

Lacey Upper Meadow

Reconnecting Lacey Creek to 99 Acres of Historic Meadow Floodplain

Historically 99 acres, Lacey Upper Meadow is now only 72 acres, degraded, and soil is eroding from both natural sources and more than a century of sheep grazing. Located in the northwest corner of the Middle Truckee River Watershed, Lacey Creek flows through Lacey Upper and Lower Meadows into Webber Lake which is the headwaters of the Little Truckee River – the largest single tributary to the Truckee River.

Lacey Creek was diverted for agriculture sometime between 1955 and 1966, and further channelized alongside a nearby road, eliminating stream flow in the historic meandering meadow channels. As a result, the meadow is very dry, conifer encroachment is prevalent, and wildlife habitat has been severely degraded.



BETH CHRISTMAN

ABOVE: Lacey Upper Meadow is drying out and lodgepole pines are encroaching. Straightening of the creek channel has resulted in a reduction of meadow landscape from 99 acres to 72 acres.

RIGHT: Lacey Creek once meandered through Upper Lacey Meadow—recharging groundwater and sustaining wet meadowlands. Now, stream-banks are falling in, eroding, and preventing the creek from wetting the meadow surface.



ISTOCK PHOTO

Restoration happens now
so our watershed can
be healthier and more
resilient **forever**.

restoring
forever

In partnership with the Truckee Donner Land Trust and U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, construction to restore and enhance Lacey Upper Meadow will begin this August. The meadow will be restored along with 3,500 feet of natural stream channel by grading and channel fill, woody debris jams, riffle construction, and revegetation. Late season flow of water will return along with more suitable habitat for sensitive status species like the bald eagle, northern goshawk and marten. These changes will improve resiliency to changes in our climate now and into the future.

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partners – Truckee Donner Land Trust & U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest.

Thank you to the funders who are making this work possible, the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, California Wildlife Conservation Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Donated photos are credited. All others are owned by Truckee River Watershed Council.

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Volunteer to Help Restore Forever

Everyone can take part in restoring our watershed for future generations.

River Talks. The Truckee River watershed is a place full of beautiful meadows, streams, and forests that we all care about. Join us for a 30-minute presentation (virtual or in-person) about past impacts to the Truckee River watershed, what we are doing to restore it, why it's important to protect it, and how you can help us create a resilient future for our community and our watershed.

- Hear about our restoration projects and get updates on our work
- Meet and connect with fellow nature-lovers

Call Sue at 530.550.8760, x5

Become an Ambassador. Connect others to help address the problems facing our watershed. Invite 10 of your friends and host your own River Talk and learn more about our work! We will provide the presentation. Call Sue at 530.550.8760, x5

How Do I Get Involved?

SUBSCRIBE to our weekly e-newsletter and follow us on social media to stay up to date with upcoming events.

FIND A PROGRAM OR EVENT you're interested in and RSVP to the staff member.



BARRY BABA

Truckee River Day volunteers help with creek restoration at Martis Wildlife Area.

Truckee River Day, October 16, 2022.

Connect at the source. Engage in a solution and work with family, friends, and your community to help repair our mountain home. Volunteers will:

- Restore selected sites
- Plant native vegetation
- Protect sensitive areas
- Create resiliency to buffer drought, flood, and wildfire

Call Michele at 530.550.8760, x4

Adopt-A-Stream. Participate in important chemistry monitoring through our Adopt-A-Stream program. We train and equip you to practice watershed science:

- Monitor water temperature
- Measure conductivity
- Assess chemical pH readings
- Evaluate dissolved oxygen
- Measure turbidity
- Collect nutrient samples

Call Eben at 530.550.8760, x7



KATHY WHITLOW

Adopt-a-Stream volunteers conduct dissolved oxygen and other tests which provides an important metric for the quality of in-stream habitat.

