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Newsletter: December 2015/January 2016

Taking time to celebrate the accomplishments of 2015...

As we begin a new year and look back, there are many accomplishments worth celebrating. In 2015, citizens and organizations worked together to address numerous large projects and plans facing our area, including but not limited to the ridgeline developments above North Lake Tahoe ([Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan and the Brockway Campground](#)), [the Village at Squaw Valley](#), the [SR 89/Fanny Bridge "Realignment" project](#), and the [Placer County Tahoe Basin Area Plan](#). We are encouraged by the level of public involvement and those who have joined and participated in ongoing efforts to affect the planning process.

It will be important to continue these efforts and increase public participation in 2016. Most of these big projects are still in the works, and as demands to exploit Tahoe's environment for profit continue, new proposals for even more large developments in our region are likely. Ongoing efforts by the public are needed to ensure new development is appropriate for our environment and communities.



FOWS will remain diligent in our efforts to influence these projects and plans and keep you informed. In the meantime, we wish you a Happy New Year, and hope that you are enjoying the beautiful snow that Mother Nature has kindly provided us this year! In addition, we are very thankful for the donations we received throughout the year, including those who responded to our participation in #GivingTuesday. Your generosity supports our efforts to preserve and protect the beautiful West Shore of Lake Tahoe.

Sincerely,

Susan Gearhart
President, Friends of the West Shore

Regional and Local Planning Updates:

Placer County - Tahoe Basin Area Plan (TBAP):

At this time, the most recent information provided indicates Placer County plans release of the the draft Environmental Impact Report/Study (DEIR/S) in early 2016.

Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan (MVWPSP)

The draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the MVWPSP, a project proposing 760 residences and 6.6 acres of commercial/retail uses in forested land and along the ridgeline between Martis Valley and North Lake Tahoe, was released for public review on 10/22/2015. The original public comment due date of 12/7 was extended to 12/22 after FOWS and others requested more time to review the document.

There are numerous problems with the DEIR, many of which are likely to underestimate the negative impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, including traffic and scenic quality. In addition, the DEIR fails to evaluate the cumulative impacts of the MVWPSP with the Brockway Campground, a 550-unit campground proposed by the same developer immediately adjacent to the MVWPSP. FOWS and the Tahoe Area Sierra Club submitted [detailed comments regarding these deficiencies](#) and requested the DEIR analysis be corrected and the DEIR recirculated. Other organizations and citizens also identified similar problems and requested recirculation, including but not limited to the League to Save Lake Tahoe, Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch, North Tahoe Preservation Alliance, and Sierra Club (Mother Lode Chapter). Comments have been posted on [FOWS' website](#).



Project Area from locations in North Lake Tahoe
(Image by: GK Consulting)

Local Project Updates:

Homewood Village Resorts, LLC.

On 12/22/2015, the California 3rd District Court of Appeals [filed a response to a lawsuit](#) filed by the Clean Energy Committee, agreeing that emergency evacuation routes were not fully addressed in the 2011 Environmental Impact Report, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

"In summary, the EIR...says nothing substantive about emergency evacuations of residents, workers and visitors or the impact of such evacuations on access for emergency personnel, vehicles, and equipment."

We will keep you updated as we learn more about what's next.



Village at Squaw Valley Expansion:

FOWS was one of approximately 40 organizations, business owners, and citizens who signed [a letter created by Sierra Watch expressing opposition to the Squaw Valley Expansion](#) (as proposed). As noted in the letter:

"Squaw Valley is not an island; it's an integral part of the greater North Lake Tahoe community, economy, culture, and environment. And any development approved for Squaw Valley would impact the entire region..."

The owners of Squaw Valley Resort have been [trying to create the impression](#) that there is widespread community support for the massively-sized project. The letter, delivered by Sierra Watch representatives to the Placer County Board of Supervisors earlier this month, challenges that notion.

