



TRUCKEE RIVER CURRENTS

PUBLISHED BY THE TRUCKEE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

SUMMER 2011

SAVE THE DATE!
Truckee River Day
October 16, 2011



CATHY HOWARD

Join us for a day of river, meadow and wetland restoration. Pre-registration is required and opens September 1st and ends October 7th.

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NOTES & QUOTES

The good life of any river may depend on the perception of its music; and the preservation of some music to perceive.

~ Aldo Leopold

Win \$5,000 to \$10,000 in River Friendly Landscaping Upgrades for Your Home!

Announcing the Truckee River Friendly Landscaping Contest

The Truckee River needs your help! The Truckee River Watershed Council's River Friendly Landscaping Program is seeking to restore residential properties with significant erosion problems near rivers and streams in Truckee. The River-Friendly Landscaping program will award three single-family residences with \$5,000 rebates and one multi-family residential property with \$10,000 to reimburse homeowners for completed river-friendly landscaping.

The Truckee River Watershed Council and the Sierra Nevada Alliance launched the River Friendly Landscaping Program in 2010 to counteract the harmful runoff from residential homes. Funded by grants from the State Water Resources Control Board, the program aims to implement erosion-control and landscaping measures on residential properties that reduce pollution to the river and create sustainable landscapes.

“River-friendly features can include native plants and flowers, retaining wall structures, gravel and mulch among a multitude of other river-friendly landscape features.”

“A river-friendly landscape helps protect the Truckee River by preventing sediment, stormwater and pollutants from leaving a property and draining into sensitive lakes and streams,” says Andy Otto, River-Friendly Landscaping Program Director.

Winners will receive a custom landscape evaluation and site plan to help determine the needs of their property. Awards will reimburse materials and labor paid for by homeowners. River-friendly features can include native plants and flowers, retaining wall structures, gravel and mulch among a multitude of other river-friendly landscape features.

To be eligible applicants must own a home in the Truckee River watershed area and there should be significant erosion and/or storm water issues on the property. Applications are due September 15, 2011 winners will be announced October 20, 2011.

For more information and to obtain an application, visit www.truckeerriverwc.org/river-friendly-landscaping, contact Reyna: reyna@sierranevadaalliance.org (530) 542-4546 ext. 317 or head over the Truckee River Watershed Council's office 10418 Donner Pass Rd # B.



Before river-friendly landscaping, this yard had exposed soil, surface runoff, and erosion.



PHOTOS: LITAHOE RCD

In the same yard after river-friendly landscaping, exposed soil is protected by gravel "armoring," the surface runoff is directed to a bioretention basin so that the sediment will not reach the rivers and streams, and the erosion is stopped by a retaining wall.



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WEED WARRIORS: Early Detection, Rapid Response

Controlling Invasive Weeds in the Watershed

Our Weed Warriors will be hosting a Weed Walk on September X. The Weed Warriors are hoping to bring awareness to the public about invasive weeds in our area and the proper ways to dispose of them.

The weed walk, led by XXX of XXX, will show how to properly identify weeds and their native look-a-likes. The walk will be located XXX and will be a two hour walk with lunch provided.

Invasive weeds are aggressive plants that have been introduced into an area outside of their native range and are dangerous because they out-compete native and other desirable plants. As a result, they reduce land and recreational values, damage water quality, contribute to soil erosion, degrade plant and animal habitat and increase the risk of wild-land fire.

Early detection and rapid response is crucial when it comes to the invasive weeds found in the Truckee meadows.

“Many of these plants have very adaptable genes, which means that they appear to be spreading slowly at first,” said Susan Urie, Botanist.

“But once they adjust to the new environment they can spread rapidly.”

The weed warrior program’s goal is to educate the public on how to find, report and properly dispose of invasive weeds. There are two ways to report potential weeds. The first is at truckeeriverwc.org/weed-warriors, where there is a Report-a-Weed page. The second way is to report on the go. iPhone and Droid users can download the “What’s Invasive” app. When the reports are received, volunteers will be sent to the location to verify the weed and log it in the database. Once verified, the appropriate agency will be notified to have the infestation taken care of.

Volunteers are needed! If you would like to attend the Weed Walk please contact the Truckee River Watershed Council at truckeeriverwc.org, or call Andy Otto, Director of Land Use Compatibility at the Truckee River Watershed Council, at (530) 550-8760 ext. 3.

For more information on the Weed Warriors or to become a volunteer visit truckeeriverwc.org/weed-warriors.



SUSAN DONALDSON



JOE DITOMASO



ILLUSTRATION BY ANNALIESE MILLER

Scotch Thistle (top), also know as Scotch Broom, is a non-native, invasive weed that flowers from June to August.

Visit the identification page at truckeeriverwc.org to find the best ways to remove this weed.

Teasel (bottom) is a non-native, invasive weed that flowers from July to Fall.

Think you saw it? Want to look for it? Check out our iPhone and Droid apps on our website to report a weed as you go!

