

### **How does local land trusts like the Truckee Donner Land Trust help a global organization like TNC?**

I always smile when this question is asked. People from all over the country and the world come to your backyard. You may be local but the world comes to you. We need to make our conservation successes part of their experiences and the stories they take back home. That to me is so much better than going to someone else's backyard and telling them what to do. Conservation succeeds when the local communities own it. Without the Truckee Donner Land Trust living and working where it does, our chances of success become really slim.



# PICKING UP ANOTHER PIECE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA CHECKERBOARD



*The heart of the Sierra Nevada Checkerboard, Webber Lake, and Lacey Meadows. Coppins Meadow is visible north of Webber Lake. Photo by Geoffrey Griffin.*

The Truckee Donner Land Trust, in partnership with The Trust for Public Land and the Northern Sierra Partnership, is seeking to acquire Coppins Meadow, a 153-acre meadow located at the headwaters of the Little Truckee River. The property shares a northern boundary with Webber Lake, acquired by the Land Trust in 2012.

Coppins Meadow is one of the last remaining developable parcels in a large conservation effort for the Little Truckee River Watershed, the largest sub-basin in the Truckee River drainage. In addition to being the largest sub-basin, the Little Truckee River watershed contains the largest complex of montane and sub-alpine meadows in the Truckee basin. The Land Trust and other conservation groups are in the process of protecting more than 17,000 acres in the Little Truckee River watershed.

As part of this conservation effort, successes in the Upper Little Truckee basin include Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows; Webber Falls, immediately downstream from Webber Lake; Perazzo Meadows; Independence Lake Preserve; Cold Stream Meadow; and the Sierra Crest Working Forest Conservation Easement. All of these individual properties have significant conservation values and, when assembled together, create a truly unique network of conserved lands filling in a significant part of the Sierra Nevada “Checkerboard.”

Coppins Meadow has significant resource values as a well-functioning montane meadow including a creek that flows year-round. It contains habitat for several threatened species and has undeveloped water rights critical to both the health of the meadow and to downstream habitats.

## Resource Values

Coppins Meadow is the northeast drainage to Webber

Lake and is a part of the greater Webber/Lacey/Coppins Meadow system, totalling more than 3,000 acres of meadow habitat. This landscape has been targeted by conservationists because of the critical habitat it provides for biodiversity in the Sierra.

This meadow system supports many native birds and is particularly important during the spring nesting season. Mammals on the property include healthy populations typical to the region such as mule deer from the Loyalton-Truckee herd, mountain lion, black bear, and small fur-bearing mammals. Numerous state and federally listed endangered and threatened species, species of special concern, and rare species occur within the Webber/Lacey/Coppins Meadow complex, including Pacific Fisher, American marten, wolverine, bald eagle, Webber’s ivesia, and Donner Pass buckwheat.

## Threats to the Property

The property is threatened by residential estate development, the perfection of its water rights resulting in decreased flows into the watershed, and commercial development such as a seasonal trailer park. Further development along the Jackson Meadows Road could potentially open the road year-round and expand development into the heart of the Checkerboard.



Courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.



# FINISHING CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN CASTLE VALLEY

Long on the Land Trust's "radar" as an important acquisition, the Pendola Family, a longtime timber family in the area, has agreed to sell 413 acres at the entrance to Castle Valley to the Land Trust. The property, rich in resource and recreation values, will be conveyed to the U.S. Forest Service after the Land Trust makes improvements to the multi-use and popular trailhead.

