



Tomorrow's too late.

It's true. Native fish: declining rapidly. Crucial invertebrates: dwindling. Entire meadows: drying up. The Truckee River's EPA Rating: "polluted." The time to act—to affect the future of the watershed—is now. And, you are! Thank you to the 375+ volunteers who joined us for our 20th Annual Truckee River Day. You're helping us change tomorrow.

BOCA TOWNSITE SEEDING

Leaders: Garrett McCullough, Rachel McCullough, Kathy Whitlow, Janet Zipser Zipkin

Volunteers: 60

A fire occurred in 2014 near the historic Boca Townsite in a fairly steep area vulnerable to erosion. The TRWC partnered with the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest to complete a project on Truckee River Day. Volunteers seeded the project area with native seeds and mulched with pine needles to arrest water quality impacts from erosion and to prevent a large population of musk thistle (an invasive weed) from moving into the area. Groups of volunteers from Green Bucks partners, Tahoe Mountain Resorts Lodging and PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn, assisted with this effort.

BOCA TOWNSITE SEEDING



JANET ZIPSER ZIPKIN

PROSSER CREEK RESTORATION



ROBIE LITCHFIELD

DRY CREEK RESTORATION

Leaders: Jake Hudson, Michele Prestowitz, Leora Sapir, Dan Saylor, Dan Warren, Randy Westmoreland

Volunteers: 35

The Dry Creek watershed, home to the community of Russel Valley, was heavily logged starting in the 1800s. This and other land uses led to significant impacts on the meadows in the watershed. The TRWC and the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest have begun a large scale restoration effort in the Dry Creek watershed to restore these meadows (see page 3 for more on this project). On Truckee River Day, volunteers assisted with the revegetation by seeding and mulching one of the recently restored meadows.

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Truckee River Watershed Council
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

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Vice Chair, Truckee River Basin Water Group

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All in. Are you?

Join us in taking back The Truckee River's meadows, creeks, streams and ponds. Home to the bugs, fish, birds and...humans.

Our work helps brings them all back—all with commitment from people like you.

You in?

Become a Weed Warrior and help prevent and control invasive weeds in the Truckee River watershed. Call Jeannette at 530-550-8760 x6.

Adopt-A-Stream—it starts with the watershed and monitoring is a critical step!

Chemical, physical, and habitat monitoring happens four times a year, May through September. Training and equipment is provided. To join a team or adopt a stream, call Erin at 530-550-8760 x7.

Biological aquatic monitoring happens year round. Collection in the summer and identification in the winter. Call Beth at 530-550-8760 x1.

TRWC Ambassadors spread the word about our work. We're looking for individuals to help us invite others to a River Talk to learn more about our watershed. The River Talk is a one-hour virtual tour of a few of our projects. Call Brenda at 530-550-8760 x5.

River-Friendly Landscaping helps homeowners improve water quality by reducing sediment flowing from our yards into area creeks and streams. Call us today to get a free site evaluation to identify erosion sources on your property. To volunteer, call Erin at 530-550-8760 x7.

Three simple steps to volunteer with the TRWC

STEP 1 Sign up for our E-newsletter, *Truckee River Currents* at truckeeriverwc.org.

STEP 2 Find a program you're interested in and RSVP to the staff member.

STEP 3 Mark your calendar and join us!



KATHY WHITLOW



JEANNETTE HALDERMAN

You can help during the winter too! An Adopt-A-Stream volunteer counts and identifies macroinvertebrates.

Volunteer Weed Warrior Trisha Ruby removes Musk Thistle along the Truckee River at a Weed Pull event.

Construction completed at Prosser and Dry Creek projects

With our partners, the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, we completed the Prosser Creek Fish Habitat Improvement project (shown before and during construction). The project is designed to improve instream habitat along 2,500 feet of the creek below Prosser Creek Dam. This reach has been highly modified by ice dams in the 1800s and the present day Prosser Dam built in 1962. Instream habitat lacked complexity; the woody materials and gravels that naturally occur simply can't get past the dam. The project restores instream habitat with log structures and boulder fields. Construction is now completed, willows and native vegetation have been planted at the site and we're entering the monitoring and establishment phases for this project.

