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May/June 2019 Newsletter

Friends of the West Shore works toward the preservation, protection, and conservation of the West Shore of Lake Tahoe, our watershed, wildlife, and rural quality of life, for today and future generations.

FOWS has long expressed concern regarding traffic-related impacts to emergency evacuation and access. After the 2018 Camp Fire revealed the perils of limited evacuation routes, there has been significantly more discussion on the issue of wildfire and our communities. The ["Destined to Burn" series](#) was recently released by several news organizations addressing various fire-related issues in our region.



The North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts [followed up with an article discussing efforts in the Tahoe Basin](#) that have been underway since our own local "wake-up call" from the 2007 Angora Fire in South Lake Tahoe. The article notes:

- The challenges of educating visitors about wildfire
- The need to use more prescribed fire to prevent catastrophic wildfires
- The need for incentives and funding to encourage homeowners to retrofit existing homes with fire-resistant materials

We encourage you to learn more about how to make your home fire safe and be prepared in the event of an evacuation (e.g. having a "Go Bag" ready with [these important items](#)) on the [Tahoe Living With Fire website](#) . In addition, although land use authorities such as the Placer County Board of Supervisors [have continued to approve projects that will place more people in danger and more traffic on our roadways](#) , the significant public concerns expressed over recent land developments have fueled important conversations about land use and traffic in our area.

We look forward to your continued feedback and support, and encourage you to [contact us](#) with any additional ideas or questions you may have. **Also, if you belong to a Homeowners Association (HOA) on the West Shore, we welcome the opportunity to speak with you and your neighbors as you gather for your annual HOA meetings this year.** Please [contact us](#) for more information.

Sincerely,

Judith Tornese,
President

Project updates:

Meeks Bay Resort and Marina:

The Meeks Bay Restoration Project proposes to remove the marina and restore the creek and lagoon, add a new public pier and boat ramp along the south end of the bay, and incorporate other changes to the campground, parking areas, and circulation. The draft environmental impact document is anticipated this summer. There are no new updates since our last report ([more information here](#)).

Meeks Bay Aquatic Invasive Weed control:

Planning is underway for an invasive weed control project at the mouth of Meeks Creek, which flows into Lake Tahoe through Meeks Bay. (Note: This is not the same project as the Meeks Bay Resort and Marina Restoration). The project will start in late spring or early summer 2019.

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

The Existing Conditions Report, which summarizes the results of data collection and analysis to date, [is now available](#) . The draft Corridor Plan, which will address options to improve conditions in the future, is anticipated in July, with final approval in September. Read details [here](#) .

As expected, the existing conditions report documents extensive congestion and parking management issues at Emerald Bay, Camp Richardson, and nearby areas (e.g. Pope Beach). Congestion along other areas of the West Shore (e.g. Rubicon Bay, Meeks Bay, Sugar Pine Point) is not as extensive as areas to the south, but there are some issues to consider, especially with regards to the location of the future bike trail from Meeks Bay south to Emerald Bay. The report also identifies where visitors are coming from, how long their visit will be, and other factors that will affect what types of future actions may be most beneficial to reduce traffic impacts. FOWS will continue to participate in stakeholder meetings and keep you updated.



Figure 3: SR 89 Corridor

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

The final Environmental Impact Statement/Report, jointly prepared by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Placer County, [is now available](#). It is good that the USFS has not selected the applicant's proposed gondola alignment, which would have run through the federally-designated Granite Chief Wilderness Area (GCWA), although we believe that more should be done to reduce transportation impacts from the expected increased visitation to the resorts. We are currently reviewing the final report to prepare comments for the USFS and Placer County.