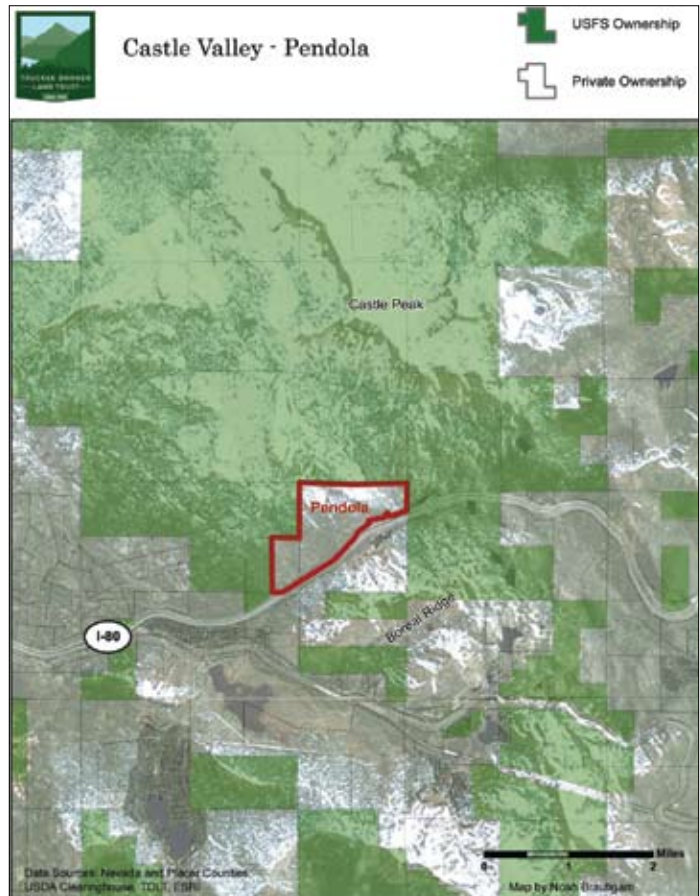
The property was pulled from a several thousand-acre conservation transaction done in the 90's by The Trust for Public Land because of its potential for development. Rumors of a hotel, golf course, and tourist-based retail services existed for decades.

The property is opposite Interstate 80 from Boreal Mountain Resort, roughly bordered by Castle Valley and Creek to the north, the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) to the east, and Interstate 80 to the south and west.

Characterized by its harsh winters and a very short growing season at sub-alpine elevations, snow covers the property often between November and July. However, after the snow melts Castle Valley's wildflowers are spectacular. A portion of the property is wet meadow and riparian habitat where a length of Castle Creek traverses it. Both the wet and dry areas abound with wildflowers in the spring, which at this elevation is usually late July

through September. The property's mixed-conifer forests consist primarily of red fir, white fir, western white pine, and mountain hemlock, with lodgepole pine in the bottomlands. Deer browse the meadow in the summer (likely arriving from the north, but also from Billy Mack Canyon), and the many snags are home to raptors.

The undesignated trailhead on the property, with its easy access from the freeway, is one of the most heavily used trailheads in the Northern Sierra. On any day, hikers, runners, and backpackers use it to access the PCT, Warren and Summit Lake Trails, the Donner Lake Rim Trail, and the Peter Grubb Hut. The trailhead, when the road is melted out, is equally popular with winter enthusiasts.



The Castle Valley property owned by the Pendola family for decades.

The Pacific Crest Trail Association ranked acquisition of this property and trailhead as a top priority for 2014. Mountain bikers, access the Hole-in-the-Ground Trail via this property. The current trailhead is rustic with few spaces that accommodate low-clearance vehicles. In addition, it does not match the numbers of users, resulting in frequent traffic jams and overflow parking. The Land Trust would like to reconstruct the trailhead by leveling the parking area and making it user-friendly.

The acquisition includes one of the most popular "unofficial" trailheads in the Northern Sierra.



A family enjoys an outing in snowy Castle Valley. Photo by Aaron Breitbard.