Funding for this project has been provided by donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, Bella Vista Foundation, National Forest Foundation, and the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest.



In 2013, with the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, we completed the Dry Creek (Russel Valley) Watershed Assessment. It provides an overview of the current condition of the watershed in light of past impacts like logging, railroad grades and a web of access roads. The Dry Creek Restoration project reduces erosion, improves hydrologic connectivity and function, and improves the overall health and resiliency of the watershed. Construction was completed at two of the three sites (including the site seen in the photo before construction above) to improve two streams. Future design and construction in this area, locally known as Russel Valley, is planned as funding allows.

Funding for this project has been provided by donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, Bella Vista Foundation, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

For more information on these projects, contact Beth at 530-550-8760 x1.

We do it for the future. It's our Nature.

We work for the watershed; she's truly our client. Everyone else—the bugs, beavers, birdwatchers and bicyclists (and you)—benefits. We find solutions that respect all viewpoints from nature lovers to land developers.

One of the approaches the Watershed Council uses is to influence policy to prevent present-day risks to our environmental future. One example of our policy work involves water quality monitoring.

The Truckee River is listed as polluted for sedimentation by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The plan to eliminate the pollution levels of sedimentation is called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). The TMDL was developed and adopted in 2008 by the EPA and California Water Board. The TMDL (pollution control plan) specifically protects Beneficial Uses including:

- Municipal Consumption – for drinkable water
- Cold Freshwater Habitat – sustaining diverse ecosystems
- Fish Spawning – for fishable, healthy waters and habitat
- Recreation – ensuring swimmable waters that can be enjoyed by all

Continues on page 8

Truckee River water bodies are failing

Lakes and streams are not supporting:

- Human health (drink-able)
- Aquatic health (fish-able)
- Recreation (swim-able)

Truckee River Day

Continued from page 1

JAMMER CHAIR RESTORATION

Leaders: Tamara Anderson, Erin Casey, Sharon Falvey

Volunteers: 12

Together with the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, the TRWC implemented a restoration project this year at Jammer Chair. The project involved improving habitat for aspen stands, restoring natural drainage patterns along intermittent streams, and reducing erosion. Truckee River Day volunteers spread seed and assisted with erosion control at the site.

JOHNSON CANYON RESTORATION

Leaders: Brenda Gilbert, Nicole Lutkemuller

Volunteers: 15

Gregory Creek in Johnson Canyon is a key tributary to Donner Lake. The watershed is steep and naturally erosive. There is a long land use history including logging and grazing. In 1960, the Donner Fire burned through the canyon. Due to these past land uses a poorly constructed road network has developed, intercepting drainages in numerous locations, causing severe erosion. In partnership with the Truckee Donner Land Trust, the TRWC implemented a large scale restoration project in 2014 to reconnect natural drainage patterns and reduce erosion. On Truckee River Day volunteers completed additional seeding and mulching of the restored areas. A group of volunteers from Teichert participated at this site.

LITTLE TRUCKEE RIVER RESTORATION

Leaders: Jamie Adams, Shana Behan, Karyn Erikson, Shelley Harris, Brian Hastings, David Lass, Sue Lowder, Sandy Rademacher, Jim Schmidt, Paul Smith

Volunteers: 60

The Little Truckee River between Boca and Stampede Reservoirs supports a population of wild trout. However, certain types of habitat are limiting in this reach of the river—the presence of the dams block recruitment of large wood and gravels to the stream. Trout Unlimited and the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest recently completed a restoration project to increase the amount of wood, boulder, and gravel in the Little Truckee River. On Truckee River Day, volunteers assisted with the revegetation effort, planting willows and mulching. Groups of volunteers from Trout Unlimited and the Tahoe Truckee Flyfishers participated at this site.