TRUCKEE REGIONAL AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION PROGRAM (TRAISPP)

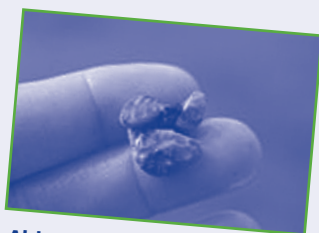
In 2010 the Truckee River Watershed Council partnered with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District in implementing aquatic invasive boat inspections in the Truckee Watershed. Continuing the partnership in 2011 the watershed council is particularly focused on developing permanent policies and programs to protect the watershed against invasives.

The Truckee watershed stakeholders saw the need to initiate the development of a regional approach to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) such as the zebra mussel and Eurasian watermilfoil. Stopping the spread of aquatic invasive species is being accomplished through a collaborative process.

A grant from the Truckee River Fund is providing funding for an environmental scientist, professionally trained watercraft inspectors, and decontamination supplies. As a result, voluntary inspections occur from May through October at Boca, Prosser, and Stampede Reservoirs, and at the Donner Lake public launch ramps.

Recent project accomplishments include: initiating a comprehensive education and outreach program, performing baseline monitoring for invasives in the reservoirs and Donner Lake, drafting a collaborative document, the Memorandum of Understanding, developing a draft Strategic Plan, and identifying long term funding strategies.

The Truckee River Fund granted the Truckee Regional Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program, through our sponsor, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, another year of funding for January through December of 2011. We will continue to develop and expand the invasive species prevention program through education and outreach, and by addressing the concerns of all stakeholders in the Truckee watershed.



Although small, Zebra mussels are a large problem for our areas lakes and reservoirs.



Zebra mussels have multiplied and taken over this large rock.

PHOTOS: TOOTH MERIDIAN

Sagehen Forestry Project

The Truckee River Watershed Council has been facilitating a series of meetings on forestry management in the Sagehen Basin.

The Sagehen Basin is a 9,000 acre watershed at the headwaters of Sagehen Creek, 10 miles north of Truckee. Most of the Sagehen Basin is an Experimental Forest and part of the Tahoe National Forest. In the center of the basin UC Berkeley has operated the Sagehen Creek Field Station since 1951. The early fishery and wildlife studies at the field station were begun by Starker Leopold. Since then data has been collected about the wildlife, fish, forests, weather, and water, making it a living laboratory for land management and conservation.

The forest condition is typical of much of the Sierra Nevada. As such, the basin provides rich opportunities for examining forest health resiliency.

From May 2010 through August 2011, the US Forest Service hosted a collaborative process with public, private, and agency stakeholders to plan for fuels reduction that also preserved and restored habitat for wildlife. Specific goals for the Sagehen Forestry Project include:

- Reduce hazardous fuel loadings;
- Maintain and enhance habitat for the marten and other wildlife;
- Create heterogeneous forest conditions;
- Enhance the ecological role of fire; and
- Restore declining aspen stands.

The stakeholders agreed that while it is preferred that prescribed and natural fire become two primary management tools over the long term, interim steps are needed so that fuels may be reduced to a more natural level. While addressing habitat, water quality, and restoration, methods such as mechanical thinning, hand thinning, surface fire and underburning were recommended.

The Tahoe National Forest will incorporate the recommendations of the stakeholders into their planning and permitting documents. The documents will be available to the public for review and comment. Work in the Sagehen Basin and Sagehen Experimental Forest may be started in 2013.

For more information about the Sagehen Forest Project, visit: <http://sagehenforest.blogspot.com/Funding> for the facilitation was provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the Placer County Resource Conservation District and the US Forest Service.



The effect of a combination of variable thinning and suppressed cut prescriptions: Before (left) and after (right)



thank you

Matching Grant

Join the Together for the Truckee Society today and your gift will be matched every year for the next five years!

At our 2011 River Breakfast, a group of donors announced a new matching gift for 2011. They will match any new pledges to our Together for the Truckee Society up to a total of \$30,000 a year for the next five years. To take advantage of these matching funds, you must sign up for a five-year pledge of \$1,000 or more a year for 5 years.

If this matching gift is fulfilled, over the next five years we will raise \$300,000 to support our work in the Truckee River watershed. This will allow us to undertake major work such as assessments and multi-year restoration in the Martis sub-watershed and the Donner Lake sub-basin, stormwater monitoring, erosion control retrofit installation, and prevention programs for aquatic and land-based invasive species.

	\$30,000	Matching Gift
+	\$30,000	Together for the Truckee Society Donations
x	5 years	
=	\$300,000	For the Truckee River Watershed

“The matching gift will create a burgeoning stream of income just when state and federal funding is drying up,” says John Eaton, a donor to the matching gift. “It could literally be a life saver for the Watershed Council.”

A group of 11 individuals, families, and businesses came together to create this pooled matching gift. Inspired by the success of last year’s challenge gift from the Martis Fund, they wanted to continue that momentum. The purpose of the gift is to challenge other supporters of the Watershed Council to make a long-term financial commitment to the restoration and monitoring projects in the watershed.