# THE FUTURE OF VAN NORDEN MEADOW



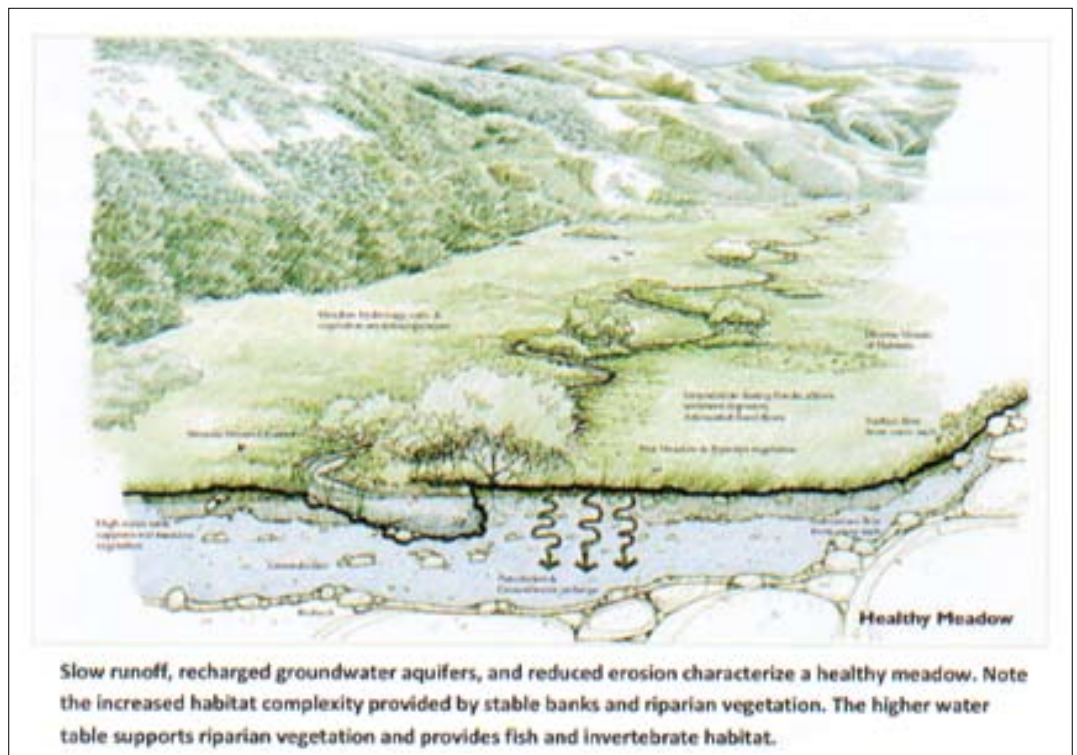
A map based on elevation modeling a 5-acre reservoir that brings the reservoir into federal standards.

After an unprecedented community and statewide effort, the Truckee Donner Land Trust and its partners purchased the 3,000-acre Royal Gorge property on Donner Summit. The Land Trust knew that the dam at Van Norden Meadow was out of compliance with the State Division of Safety of Dams safety standards and was illegally storing waters owned by the citizens of California, according to the State Department of Water Resources.

Since acquiring the Royal Gorge property and Van Norden Meadow, a top priority for the Land Trust is complying with state regulations while

upholding the conservation value of Van Norden Meadow. The Land Trust has concluded that it has no option other than to lower the dam and reduce the amount of water it stores to a level acceptable to the U.S. Forest Service and legal to the State. While loss of open water from a habitat and scenic standpoint is regrettable, restoration of the meadow to its natural functions is a superior conservation outcome. The State mandates actually are the catalyst for a rare opportunity to restore meadow functions impaired by over a century of human degradation to the ecosystem.

*For a full explanation of the Land Trust's decision, please visit our website, [www.tdlandtrust.org](http://www.tdlandtrust.org), and download the document from our Home page.*



Slow runoff, recharged groundwater aquifers, and reduced erosion characterize a healthy meadow. Note the increased habitat complexity provided by stable banks and riparian vegetation. The higher water table supports riparian vegetation and provides fish and invertebrate habitat.



# A SHOUT OUT TO OUR FOUNDATION FRIENDS

If it weren't for the generous grant contributions we receive, the Land Trust simply could not accomplish the important amount of acquisitions, stewardship, and restoration projects we conduct. Our heartfelt thanks to the following organizations who have recently supported our work:

## The Lahontan Community Foundation

A \$5,000 grant for the Middle Martis Creek Riparian, Road, and Trail Restoration Project, a joint project of the Truckee Donner Land Trust and the Truckee River Watershed Council

to curb erosion, restore a system of meadows and watercourses, and promote public access to Elizabethtown Meadows.

## Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation Nature Fund and The Martis Fund

A \$25,000 grant for the Middle Martis Creek Riparian, Road, and Trail Restoration Project. This fund is a collaborative project of Martis Camp landowners, DMB/Highlands Group, Mountain Area Preservation and, Sierra Watch.

## Mellam Family Foundation

A \$10,000 grant for a new bridge on the Donner Lake Rim Trail.

## REI

A \$20,000 grant to support the design of the Royal Gorge Rim Trail, maintenance upgrades to make existing portions of the trail more sustainable, and directional signage for the trail.

Thank you to the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation for expertly facilitating charitable awards in our community.

## Leave a Legacy of Open Space for Future Generations


The land under our feet ... hiking Schallenberger Ridge, skiing Coldstream Canyon, or enjoying the stunning views of the surrounding peaks from the Donner Lake Rim Trail.

When you include the Land Trust in your will or estate plans you leave a legacy to future generations, ensuring they will be able to enjoy the lands we cherish today.

A planned gift -- depending on your situation -- may reduce your income taxes, reduce or eliminate capital gains taxes, reduce your gift or estate tax, provide income to you and your loved ones, and help support the Land Trust's efforts to protect our mountain home.

Leaving a bequest is simple and gives you the opportunity to make a significant difference. To make a bequest, consult with your tax or legal advisor, or contact Kellie Wright at 530-582-4711 or [kellie@talandtrust.org](mailto:kellie@talandtrust.org).

If you have thought about leaving the Land Trust a legacy gift, please let us know so we can acknowledge your generosity.



Leave a  
Legacy

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The Land Trust and its partners gratefully acknowledge the many individuals, businesses, and foundations that made gifts to the Land Trust from January 1, 2013 to February 28, 2014. These donors provide fundamental and annual support for the Land Trust's mission.

## \$500,000 or More

California Wildlife Conservation Board  
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## \$50,000 - \$499,999

Walter & Esther Hewlett

## \$25,000 - \$49,999

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Larkspur. Photo by Susan Johnson.



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## \$1,000 - \$2,499

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*Coyotes, though often misunderstood, are important players in our region's ecosystem. Photo by Stan Wingate.*

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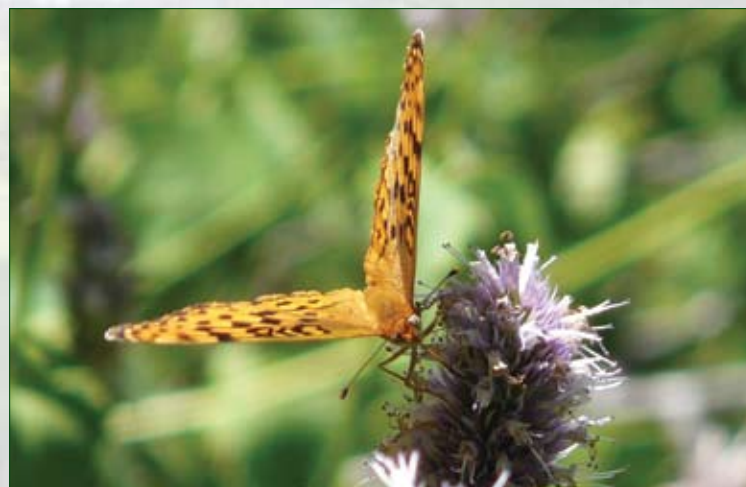
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The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges the many individuals, businesses, and foundations that made gifts to the Land Trust in honor or memory of a loved one from January 1, 2013 to February 28, 2014. These gifts are a great way to pay tribute to a person's love of the Truckee Donner region.

