



Newsletter: December 2015/January 2015

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year...

As we move into a new year, we'd like to take a moment to reflect on the ups and downs of 2014. It was a busy year for FOWS, and we thank you for your continued support and interest in our efforts to preserve the West Shore. Highlights of 2014 include:

- The launch of our new nearshore volunteer program, [Tahoe Nearshore Dippers](#), and establishing a new world record on **July 4th**;
- Ongoing hard work and efforts to challenge the new, large developments allowed by [TRPA's 2012 Regional Plan Update](#);
- Collaboration with friends in the North Shore area to raise awareness of the proposed ridgeline development ([Martis Valley West](#));
- Questioning the impacts of substantial new resort development as it relates to water supply, drought, and [sustainability](#);
- [Bi-monthly FOWS Newsletters](#) to keep members informed of relevant projects and plans; and
- Improvements to our website, a new [Facebook page](#), and the addition of PayPal to allow for [easier online payments](#) of membership dues and donations.



[VIEW LARGER IMAGE](#)

As we start the New Year, we would like to acknowledge and thank our volunteers, Board members, supporters, and all others who work hard to help protect the unique environment of our beloved West Shore, the character of our rural communities, and the beauty of Lake Tahoe. However, we also want to highlight the many community-based efforts that began in 2014, from North Tahoe citizens working to inform their neighbors of significant proposed developments, to Meyers residents trying to ensure their community is part of their plan update process. **These are the grassroots efforts that garner the attention of our planning agencies and Board of Supervisors.**

We are proud to be among the many dedicated community and conservation organizations working hard to protect Lake Tahoe, and look forward to continuing our partnerships to help prepare for challenges and efforts we will face in 2015. We encourage you to read more below to learn about key plans and projects we will be focusing our efforts on in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Susan Gearhart,
President, Friends of the West Shore (FOWS)

Regional and Local Planning Updates

Martis Valley West Parcel Area Plan - Placer County:

Throughout 2014, we have kept you informed regarding the new proposed Martis Valley West Parcel Area Plan (MVWP AP). The proposed project (which relies on the adoption of an Area Plan under TRPA's new Regional Plan Update) aims to build 112 luxury homes as part of a gated community on a forested, undeveloped ridgeline in North Lake Tahoe. Not only will there be detrimental impacts to Tahoe's forested environment, and the scenic quality of the entire North Shore, but such a project would also set a precedent that could allow more ridgeline developments around Tahoe in the future. Community members are keeping the public updated through their website: www.savetahoe forests.com. In addition, on October 16th, FOWS participated in the North Lake Tahoe communities' efforts to raise awareness through holding a public meeting in Kings Beach. An estimated 100 people attended, and not one person expressed support for the project.

However, concerns about the development of this ridgeline aren't reserved to just Lake Tahoe communities; in fact, members of the public in Truckee are concerned about such development as well. As a result, [another public meeting was held in Truckee on December 9th to discuss the project](#) with an estimated 70 people in attendance. In addition, residents in Truckee and the larger North Tahoe area are concerned about the impacts of [other multiple developments in the works](#). **It has been exciting and encouraging to see the efforts of these community members result in broader community engagement and participation!**



*** Please Sign these TWO Petitions! ***

Concerned North Shore and Truckee citizens have been circulating two petitions:

Remove Tahoe Basin portion of Martis Valley West project

([view/sign petition](#))

Establish enforceable ridgeline protections in the Lake Tahoe area ([view/sign petition](#))

We encourage you to sign both of these petitions to show your support for these requests. FOWS also recently submitted [a request to TRPA to include ridgeline protections in its Code](#).

Although the project documents' release date has been delayed, according to the last update, the draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed MVW Area Plan will be released in January for public review. We will keep you updated on this process.

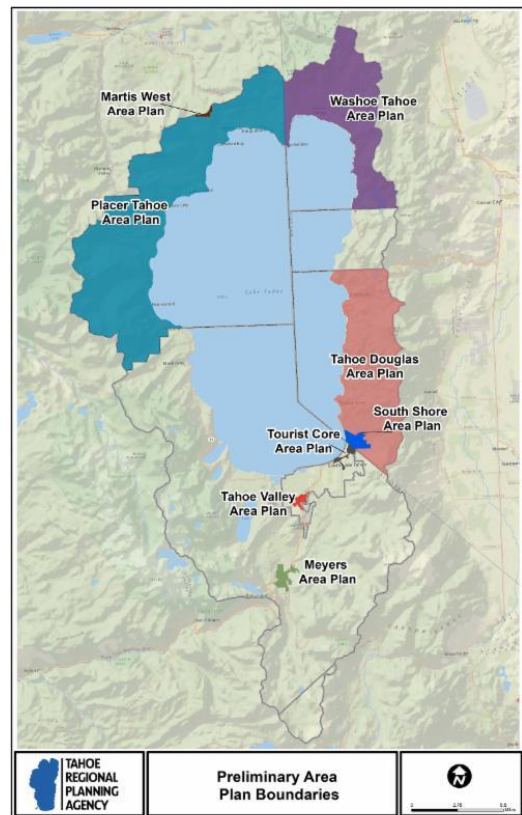
Placer County – Tahoe Basin Area Plan:

