

TRUCKEE DONNER LAND TRUST

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



Spring/Summer Newsletter
Volume 43 ❖ May 2013

Wow! What a year.

Royal Gorge moves ahead; page 4

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to enjoy; page 6*

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Martis Valley; page 22*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Honestly, the pace leading to our close of escrow on Royal Gorge in late December has not slackened. We had a party, a toast, slapped high fives, and went straight back to work. A deal such as Royal Gorge has a lot of moving parts, as they say.

One of the post-acquisition tasks we are dealing with regards the business property included with the deal. None of the assets we suddenly came to own were included in our appraisal, or in our negotiations with the receiver and the bank that foreclosed on the previous owners. At the Land Trust, we hadn't paid much attention to these peripherals until Sugar Bowl, already occupying Summit Station and busy running a Nordic ski area, asked what our plans were for the three broken-down grooming machines taking up valuable parking spaces.

In addition to the grooming machines, the Land Trust became the new owner of a grader, a giant snow blower (similar to those used by Caltrans), 600 pairs of skis, three meat slicers, four snowmobiles, etc., most of which was sorry-looking and in ill repair. Wondering if we would ever be able to rid ourselves of all this gear, our newly acquired assets suddenly began looking more like liabilities. Thankfully, Sugar Bowl bought a lot of what wasn't broken.

It's no secret that used 3 to 5-year-old rental skis don't fetch much; seven to 10-year-old boots even less. Shipping would have cost more than the skis are worth,



Skinny skis find a good home in Loyalton. Students from Loyalton High School load a horse trailer with their new Nordic equipment.

and the thought of throwing good gear into the landfill made me sick. "Make Adirondack chairs," someone suggested.

Enter my good friend Megan, a dedicated high school teacher in Loyalton (and a Truckee High grad). "We'll take 'em," she said.

Loyalton is a small town 45 minutes north of Truckee in the northwest corner of one of the largest and most beautiful sub-alpine meadows in North America. It is quintessentially western. Despite its allure, Loyalton has been particularly hard hit by the economic downturn, much like Mayberry fallen on hard times.

Recently, we loaded 234 pairs of Nordic skis and boots into the Loyalton PE teacher's horse trailer. A basketball player who spends his summers team roping helped load. "Thanks, Mr. Norris, but the skis look awfully skinny."

I love skiing, perhaps more than "buying mountains for kids," as my son once described my occupation. The thought of 300 Loyalton school district students striding on skinny skis through winter in the incomparable Sierra Valley makes me very happy. The moment that horse trailer pulled away toward Loyalton was the most joyous through all the months I've been working on Royal Gorge.

"Maybe we'll start a biathlon team," the PE teacher told me. "These kids really know how to shoot."

Warm regards,

*Perry Norris
Executive Director*



Fireworks over Serene Lakes celebrating the close of escrow on Royal Gorge, December 20th, 2012. Photo by George Lamson.

A BRIEF & RECENT HISTORY OF ROYAL GORGE

And the amazing story in a nutshell of how it was saved.

While for centuries Native Americans intensely used what is now called Summit Valley and Royal Gorge for hunting, trading and sustenance, and later the emigrants and the transcontinental railroad helped create “the most important square mile in California history,” that story is too long and important to tell in this space. Our recent history begins...

America's Largest Nordic Ski Resort Opens

When John Slouber opened Royal Gorge in the 1970's, Nordic skiing in the U.S. was in its infancy. It seems everyone on Donner Summit has a John Slouber story to tell, but he was a visionary. Since then, the sport has grown to near European popularity and Royal Gorge became renowned the world over, boasting over 200 kilometers of skiing on nearly 6,000 acres of scenic terrain.

A Landscape in Peril

In 2005, the resort was sold to Bay Area developers who quickly announced plans to construct a large resort with 950-units and 85,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. Local residents and environmental groups were up in arms; it was too much and a bad fit with Donner Summit's proud (but a little funky) character. Due to a poor economic climate and a lack of investors, the property went into foreclosure, opening a path for the Truckee Donner Land Trust and its partners, The Trust for Public Land and the Northern Sierra Partnership, to purchase it.

The Campaign to Save Royal Gorge

In August 2012, the Truckee Donner Land Trust and its partners rolled the dice and signed an agreement to purchase the land for \$11.25 million. This gave the Land Trust, its partners, and the Donner Summit community a dauntingly short, five-month deadline to save the property. And so began one of the most astounding, grassroots fundraising campaigns ever conducted in the Sierra Nevada.

Saved!

After months of fundraising and intensive negotiations, the famed property was forever protected on December 20th 2012. The acquisition comprises 3,000 acres on Donner Summit – the Royal Gorge – 351-acres in Negro Canyon, and Van Norden Meadow. The acquisition is considered one of the most important conservation victories for the Sierra in a generation.

The Land

The historic and scenic Royal Gorge property, west of Donner Pass, contains tall peaks, old-growth forests, lakes, streams and meadows, and is steeped in history with portions of Native American trade routes, the Overland Emigrant Trail, and the transcontinental railroad. Van Norden Meadow is one of the few large sub-alpine meadows north of Yosemite's Tuolumne Meadows. The property contains the headwaters of the North Fork American and South Yuba Rivers, critical for California's water supply.