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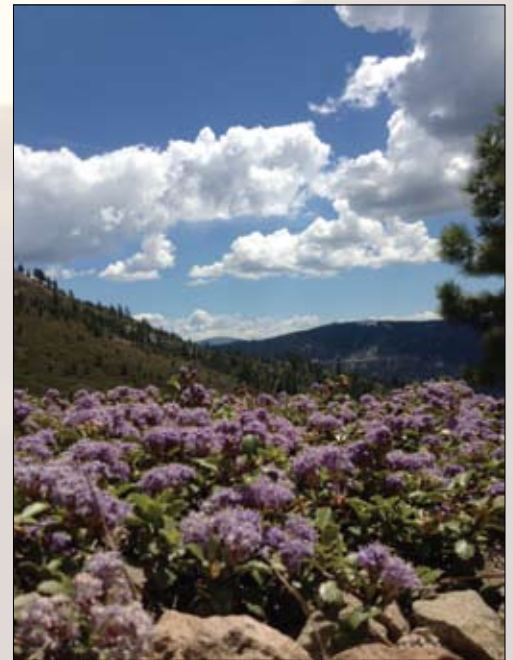
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# CULTIVATING OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The Truckee Donner Land Trust has been a strong supporter of Truckee and Glenshire Elementary's Sagehen field program, The Gateway Learning



The Wintercreek wetland, owned by the Land Trust, is often used by outdoor education programs. Photo by Will Richardson.

Center, and the Tahoe Institute for Natural Science. The Land Trust fully supports making its lands available to nonprofit organizations and strongly supports outdoor education in our region.

The Land Trust has made a multi-year commitment to Glenshire and Truckee Elementary Schools' Sagehen field program, annually providing scholarships to economically disadvantaged 5th graders so they may participate with classmates in a four-day outdoor camping and learning experience.

In addition, the Land

Trust has donated thousands of dollars of equipment to the Gateway Learning Center, and continues to invest in its programs, and also offers Van Norden Meadow on Donner Summit as the Learning Center's outdoor classroom. The Land Trust offers similar benefits to the Tahoe Institute for Natural Science at Waddle Ranch Preserve.

*The Land Trust Board believes in advancing its mission by offering opportunities for local youth to appreciate and learn about the natural world.*

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# THE LAND TRUST SKI TEAM SNAGS SECOND PLACE

at the Northstar Ski Challenge

Last winter, Truckee Donner Land Trust staff, friends, and directors participated in a ski challenge hosted by Vail Resorts Echo — a Vail Resorts program of environmental stewardship, charitable contributions, and volunteerism. Local nonprofits raced for cash prizes at Northstar California Resort and were introduced to



*Andrew Strain, the Vice President of Planning & Governmental Affairs Heavenly Mountain Resort/Northstar California Resort, Kellie Wright, John Svahn, Kevin Starr, Fred Besch, Cory Engles, Dan Goddard, Jeff Hamilton, Hans Standteiner, Jeff Brown, and Sara Taddo Jones.*

Northstar's Habitat Management Plan, a collaboratively developed resource management plan.

The Land Trust Ski Team proudly earned 2nd place and a \$3,000 award for the Land Trust. All entries also received \$1,000 of in-kind services from Northstar California.

The Land Trust extends its appreciation to Vail Resorts Echo for inviting us to review Northstar's Habitat Management Plan, for supporting local nonprofits, and for a great ski day at Northstar.

## EXTENDED THANKS TO VAIL RESORTS ECHO

The Land Trust received a grant from Vail Resorts Echo for \$7,000 to support the Middle Martis Creek Riparian, Road, and Trail Restoration Project. This project, to be completed in partnership with the Truckee River Watershed Council, will restore the natural hydrologic function in Elizabethtown Meadows and help build a new trail connecting Waddle Ranch Preserve to the Highway 267 stoplight at Northstar California.

The Land Trust is deeply grateful to Vail Resorts Echo for its continued service within our community and for providing funds critical to the work of the Land Trust and the region's many nonprofits.

Vail Resorts, Inc., through its subsidiaries, operates Northstar and other destinations in the Tahoe area and nationwide. Vail Resorts Echo is a program of Vail Resorts, Inc.