A Note from Lisa Wallace, Executive Director

How We Are Restoring Forever

As I've been doing this restoration work and talking with our community about climate change, I see many are worried, afraid, and often frustrated by the scale and urgency of the problems. One of the most rewarding parts of my job is to flip that anxiety around into optimism by implementing work that helps prevent the impacts of the climate crisis.

We are mitigating the climate crisis by creating resilient forests, protecting water quality, restoring critical habitat, and bringing the community together. In the past two years, we restored over 800 acres of forests and habitat in Independence Forest, Alpine Meadows, Russel Valley, Donner Memorial State Park, Sardine Meadow, and more. Those restored places now buffer wildfires, filter out pollution, and slow flood waters. We worked to increase water releases out of Prosser, Stampede, and Boca dams to improve flows for miles of stream – making better habitat for fish and birds—so their numbers can increase. In 2021, hundreds of volunteers came out, in-person, for Truckee River Day to work at

a dozen restoration sites—they put their hands in the dirt, their boots in the water, and restored Dry Creek Forest, Bear Creek, and Sardine Meadow.

What we have learned from recent years is that we have limited time to build more resilient natural “infrastructure” that can help protect our community from droughts, floods, and fires. We need to protect our meadows that are working overtime to be able to slow catastrophic fires. We need to restore historically damaged streams to their best health, so they have the capacity to give back. And we need to treat forests in a way that balances our relationship with public safety, recreation, and biodiversity.

We know that many of you reading this deeply value the beauty and benefits of our mountain home. It is this value that motivates us to do the work we do each day. I hope you enjoy reading about some of our ongoing projects that are making our watershed and community more resilient by *Restoring Forever*.



