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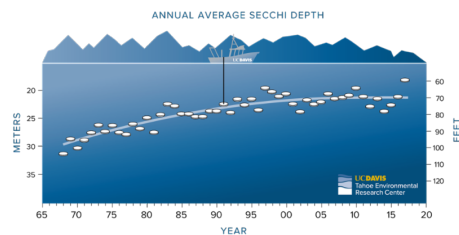


July/August 2018 Newsletter

You may have heard that Tahoe's [2017 mid-lake clarity declined by 9.5 feet](#) - the worst annual average mid-lake clarity ever recorded. Researchers from U.C. Davis discussed the circumstances behind the low clarity in a [recent press release](#) and 6/27 presentation to the TRPA Governing Board indicating that extreme weather is the culprit:

"The combination of arguably the most extreme drought period ending with the most extreme precipitation year produced the low clarity values seen. But this does not reflect the long-term trend, and measurements for 2018 have already shown a large improvement that are more in line with the long-term trend."

- Dr. Geoff Schladow



When asked what we could have done to prevent the impacts to clarity, Dr. Schladow explained it was not possible to design a project to deal with this scale of flooding. However, the key to better understanding the lake's internal processes so we can better adapt to climate change is a greater investment in lake **monitoring**. We agree, and are proposing more sufficient and frequent monitoring be required by TRPA's new Shoreline Plan (details below). You can learn more at the [upcoming "State of the Lake" presentation](#) on 7/26.

FOWS also believes it is important to do everything we can to best prepare Tahoe to adapt to climate change, however current requirements are not good enough. For example, regulations are based on decades-old engineering requirements regarding storm water volume and do not sufficiently address the more periodic and intense storms we are now seeing.

Finally, please note FOWS' third annual community party is scheduled for **August 16** at [West Shore Pizza](#) in Tahoe. **Come celebrate with us and enjoy good food, drinks, community camaraderie, and conversation!**

Sincerely,

Judith Tornese,
President

PS: If you belong to a Homeowners Association (HOA) on the West Shore, FOWS welcomes the opportunity to update your group on West Shore activities during your annual HOA meetings this year. Please [contact us](#) for more information.

BE SAFE!

Sign up for emergency alerts on your cell phone.

With fire season upon us, FOWS encourages you to register your cell phone (click below):
[Placer County Alerts](#)
[El Dorado County Alerts](#)

Project updates:

Meeks Bay Marina:

The US Forest Service (USFS) still aims to release the Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation (NOI/NOP) this summer. The project will evaluate opportunities for restoration, relocating/modifying some recreational uses, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and other actions in the campground, resort, and marina. FOWS will keep you updated.

State Route 89 Corridor Planning (Tahoma to South Lake Tahoe):

The SR 89 "Corridor" Planning project will look at issues like parking along the highway, curb and gutter, pedestrian access, etc., with emphasis on Emerald Bay and the Camp Richardson areas.

The project will also look at potential bike path routes south of Meeks Bay and through the corridor. [Valuable information](#) has been gathered about the current roadway-related problems and one thing is clear - resolving the issues will not be as simple as adding more parking spaces or trying to get more people to ride existing transit services. Solutions will require multiple approaches and collaboration across the board.



1,782,648
annual visitors
up to a **30 minute**
delay
of northbound traffic south of Pope Beach

Beginning in July, TRPA and other project planners will initiate surveys to gather input from the public. We encourage those interested to [sign up for their e-news list](#) . FOWS will also inform you of any opportunities online, once available. View the project's [fact sheet](#) or read more details [here](#) .

Alpine Meadows to Squaw Valley Base-to-Base Gondola:

The [draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report](#) (DEIS/R) was released on 4/27 with public comments due by 6/11 ([read FOWS comments here](#)). FOWS was pleased to see the inclusion of two alternative routes for the proposed gondola that do not cross land within the Granite Chief Wilderness Area (GCWA) boundary, however there were technical deficiencies with the environmental analysis that need to be resolved in the final EIS/R. Concerns are also summarized in [FOWS' recent Alert](#) .