Thank you to our In-Kind Partners

- Atypical Design
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- Jan & Buzz Wiesenfeld
- Charles Zipkin & Janet Zipser Zipkin
- Dennis E. Zirbel, Architect

# TRAILBUILDING UPDATE

This year promises another productive trailbuilding season for the Truckee Donner Land Trust. With California State Parks, the Land Trust hopes to finish much-needed trail repairs on the Donner Summit Canyon property after damaging rains of 2012.

We are also working closely with State Parks to plan the next phase of the Donner Lake Rim Trail through Donner Memorial State Park. A portion of the trail will traverse Schallenberger Ridge above Donner Lake, which was acquired by the Land Trust in 2002 and later transferred to the State Park.

The Land Trust will also be celebrating the opening of the recently re-routed portion of the Donner Lake Rim Trail, the Wendin Way access trail. The old route was on a steep, erosive section of roadbed. The new section will prevent sediment runoff into Gregory Creek.

We are also looking forward to important trail enhancements at Royal Gorge.

Hope to see you on the trails!



A volunteer uses a McLeod to build a new trail segment at Waddle Ranch Preserve.

## Trailbuilding Dates

Trailbuilding is scheduled on various Land Trust properties throughout the season. (Dates may change. Be sure to check [www.tdlandtrust.org/news-events](http://www.tdlandtrust.org/news-events) prior to signing up).

Work time is typically 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 14th

Saturday, July 12th

Sunday, August 10th

Saturday, September 6th

To sign up, contact  
Kevin Starr  
at 530-582-4711, or  
[kevin@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kevin@tdlandtrust.org).

## Buck for Open Space Partners Donate a \$1 Today

Preserving open space in the greater Truckee Donner region is simply good business. The Land Trust would like to thank the following conservation-minded businesses and their customers and encourage you to give them your business.

Cottonwood Restaurant  
The Lodge at Tahoe Donner  
Paco's Truckee Bike and Ski  
Sierra Crest Dental, Robert Colpitts DDS





# SAVE THE DATE - 2014 Events

## Northern Sierra Partnership 3rd Annual Celebration July 5th, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Northern Sierra Partnership holds its 3rd Annual Celebration & Picnic this year at Perazzo Meadows, 15 miles north of Truckee. The Land Trust, the Northern Sierra Partnership, and The Trust for Public Land acquired the Perazzo Meadows property in 2009. The event features guided hikes, mountain biking, fly-fishing, and other fun activities for people of all ages and abilities. At noon, we will gather for a picnic lunch at Perazzo Meadows along the Little Truckee River. For more information, visit [www.northernsierrapartnership.org](http://www.northernsierrapartnership.org).



*Perazzo Meadows is bisected by the Little Truckee River and hosts an astonishing variety of birds. Photo courtesy of [www.TheCarmelGallery.com](http://www.TheCarmelGallery.com), ©Elizabeth Carmel.*



*Scenic patio dining at Sugar Bowl's Lake Mary Cabin. Photo courtesy of Sugar Bowl.*

## Lake Mary Cabin Benefit Dinner July 23rd, 5:30 - 9 p.m.

Join friends of the Land Trust at Sugar Bowl's Lake Mary Cabin for a very special dining experience with delectable foods and fabulous views. A portion of the evening's proceeds will benefit the Land Trust. For reservations call 530-456-7002.

## Trails & Vistas. Art in Nature. September 6th-7th

Described as magical and inspiring, the Trails & Vistas annual event features visual artists, original dance performances, and live music, all presented along a hiking trail. The three-hour art hike, Meadows to Mountains - A Cultural Journey, will be held this year along the Spooner Lake Trail at Lake Tahoe. Artists include violinist Scarlet Rivera, flutist Ann Licater, and Santa Cruz-based SambaDá. In addition, there will be a fundraising concert the evening of September 6th to support Trails & Vistas' Art in Nature fieldtrips for third grade students.

Trails & Vistas collaborates with community partners' InnerRhythms Dance Theatre, KidZone Museum, For Goodness Sake, Arts in Wellness, and the Truckee Donner Land Trust. For tickets visit [www.trailsandvistas.org](http://www.trailsandvistas.org).