The Wildlife

A vast wealth of wildlife calls the region home. It has numerous



A Sandhill crane at Van Norden Meadow. Photographer George Lamson noted, “It put on quite a show.” Photo by George Lamson.

species of amphibians, 20 species of mammals, and is visited by nearly 100 species of birds. More than 500 species of vascular plants occur in the region. At least 16 rare and protected plant species thrive there with one of the richest diversities of butterflies documented in North America.

The Caretakers

The Truckee Donner Land Trust owns the land and leases the Nordic ski trails in winter to Sugar Bowl to run the ski area. When the ski area is closed, usually mid-April to Thanksgiving, the property and trails are open to the public. A public outreach process is now underway to help guide the future management of the property (See article pages 4 and 5.)

Year-Round, World Class Recreation

Along with outstanding Nordic skiing and snowshoeing, by June, wildflowers and birds abound to delight recreationists, with Van Norden Meadow being a favorite spot. In the backcountry, snow-free ski trails offer chances to summit peaks with views exceeding 75 miles. The Land Trust will develop additional trails, offering technical challenges and connections with trail networks extending from Auburn to Truckee and beyond.

PLANNING FOR

With the acquisition of the 3,000-acre Royal Gorge property on Donner Summit now complete, the Land Trust has turned its focus to readying the property for the public's enjoyment this summer, and to gathering public input for guidance on future management of the property.

The \$11.25 million purchase was made in late December after an unprecedented and truly miraculous fundraising campaign. More than 1,200 individuals gave to the campaign, with gifts ranging from \$20 to \$1 million.

"I have spent 25 years in the non-profit sector and have never seen anything like it," said Perry Norris, the Land Trust's Executive Director. "I am humbled by our community's overwhelming support."

Due to this tremendous fundraising success, the Land



Nordic skiers enjoying America's largest and most scenic nordic ski area. Photo by Mark Wadell, MacBeth Graphics.

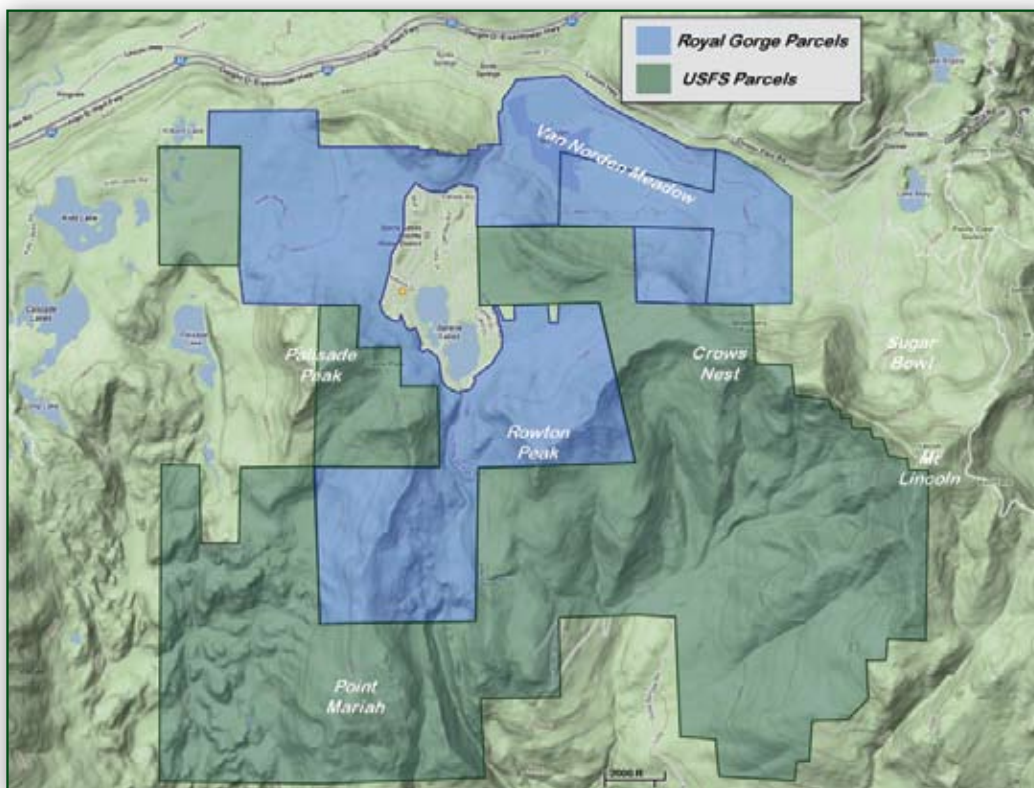
Trust is confident it has the financial resources to care for and manage the property. An endowment will ensure funds are available for future generations.

The Land Trust has contracted with Heidi Kolbe, a skilled facilitator and Serene

Lakes homeowner, to manage community workshops that will shape management of the property for the next 50 years. A series of public meetings will be held to gather input on future recreational planning. Informational meetings are also planned for forestry management, meadow restoration, and the dam on Lake Van Norden. Interviews will be conducted with a number of stakeholder groups and an online survey will also be available for those who wish to comment.

Sugar Bowl, which has agreed to a minimum 10-year lease to run the Nordic operations, by all accounts did a fantastic job in its first year, investing in neglected infrastructure, and providing first rate grooming. The Land Trust is now looking forward to summer.