JOHNSON CANYON RESTORATION



BRENDA GILBERT

DRY CREEK RESTORATION



JOHN ECHOLS

MARTIS CREEK MILFOIL SURVEYS

Leaders: Jeff Glazner, Jeannette Halderman, Eben Swain

Volunteers: 10

Eurasian milfoil is an invasive aquatic plant that is becoming established in the Truckee River and other tributaries such as Martis Creek. To effectively eradicate this species, we need to gain an understanding of where populations are located and how widespread they are. On Truckee River Day, volunteers surveyed several reaches of Martis Creek and mapped milfoil populations.

MARTIS CREEK MILFOIL SURVEYS



PLACER COUNTY

PROSSER CREEK RESTORATION

Leaders: Robie Litchfield, Karen Sessler, Sarah Trebilcock, Deborah Urich, Fred Zabell

Volunteers: 30

Prosser Creek below Prosser Dam provides important habitat for fish. The TRWC and the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest completed a large-scale restoration project this year to increase habitat complexity in this reach (see page 3 for more on this project). On Truckee River Day, volunteers helped to revegetate the restored area by planting willows and spreading mulch. Groups of volunteers from the Sodergren Memorial group and the Truckee River Winery participated at this site.

STOCKREST SPRINGS

Leaders: Johnny Brokaw, John Eaton, Susi Urie, Bill Wendin

Volunteers: 40

The Stockrest Springs meadow is home to a substantial population of Plumas mousetail, a sensitive plant in the rose family. On Truckee River Day several years ago, volunteers constructed a fence to protect the main part of the sensitive plant. In 2015, volunteers helped to repair that fence and removed conifers that were encroaching into the meadow.



RIVER FAIR

JOHN ECHOLS

PROSSER CREEK RESTORATION



ROBIE LITCHFIELD

SUGAR PINE PLANTING

Leaders: Steve Disbrow, Gen Gwerder, Bill Houdyschell, Maria Mircheva, David Shaw

Volunteers: 60

Sugar pines were once widespread throughout the Truckee River watershed. However, their populations have been severely reduced due to logging, starting as early as the 1800s. The TRWC, the Sugar Pine Foundation, and Tahoe Donner partnered this year to plant several hundred seedlings of sugar pines. A group of volunteers from the Friends of Tahoe Donner Trails participated at this site.

WADDLE RANCH TRAIL

Leaders: Jim Herzman, Kevin Starr

Volunteers: 10

The eastern side of Martis Valley is home to meadows, springs, creeks, and other native habitat. It is also a highly used recreational area. In order to manage recreation, the TRWC is partnering with the Truckee Donner Land Trust on a restoration and recreation plan for the Elizabethtown Meadows area, connecting to Waddle Ranch. On Truckee River Day volunteers helped to put in a trail that will provide recreational access without damaging natural resources.

Thank you to the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, Northstar California, Patagonia, Tahoe Oral Surgery and Implant Center, and the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce for their support of Truckee River Day.

For more information on our Truckee River Day Projects, contact Beth at 530-550-8760 x1.

RIVER FAIR



JOHN ECHOLS



PLANNED GIVING

Consider planned giving to create a natural legacy protecting the Truckee River watershed for the next generation. It's in your nature and ours! For more information, call Brenda at 530-550-8760 x5.



STEFAN MCLEOD PHOTOGRAPHY

The Truckee River Watershed – A Map Quilt

People give back in many ways. Mary Nyquist Koons created a map quilt. She explains, "Art illuminates concepts. Suddenly, you just get it!" Mary's design, artful sewing, and the intricate quilting by Celeste Percy connect us to the needs of our watershed when we experience this special art piece.



JEREMY KOONS PHOTOGRAPHY

These donors pledged a minimum of \$1,000 a year for five years toward the long-term sustainability of the Truckee River Watershed Council. They're members of the Together for the Truckee Society. We deeply appreciate their confidence in our restoration and protection projects.