*Trails & Vistas is one of Truckee Tahoe's most unique events. Photo by Jeff Engerbretson.*



# BUSINESS PARTNER PROFILE

## Sam Okamoto, Photographer

Sam Okamoto, a 27-year food industry veteran, has worked as a restaurateur, columnist, author, cooking instructor, and nutrition expert. Sam says simplicity is the key in his cooking. Despite classic French training, he focuses mainly on healthy cuisine, and of course sushi, an art he learned from his father, a well-known sushi chef in Kokura, Kyushu Japan.

Currently living in Truckee, California, Sam runs the popular Drunken Monkey restaurant in Truckee. He also enjoys photography around the Sierra Nevada and the Nevada desert. The Land Trust is grateful to Sam for granting the Land Trust use of a vast selection of his photography.



*Sam Okamoto.* Photo courtesy of Sam Okamoto.

## PARTNER PROFILE



*Will Richardson of Tahoe Institute for Natural Science rappels off Black Wall.*

## Tahoe Institute of Natural Science

The Tahoe Institute for Natural Science (TINS) is a nonprofit that seeks to advance natural history, conservation, and ecosystem knowledge of the Tahoe region through science, education, and outreach. The Institute has a long-term goal of creating a world-class interpretive nature center and educational facility in our area and currently engages in several programs to promote greater appreciation, understanding, and stewardship of the natural resources of the Tahoe region.

Research pursuits are a cornerstone of TINS. Through applied field research, TINS works collaboratively to help public and private land managers make informed management decisions.

TINS seeks to provide learning opportunities for all ages, from K-12 and beyond, with curricula, educational material, and supplemental instruction that conforms to California and Nevada education standards. The goal is to engage students' curiosity of the natural world through place-based, experiential education. Programs connect students to their immediate natural surroundings, both in the classroom and through field-based programs, and promote environmental stewardship. For more information, visit [www.tinsweb.org](http://www.tinsweb.org).



# THE WEBBER LAKE HOTEL RESTORATION PROJECT

The Truckee Donner Land Trust staff and Board are always pleased when tasked with a new and different project: A new “first” for the Land Trust is the restoration of the historic hotel at Webber Lake. The Land Trust acquired Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows, including the hotel, in late 2012.

Dr. David Gould Webber built the Webber Lake Hotel in 1860. He was a well-known and respected leader in Sierra County, rumored to have adopted as many as 50 children.

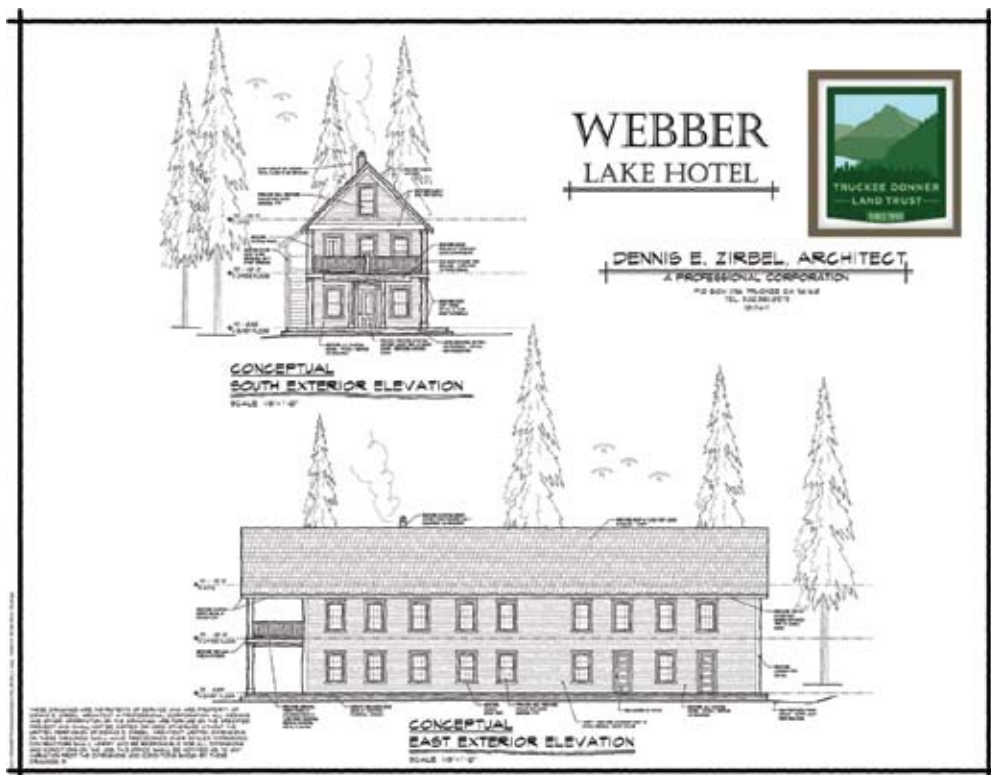
Dr. Webber built the Webber Lake Hotel on the Hennes Pass Road, a popular stage route that served as an alternate high Sierra crossing after the ill-fated Donner Party ordeal. The hotel became celebrated and entertained guests such as Old Block Delano, an early comic writer; Charles Nahl, an early California artist; Thomas Hill, renowned painter; and actress/courtesan Lola Montez.