"The Land Trust has no agenda other than to protect the property's conservation values while making it available for people to enjoy," said John Svahn,



With surrounding United States Forest Service lands, more than 6,100 acres is now available for the public to explore. Map by George Lamson.

ROYAL GORGE

Land Trust Stewardship Director. “We hope to make Donner Summit as popular a summer destination as it is in winter. “We’d like to know what the community wants.”

Land Trust staff are busy implementing a short-term plan to ready the property for extensive public use. Because the property was closed in summer to the public for over 40 years, we expect swarms of hikers and bikers eager to explore. Clearing trails, adding directional signage, and creating trailheads are the Land Trust’s objectives once the snow melts.

The Land Trust has also retained an experienced licensed forester, Danielle Banchio, to develop a forestry management plan. Preliminary plans call for the thinning of 125 acres after Memorial Day weekend. The preliminary plan is available now on the Land Trust’s website.

A number of other transactions associated with the acquisition are



A historic photo of Van Norden Meadow.
Photo courtesy of Donner Summit Historical Society.

also in the works. The Land Trust hopes to complete an exchange with Sugar Bowl, trading 266-acres Sugar Bowl owns on Van Norden Meadow for the five-acre Summit Station property that includes the lodge, maintenance sheds, and parking areas at Royal Gorge.

“It will be great to make Van Norden Meadow whole again,” said Svahn.

Long term, Van Norden Meadow and Lake Van Norden will be conveyed to the United States Forest Service. The Forest

Service has made this their Number One priority in the region.

“Restoring the meadow and improving the habitat will be our focus going forward,” said Fran Herbst, head of acquisitions for Tahoe National Forest.

Also included in the Royal Gorge acquisition is 355 acres in Negro Canyon that abuts acreage the Land Trust acquired in 2006. All of Negro Canyon, an important tributary to Donner Lake once threatened by residential development, is now protected as well.

Save the Date!

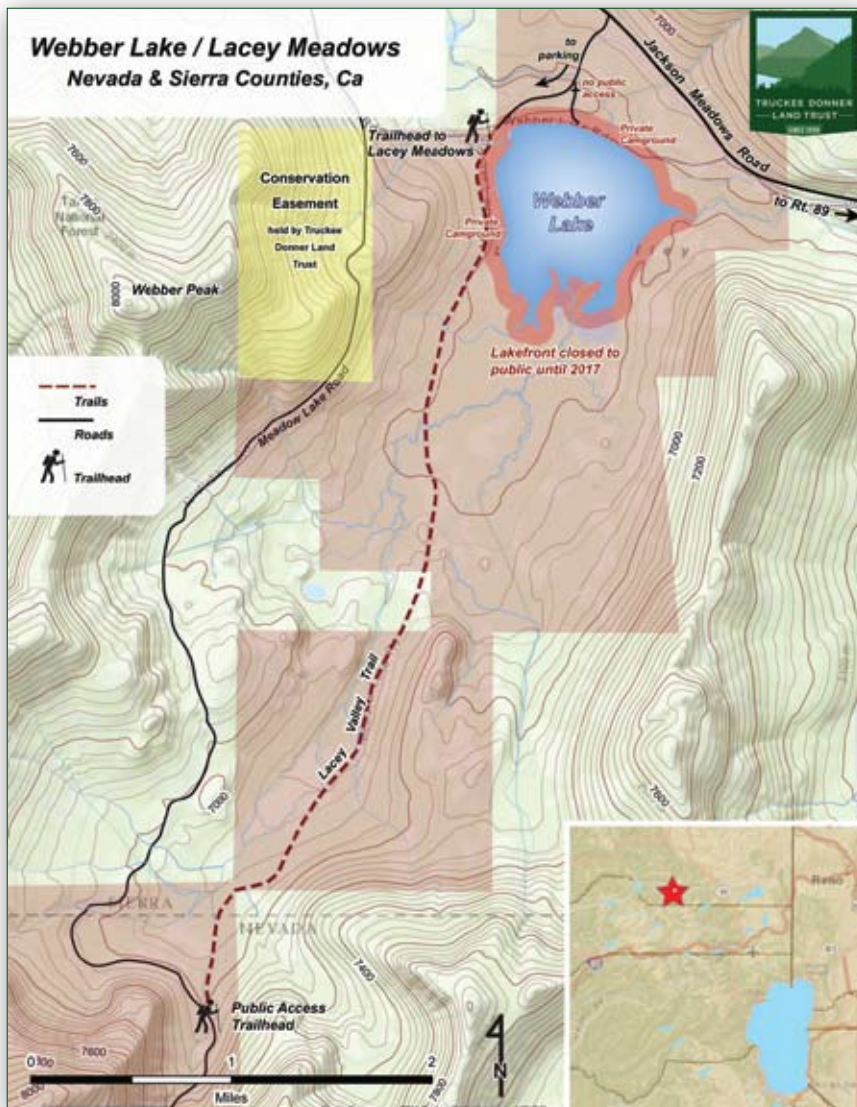
Help guide Royal Gorge’s Future!

Kick-off meeting	June 15
Forestry Management	July 6
Van Norden Meadow & Lake Van Norden dam	TBD
Wrap-up & preliminary findings	Aug. 31
- check www.tdlandtrust.org for times & locations	



A fascinating feature, the arch below the summit of Mt. Rowton. Photo by George Lamson.

