

# TRUCKEE DONNER LAND TRUST

*The Truckee Donner Land Trust preserves and protects scenic, historic, and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the Truckee Donner region.*



Summer Newsletter 2015  
Volume 46

*Wow! Announcing our latest very important and cool acquisition; page 4*

*Updates on:  
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*A Thank You to our Donors; page 12*

*Photo by Sam Okamoto Photography.*



# FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

*Dear Friends,*

Where were you in 1990? The Truckee Donner Land Trust was in its infancy – a gleam in the eyes of visionaries meeting around kitchen tables, aiming to protect precious land in the Sierra Nevada. Now the organization is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

What do you remember about 1990? The Cold War was coming to an end and Mikail Gorbachev won the Nobel Peace Prize. East and West Germany reunited as the Berlin Wall went the way of big hair and shoulder-padded pants suits. South Africa freed Nelson Mandela after 27½ years of imprisonment. Driving Miss Daisy won the Academy Award for best picture, and Bette Midler's *Wind Beneath My Wings* got the Grammys' nod for Record of the Year. The Hubble Telescope launched that April. Median household income averaged \$29,943 in today's dollars; unemployment was 5.6%; a postage stamp cost 25 cents; and a gallon of gas would set you back \$1.16.

Times change. Strain on our precious natural resources has grown. Public funding for conservation and recreation has come under pressure. Development has threatened to displace historic and scenic properties. And the Land Trust, in concert with its outstanding collaborators and supporters, has risen to meet these challenges time and time again, from Webber Lake to Royal Gorge, and Perazzo Meadows to Martis Valley.

It's truly remarkable that the seeds planted 25 years ago by a few farsighted leaders have grown to become a prominent force for conservation and responsible stewardship in the Sierra. The Land Trust has protected more than 33,000 acres, ensuring continued recreational access and preserving land for future generations. While we remain in acquisition mode with several exciting opportunities on our plate, we also devote a great deal of time, energy, creativity, and financial resources to stewardship.

One of the most important elements of our stewardship is meadow restoration, especially in this drought environment. Growing awareness of the role of meadows in a healthy water supply appears in the news media on a regular basis these days. An NPR story this month highlighting a meadow restoration project in the southern Sierra said meadow repair and forest thinning are a win-win. "It's good for drought and fire management,"

reporter Ezra David Romero said. Just one year after restoration work removed thickets of small conifers from a sub-alpine meadow, the limited snow that did fall was able to soak in and allow the meadow to act as a sponge, as it had in the past.

An article in the *Sacramento Bee* this March pointed out that the Sierra delivers about 60% of the water Californians use in their homes, businesses, and farms. "More winter precipitation is falling on the Sierra as rain rather than snow," *Bee* reporter Matt Weiser wrote, "which changes the duration and intensity of runoff. As a result, healthy meadows have become a critical means of capturing and storing runoff later into the year. Meadows are the sponges that soak up and slowly release each winter's precipitation." Many Sierra meadows have lost some of that absorbing power due to legacy uses such as grazing, railroads, power lines, forestry, dams, and roads.

The Land Trust – collaborating with scientists, researchers, and dedicated partners like the Truckee River Watershed Council, U.S. Forest Service, and South Yuba River Citizens League – is working to restore meadows in the region's important watersheds. This crucial work is shaping up to become one of our organization's notable legacies. It will improve available water quality and quantity while enhancing habitat for a wide diversity of plant and animal species.

Last month I visited with students and faculty of Loyalton Elementary School to launch an outdoor learning initiative. To the school kids, 1990 seems like ancient history. We talked about sustainability and the concept of conservation "in perpetuity." I wonder whether they used the term around the dinner table that night. In any case, I'm delighted to be at the helm of the Truckee Donner Land Trust as it celebrates 25 years of success, and thrilled to be making a difference "in perpetuity." That's forever.

*Most sincerely yours,*



*Anne Chadwick  
Board President*



*Anne Chadwick, Board President. Photo by Bob Cunningham.*



# DONNER LAKE RIM TRAIL UPDATE

When completed, the Donner Lake Rim Trail (Rim Trail) will form a loop that traverses the ridges and valleys surrounding Donner Lake. There is more to trail construction than constructing a trail. In addition to all of the planning and permitting prior to construction, the Land Trust acquired numerous parcels: Schallenberger Ridge, Donner Summit Canyon, Johnson and Billy Mack Canyons – all needed to be acquired first to allow for future trail construction. A total of 11 separate transactions were completed to acquire portions of the basin-land for open space, habitat, water quality, and of course, the trail. After years of difficult behind-the-scenes work, the Land Trust will again be adding length to the Rim Trail.

The Land Trust has some exciting updates to report on the progress of the Rim Trail. An official route will be identified through Donner Memorial State Park this summer, and staff should secure access permission across Union Pacific Railroad property to connect the south and north halves of the Donner Basin. This route, including the railroad crossings, will be added to the California State Parks Road(s) and Trails Master Plan and will then be eligible for permitting and construction.

As usual, Land Trust staff and volunteers will be out this summer to remove fallen trees crossing the trail and to conduct maintenance and improvement of existing drainage features along the trail.

*See page 27 for Trailbuilding Dates.*



*Donner Party Mountain Runners celebrate a gratifying day maintaining the Donner Lake Rim Trail.*

## The Spirit of Howdy

The Land Trust promotes "The Spirit of Howdy" for users on all of its protected open space.

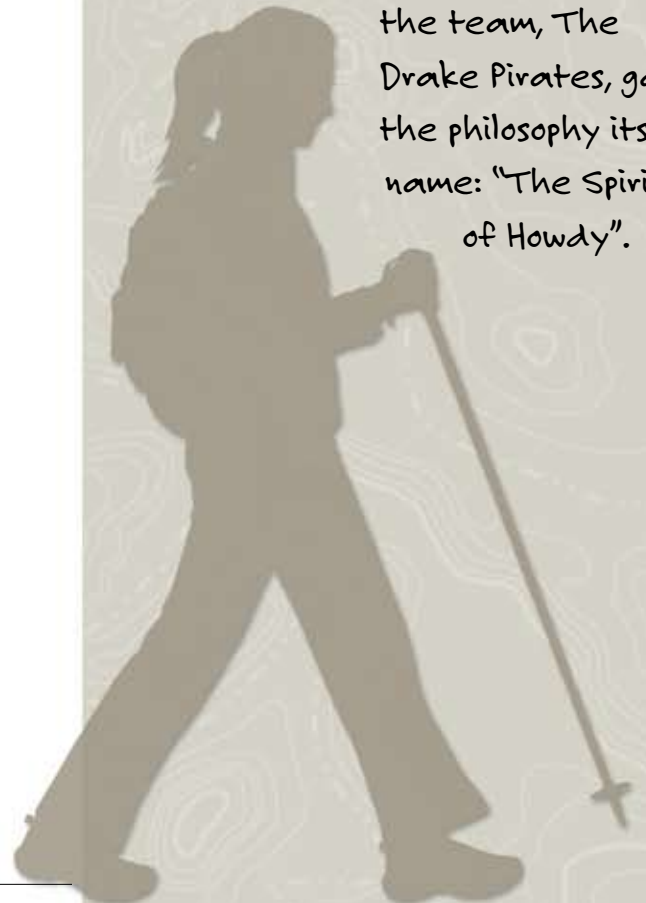
**About The Spirit of Howdy:**

In the 1990's, National Interscholastic Cycling Association founder Matt Fritzinger realized that students on the Berkeley High Mountain Bike Team didn't always slow down to pass hikers. Matt devised a simple rule: "Slow down enough so you can say hello, AND they can say hello back. Add to their day with kindness, don't take away from it."