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

The Martis Fund	Tahoe Mountain Resorts
Northstar California / Vail Resorts	Environmental Fund
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Protect the River – \$5,000 a year for 5 years

San Francisco Fly Casting Club	Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows
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Restore a Stream – \$1,000 a year for 5 years

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If we missed or misidentified you or your organization, please let us know: 530-550-8760 x5.

Donors to the Truckee River Watershed Council

We thank the following donors who made contributions since November 2014. They provide resources to find solutions to protect, enhance and restore the Truckee River watershed. Together we are making a difference. (Please see page 6 for members of the Together for the Truckee Society.)

\$10,000+

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Tahoe Oral Surgery and Implant Center

\$5,000 – \$9,999

Koons Family Fund

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As we celebrate our 20th Annual Truckee River Day, we asked some who were there at the beginning to reflect on their memories and thoughts about our history and deep community roots.

20 years – 200 projects – 200,000 volunteer hours

“The Truckee River was in bad shape. We knew a volunteer force was the only way to get restoration projects on the list accomplished. We also wanted volunteers who were out there working hard to have an interesting, educational experience.” 20 years later, Sarah showed her continuing commitment to the watershed by leading the Prosser Creek restoration project. “What we accomplished during those first few Truckee River Days showed volunteers are the way to get work done. It’s exciting to see ongoing professional restoration work supported by volunteer efforts.” ~Sarah Trebilcock

“I’ve talked about this memory many, many times but that is because it is truly my favorite. The first Truckee River Day launched with only three weeks between the germ of an idea and the event taking place. Yet in that short period of time the word got out and several hundred people showed up. They showed up not because we had some great marketing campaign; but because **the notion of helping restore the river ignited, like a flash fire, the clear passion our community has for the Truckee River.** Wow! I will never forget the power of that realization.” ~Kathleen Eagan

“I grew up on the river and witnessed first-hand the explosion of recreation on it in the 70s and the effects in the 80s. After restoring a section of river along my property with my friend Sarah Trebilcock’s help, it was easy to see even small, individual actions could have a huge impact on the Truckee River. The idea of creating a volunteer organization was born. It really touches my heart to see the community’s response over the past 20 years. Each year when they come out to work on restoration projects, they’re agreeing with us, ‘The Truckee River is a valuable resource and we need to protect it.’ I had no idea when we started Truckee River Day such a strong organization would be the result 20 years later. **I’m so thankful the community has upheld that dream we had in the very beginning!**” ~Jim Plehn

We do it for the future. It’s our Nature.

Continued from page 3

The Watershed Council started water quality monitoring to understand how the Truckee River is being damaged by the excess sedimentation. Findings include:

- There is a significant disconnection between the current TMDL and detection of actual degradation of the beneficial uses.
- On the one hand, the Truckee River and its tributaries meet TMDL standard overall.
- On the other, negative impacts from sediment exist. We are seeing the clear decline the of macroinvertebrates (water insects) which are the source of food for fish.

Because the current TMDL standard does measure biological impact of excessive sedimentation, the Watershed Council has been diligently working to influence policy. We were able to provide data to show the Truckee River needs to remain listed by the EPA as polluted, a decision upheld by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.

What’s next? The TRWC will continue to advocate for the watershed, pushing for an additional standard for the Truckee River tied to Beneficial Uses. The TRWC will keep monitoring with the our Adopt-A-Stream volunteers and will continue implementation actions so that one day we can really de-list Truckee!

More information including water quality monitoring reports and additional detail from our 2015 Bugs, Dirt and Data presentation can be found at truckeeriverwc.org. Thank you to our partners, Town of Truckee and Placer County, our technical advisors: CA Department of Water Resources, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, Town of Truckee, Placer County and the U.S. Geologic Survey. Funding comes from donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, CA Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board.



Macroinvertebrates like this stonefly give us valuable information about the health of our watershed ecosystems.

B. FRIEDRICH