LACEY MEADOWS & WEBBER LAKE:



Access and trails to Lacey Meadows from the Jackson Meadows Rd. off of SR 89 north of Truckee.

The Land Trust has been planning for the public's enjoyment of the property and on-the-ground work is underway.

The Webber Lake Hotel was built in 1860, the same year Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States. Along the northern edge of Webber Lake ran Henness Pass Road, which became one of the most popular routes across the Sierra. In that same year, Dr. Gould Webber of Loyalton began stocking Webber Lake for sport fishing. In the Sierra, just a little more than a decade after the infamous Donner Party winter, a new era had begun.

We believe, that with our late-2012 acquisition of the 3,000-acre Webber Lake property, once again a new era begins. For the first time in nearly 150 years, most of the property will be open to the public. In 2017, when our lease expires with the current operators of the private fishing camp, Webber Lake itself will be open to the public.

The richness of Webber Lake and Lacey Meadow from historical, recreational and natural resource perspectives is hard to overstate. Lacey Meadow, at nearly 1,500 acres, is one of the finest examples of a sub-alpine meadow in the entire Northern Sierra. For a number of birds and mammals, many threatened or endangered, the meadow provides critical habitat.

The Land Trust has been planning for the public's enjoyment of the property and on-the-ground work is underway. Main access will be off Jackson Meadows Road, with a second trailhead to be constructed off Meadow Lake Road (see map). Hiking and biking along historic Lacey Meadows Road is enjoyable and



A hydrologist and range specialist from Balance Hydrologics ponder native plant composition (and wishing all Sierra meadows are as healthy.)

A NEW ERA BEGINS.



A field of Arnica thrive in the porous soil of a gravel bar near Lacey Creek.

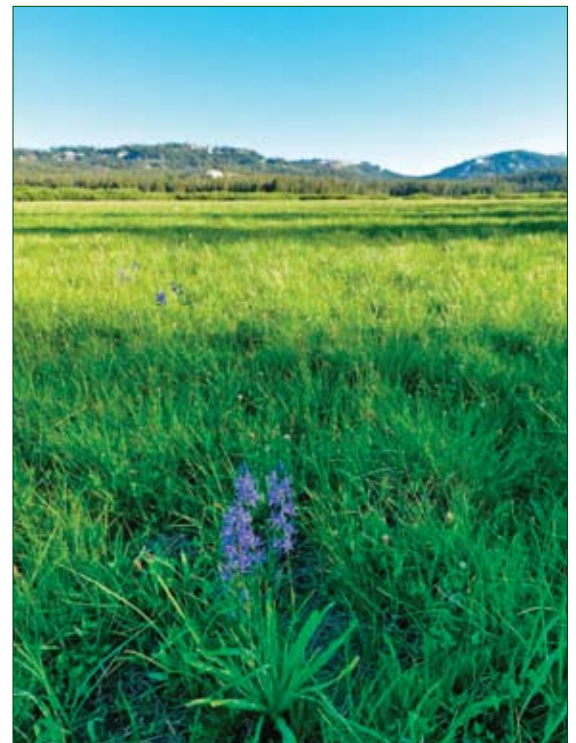
We extend our deepest gratitude to Barbara Johnson and the late Clifton Johnson. Clif's father, William Henry Johnson, began grazing sheep on the property in the late 1880s. The Johnsons have been remarkable stewards of the property and have cared for the land.

fairly easy, making a pass by the old Johnson Family homestead at the northern end of the meadow well worth the trip. The wildflower displays beginning in June are extraordinary.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Barbara Johnson and the late Clifton Johnson. Clif's father, William Henry Johnson, began grazing sheep on the property in the late 1880s. The Johnsons have been remarkable stewards of the property and have cared for the land. Suffice it to say, it took about a year (and a lot of chicken soup) before the Johnsons were sure they could entrust their legacy with us. When they agreed to sell, they turned down more lucrative offers in order to sell to the Land Trust.

This acquisition augments a strong conservation effort in the Little Truckee River watershed, including Upper Perazzo Creek (2007), Perazzo Meadows (2008), Coldstream Meadow (2009), Independence Lake (2010), and the Henness Pass/SPI conservation easement (2010-2012). These projects, with the addition of Webber Lake, total nearly 17,000 acres in the heart of the Sierra Nevada Checkerboard.

The Webber Lake acquisition was made possible through the generous support of our donors and funding from a number of State agencies, including the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and the Natural Resources Agency. The Trust for Public Land and the Northern Sierra Partnership also partnered with the Land Trust on the acquisition.



Lacey Meadow. The seldom visited Lacey Butte is in the background to the right. Photo by ©ElizabethCarmel.com.

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 in support of operations, Webber Lake and Donner Summit Canyon from January 1, 2012 to February 28, 2013.

These donors provide fundamental and annual support for the Land Trust's mission. Please note: Not included in this list are donors to the Royal Gorge Campaign. Look for a separate mailing to recognize those donors.

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Searching for aquatic insects on the Winter Creek Wetland, a small 15-acre parcel owned by the Land Trust.

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Hikers at Morgan Point above Lake of the Woods, part of the 7,200-acre conservation easement along the Jackson Meadows Rd. Morgan Point is named in honor of Jim & Becky Morgan.