[The USFS has selected Alternative 4](#) , which places the new gondola to the east and away from the GCWA. Placer County has not selected a preferred alternative. Background information is available [here](#). *Click on image for larger view of alignment options.*

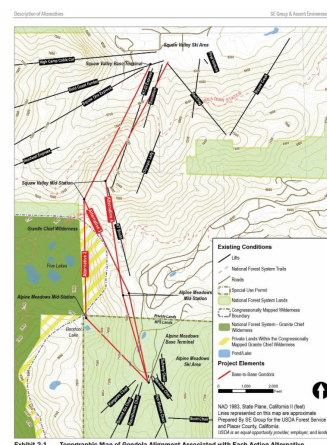


Exhibit 2-1 Topographic Map of Gondola Alignment Associated with Each Action Alternative

Upcoming hearings include:

- North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council - May 9 ([agenda](#))
- Placer County Planning Commission - May 30 ([agenda will be posted here when available](#))
- Placer County Board of Supervisors - (To Be Determined)

Other projects:

- [Alpine Sierra Subdivision \(Alpine Meadows\)](#) - At their 4/23 hearing, the Placer County Board of Supervisors approved the new subdivision, which will include additional fire safety measures ([read more here](#)).
- [Fanny Bridge/SR 89 Realignment](#) - The replacement of Fanny Bridge will not occur this year. The new highway segment, new Truckee River Bridge, and two roundabouts on either end of the realignment, are anticipated to be completed this year. However, due to high water levels, construction may not begin until sometime in mid-June. Work at the Tahoe City Wye will not occur this year. [Read more here](#).
- [Homewood Mountain Resort](#) - There are no new updates since our last newsletter.
- [Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership](#) - The Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership is developing a strategy to guide forest restoration activities along Lake Tahoe's West Shore with the goal of increasing the resilience of the landscape and to protect against prolonged drought, climate change, and extreme fire. Committee members continue to review modeling results and research and provide guidance on upcoming environmental review processes.
- [Martis Valley West Specific Plan](#) - There are no updates since our last newsletter.
- [Old Tahoe City Firehouse](#) - A feasibility study was initiated in 2018 to examine potential redevelopment options for the old Tahoe City Firehouse. Additional studies related to allowable land development are currently underway. Placer County staff will present the final report to the public in June and Board of Supervisors in July.
- [Tahoe City Lodge](#) - There are no new updates since our last newsletter.
- [Tahoe Keys Proposed Herbicide Use](#) - TRPA reports the Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement will be released in June.
- [Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan](#) - There are no updates since our last newsletter.

Regional and local planning updates:

TRPA Threshold Update:

The TRPA Governing Board recently approved proposed organizational and process-related changes to the thresholds, however these changes do not affect the protection provided by the environmental standards. FOWS will continue to follow this process to ensure changes do not lead to reduced environmental protection.

TRPA Regional Transportation Model Update:

FOWS is currently participating in a stakeholder process associated with the 2019 transportation model update. Stakeholders have been discussing priorities and budget/schedule constraints and developing a list of short- and long-term improvements to the TRPA Transportation Model. Short-term improvements include improved calibration, updates to visitor and commuter vehicle trip data, and updated recreational attraction data.



Are you looking for an opportunity to volunteer to help Lake Tahoe? The League to Save Lake Tahoe is seeking West Shore volunteers to assist with the "Pipe Keeper" program, where community members are trained to assess and monitor the condition of storm water infrastructure and collect storm water samples for analysis during storm and snow-melting events. FOWS was a founding partner of this program. Training events are held in both south and north shore locations. Learn more [here](#) .

Other ways to support FOWS:

Amazon Smile:

We've joined the Amazon Smile program; all you have to do is order from Amazon through smile.amazon.com and 0.5% of your purchase will be donated to FOWS at no additional cost to you!

eScrip SHARES:

The eScrip Shares program allows shoppers to designate FOWS to receive donations earned through their purchases; up to 5% of your purchase will be donated to FOWS at no cost to you. Sign up through [this link](#) .

*** Unfortunately, Save Mart discontinued its participation in the S.H.A.R.E.S. program last month. However, numerous stores throughout California and online retailers ([see list](#)) will continue to participate!**



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.