The idea caught on and later became a league rule in Northern

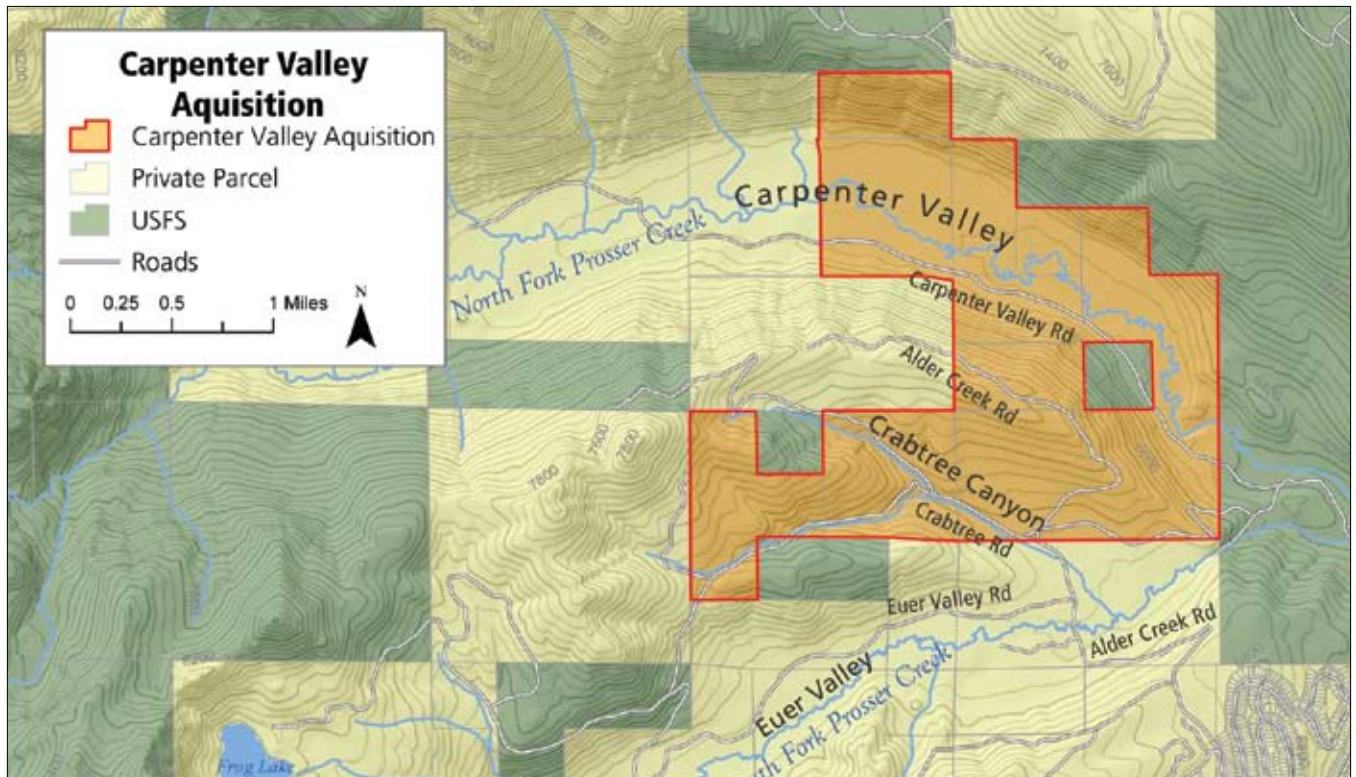
California. Members from

the team, The Drake Pirates, gave the philosophy its name: "The Spirit of Howdy".





# PRESERVING



*The acquisition includes a good part of Carpenter Valley and Crabtree Canyon. Tahoe Donner is immediately south.*

The Land Trust is announcing it is under contract to purchase 1,320 acres north of Truckee that include much of Carpenter Valley. This new acquisition follows a recent string of successful acquisitions that includes Waddle Ranch Preserve, Perazzo Meadows, Donner Summit Canyon, Webber Lake and Royal Gorge, to name a few.

“Like many of our acquisitions, we never imagined we’d have a shot at Carpenter Valley,” says Board President, Anne Chadwick. “This is certainly one of our most important and most exciting acquisitions. The natural resources and condition of the property are nearly unheard of in the northern Sierra.”

Also part of the acquisition are 640 acres of uplands on the ridge separating Euer Valley and Carpenter Valley, including Crabtree Canyon.

The three members of the LLC that have owned and stewarded the property for decades decided that the best outcome would be to conserve the property in perpetuity by selling it to the Land Trust. The Land Trust worked with the party’s respective attorneys on a total of nine complex agreements to achieve a resolution that was acceptable to all, ultimately hammering out a deal.

Working with the Northern Sierra Partnership and The Nature Conservancy, the Land Trust now has 24 months to raise the \$8 million needed to protect the property in perpetuity.



*Looking west towards Basin Peak.*

# CARPENTER VALLEY

“Most of our Sierra meadows are seriously degraded due to grazing, dams, roads, and development,” says John Svahn, the Land Trust’s Stewardship Director. “Carpenter Valley hasn’t been grazed in 40 years, and the sellers have taken extraordinary care of the property.”

Now that the property is under contract, the \$8 million fundraising campaign is underway.

“We’ll be working with the Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy to organize a community campaign to conserve this outstanding property. We’re also counting on strong support from our state and federal partners,” says Lucy Blake, President of the Northern Sierra Partnership. “For anyone who loves our corner of the Sierra, this is an opportunity for a true conservation victory.”

The north fork waters of Prosser Creek that run through the meadow are ideal for reintroduction of native Lahontan cutthroat trout. The property could also be the site of a future backcountry ski hut. Other amenities are likely to include bird watching, hiking, and picnicking.



An aerial view of Carpenter Valley. The sinuous course of the creek is telling of a healthy meadow.

The property is not open to the public until the Land Trust and its partners complete the acquisition in 2017. Please respect private property rights.

For anyone who loves our corner of the Sierra, this is an opportunity for a true conservation victory.

– Lucy Blake, President of the Northern Sierra Partnership

We are grateful to the following for their donations of land in-fee and in granting a conservation easement.

DMB/Highlands Group, LLC

JoDe Keilhofer

Gaylia Newcomb

Northstar California

John Renwick

Karen Semon



# ADDING COPPINS MEADOW TO THE LACEY MEADOWS AND WEBBER LAKE ACQUISITION



*Coppins Meadow is part of the larger Perazzo Meadows complex.*

Thanks to a \$590,000 Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program grant from the California Department of Natural Resources, final funding is in hand to close on the 155-acre Coppins Meadow addition to Webber Lake. The grant money was an augmentation of earlier grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Sierra Meadows Program and Vail Resorts EpicPromise.