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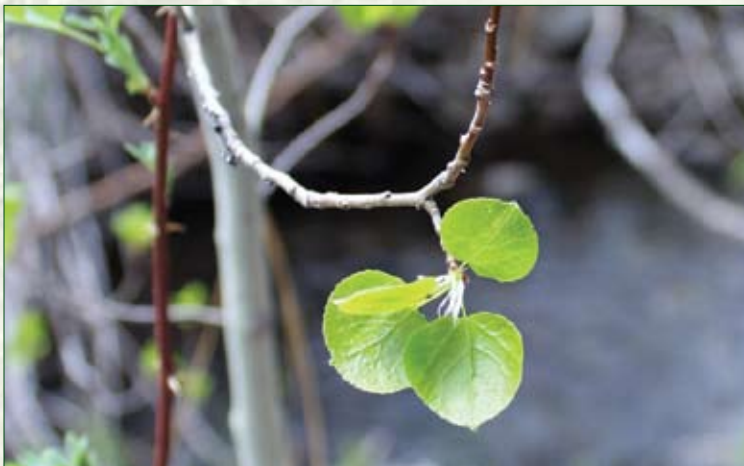
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Spring buds on an aspen.

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One of our favorite spots, Julie's Rock at Donner Summit Canyon. Photo by Anne Chadwick.

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Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*.) Photo by Anne Chadwick.

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 Call us at 530-582-
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John Davis with a Lahontan Cutthroat trout before releasing it back into Independence Lake.

TRAILBUILDING WITH GOOD DIRTY FUN

Exciting news, as the Truckee Donner Land Trust is moving forward on several new trails this summer. Land Trust staff will be flagging and designing new trails at Independence Lake, designing a new trail linking State Route 267 at the Northstar signal with Waddle Ranch Preserve, and flagging new portions of the Donner Lake Rim Trail. Staff and volunteers will be busy. If there is a silver lining to the meager winter of 2012-2013, it is that it provides an extra couple of months for trail work.

By the end of this summer, hikers and cyclists making the trek around Independence Lake will no longer have to bushwhack from the North Shore Trail to the South Shore Trail. A new trail is slated to be built that will not only eliminate the bushwhacking, but will meander through a beautiful mature red fir grove and showcase the cascades of upper Independence Creek. The trail will have an ecological benefit as well; currently the creek crossing passes through a Lahontan cutthroat trout spawning area. The new trail will bypass this area and prevent impacts to this threatened native fish.

Staff is also coordinating with the U.S. Forest Service in designing an exciting, new trail linking two spectacular and protected lands: Independence Lake and Cold Stream Meadow. The trail will link the Independence Lake basin with the Mount Lola Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, creating a myriad of backpacking opportunities. This trail is in the planning stages and is likely a five-year endeavor, but we are excited to take these first steps.

In 2013, a new access into Waddle Ranch Preserve is being planned that will pass through beautiful Elizabethtown Meadows (a part of the Martis Valley meadow complex, south of Waddle Ranch and roughly across the road from Northstar). Thanks to generous



Land Trust Trail guru Kevin Starr demonstrating how to cut trail tread with a group of pro-riders from Shimano Bike Equipment. Photo by Sterling Lorence.



It is nice to be reminded of our region's rich history. Photo by Geoff Griffin.

grants from Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation's Nature Fund and the Lahontan Community Foundation, staff will map out the trail this summer and work with the Truckee River Watershed Council to curb erosion on legacy roads in the area. Construction will begin in 2014.

Finally, ten years after protecting Schallenberger Ridge and conveying it to State Parks, the Land Trust will begin flagging the Donner Lake Rim Trail sections across this scenic ridgeline. The Land Trust will also work on a new portion of the Wendin Way trail that accesses the Donner Lake Rim Trail from the Donner Lake Interchange. Currently, Wendin Way is a newly constructed single-track trail for the first half, and a badly eroded dirt road for the second half. The Truckee River Watershed Council will rehabilitate and decommission the old road and a new trail will be built this fall.

The Land Trust has always relied on volunteers to construct its trails, and these new trails will be no exception. The passion and dedication of volunteers cannot be matched in constructing and maintaining trails. If you would like to join us, please contact Kevin Starr at 530-582-4711, kevin@tdlandtrst.org.

2013 Trailbuilding Dates

This year, trailbuilding will be once a month on select dates from June through early October. Sign up by visiting Truckee Trails Foundation at www.truckeetrails.org, and click on Good Dirty Fun.



SPECIAL TRIBUTE GIFTS

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, 2012 to February 28, 2013.

These gifts are a great way to pay tribute to a person's love of the Truckee Donner region.

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An early project of the Land Trust was protecting a rare fen containing Pitcher Plants. These carnivorous plants thrive in soil too poor in minerals for other plants to survive. Photo by Ralph & Barbara Hunt.

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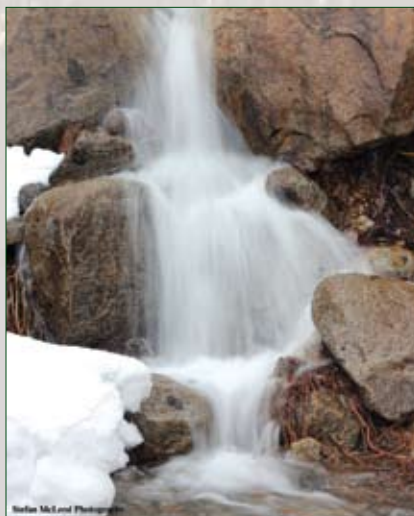


Photo by Stefan McLeod Photography.