As reported in our last Newsletter, Placer County is reorganizing the draft Area Plan (which will cover all areas in the Placer County portion of Lake Tahoe) to match TRPA's terminology. As the fall release of the draft Area Plan did not happen, we anticipate this document to be released to the public early in 2015. A 60 day public comment period will be provided for public review and comment. Placer County and TRPA will also release a 2nd Notice of Preparation after draft Area Plan language has been available for public review.

El Dorado County – Meyers Area Plan:

The efforts of [concerned citizens](#) have delayed the Meyers Area Plan update process. The agency update of the plan is anticipated to pick up again in January after the new members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors are sworn in.

It is uncertain when El Dorado County plans to develop an Area Plan for the remaining portions of the County, which would include portions of Tahoma, McKinney-Rubicon, and Meeks Bay. However, El Dorado County has previously stated it does not intend to start a new Area Plan process until the Meyers Area Plan is complete.



[VIEW LARGER IMAGE](#)

FOWS will continue to follow these Area Plans and update you as new information becomes available.

Update: Lawsuit against TRPA's 2012 Regional Plan Update:

On September 30, on behalf of FOWS and the Sierra Club, Earthjustice filed the [Opening Brief for our Appeal](#) to the federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. [TRPA's reply](#) was received November 28th. Earthjustice filed [our final reply](#) on December 23rd. The next action will involve a public hearing of the case. We will keep you updated as the process proceeds.

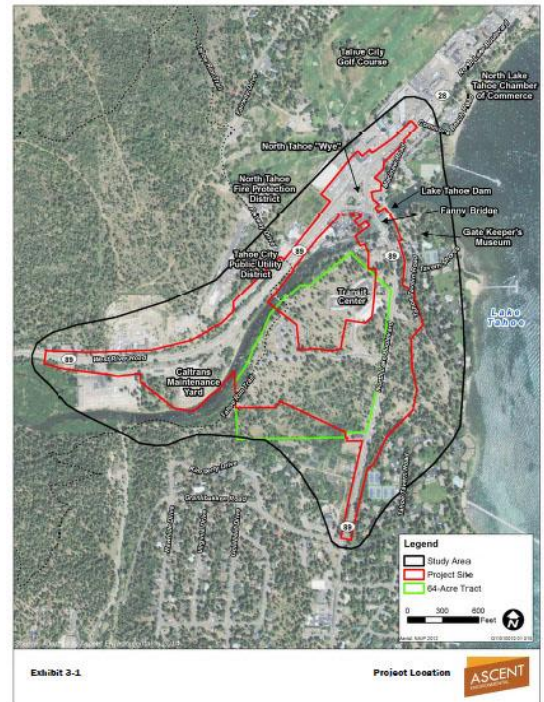
Local Project Updates

Fanny Bridge/S.R. 89 Realignment Project:

On December 19th, the draft Environmental Impact Report/Study (DEIR/S) for the proposed Realignment of State Route 89 (in the area known as "Fanny Bridge") was released. Public comments will be accepted through Feb. 17.

According to the notice, the proposed project "aims to improve traffic congestion at the intersection of highways 28 and 89 in Tahoe City and address the long-term structural integrity of Fanny Bridge over the Truckee River. Improvements are designed to reduce traffic congestion, accommodate future traffic increases, enhance motorized and non-motorized mobility, increase access across the Truckee River, address pedestrian and traffic safety concerns, and encourage revitalization of the Tahoe City community."

The environmental documents examine seven project alternatives and are available [online](#).



Fanny Bridge/S.R. 89 Realignment Project Map



Examples of Alternatives Studied (Alt. 1)

Public hearings are scheduled for:

Jan. 14, 9:30am, TRPA Advisory Planning Commission, 128 Market St., Stateline.

Jan. 23, 9:30am, Tahoe Transportation District board of directors, Granlibakken Resort, Tahoe City.

Jan. 28, 9:30am, TRPA Governing Board, the Chateau, Incline Village.

FOWS will be submitting comments on the document, as we are concerned about the potential for several impacts, including possible increases in traffic on the West Shore. Several West Shore community members have also expressed concerns about the project. We encourage you to attend the meetings and/or submit comments.

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

Please write to Jennifer Quashnick, FOWS Conservation Consultant, at: jqtahoe@sbcglobal.net, or Susan Gearhart, FOWS President, at: susan@friendswestshore.org.