The grant could not have come at a better time. Webber Lake will open to the public in 2017. With a new trailhead and trails open to the public for the first time in a century, the popularity of the area has grown.

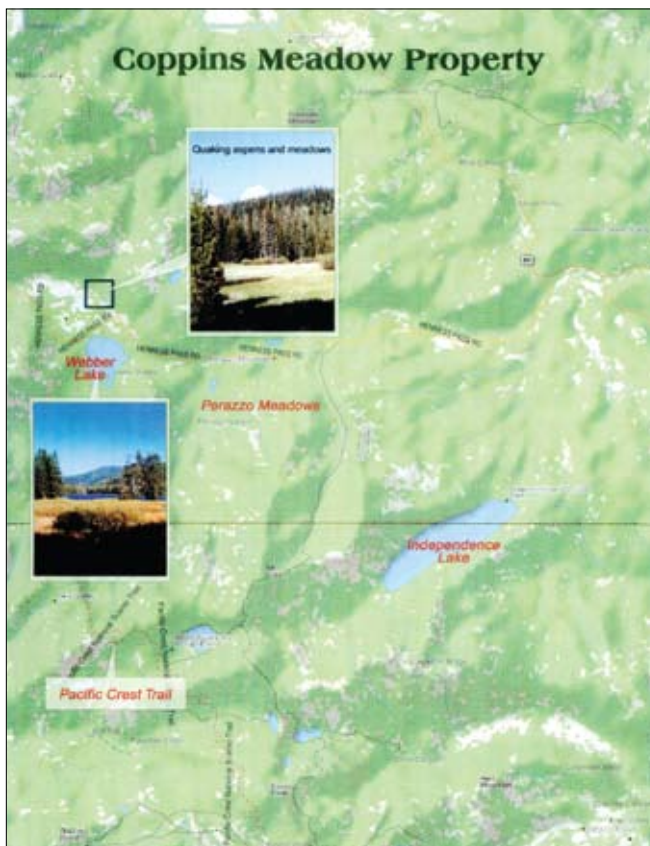
Ron Duhamel, the seller’s representative for Coppins Meadow told the Land Trust, “I have had three other offers – all cash.”

The property is mostly sub-alpine meadow. However, current County zoning would allow for residential or recreational development at the entrance to Webber Lake, including a trailer park, contemplated by one potential buyer.

Coppins Meadow is one of the last remaining developable parcels within the Little Truckee River Watershed – the largest sub-basin in the Truckee River drainage. In addition, the Little Truckee River Watershed contains the largest complex of montane and sub-alpine meadows in the Truckee basin. The Land Trust and other conservation groups are in the process of protecting more than 17,000 acres in the Little Truckee River Watershed.

As part of the greater conservation effort, successes in the Upper Little Truckee basin include Webber Lake and Lacey Meadows, Webber Falls, which lies immediately downstream from Webber Lake, Perazzo Meadows, Independence Lake Preserve, Cold Stream Meadow, and the Sierra Crest Working Forest Conservation Easement. All of these individual properties have significant conservation values and, when assembled together, create a truly unique network of conserved lands that make up a significant portion of the Sierra Nevada “Checkerboard.”

As a healthy montane meadow that includes a perennial creek, Coppins Meadow has significant resource values. It contains important habitat for several threatened species and has undeveloped water rights critical to both the health of the meadow and to downstream habitats.



Courtesy of The Trust for Public Land.



*A year-round creek with water rights is part of the acquisition. Photo by Fran Herbst.*

# MEET OUR PARTNER

## Dave Sutton, California Land Conservation Director, The Trust for Public Land



Long-time ally, Dave Sutton.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) conserves parks, gardens, and other natural places for people to enjoy, investing in livable communities for generations to come. For 42 years, TPL has been designing and developing parks in cities,

especially in underserved neighborhoods and protecting California's cherished natural areas across the country. In the northern Sierra, we launched the Sierra Checkerboard Initiative in 2002 and have been collaborating with the Land Trust ever since. Our shared successes include Schallenberger Ridge, Perazzo Meadows, Waddle Ranch Preserve, Webber Lake, and Royal Gorge.

### What makes the protection of the Sierra critical to the state of California?

As the source of much of our water and timber base, the Sierra is California's lifeblood and has become even more vital to a changing climate regime. The Sierra is also a source of inspiration for both Californians and people all over the world; the Range of Light, Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon, Lake Tahoe, and 19 of California's greatest rivers are all part of the Sierra.

### What do you view as TPL's most important work in the northern Sierra?

Our partnership with the Land Trust, our launching of the Sierra Checkerboard Initiative, our role in founding the Northern Sierra Partnership (NSP), and work with the five partners are part of our collaborative success in protecting almost all of the top land conservation priorities we identified a dozen years ago.

TPL was a strong partner in the Royal Gorge acquisition. How did your staff handle the difficulties and complexities of this acquisition?

Royal Gorge was exceptional as an achievement in terms of the demands it put on the collective staff teams from the Land Trust, NSP, and TPL. We were successful through our collaborative commitment, our attention to detail, preparation that pre-dated the project by years, and frankly, our ability to deflect stress by keeping our eyes on the prize. Perry's leadership and extraordinary fundraising, the contributions and dedication of so many residents, other philanthropists, and our public agency partners all played a critical role in the acquisition.

### Why is TPL involved in the Northern Sierra Partnership?

Simply put, the sum is greater than the parts. We have been able to accomplish more and bring a lot more financial and other resources to the region by aligning our objectives and collaborating in our work.

### How does local land trusts like the Truckee Donner Land Trust help a national organization like TPL?

I can't imagine our work any other way. What we have accomplished together is awe-inspiring to me and so far beyond what we once might have believed possible. The Land Trust brings local knowledge, expertise and presence, as well as an exceptional staff and network of members and donors. With TPL's access and teams in D.C. and Sacramento, our legal, philanthropic and real estate expertise, financial capacity, the combined resources of the Land Trust and TPL have led to historic conservation across the Sierra Checkerboard and the greater Truckee Donner region.

Learn more about  
The Trust for Public Land  
by visiting [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).

Learn more about the  
Northern Sierra Partnership  
by visiting  
[www.northernsierrapartnership.org](http://www.northernsierrapartnership.org).



# Saving Donner Summit



*Black Wall is an iconic Donner Summit landmark off of Old Hwy 40.*

The Truckee Donner Land Trust and a national climbing advocacy organization, the Access Fund, have signed an agreement with a private landowner to purchase a significant climbing area on Donner Summit.

With stunning vistas and world-class climbing on finely textured granite, the 10-acre property features some of the most dramatic terrain in the Truckee-Tahoe region. The acquisition will protect the popular and historic Black Wall, Peanut Gallery, and Road Cut climbing areas, as well as the access trail to Space Wall.