Kings Beach Recreation Area:



Kings Beach Recreation Area
([Image source](#))

The California Department of Parks and Recreation and the California Tahoe Conservancy are [preparing a revised General Plan](#) that will guide the long-term management of the Kings Beach State Recreation Area (SRA). Proposed revisions include a reconstructed Kings Beach Pier.

Two public workshops and scoping meetings are scheduled:

- **January 12, 2016:** North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach, from 6:00-8:30 pm
- **February 20, 2015:** TRPA Advisory Planning Commission at TRPA's offices in Stateline beginning at 9:30 am.*

* TRPA advises the public to refer to the [meeting agenda](#) up to one (1) week prior to the meeting for updated information on timing.

Base-to-Base Gondola:

You may have heard discussion over the past year regarding a proposal to install a Gondola between Alpine Meadows and Squaw

Valley. This is of great concern for many as it will cut through the Granite Chief Wilderness Area, which was created by Congress in 1984. Active citizens formed the "[Protect Granite Chief](#)" Initiative. On 12/22/2015, Placer County issued a public notice for a formal application for the Gondola. [Learn more.](#)

Transit-related changes in North Lake Tahoe/Truckee:

Placer County recently reported that the Tahoe-Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART)* will be increasing the hours of operation and winter routes around North Lake Tahoe and Truckee. Changes include:

"TART'S Truckee local route will also offer service throughout Truckee, with daily connections to Sugar Bowl, Soda Springs, Donner Ski Ranch and Boreal beginning Dec. 17. Free night rider service begins Dec. 14 to Crystal Bay, Squaw Valley, Tahoe City, Tahoma, and Northstar. Year-round, hourly routes on Highway 267 begin Dec. 14, and hourly daytime service continues between Truckee, Squaw Valley and Tahoe City. Daily, year-round service continues from Tahoma to Incline Village, and between Truckee, Northstar, Kings Beach and Crystal Bay." [Click here for more information](#) .

* TART and Truckee Transit will also soon be a single unified brand under the TART label.

Upcoming planning meetings:

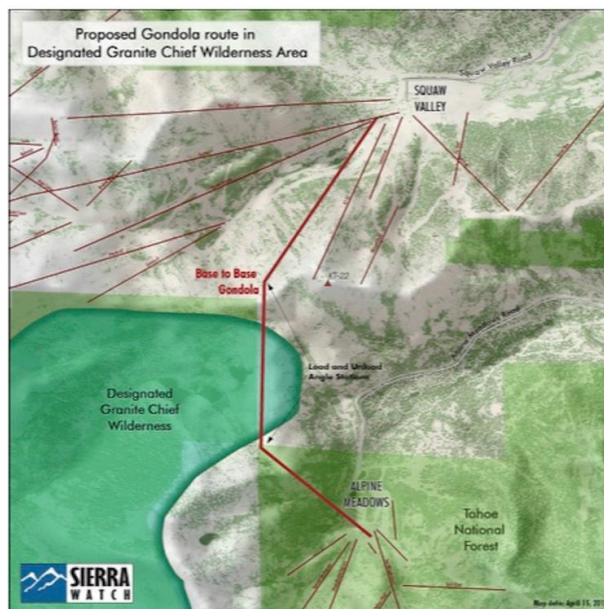
Although agendas have yet to be developed, with a full plate in the upcoming year the following meetings may involve topics of interest for the West Shore and Tahoe Basin:

Placer County Board of Supervisors:

January 05, 2016
January 25, 2016 - Tahoe
January 26, 2016 - Tahoe
February 09, 2016
February 23, 2016

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency:

January 13, 2016 - Advisory Planning Commission
January 27, 2016 - Governing Board - North Tahoe Events Center
February 10, 2016 - Advisory Planning Commission
February 24, 2016 - Governing Board



Proposed Gondola Route

We invite you to contact us to learn more, ask questions, or simply get to know the FOWS Board.

Please contact Jennifer Quashnick, FOWS Conservation Consultant, at: jqtahoe@sbcglobal.net, or Susan Gearhart, FOWS President, at: susan@friendswestshore.org or (530) 525-0368.

