

SHARE:



[Join Our Email List](#)



September/October 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.

We hope you had a wonderful summer and were able to enjoy all Tahoe has to offer! While we have continued to monitor projects that will impact the West Shore (read updates below), we are also excited to see some of the information that is being shared about the Basin we love so much. For example:

- This year's [State of the Lake Report](#) from the scientists at the Tahoe Environmental Research Center reports good news: the lake's clarity improved in 2018 compared to the previous year. While we still have a long way to go to meet clarity standards, we are pleased to see the lake recovered from the especially low clarity experienced in the previous year. In addition, new research is suggesting that removing a certain type of non-native small shrimp in the water may lead to improved clarity.



- Capital Public Radio out of Sacramento is airing a series of Podcasts titled "[TahoeLand](#)". The podcasts discuss how climate change threatens the Tahoe Basin and what we can do about it. FOWS was interviewed as a participant for one of the episodes. We encourage you to check out this informative series.



We look forward to your continued feedback and support, and encourage you to [contact us](#) with any additional ideas or questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Judith Tornese,
President

Project updates:

Meeks Bay Resort and Marina:

The Meeks Bay Restoration Project proposes to remove or renovate the boat 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. Release of the draft environmental impact document is now anticipated in the winter or spring of 2020 ([more information here](#)).

Meeks Bay Aquatic Invasive Weed control:

This invasive weed control project at the mouth of Meeks Creek, which flows into Lake Tahoe through Meeks Bay, is already in the works; bottom barriers have been placed in the lagoon. (Note: This is a separate project from the Meeks Bay Resort and Marina Restoration). [Learn more about this method](#).

Fanny Bridge/SR 89 Realignment:

The new highway segment, new Truckee River Bridge, and two roundabouts on either end of the realignment, are anticipated to be completed this year. The replacement of Fanny Bridge and changes to the Tahoe City Wye will not occur this year and [will be delayed until further notice](#). [Read more here](#).

West Shore Highway Crossing Improvements:

Placer County is working on a plan to improve pedestrian and cyclist crossings along SR 89 from Tahoma to Tahoe City. The [Preliminary Design Report](#) reviews existing conditions and recommends measures to be taken at fourteen crossings.

Placer County has been seeking public input on the proposal throughout the summer, with the next public meeting tentatively set for the 9/12 [North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council](#) meeting. Funding from Caltrans was delayed, so the project may not be constructed until next year.

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

The draft SR 89 Corridor Plan, which will address options to improve traffic and pedestrian conditions in the future, is anticipated this fall. The Plan will include extensive focus on congestion, parking, and safety issues at Emerald Bay. Read details [here](#). The agencies are still working on the draft plan; there are no updates since our last newsletter.

Tahoe City Lodge:

On August 21, a ceremonial [Demolition Party](#) was held at the old Henrikson building where the new Lodge will be built. The project is slated to begin construction next spring and be completed within 18 months.



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

Placer County's Board of Supervisors approved the final project on July 23 amid concerns about unmitigated environmental impacts. As reported previously, 11 "Objections" were filed with the USFS ([learn more here](#)); at this time, there are no updates regarding the Objection process or whether the USFS will consider additional mitigation, as requested by the Objectors. However, one of the Objecting organizations, the Protect Granite Chief Initiative, recently [filed a lawsuit in the California Superior Court](#).

Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows - Evacuation Drills:

Wildfire evacuation drills will be held in Squaw Valley on 9/8 and Alpine Meadows on 9/2. The drills aim to practice for a situation where wildfire closes SR 89 in both directions and moves toward the valleys; in this case, the ski resort parking lots are designated "areas of refuge." [Learn more here](#).

Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan:

While there are no updates related to the lawsuit against the Village, we do have exciting news to report: Sierra Watch's ["Keep Squaw True" movie is now available to stream online](#)! We encourage anyone

who is concerned about the impacts of this massive development on Lake Tahoe and along the West Shore to watch this well-made and informative movie. In addition, Sierra Watch is hosting a [Community Update](#) on 9/18 from 6-7:30 p.m. in the Squaw Valley PUD meeting room.

THE MOVIE TO KEEP SQUAW TRUE



Other projects:

- [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 are currently assisting the core representatives with the development of a proposed Landscape Restoration Strategy, which will move into the environmental review process later this year.
- [Martis Valley West Specific Plan](#) - There are no updates since our last newsletter.
- [Old Tahoe City Firehouse](#) - The property includes Former Fire Station 51, the Visitor Center and Tahoe Community Center located on Commons Beach in Tahoe City. The feasibility study addressing two proposed project concepts [is now available](#). The study concludes that neither project is financially viable as proposed and significant financial assistance would be required.
- [Tahoe Keys Proposed Herbicide Use](#) - The deadline for comments on the Notice of Preparation was 8/2; there are no other updates at this time.
- [West Shore Water Treatment Plant](#) - Construction of the [West Shore Water Treatment Plant](#) on Lodge St. and SR 89 is expected in 2020.

Regional and local planning updates:

TRPA Threshold Update:

On 8/28, the TRPA Regional Plan Implementation Committee heard a presentation from TRPA staff related to updating the transportation metrics the agency uses for planning purposes ([read staff report](#)). While there is a need to enhance the way that transportation impacts are measured in order to capture the full effects of traffic on the environment and public health and safety, future changes must not weaken the protection provided by the current TRPA standard that regulates basin-wide Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). In fact, FOWS believes standards should be enhanced in order to address local area impacts and additional times of the year (the current standard is based solely on a Friday in August). FOWS will continue to follow this process to advocate that changes do not lead to reduced environmental protection.

TRPA 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 and schedule constraints and developing a list of short- and long-term improvements to the TRPA Transportation Model. Information from the updated model run will be used in 2020 for a variety of planning and reporting documents.



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