“For years, residents and visitors to Truckee have enjoyed watching climbers ascend the formidable granite landmarks outside of Truckee’s town limits,” says the Land Trust’s Board President, Anne Chadwick. “What many don’t know is that this is a world-class climbing area.”

Many of the climbing routes were established more than 50 years ago and range from deep chimneys and low-angle slabs for beginners, to overhanging test pieces for experts, and splitter cracks and sport routes for all skill levels.

“Next to Yosemite, Donner Summit was home to many of the best rock climbers of the 70s and 80s,” says Gary Allan, a long-time climber and Truckee resident who is assisting the Land Trust with its fundraising efforts. “In fact, many world-class climbers still use Donner Summit as a training ground.”

The 10-acre property has been privately owned since the mid-1800s, but concerns about liability drove the current owner to put the property on the market. The Land Trust currently holds a Purchase and Sale Agreement to acquire the property by December. Access Fund holds a lease agreement to address liability concerns raised by the private landowners and to assist in stewardship.

An adjacent 65-acre parcel owned by the Land Trust will also provide access to Black Wall and nearby crags as part of the Town of Truckee’s trail network and as a scenic viewshed from the roadway. The parcel supports a year-round creek and will be part of a multi-use, non-motorized recreational trail from Donner Lake toward the climbing wall and continuing up to the summit area. The acquisition will attract more climbers and visitors to the area who will in turn spend within the local community.



*Artist, former US Ski Team member, local hardman and Land Trust groupie, Hansi Standteiner, pulling down on Black Wall. Photo by Josh Horniak.*



# Climbing Forever

“Access Fund is excited to work alongside the Land Trust and local climbing community to protect this iconic and important climbing resource,” says Brady Robinson, Access Fund’s Executive Director. “This is a unique opportunity to pair our resources for the benefit of future generations.”

With support from the Access Fund and local climbers, the Land Trust will steward and provide public access to the property, minimize environmental and visual impacts from climbers, build new trails and trailheads, provide signage, and protect nesting peregrine falcons in the area.

Both the Land Trust and the Access Fund will work with the local climbing community to create a volunteer climber coalition that will help implement a recreation and stewardship management plan for the greater Donner Summit area to ensure best practices.

The Land Trust has currently raised \$160,000 towards the total fundraising goal of \$280,000 and is now calling upon the community to donate towards the acquisition, stewardship, and additional trailhead improvements on the 10-acre property and adjacent Land Trust land by December 1, 2015.

Visit [www.savedonnerclimbing.org](http://www.savedonnerclimbing.org) to learn more and make a secure online donation.



The Access Fund’s conservation crew at Black Wall. The team travels throughout the United States building eco-friendly trails.



“Standing guard above Donner Lake lie some of the best and highest concentrations of traditional climbing routes in the country,” says Jim Zellers, a long-time Truckee resident, Land Trust member, and North Face Athlete. “It’s the reason climbers include it on their obligatory road trip stop list, the reason many move here, and the reason I will never leave.”

## More land protected in the Martis Valley!

### Protection of scenic vistas and recreational lands continues in the Martis Valley.

The Land Trust is excited to announce three new acquisitions:

A local family, the Keilhofers, generously donated acreage to the Land Trust that will allow further completion of the Martis Valley Trail, a paved trail linking Truckee to Northstar California and eventually Kings Beach. The Keilhofer property sits in the middle of the valley, just to the east of Schaffer Mill Road and is part of the scenic viewshed.

In addition, Northstar California donated a conservation easement on 236 acres, contiguous with Elizabethtown Meadows, on the east side of State Route 267. This beautiful property contains a reach of Middle Martis Creek, several meadows, and lovely mixed-conifer forests.

Last but not least, nearly 220 acres at the entrance to Martis Valley, Hopkins Ranch, are now in Land Trust ownership. These acres protect the viewshed when entering the Valley from the west. Along with the Keilhofer property, Hopkins Ranch also contains a portion of the Martis Valley Trail.

# PROTECTING A DONNER SUMMIT LANDMARK

The Truckee Donner Land Trust and its longtime partner, The Trust for Public Land, are poised to close this summer on 455-acres at the entrance to Castle Valley on Donner Summit. At close, the property will be conveyed to the United States Forest Service (USFS).

An impromptu trailhead on the property is heavily congested on weekends, providing access to a multitude of very popular trails including the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), Hole in the Ground, the Donner Lake Rim Trail, and Castle Peak.

Working with the USFS, the Land Trust plans to build a new trailhead and trail connecting directly to PCT. "This is arguably the most heavily used trailhead in the region," noted John Svahn, the Land Trust's Stewardship Director.

The property's current commercial zoning could have eliminated this treasured recreational amenity. Rumors of a hotel, golf course, and tourist-based retail services existed for decades.

"The property has been on our 'must-have' list for years," says David Sutton, Northern California Director



*The acquisition is off I-80 across from Boreal Ski Resort. This is a critical trailhead to the backcountry at Truckee's doorstep.*

## Support Conservation with a Donation of Stock

Donating stock or other securities to the Land Trust is a tax-efficient way to make a meaningful contribution to the Land Trust. These gifts may also help you to reduce your income and capital gains taxes, allowing you to make a larger gift at a lower cost. For these reasons, a gift of appreciated securities may be one of the best ways for you to support the Land Trust. Please consult your tax advisor for details and contact Kellie at [kellie@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kellie@tdlandtrust.org), 530-582-4711 for assistance.

for The Trust for Public Land. The property is the number one acquisition for the Pacific Crest Trail Association, an organization solely committed towards protecting and enhancing this national landmark running from Mexico to Canada.

The purchase price is \$2,040,000, significantly lower than the sellers' original listing of \$7,500,000.

Funding is through the Federal Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The LWCF was created through royalties oil companies pay for off-shore drilling. In recent years, the funds have been reallocated to non-conservation federal pots.

"Gutting LWCF is a real shame for our outdoor-based local economy and legacy of the Checkerboard we've inherited," says Anne Chadwick, the Land Trust's Board President.

Characterized by its harsh winters and very short growing seasons at sub-alpine elevations, deep snow covers the property often between November and July. However, after the snow melts Castle Valley's wildflowers are spectacular. A portion of the property is wet meadow and riparian habitat where a length of Castle Creek traverses it. Both the wet and dry areas abound with wildflowers in the spring, which at this elevation is usually late July through September.

The property's mixed-conifer forests consist primarily of red fir, white fir, western white pine, and mountain hemlock, with lodgepole pine in the bottomlands. Deer browse the meadow in the summer (likely arriving from the north, but also from Billy Mack Canyon), and the many snags are home to raptors.



# A SHOUT OUT TO OUR FOUNDATION FRIENDS

The Land Trust simply could not accomplish its many acquisition, stewardship, trail, and restoration project goals without the generous grant support we receive. Our heartfelt thanks to the following organizations that have recently supported the Land Trust's work:

## Access Fund

The Land Trust was awarded a \$6,000 grant to assist with the Campaign to Save Donner Climbing – a collaborative effort to acquire and steward the Black Wall property on Donner Summit. The 10-acre property includes the popular and historic Black Wall, Peanut Gallery, the Road Cut crag and sport crags, as well as the access trail to Space Wall.