Other projects:

- [Fanny Bridge/SR 89 Realignment](#) - Work is ongoing; completion is expected this fall.
- [Homewood Mountain Resort](#) - There is no Master Plan-related construction this summer.
- [Lake Tahoe West \(LTW\) Restoration Partnership](#) - An assessment of the existing health of the West Shore's forests has been prepared and efforts now involve developing potential strategies for restoring forest health and resiliency. Click [here](#) for a recent summary of LTW's efforts.
- [Martis Valley West Specific Plan](#) - After the California Superior Court released a decision on the MVWSP lawsuit last March, [an appeal was filed by conservation groups](#) challenging the court's ruling that the environmental analysis had sufficiently addressed the project's impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. The groups are now awaiting the court's ruling.
- [Meeks Bay Bike Trail](#) - Construction is currently underway.

- [Tahoe Keys Proposed Herbicide Use](#) - TRPA has determined that a full environmental impact study will be required for the proposed herbicide use. In the meantime, there are ongoing studies this summer using non-chemical methods; more detail regarding invasive species issues and alternative methods is available in TRPA's summer [2018 Tahoe in Depth](#).
- [Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan \(VSVSP\)](#) - On 5/24, the California Superior Court [heard arguments regarding the Sierra Watch lawsuit against the VSVSP](#). Each side now awaits the judge's ruling, which could take up to 90 days from the May 25 hearing.

Regional and local planning updates:

TRPA Shoreline Ordinances:

In early May TRPA released the [Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) (DEIS) for a new set of proposed Shoreline Ordinances that allow more piers, buoys, boat ramps, and marina expansions ([read FOWS comments here](#)). Concerns include:



- Inadequate requirements for enforcement, which is relied upon to mitigate numerous environmental and public health and safety impacts.
- Lack of sufficient improvements for the safety and experience of non-motorized watercraft recreation users and beach-goers.
- Deficient analyses of impacts to air quality, water quality, noise, greenhouse gas emissions, non-motorized recreation, and public health and safety.
- No shoreline-specific monitoring requirements related to air quality, water quality (limited references are made to additional nearshore monitors but there is no plan or detail), noise, non-motorized recreation use and safety, or scenic resources.

While the purpose of the DEIS is to evaluate the environmental impacts of multiple new plan options, TRPA's Proposed Plan provides only one benefit - more access for motorized boats. **The DEIS concludes no benefits to the environment. None.** The DEIS evaluates two alternative plans that reduce harm to Lake Tahoe (Alternatives 3 and 4), and one which focuses primarily on increased, non-motorized public access to the lake (Alternative 4) rather than increases in motorized boat use.

TRPA Threshold Update:

In late May, the TRPA Board approved non-substantive 'technical changes' to their environmental threshold standards to reduce the overlap of standards and improve organization. Revisions are now being considered for forest-related standards, stemming from work being done by the Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership and are focused on measurable values that represent healthy forests. FOWS will be watching these closely to advocate for proposed changes that are in line with the best available science and result in equal or better protection than the existing standards. TRPA will soon consider changes to stream environment zone and vehicle-related standards. FOWS will continue to follow this process.

New website for planning your transportation:



Multiple Tahoe agencies have created [a new website](#) aimed to help people " *Get to, through, and around Lake Tahoe* ." We encourage you to check it out and help spread the word!

FOWS is looking for a few good men and women to join our Board!

Please contact Judith Tornese at jmtornese@aol.com for more information.

Ways to support FOWS:

FOWS is always in need of funds to support the use of our consultant who reviews and makes scientific comments to the Tahoe agencies to improve local projects. **Please consider a donation soon!**

Save Mart:

The eScrip Shares program allows shoppers to designate FOWS to receive donations earned through their purchases; up to 3% of your purchase at Save Mart and [other stores](#) will be donated to FOWS at no cost to you. Sign up for a new account or register your existing account [through this link](#) , then simply provide your phone number at checkout and funds are donated to FOWS ([click here for a short instruction sheet to get you started](#)) .

Amazon Smile:

We've joined the Amazon Smile program; all you have to do is order from Amazon through [this link](#) and 0.5% of your purchase will be donated to FOWS at no additional cost to you!

Welcome to eScrip

SAVE MART Lucky Lucky foodmaxx



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Friends Of The West
Shore.**

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Amazon donates.

amazonsmile

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 Judith Tornese, FOWS President, at: jmtornese@aol.com .

Friends of the West Shore | www.friendswestshore.org