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Vail Resorts
The Villager Nursery
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Dennis E. Zirbel, Architect

THE LAND TRUST ACHIEVES A MILESTONE

After a lengthy process, in February the Truckee Donner Land Trust earned accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, a program of the Land Trust Alliance.

The Land Trust is one of only 201 land trusts nationally that have met the strict standards required for accreditation.

Accredited land trusts are authorized to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust, and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.

“This effort will pay off in the future as we have better procedures, documentation, transparency, and credibility in the land trust and wider

communities,” said TDLT President William Thauvette

Lawrence R. Kueter, Chair of the Accreditation Commission, referred to the efforts of the entire Land Trust staff in earning this distinction: “Congratulations on this achievement. I know everyone at the Truckee Donner Land Trust has worked hard to earn this honor. This is a milestone for you and the land trust community.”



MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

Anne Chadwick

Writer and photographer Anne Chadwick splits her time between the Sierra Nevada and Sebastopol, California. She is active in several organizations devoted to protecting the

environment and advancing the arts and she chaired the Fire Safety Committee for the Serene Lakes Property Owners Association. Retired from a career in agricultural trade policy and communications, Anne has traveled extensively for work and pleasure.



Anne Chadwick

She has served on the Land Trust's Stewardship Committee since 2009 and has been active in raising funds for the preservation of Royal Gorge. Anne enjoys

alpine and Nordic skiing, cycling, kayaking, and hiking.

Ted Owens

Ted Owens was raised in northern California in a family of outdoor enthusiasts, enjoying skiing, backpacking, fishing and hunting. He majored in Political Science at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and afterward went to work as a government affairs manager for a statewide insurance association. Trading in the suits and ties, Ted moved to Truckee full time in 1989 to join his father in the family construction business.



Ted Owens

Ted is a member of the Truckee Rotary Club, a charter member and past President of the Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe, and a member of the Truckee Masonic Lodge #200. He served on the Truckee Planning Commission and the Town Council and was selected in 2003 to serve as

Truckee Mayor. Ted was elected to the Nevada County Board of Supervisors in 2004 and 2008 where he served as Chairman of the Board in 2005, 2008 and 2012.

As Supervisor, Ted served on several statewide boards including California's Sierra Nevada

Conservancy representing the Central Sub-region. He also worked extensively with the Land Trust on several acquisitions.

“I joined the board because the Truckee Donner Land Trust goes about conservation the right way, creating a win-win-win for private landowners, the public and conservation,” Ted said.

Award Alert: The Land Trust is "Relentless"

At the California Council of Land Trust's annual conference, the Truckee Donner Land Trust was one of eight organizations recognized for its outstanding work in 2012. The Land Trust was honored for its "relentless and tenacious pursuit" to protect Royal Gorge.

Save the Date

2013 Events

Northern Sierra Partnership Second Annual Celebration

Friday, July 5th

The first and highly successful NSP celebration was held last year at spectacular Independence Lake. This year, we'll be celebrating at the newly conserved Royal Gorge! The fun begins at 9 a.m. with hikes, nature walks, bike rides, and outdoor classrooms. At noon, guests will enjoy a delicious catered BBQ. Friends and family are heartily encouraged to attend. Stay tuned for more information on how to RSVP by watching our website and e-newsletters. If you are not signed up to receive our e-newsletters, you may do so at the top of the page at www.tdlandtrust.org.

Trails & Vistas

September 7th - 8th

For Trails & Vistas 10th Anniversary, the location for the area's magical, musical art hike is the Pacific Crest Trailhead in the Tahoe National Forest on Donner Summit. This unusually creative experience allows people to appreciate the Sierra landscape in a truly unforgettable manner. For tickets visit www.trailsandvistas.org.

Hike Ambassadors—Invite Us Along!

Is your hiking club planning an outing on Land Trust properties this year? We'd love to join you! Hike Ambassadors are Land Trust Directors who share your love for hiking and can enhance your experience with stories about the ecology, history and people of the land. Learn what part the Land Trust played in making these trails available for public recreation. If you like, we'll work with your hike guide to customize a focus - birds, butterflies, wildflowers, historical events, the land acquisition process - and fit it into your plans. (We even have a professional photographer who can share tips on capturing the spectacular scenery.) Call or e-mail K.V. at 530-582-4711, kv@tdlandtrust.org to invite a Hike Ambassador to join you on these trails:

- Castle Valley
- Coldstream Meadow
- Donner Lake Rim Trail
- Independence Lake
- Negro Canyon
- Lacey Meadow
- Perazzo Meadow
- Royal Gorge
- Schallenberger Ridge
- Donner Summit Canyon
- Van Norden Meadow
- Waddle Ranch Preserve

Thank You to our In-Kind Donors

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The Pour House
Puma Springs Vineyards
The Richardson House
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Sierra Business Council
Squaw Valley
Jodi & Bill Sterling - Salomon
Sugar Bowl Academy
Sugar Bowl Ski Resort
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Tahoe Institute for Natural Science
Tahoe Mountain Resorts - Jeff Brown & Breck Overall
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The Land Trust would like to thank the following foundations for their recent grants:

Emmigrant Trails
Greenway Trust

Grasseschi-Crabb Family
Foundation

Kansha Foundation

Lahontan Community
Foundation, a Donor
Advised Fund at Tahoe
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Morgan Family Foundation

Northern Sierra Partnership

Page Foundation

Patagonia

REI, Inc.