## Mellam Family Foundation

The Land Trust received a \$10,000 grant for the repair of Summit Canyon Bridge, which spans Summit Creek – a major tributary to Donner Lake. The bridge is also part of a popular trail in Donner Summit Canyon enjoyed by literally scores of families during every snow-free weekend.

## REI

The Land Trust received a \$20,000 grant to support the design of the Royal Gorge Rim Trail, directional signage for the trail, and maintenance upgrades to make existing portions of the trail more sustainable. Donner Summit is often regarded as a large void in the area trail network, yet trails in the Donner Summit/Truckee region are often listed as the number one draw to outdoor enthusiasts. We believe this trail will be a regional hit and will be well used.



*The new bridge over Donner Summit Canyon Creek with a nice bench to sit and listen to the creek. Private donations from the Mellam Family Foundation, Bill & Christney McGlashan, Kevin & Sheri Marshall, Lance & Emily Conn and others made the new bridge and trails possible.*

## Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation/ Nature Fund Grant

The Land Trust received a \$22,500 grant to support Phase I of the Truckee Downtown River Revitalization Campaign. The partnership will create public access, support stream restoration, and environmental enhancement activities along the river in areas that do not conflict with existing development. The Truckee River runs through the heart of Truckee and has long been considered the Town's natural landmark. The river's industrial legacy, limited public access for recreation, and unmet restoration needs have resulted in the Environmental Protection Agency listing the river as impaired.

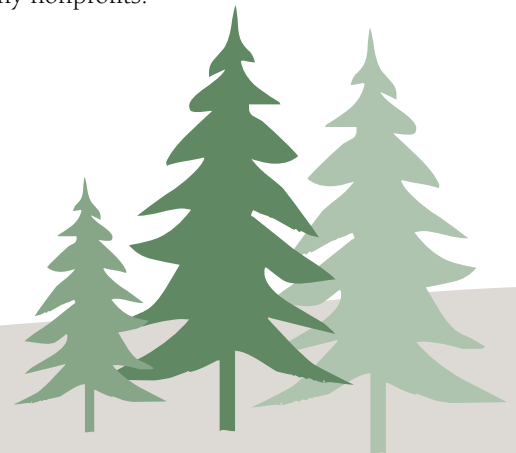
Also, thank you to TTCF for creating the very successful Give Back Tahoe Campaign and for their expert facilitation of charitable donations in our community.

## Vail Resorts Epic Promise

The Land Trust received a \$7,000 grant in support of the acquisition of Coppins Meadows, a 153-acre meadow located at the headwaters of the Little Truckee River. Coppins Meadow has significant resource values as a well-functioning montane meadow complete with a creek that flows year round.

In addition, on March 27th, the Land Trust staff, Board, and friends proudly participated in a ski challenge hosted by Northstar California. The Land Trust received a \$1,000 in-kind gift as a participant of the Northstar Ski Challenge. The Land Trust extends its appreciation to Vail Resorts EpicPromise for inviting us and for a great ski day at Northstar.

Vail Resorts EpicPromise program continues to provide needed funds to assist the Land Trust with important land acquisitions, and we are so grateful for their ongoing support of our work. The Land Trust is deeply grateful to Vail Resorts EpicPromise for its continued service within our community and for providing funds critical to the work of the Land Trust and the regions many nonprofits.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The Land Trust and its partners gratefully acknowledge the many individuals, businesses, and foundations that made gifts to the Land Trust from January 1, 2015 to February 28, 2015. These donors provide fundamental and annual support for the Land Trust's mission.

## **\$1,000,000 or More**

California Wildlife Conservation Board  
Emigrant Trails Greenway Trust

## **\$250,000 - \$999,999**

California Natural Resources Agency/The California River Parkways Program  
Caltrans/The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program  
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Northern Sierra Partnership

## **\$50,000 - \$249,999**

California State Parks  
The Trust for Public Land

## **\$25,000 - \$49,999**

Anonymous  
Crabb-Grasseschi Family Foundation  
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Isaac & Renee Goff - Schwab Charitable



Spring wildflowers. Photo by Susan Johnson.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS January 1, 2014 - February 28, 2015

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## **\$1,000 - \$2,499**

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The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges the many individuals, businesses, and foundations that made gifts to the Land Trust in honor or in memory of a loved one from January 1, 2014 to February 28, 2015. These gifts are a great way to pay tribute to a person's love of the Truckee Donner region.

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Leopard lilies. Photo by Susan Johnson.

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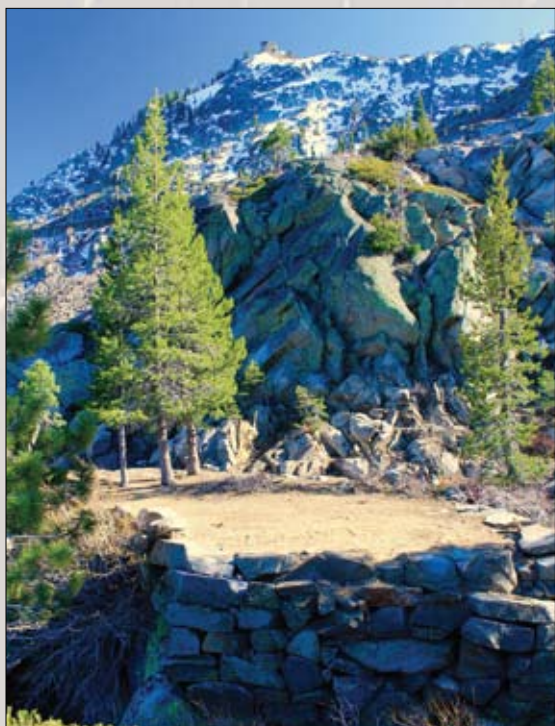


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Remnants of the old highway bridge at Donner Summit Canyon. Photo by Susan Johnson.

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**Business Partners contribute a cash donation each year, providing the Land Trust with the reliable annual funding we need to pursue large-scale projects.**

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# THE LAND TRUST AND THE TRUCKEE TAHOE COMMUNITY SAY FAREWELL TO A DEAR FRIEND, W. DAVID BROWN

Truckee Donner Land Trust Board member, W. David Brown, unexpectedly passed away last May. David served on the Land Trust Board for many years, chairing both the Lands Committee, overseeing acquisitions, and the Board's Hike Ambassador Committee.

"David was a friend, a mentor and an outstanding conservationist. He was thoughtful, kind, generous, and you could not ask for a better partner on the trail," says Perry Norris, the Land Trust's Executive Director.

David possessed a contagious enthusiasm for the outdoors and all things wild. David's spirit is remembered in a number of acquisitions that he was a key partner in bringing to fruition: Royal Gorge, Webber Lake, Waddle Ranch Preserve, Perazzo Meadows, and Donner Summit Canyon to name a few.

The Land Trust thoughts are with his wife Linda, and their family. David Brown will be sorely missed.



David Brown in his favorite environment, the outdoors. We'll miss you David. Photo by Janet Zipser Zipkin.