SIERRA SUN

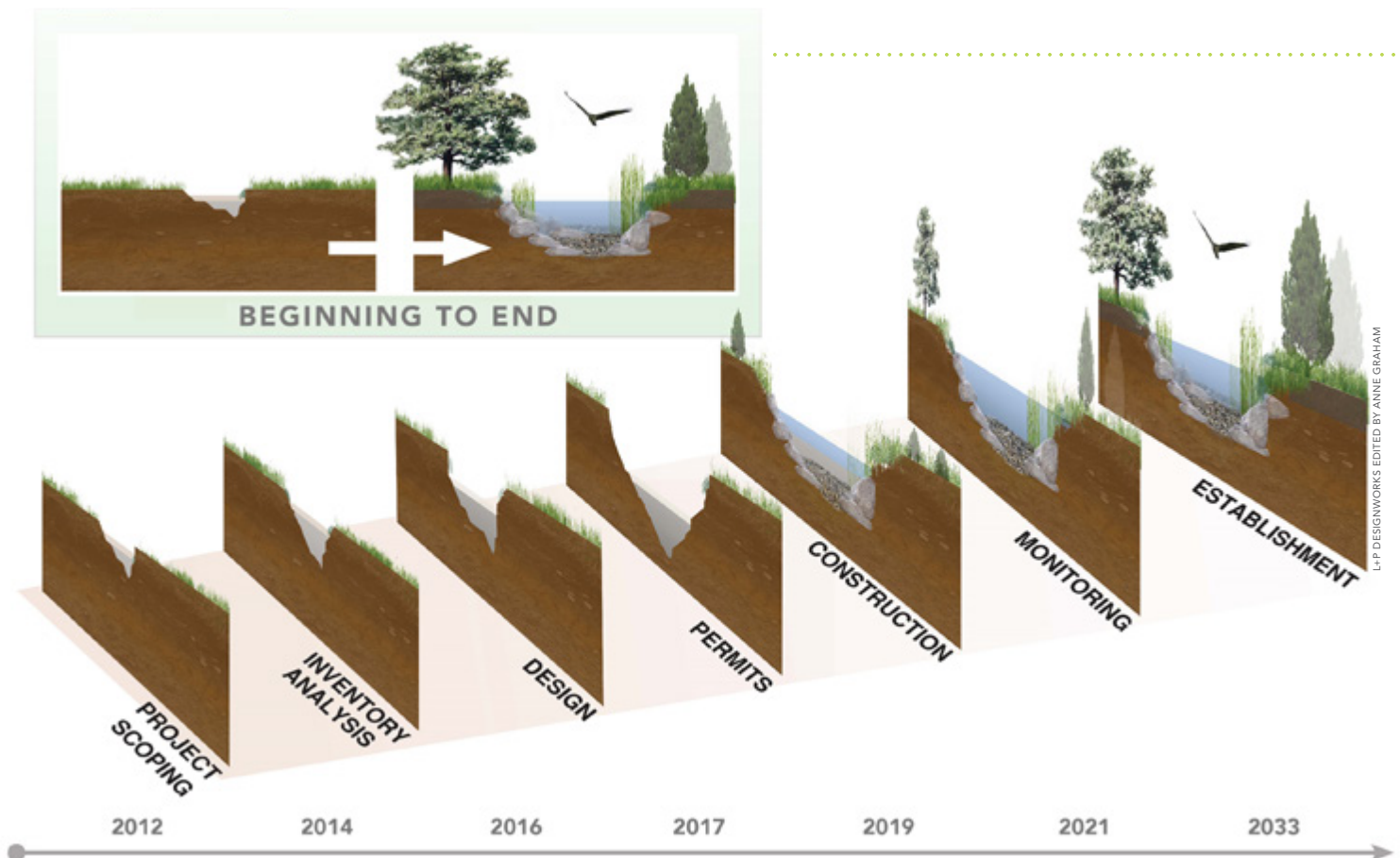


Wildflowers
blooming near
Bear Creek

ANNE GRAHAM

How Does My Gift Make a Difference?

Every donation to the Truckee River Watershed Council is invaluable, but did you know when you donate to TRWC, your gift doesn't just help us keep on lights on—it can be leveraged in grant applications to fund our projects. Each project first requires fundraising for building a partnership, planning, permitting, and engineering design well before dirt can be moved or vegetation can be planted. Your \$100 donation grows to \$10,000 through grants! Interested in giving? Visit our website: www.truckeeriverwc.org



Restoration Lifespan

Restoration projects take many years from start to finish. Scoping and inventory analysis kickstart a project. This technical study of the proposed restoration area allows us to identify, understand the cause of, and propose solutions to correct damage to the watershed. This process then informs the design.

Designing a project requires detailed surveying and hydraulic modeling to develop grading and revegetation plans as well as cost estimates. In the construction phase, we bring in the heavy equipment, and implement the big (and small) fixes to the watershed. Monitoring of a project site follows construction to measure success and determine any additional steps needed to increase a project's effectiveness. Full benefit of many restoration projects can take anywhere from 25-50 years.

Working at these time scales takes long-term commitment and is only possible with a dedicated community like you supporting our work. Donations to TRWC are used in pre-construction project phases which can cost between \$250K and \$750K per project. Once a design is finalized, we apply for state and federal grants to fund the construction phase of a project which can cost between \$1 million and \$3 million per project.



A few of our 2022 project work locations, highlighted above, are described in this newsletter.

Independence Forest Health

Reestablishing a Resilient Forest Ecosystem

FAST FACT

Did you know thinner forests increase the health of our watershed by decreasing competition for scarce water resources. Healthy forests:

- Support a range of ages and species of trees and shrubs
- Create a greater diversity of habitat
- Support strong root systems that prevent erosion
- Are more resistant to disease and insects
- Incorporate fire as a tool rather than a threat
- Improve movement of water through the watershed

Over the past decade, the Watershed Council has deployed over \$1 million for healthy forests, and we are doing more this summer. As we've experienced the threat of intense wildfires nearby, we are increasing our involvement in forest health projects to help our mountain home be more resilient and adaptable to fire.