Resources Legacy Fund

Tahoe Truckee Community
Foundation Nature Fund and
The Martis Fund

Vail Resorts Charitable Fund

A Special Thanks

The Land Trust would like to thank Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation's The Martis Fund for its generous grant of \$25,000 for restoration and construction of trails at Elizabethtown Meadows. Acquired in 2012, Elizabethtown Meadows is located on the east side of Highway 267 and will provide trails connecting to Waddle Ranch Preserve. The Martis Fund is a collaborative project of Martis Camp landowners, DMB/Highlands Group (developers of Martis Camp), Mountain Area Preservation Foundation, and Sierra Watch.

The Land Trust also received a grant for \$5,000 from the Lahontan Community Foundation via the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation. The grant is for the Middle Martis Creek Riparian, Road and Trail Restoration Project.

BUSINESS PARTNER PROFILE

Dr. Andy Pasternak & JoAnn Ellero, Silver Sage Center Family Medicine

While living in Wisconsin, Dr. Andy Pasternak and his wife JoAnn Ellero visited friends in Reno with whom they skied at Royal Gorge. Andy and JoAnn were so taken by the skiing and the Sierra they immediately started to plan their move out west and have now enjoyed 15 years in the region.

The couple started Silver Sage Center for Family Medicine in Reno, providing high quality health care to the community. They focus particularly on patients interested in making healthy changes in their lifestyles.

In an effort to give back to the community, they have been proud members of One Percent for the Planet since

2007. In addition, they support the Truckee Donner Land Trust for its commitment to preserving what Andy and JoAnn love about their home.

"The Land Trust, while promoting opportunities for healthy outdoor fun, preserves land for future generations. Royal Gorge is a shining example," Dr. Pasternak said.

The couple enjoys skiing, mountain biking, hiking, trail running, kayaking, bocce ball, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and bird watching. Dr. Pasternak reminds everyone: Use sunscreen!



Andy Pasternak, MD, MS, and JoAnn Ellero.

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

Dragonfly

The Lodge at Tahoe Donner

Paco's Truckee Bike and Ski

Sierra Crest Dental, Robert Colpitts DDS

FLOODING WREAKS HAVOC AT DONNER SUMMIT CANYON

Between December 2 and 4, 2012, the west end of Donner Lake received 14 inches of rain that fell on top of an existing snowpack causing a 100 to 200 year flood event. The flood devastated many of the trails at Donner Summit Canyon, one of the Land Trust's most visited acquisitions and now part of Donner Memorial State Park.

The post-flood damage is extensive: the bridge over Summit Creek needs replacing, culverts have been overrun, and in several places, the trail was eroded down to bedrock and is unrecognizable.

In places, Summit Creek jumped the creek bed and quickly eroded a new channel into the trail. Hydrologists with State Parks are in the process of analyzing whether to leave the creek in its new home and reroute the trail, or push the creek back into its previous drainage and reconstruct the trail. Staff plans to have at least a temporary bypass in place for the summer hiking season, if not a permanent one.

Last fall, the Land Trust prudently installed a series of rolling grade dips on the trail. These dips were very successful in diverting the storm flows off of the trail and back into natural drainages. Although the damage is extensive, it is localized to certain areas due to the success of the grade dips.



The flood cresting near the bridge at Summit Creek. The water is about a foot and a half deep on the Old Dutch Flat Wagon Rd.



This culvert will be replaced with a rock-hardened low water crossing.



After the flood, parts of the trail remain intact.

The Land Trust and State Parks also plan to remove several damaged culverts and replace them with rock-armored, low water crossings that will not clog with debris. The Land Trust also plans to replace the existing bridge with a new one that will span the entire creek without center supports that are prone to clogging.

The repairs are costly and unexpected. Still the Land Trust views the acquisition and stewardship of Donner Summit Canyon a wonderful conservation victory among many.

Please use caution when hiking and biking at Donner Summit Canyon this summer.

CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Post Waddle Ranch, the Land Trust makes progress toward a conservation grand slam.



Elizabethtown Meadow. Remnants of Elizabethtown, a mining camp in the 1870's, can be found at the edge of the meadow.

The overarching conservation goal in the Martis Valley is to create contiguous natural lands and habitat from Waddle Ranch Preserve to the Mt. Rose Wilderness and Toiyabe National Forest, an area covering more than 70,000 acres.

As a transition zone between the relatively wet Sierra Crest and the drier Great Basin Ranges to the east, the Martis Valley is ecologically important. Plant communities thrive throughout its creeks, wetlands, forests and meadows. Its protection provides an unbroken corridor from the Valley to the Mt. Rose Wilderness and beyond, ensuring hundreds of species of birds and mammals can survive and flourish.