## Leave a Legacy of Open Space for Future Generations

The land under our feet ... hiking Schallenberger Ridge, skiing Coldstream Canyon, or enjoying the stunning views of the surrounding peaks from the Donner Lake Rim Trail.

When you include the Land Trust in your will or estate plans you leave a legacy to future generations, ensuring they will be able to enjoy the lands we cherish today.

A planned gift -- depending on your situation -- may reduce your income taxes, reduce or eliminate capital gains taxes, reduce your gift or estate tax, provide income to you and your loved ones, and help support the Land Trust's efforts to protect our mountain home.

Leaving a bequest is simple and gives you the opportunity to make a significant difference. To make a bequest, consult with your tax or legal advisor, or contact Kellie Wright at 530-582-4711 or [kellie@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kellie@tdlandtrust.org).

If you have thought about leaving the Land Trust a legacy gift, please let us know so we can acknowledge your generosity.

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# TRAILBUILDING UPDATE

It has been a productive winter for trail planning. The Land Trust had made significant progress on several trail projects.

Land Trust staff continues to work closely with California State Parks, the United States Forest Service, and the Tahoe Donner Association in planning for the next phases of the Donner Lake Rim Trail that will pass through Donner Memorial State Park to the south and the property known as the Bucknam Tract to the north. The Land Trust has also begun the permitting process for the Royal Gorge Rim Trail and hopes to complete that process by the end of this summer. Exciting work continues on the Elizabethtown Meadows trail in Martis Valley, and staff hopes to complete Phase 1, which will connect to Waddle Ranch Preserve by the end of summer.

## Stewardship Update

The Land Trust takes great pride in managing lands protected by acquisition and conservation easements. Most of the previous owners of acquired Land Trust properties took great care of their land. The Land Trust brings knowledge and field expertise to further improve the properties by working with partners to restore watercourses damaged by legacy uses, thinning forests to restore a more natural population of trees, and developing recreation opportunities that balance the protection of open space with the public's enjoyment of the property.

## Royal Gorge

The Land Trust continues to “chip away” at forest thinning at Royal Gorge. Ideally, the forest should contain around 80 trees per acre (up to 400 trees per acre now crowd the forest). Too many trees create a fire hazard, facilitating spread of disease and fungus, and encroachment into areas that were historically meadows. In addition to forestry management requirements, the roads and ski trails in Royal Gorge are in desperate need of new drainage conveyances. The Land Trust is working with Royal Gorge Ski Resort to fix the drainages and will provide the dual benefit of decreased erosion and puddling, allowing Royal Gorge to groom trails with less snow on the ground. Along with the drainage improvements, the Land Trust is adding new trails and signage to enhance public use. Permitting for the Walter and Esther Hewlett Royal Gorge Rim Trail will begin this summer. This trail will add nearly 15 miles of new hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use.

## Webber Lake

In 2017, the campground and lakeshore at Webber Lake will open to the public and will be here before we know it. To prepare the property for the next chapter, the Land Trust along with a campground design consultant from the United States Forest Service, are busy redesigning the campground and day use areas. The new campground will provide tent and RV sites, a small boat-in/walk-in camping area, and will feature a new picnic area and bathrooms. Planning will take place during 2015 and 2016 with little visible change on the ground. Completion of planning and permits will ensure that changes can be made smoothly and efficiently. Land Trust staff is also working closely with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) on continued fish stocking. Currently, the lake is stocked with private funds from the Webber Lake Ranch campers. When the Lake opens to the public in 2017, the DFW will manage the fishery.

While Royal Gorge, Webber Lake, and the extensive trail systems require most of our time and attention, staff has ongoing stewardship obligations and projects on all 9,000-plus acres managed by the Land Trust. A few noteworthy projects include:

- Working with Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway on the new phase of an exciting trail that traverses the Truckee River Canyon Conservation Easement.
- Ensuring that Liberty Energy's power line modifications and new towers have minimal impact to Waddle Ranch Preserve and Elizabethtown Meadows.
- Working with the Truckee River Watershed Council and Truckee Tahoe Airport District on the restoration of Middle Martis Creek (Elizabethtown Meadows and Waddle Ranch Preserve) and Truckee Wetlands restoration (Wintercreek wetland). These two projects will re-water wetlands impacted by the construction of State Route 267.



Stewardship Coordinator, Kevin Starr's mobile trail maintenance “office” is ready for a day's work.

- Continued thinning of lodgepole pines that are encroaching into Perazzo Meadows.
- Monitoring timber harvests on the Sierra Pacific Industries conservation easements.
- Updating Land Trust signage to maximize enforceability of motor vehicle trespass.

For trailbuilding dates,  
see page 27.



# SAVE THE DATE - 2015 Events

## Lake Mary Cabin

### Benefit Dinner

July 19th, 5:30 – 9 p.m.

Book your reservations now for the Land Trust benefit dinner at Sugar Bowl's Lake Mary Cabin. This special dining experience will include delicious foods and great views, and a portion of the evening's proceeds will benefit the Land Trust. Tell reservations you are dining for the Truckee Donner Land Trust: 530-426-7002.



Scenic patio dining at Sugar Bowl's Lake Mary Cabin. Photo courtesy of Sugar Bowl.

## 7th Annual

### Sierra Forage Dinner

August 27th, 5:30 – 9 p.m.

Hosted by Mountain Area Preservation at Martis Camp in Truckee. For tickets: [www.MountainAreaPreservation.org](http://www.MountainAreaPreservation.org).



Great scenery, surprises, and music await hikers. Photo courtesy of Trails & Vistas.

## Trails & Vistas

### Art in Nature

September 12th,

Spooner Lake

September 19th,

Donner Summit

Trails & Vistas Art Hikes will be offered at two locations this year, collaborating with over 30 musicians to dazzle your senses. Both art hikes feature storytelling, visual and performance art, dance, and live music. Experience music in the trees with Celtic music and African harp, John Muir storytelling, and a trio from Pacific Mambo Orchestra. For tickets: [www.trailsandvistas.org](http://www.trailsandvistas.org).

## Trails & Vistas World Concert: A Peace Project of Truckee Tahoe

September 12th, Sand Harbor

Dig your toes in the sand and listen to Grammy Award Winning Pacific Mambo Orchestra – one of the best current Latin Big Band Orchestras in the world – against the stunning backdrop of Sand Harbor, Lake Tahoe. Opening the show are Taiko drummer Peter Joseph Burt, violinist Scarlet Rivera, Tahoe bagpiper Sean Cummings, double neck guitarist Ian Ethan, Angelika Healing Music, and jazz harp musician Motoshi Kosako. For tickets: [www.laketahoeshake-spere.com](http://www.laketahoeshake-spere.com).



# SAVE THE DATE - 2015 Events cont.

## Truckee Donner Land Trust 25th Anniversary Celebration & Coppins Meadow Dedication September 19th

We'll be celebrating 25 spectacular years of saving and stewarding open space at Coppins Meadow with Land Trust members, Board and staff, and important partners and agencies who have all been a part of our wonderful and successful journey. Expect a delicious catered event from Red Truck, music, beverages, and many a toast to 25 years of amazing successes. This event will also be a ribbon cutting dedication for the Coppins Meadow acquisition. Please RSVP to Kellie at [kellie@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kellie@tdlandtrust.org).