The hotel’s glory days arrived with the discovery of the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, Nevada. The two-story hotel provided respite for emigrants and miners while drawing hunters, fishermen, botanizers, boaters, and businessmen who enjoyed the lake, within steps from the hotel.

The restoration of the old hotel was not part of the Land Trust’s fund-



*The Webber Lake Hotel today, slightly less than plumb.*



*A conceptual drawing of the Webber Lake Hotel courtesy of Dennis E. Zirbel, Architect.*

raising efforts for the acquisition of Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows but it is now our hope to gain the needed funds to renovate the historic building.

“Brick and mortar grants are hard to come by,” says K.V. Van Lom, who is heading the Land Trust’s restoration efforts. “But the Land Trust is committed to moving this process along. The Webber Lake Hotel is unique and deserves to be here for history buffs and visitors to explore forever.”

Dennis E. Zirbel, a well-known and award-winning Truckee architect, has already provided architectural concepts. “We are always happy working with the Truckee Donner Land Trust,” says Zirbel. “And we are particularly excited about this project.”

The Land Trust plans to work with the Sierra County Historical Society, the Truckee Donner Historical Society, and other agencies to create several exhibits and to restore at least one room to the time-period.

(Thank you to Lee Adams for his informative, historical research.)

## Planning underway at Webber Lake

When the Truckee Donner Land Trust partnered with The Trust for Public Land and the Northern Sierra Partnership to purchase Webber Lake in 2012, it agreed to maintain the campground lease for five years per the sellers’ wishes. Webber Lake has been in the Johnson family for nearly a century and has served as a prized, private fishing camp for decades. For families that have long held these campsites like cherished heirlooms, five years is likely not long enough, but the seller and buyer agreed the multi-year extension provided a reasonable compromise.

Lacey Meadows opened to the public last year and the Land Trust is looking forward to 2017 when Webber Lake will be open to the public as well. This unique property provides the Land Trust tremendous opportunity to create a recreational destination for hikers, bikers, birders, and fishermen compatible with protecting the region’s natural resources.

“Webber Lake’s legacy as a fishing destination is historic and significant,” says John Svahn, the Land Trust’s Stewardship Director. “We’d like to ensure Webber Lake continues to be a great place for families to gather, camp, and catch fish.”

*The Truckee Donner Land Trust was founded in 1990 to preserve and protect scenic, historic, and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the greater Truckee Donner region.*

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The Truckee Donner Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations to the Land Trust may be tax-deductible under the IRS Code.

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*Only on Donner Summit. Sugar Bowl Academy Nordic skiers playing soccer on one ski at Van Norden Meadow. Photo by Grant Barta Photography.*

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