“To borrow a sports metaphor, this is nothing short of a conservation

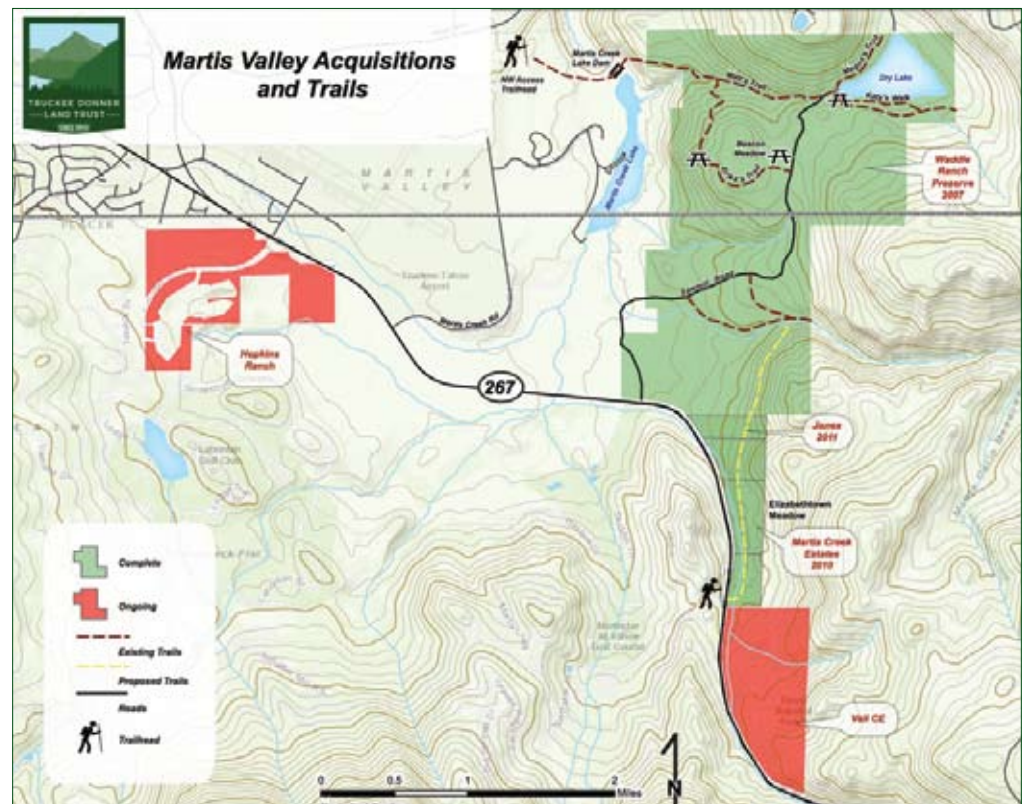
grand slam,” said Perry Norris, the Land Trust’s Executive Director.

Toward that goal, Truckee Donner Land Trust continues to steadily make progress in the Martis Valley. Since 2006, the Land Trust has completed three acquisitions and three conservation easements totaling 2,109 acres. This includes the protection of the 1,482-acre Waddle Ranch Preserve acquired in 2007 for \$23.5 million, one of the most expensive and complicated conservation transactions in the Sierra.

The Land Trust is now working on two new projects: Hopkins Ranch, once slated as a golf resort subdivision; and a 232-acre conservation easement across from the entrance to Northstar Resort. Both of these projects should be completed by year end.

Hopkins Ranch comprises 242 acres south of Shaffer Mill Road. DMB Highlands Group, the developer of Martis Camp, has agreed to donate the property in fee to assure its permanent protection.

The acquisition protects a scenic viewshed and includes the proposed alignment for the Martis Valley Regional



Current acquisitions, new and existing trails on Land Trust properties in the Martis Valley.

CONTINUE IN THE MARTIS VALLEY

Trail, a paved multi-use trail that would link Truckee to Northstar, and eventually North Lake Tahoe.

Vail Resorts, the operator of Northstar, is the successor to agreements made by its predecessor, Booth Creek, with Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch as part of the “Martis Valley Settlement.” The agreements required the donation of a conservation easement to the Land Trust on acreage once planned for development. The acreage is directly across from the entrance to Northstar.

“Working with DMB Highlands Group and Vail Resorts has been a true pleasure,” Norris said. “They are committed to insuring the Martis Valley is a special place for generations to come.”

The Vail/Martis Valley conservation easement will provide opportunity for a new trail linking Northstar to Waddle Ranch Preserve, crossing recent Land Trust acquisitions. (See map previous page.)

“Given the popularity of trails at Waddle Ranch, building new trails for hiking, biking and running in the Martis Valley will fill in a piece to our local trails network,” said John Svahn, the Land Trust’s Stewardship Director.

The Land Trust is also partnering with business groups and advocacy groups to achieve a conservation outcome for Sierra Pacific Industries’ 6,800 acres that spans from the Vail/Northstar conservation easement to Brockway Summit.



It may look like something out of Star Wars, but a Feller/Buncher is an incredibly efficient machine for thinning dense stands of forest. It also leaves less impact than a crew with chain saws and skidding logs out.



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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www.tdlandtrust.org

The Truckee Donner Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations to the Land Trust may be tax-deductible under the Internal Revenue Service Code.

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COVER PHOTO:

Spring storm at Lacey Meadows.
Photo by Sam Okamoto Photography.



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"Hey kids, wait for dad!" Photo by: Mike Schwartz - The Backcountry.



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