## 2nd Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival October 9th & 10th

Films focused on the environment will show at Community Art Center in Historic Downtown Truckee. More information: [www.mapf.org/wild-scenic-2015](http://www.mapf.org/wild-scenic-2015).



Actors from Truckee's Historical Haunted Tour entertain and educate with spooky, heart-stopping, and downright scary stories from Truckee's rugged past. Photo courtesy of Johnstone Studios.

## Truckee's Historical Haunted Tour\* October 15th & 16th

The Historic Haunted Tour is truly one of Truckee's most popular, outlandish, and fascinating events. A cast of old-time characters will guide you on designated stops for a spooky night you will never forget, offering a glimpse into Truckee's rowdy past and present day hauntings. For more information and tickets: [www.truckeehistorytour.org](http://www.truckeehistorytour.org).

\* This is a fundraiser for Trails & Vistas of which the Truckee Donner Land Trust is a partner. Christina Stoeber Young of Sunshine Tahoe produces this fundraiser, which benefits the Trails & Vistas programs of Art in Nature School Field Trips for third grade students of Truckee Tahoe.

## Truckee Donner Land Trust 25th Anniversary Celebration Bay Area/Portola Valley October 22nd

For those who cannot make our Truckee region celebration, we will be holding a special cocktail reception in the Bay Area. Stay tuned for more details, but you can RSVP to Kellie now at [kellie@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kellie@tdlandtrust.org).

## Trailbuilding Dates:

Trailbuilding is scheduled on various properties throughout the season. (Dates may change. Be sure to check [www.truckeetrails.org](http://www.truckeetrails.org)). Work time is typically 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

July 11th: Emigrant Trail  
August 1st: Hole in the Ground Trail  
Sept 12th: TBD

**For more details visit: [www.truckeetrails.org](http://www.truckeetrails.org), or email [kevin@tdlandtrust.org](mailto:kevin@tdlandtrust.org) if you have any questions.**

# THE LAND TRUST CELEBRATES 25 YEARS!



A view of Schallenberger Ridge from Glacier Way. Schallenberger Ridge was one of the Land Trust's first big acquisitions. Photo by Susan Johnson.

It's rewarding to reflect on how the Land Trust has grown in 25 years to become a key fixture in the Truckee Donner region. By protecting more than 33,000 acres in our region, we've provided recreational opportunities, preserved natural resources, and safeguarded historic treasures forever. We're pleased with our progress, and together we'll continue to make a difference in the next 25 years.

– Anne Chadwick, Board President

It all started in 1990, when the picturesque and historic Coldstream Valley next to Donner Lake was about to be lost to logging. A small group of passionate hikers joined together, raised \$150,000, and purchased 160 acres in the valley. From early Board members sitting around the kitchen table prioritizing which lands to protect with just a few hundred dollars in the fledgling organization's bank account, the Truckee Donner Land Trust has protected 33,000 acres to date!

Primary areas of focus for the Land Trust are: the expansion of Donner Memorial State Park, Truckee Open Space, the Truckee

River Corridor, the Sierra Nevada Checkerboard, the Martis Valley, Donner Summit, the Donner Lake Rim Trail, and ongoing land stewardship.

We couldn't have done it without 25 years of dedicated staff and Board, our members, partners, agencies, allies, and foundations that have supported us all the way. Thank you to all of you for a successful and wonderful 25 years saving open space in our precious corner of the Sierra!

Look for our big 25th Anniversary article to come out this summer.

We will be celebrating later this year with all of you! See pages 27 for details.





# 25 YEARS OF BOARD SERVICE MEMORIES

Recollections of a few past Board members.

## Buddy Hunt

(Buddy was a Board member in the early 90s. His area of expertise was the Donner Lake Rim Trail).

*“I remember we needed to build a bridge in the Gregory Creek drainage to continue the Rim Trail. We had very little money, so we ended up partnering with California State Parks as they had all the materials and expertise we needed. They could not justify purchasing a new snowmobile given their budget, so we traded. We bought them a new snowmobile and donated it to the State Parks. They supplied all the materials and expertise, and we built a great bridge!”*



Buddy Hunt (L), with Dick Fearon.

## Tamara Lieberman

*“I joined the board in 2000, a year of reassessment to position the Land Trust for the future. At that time, it was expressed that the Land Trust should only purchase land and then turn it over to other organizations to steward and*

*operate. I remember thinking, ‘Someday, we will eat those words.’ In fact, that is what happened. The Land Trust is doing a fabulous job in their role as stewards of Royal Gorge, Waddle Ranch Preserve, and Lacey Meadows to name a few.*

*I remember how proud and appreciative we were of Perry’s skills in putting together the Waddle Ranch purchase. It was the first of several purchases Perry organized and made happen.”*



Tamara Lieberman.

## Judy Mayorga

(Judy served on the Board in the mid 90s).

*“Working with the Elderhostelers on the Donner Lake Rim Trail was a unique experience. These were not young people, and many of them were coming from sea level to build trail at our high elevation. One memorable participant Roger, found a tennis ball-sized rock on the trail and decided to remove*

*it. By the end of the workday, he unearthed not the 3” rock but a 3’ boulder! We ended the day with the ‘rolling of Roger’s Rock’ off the trail.”*



We found this early Board Manual from 1994. You can see handwritten on it: “Updated for Matt.” Matt Rusanoff was a Board member who passed away much too young. Matt’s Trail at Waddle Ranch Preserve is dedicated to his memory.

## Buck for Open Space Partners

Donate a \$1 Today

Preserving open space in the greater Truckee Donner region is simply good business. The Land Trust would like to thank the following conservation-minded businesses and their customers and encourage you to give them your business.

The Lodge at Tahoe Donner  
Paco’s Truckee Bike and Ski  
Sierra Crest Dental, Robert Colpitts DDS



Janet receives a special certificate of appreciation. From left to right: Perry Norris, Executive Director; Bill Thauvette, former Board President; Janet Zipser Zipkin; and Anne Chadwick, current Board President.

# ACKNOWLEDGING A SPECIAL BOARD MEMBER

Last year, the Land Trust hosted a warm send off for Board member Janet Zipser Zipkin. Janet served several years on the Land Trust Board as well as on the Board Development and Stewardship Committees. She played a primary role in helping the Land Trust achieve Accreditation status from the Land Trust Alliance. As former Director of Marketing for Stanford University, Janet's experience was invaluable for many of the Land Trust's marketing programs. Janet is an expert in butterfly and plant identification. She led a number of guided hikes and provided many excellent photos to the Land Trust. A big thanks for your great service Janet! Though we miss her, Janet and her husband Charles Zipkin still live close by in Tahoe Donner.