Our Independence Forest Health project near Little Truckee Summit began in June with treating approximately 430 acres of overstocked forest stands. A history of intense logging followed by over 100 years of fire suppression has resulted in young, densely packed forests that are highly susceptible to wildfire and other disturbances. Small diameter trees, brush, and other flammable materials within the project area are being removed and prescribed burning will be utilized as conditions allow. This work improves forest ecosystem resiliency, creates a more heterogeneous landscape, removes hazardous and concentrated fuels, and reduces the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

Additionally, fuels reduction treatments are being done in a manner that does not damage trees being left behind. Buffers have been created around riparian zones to limit ground disturbance in any stream and riparian areas. Meadows, springs, seeps, and wet areas are being protected along with sensitive species and their habitat.

Restoring the forest in the Independence Creek Basin increases ecosystem resiliency by providing habitat for key species including the northern goshawk and maarten. It also helps protect headwater streams and tributaries including Independence Creek and the Little Truckee River.

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partner – U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest.

Thank you to the funders who are making this work possible – the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.



EBEN SWAIN



EBEN SWAIN

FAR LEFT:
Dense trees at are a high-risk factor for catastrophic fire.

LEFT:
By thinning the forest and removing brush from the forest floor we reduce risk and protect both the health of our watershed and our community for the future.

We thank the following donors who have contributed since November 2020. Together, they provide the resources to fund solutions to protect, enhance and restore the Truckee River watershed.

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If we missed or misidentified you, please let us know: 530.550.8760 x5

Thank you members of the Together for the Truckee Society.

Your multi-year generosity has shaped the Truckee River Watershed Council's work and inspires meaningful changes in our community and watershed. Thank you for your support.

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If we missed or misidentified you or your organization, please let us know: 530.550.8760 x5

Donner Lake Lagoon

Restoring Hydrologic Function to a Recreation Area

The Donner Lake Lagoon project is a small, but mighty, restoration project taking place later this summer. The project area includes 1.5 acres of riparian habitat and 300 feet of streambank located in a highly trafficked day-use area of Donner Memorial State Park at the east end of Donner Lake. This park boasts more than 200,000 visitors annually. Donner Lagoon is a beautiful place for beach-going, kayaking, and wildlife-watching; however, years of heavy recreation has resulted in streambank destabilization along the lagoon, loss of vegetation and habitat, poor recreational access, and user conflicts.

In partnership with California State Parks, we will stabilize 300 feet of streambank, restore scarce riparian and wetland habitat, protect hydrologic function, and improve visitor access and facilities. The project plan includes designated access for non-motorized boats and swimmers, improve existing picnic areas, and will provide valuable natural and cultural resource protection, information, and interpretation.

When finished, Donner Lake Lagoon will be a revitalized recreational area where park-goers can experience first-hand the benefits of restoration.



Vegetation loss, denuded soil, erosion, tree mortality and undercutting along roughly 300 feet of streambank degrade user experience, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

Construction is planned to begin in September and will be completed by October 2022.

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partner – California State Parks.

Thank you to the funders who are making this work possible – the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council and the California Wildlife Conservation Board.

Giving With Greater Impact

Three tax-efficient gifting ideas:

- **Gift appreciated shares of stock or mutual funds.** For those who itemized deductions on their tax return, most will be able to deduct the full value of shares gifted, while avoiding the taxation of the unrealized capital gains of the shares.
- **Qualified Charitable Distributions.** For IRA owners aged 70½ and above, you may gift your required minimum distribution to your favorite non-profit or charitable organizations. What would normally be taxed as ordinary income, isn't reportable income on your tax return.
- **A charitable gift through a Donor Adviser Fund (DAF).** For those who contribute cash, securities, or other assets to a DAF most will be able to take an immediate tax deduction and grow your money tax free in the DAF while waiting to decide how to use the donations. (Scan/point your phone camera at the QR Code to the right to learn more about DAFs.)

Ask your tax professional how these strategies may work for you.