Already, nine donors made new pledges in 2011, so we are part of the way to meeting the matching gift. This is a great start, but we are still looking for supporters to help us raise the remaining funds.

The Truckee River Watershed Council’s goal is to complete 40-50 priority restoration and prevention projects within the next 10 years.

If you are interested in learning more about the Together for the Truckee Society or the matching gift, please contact Michele at (530) 550-8760 x 4 or email mprestowitz@truckeeriverwuc.org.

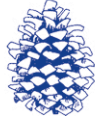
Thank you to these committed donors for coming together to create a matching gift:

The Martis Fund
DMB Highlands, LLC
Squaw Valley USA
Truckee River Winery
Elizabeth and John Eaton
Hover-Smoot Family
Robie and Dean Litchfield
Joanne Roubique
Michael Sabarese
Sierra Mountain Mortgage
Lisa Wallace & Family

GIVE TO THE RIVER PROGRAM

Truckee River Winery

The “Give to the River” program was launched on June 24th of this year. The program is ongoing and collects a voluntary \$1 donation for each bottle of wine purchased from the Truckee River Winery. The Truckee River Winery will match that \$1, and then a committed group of donors will match that \$2. You give \$1, and a total of \$4 goes to the Truckee River Watershed Council. These funds go directly towards protecting water quality, preserving wildlife habitat, and restoring our river, streams, meadows and wetlands that inspire us with their beauty.



“We at Truckee River Winery have been looking for ways to increase our contribution to this great organization and want to pass on our passion for the River and the work,” said Joan Jones, co-owner of the Truckee River Winery. “Give to the River” provides us the opportunity to talk about the River, the Watershed Council and the work being completed. It also gives our customers an easy way to make a donation. We hope we can provide for increased contributions and in turn increased work to improve the watershed. Because it’s all about the River.”



MICHELE PRESTOWITZ

**You give \$1,
and a
total of \$4
goes to the
Truckee River
Watershed
Council.**

Left: Katy, Russ and Joan Jones from the Truckee River Winery and Lisa Wallace at the launch of the Give to the River program at the Truckee River Winery. The winery tasting room is located at 11467 Brockway Road in Truckee.



The donors below have made a long-term commitment to the Truckee River watershed. They are members of the Together for the Truckee Society. We deeply appreciate their confidence in our restoration and protection projects.

Protect the Watershed – \$10,000 a year for 5 years

The Martis Fund

Protect the River – \$5,000 a year for 5 years

Shelley and Michael Perry
San Francisco Fly Casting Club
Cathy and Tom Van Berkem
Sierra Mountain Mortgage

Restore a Stream – \$1,000 a year for 5 years

Alpine Meadows Ski Resort
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Mike Sabarese
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Shaw Family Farm
Sierra Mountain Mortgage
Gail and Rick Stephens
Bill and Jody Sterling
Tahoe Truckee Fly Fishers
Teichert/Stonebridge Properties
Kristi and Chris Thompson
Truckee River Winery
Lisa Wallace and Family
Ward Young Architects
Kathy and David Welch
Diane and Bill Zuentd

Donors to the Truckee River Watershed Council

We thank the following donors who have made contributions since October 2010. They have provided resources to find solutions to protect, enhance and restore the Truckee River watershed. Together we are making a difference.

\$1,000-\$2,500

Joyce Bordelan
Bob Cohune
Colleen and David Haig
Janet and Charles Zipkin

\$500-\$999

Wally Auerbach
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\$100-\$499

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Up to \$99

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Villager Nursery

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USFS Tahoe National Forest
Vail Resorts Echo

Special thanks to our Board members, volunteers, and supporters.

If we missed or mis-identified you or your organization, please call and let us know. Our phone number is 530-550-8760.



Truckee River Watershed Council

Collaborative solutions to protect, enhance and support the Truckee River Watershed

P.O. Box 8568
Truckee, CA 96162

Final Stages of Martis Creek Watershed Assessment

In 2010, to prioritize additional restoration, we launched a watershed assessment for the Martis Creek watershed. The assessment is in its final stages and will be finalized in September 2011; in it is a completed compilation of existing studies and finalized watershed attributes report.

The assessment was put together by reviewing previous local and regional investigations and watershed physical characteristics, evaluating existing hydrologic data, identifying historical and landscape-altering events and reviewing historical aerial photographs to identify patterns of disturbance.

We are currently identifying areas in need of restoration and developing project concepts. A public meeting will be scheduled in January to learn about potential projects in the future. Our past projects include small scale restoration related to trail re-alignment and meadow improvements in the Martis Wildlife Area, and spawning gravel augmentation below Martis dam.

The Martis Creek watershed has a long history of human occupation, beginning with Native American tribes. Currently the land is used for recreation and residential and commercial



Example of streambank erosion along the main fork of Martis Creek

developments. Martis Valley is a transportation corridor with Highway 267 running through the watershed. Despite existing and planned development there is significant opportunity for restoration that will result in meaningful gains in water quality, wildlife habitat, and watershed function.