## Thank You to our Partners

- Access Fund
- American Hiking Society
- Bear Yuba Land Trust
- Bicyclists of Nevada County
- Bretthauer Management Inc.
- California Council of Land Trusts
- California Department of Fish & Game
- California Department of Transportation
- California Natural Resources Agency
- California State Parks
- California Trails & Greenway Trust
- California Wildlife Conservation Board
- CalTrans/The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program
- Climbing Resource Advocates for Greater Sacramento
- Community Foundation of Western Nevada
- Donner Memorial State Park
- Donner Summit Area Association
- Donner Summit Historical Society
- Emigrant Trails Greenway Trust
- Feather River Land Trust
- Folsom-Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition
- The Gateway Mountain Center
- Gold Country Trails Council
- GoodDirtyFun.org
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Lahontan Community Foundation
- Land Trust Alliance
- Martis Camp
- The Martis Fund
- Meadow Vista Trails Association
- Mellam Family Foundation
- Moonshine Ink
- Mountainside Partners
- Morgan Family Foundation
- Mountain Area Preservation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- Nevada County
- North Fork American River Alliance
- North Fork Association
- North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce
- Northern Sierra Partnership
- Northstar California
- Pacific Crest Trail Association
- Pacific Forest Trust
- The Palisades
- Patagonia
- Placer County
- Placer Land Trust
- REI, Inc.
- Resources Law Group
- Resources Legacy Fund
- Royal Gorge Cross Country Ski Resort
- Sagehen Creek Field Station
- Save Donner Summit Climbing
- Save Van Norden Meadow
- Ann Taylor Schwing
- Serene Lakes/Donner Summit Conservation Association
- Serene Lakes Property Owners Association
- Sierra Business Council
- Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council
- Sierra Club
- Sierra College
- Sierra County
- Sierra County Historical Society
- Sierra Nevada Alliance
- Sierra Nevada Conservancy
- Sierra Sun
- Sierra Watch
- South Yuba River Citizens League
- Sugar Bowl Corporation
- Sugar Bowl Ski Resort
- Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association
- Tahoe Donner Association
- Tahoe Donner Hiking Club
- Tahoe Institute for Natural Science
- Tahoe Quarterly
- Tahoe Rim Trail Association
- Tahoe Trampers
- Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation
- Town of Truckee
- Trails & Vistas
- Trout Unlimited
- Truckee Chamber of Commerce
- Truckee-Donner Historical Society
- Truckee River Watershed Council
- Truckee Tahoe Airport District
- Truckee Trails Foundation
- The Trust for Public Land
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- United States Forest Service
- Vail Resorts EpicPromise



# PLAN YOUR VISIT TO A LAND TRUST PROPERTY FOR THE BEST EXPERIENCE

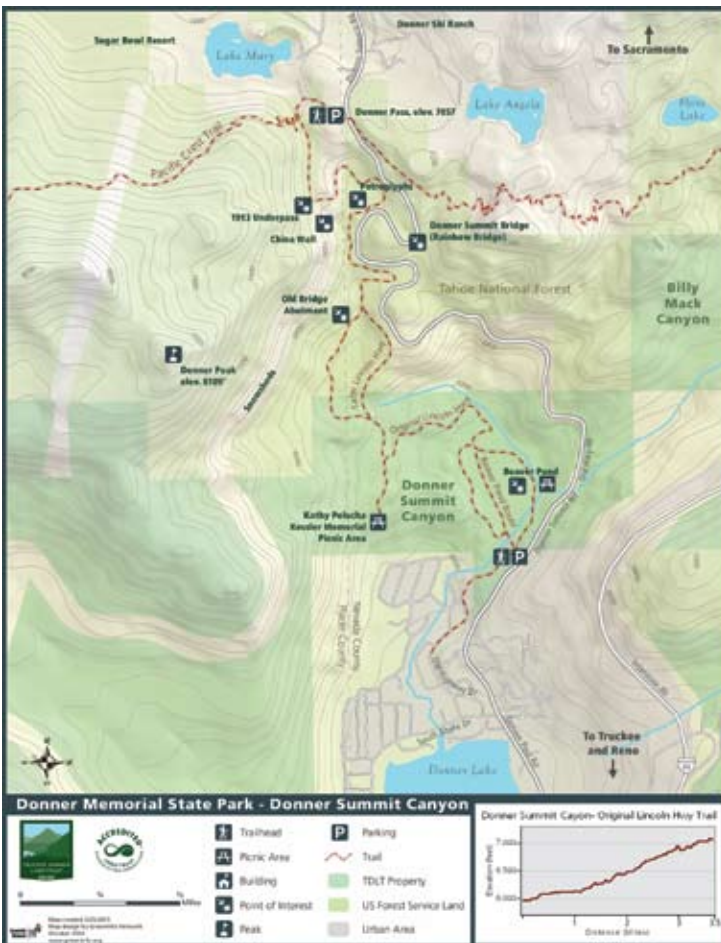
Thanks to our dedicated and hard working Board, our website recreation pages are filled with information to help you have the best experience you can while visiting a Land Trust property. Just go to [www.tdlandtrust.org](http://www.tdlandtrust.org) and click on **Plan Your Visit** on the main navigation bar.

Not only will you find our suggested outings, you will find information on Trails by Interest, such as:

- **Kid-friendly**
- **Birding**
- **Wildflowers**
- **Specialty Hikes**
- **Winter Wonderlands**
- **Mountain Biking**
- **Equestrian**
- **Dog Friendly**
- **Easy Access**

Each recreation page has:

- **Acquisition background**
- **What to do there**
- **How to get there**
- **Other Land Trust properties in the area**
- **A cool factor about the property**
- **Rules, regulations, and good to know**
- **Additional history**
- **Trail specifics**
- **Downloadable map**



All of our Plan Your Visit pages have a downloadable map like this one.

Thank You to our In-Kind Partners

- Alibi Ale Works
- The Backcountry
- Bretthauer Management, Inc.
- California State Parks
- Camel Gallery Downtown - Truckee/[www.TheCamelGallery.com](http://www.TheCamelGallery.com)
- Cedar House Sport Hotel
- Anne Chadwick Photography
- Clair Tappaan Lodge
- DMB/Highlands Group, LLC
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- Feather River Land Trust
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- Tahoe Institute for Natural Science
- Tahoe Mountain Resorts – Jeff Brown & Breck Overall
- Tahoe Mountain Sports
- Tahoe Quarterly
- Tahoe Sports Hub
- Tahoe Trips & Trails
- Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation
- Touchstone Climbing
- Town & Country Storage
- Town of Truckee
- Trailscape, Inc.
- Truckee Tahoe Airport District
- Truckee-Tahoe Mortuary
- Vail Resorts EpicPromise
- Cathy & Tom Van Berkem
- Webber Lake Resort
- Western Nevada Supply
- Jim Zellers
- Janet Zipser Zipkin Photography
- Dennis E. Zirbel, Architect

*The Truckee Donner Land Trust was founded in 1990 to preserve and protect scenic, historic, and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the greater Truckee Donner region.*

Tel. 530-582-4711  
Fax 530-582-5528  
info@tdlandtrust.org  
www.tdlandtrust.org

The Truckee Donner Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations to the Land Trust may be tax-deductible under the IRS Code.

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Atop Razorback Ridge at Royal Gorge. Photo by Laurie Sweeney.



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper using soy ink.

