

This Counts on All of Us

We count on you; you count on us. For fresh mountain air, water storing meadows, fire resilient forests, clean clear streams, and evidence based science.

Euer Valley Restoration

Enhancing sustainable recreation and a healthy ecosystem in a beloved valley

The future of the verdant meadows, sweeping mountain vistas, and year-round recreation opportunities have been threatened without intervention, until now. After years of planning with our partner the Tahoe Donner Association, we are on the ground this summer restoring 30 acres of meadow and streambank in Euer Valley—improving both ecological health and sustainable recreation. Euer Valley is important for the health of our watershed at large. The South Fork of Prosser Creek starts high in Euer Valley, watering a rich mosaic of meadows, wetlands, and forests below. Any issues up in the headwaters can also propagate downstream, decreasing water quality and degrading critical habitat along Prosser Creek as it tumbles down towards Prosser Reservoir.



S. Fork of Prosser Creek meanders through Euer Valley. Streambank failures will be repaired to reduce sediment from polluting the creek and degrading aquatic habitat.

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A legacy of past land uses like logging, dirt road building, and trails have left Euer Valley degraded. Eroding logging roads shuttle excess sediment to the creek. The popularity of Euer Valley has also outpaced the recreation infrastructure in the area. A network of compacted trails degrades fragile meadow soils and vegetation at Coyote Crossing. Undersized culverts constrict natural stream flow and pose challenges to cross country trail grooming in the winter.

So, what work is happening? We're restoring 30 acres of meadow habitat at Coyote Crossing by installing a boardwalk and bridge to cross the creek year-round, whether you are on skis, foot, bike, or horseback. We're also improving the condition of 1½ miles of South Euer Valley Road and stabilizing ½ mile of the streambank to prevent further erosion and improve the drainage area, leading to healthier aquatic habitat and water quality.

Our work to restore Euer Valley for the people, animals, and plants that thrive here will continue through the fall. You can stay up to date on the status of recreation trails at the Tahoe Donner website: tinyurl.com/458zx3zt

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partner – Tahoe Donner Association.

Thank you to the funders who are making this work possible, the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, the California Wildlife Conservation Board, State Water Resources Control Board, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Point Blue Conservation Science, Truckee River Fund at the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada, and the Nevada County Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund.

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Our mission is to bring the community "together for the Truckee" to protect, enhance and restore the Truckee River watershed.

Donated photos credited; others owned by TRWC.

We Count on Each Other to Protect our Environment

To make lasting changes, we need all hands (and boots) on deck

Join a River Talk

The Truckee River watershed is a place full of beautiful meadows, streams, and forests that we love. Join us for a 45-minute presentation (virtual or in-person) about past impacts to the Truckee River Watershed, ongoing threats, what we are doing to protect and restore it, and how you can help us create a resilient future for our community and our watershed. Hear about restoration projects and connect with fellow nature-enthusiasts.

Contact Sue at 530.550.8760 x5 or sdrake@truckeeriverwc.org

Become an Ambassador

You can host your own River Talk by introducing 8-10 of your friends, family, or co-workers to TRWC's mission! You provide the audience, and we provide the presentation.

Contact Sue at 530.550.8760 x5 or sdrake@truckeeriverwc.org

Adopt-A-Stream

Participate in important chemistry monitoring through our Adopt-A-Stream program. We train and equip you, then send you to a nearby stream to practice watershed science and contribute valuable data toward the protection of our watershed. This is a great opportunity for individuals or the whole family.

Contact Rachel at 530.550.8760 x4 or rrobin@truckeeriverwc.org

VOLUNTEER

FIND A PROGRAM OR EVENT:
If you're interested, please contact the staff member listed here.

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER:
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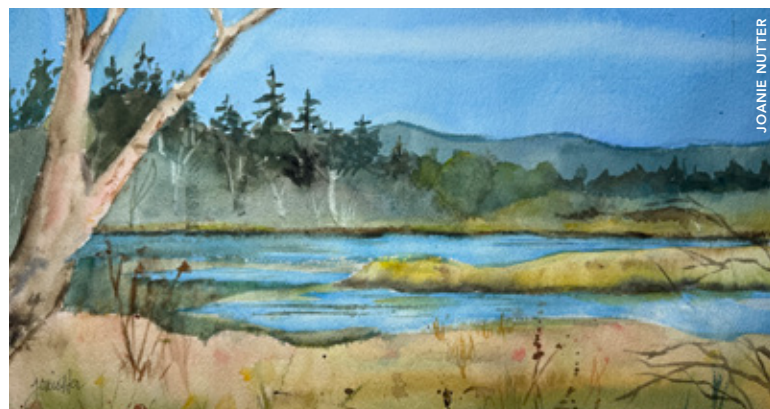
Truckee River Day

Be a part of the solution by working with family, friends, and our community to help repair our mountain home. As one of our more than 400 annual volunteers, you will help restore selected sites, seed and plant native vegetation, protect sensitive areas, and build resilience to buffer drought, flood, and wildfire.

Contact Eben at 530.550.8760 x7 or eswain@truckeeriverwc.org



Truckee River Day volunteers of all ages pitch in on projects throughout our watershed.



JOANNE NUTTER

Wetlands are nature's quiet masterpieces, where water and land intertwine to cradle life in its most abundant and intricate forms.

The Willow Flycatcher: A Meadow's "Canary in a Coalmine"

*You count on us,
we count on you,
and the willow
flycatcher counts
on us all*



BEARA CREATIVE FROM ISTOCK PHOTOS

Willow flycatchers prefer to nest in willow thickets above standing water. As their name suggests, these little birds chomp down on flies and other macroinvertebrates that call meadows home.

Meadow ecosystems—and many of the plants and animals that depend on them—are in decline throughout the Sierra. A legacy of disturbances, fire suppression, and a changing climate are drying out meadows, transitioning wetland complexes to seas of forest and sagebrush.

The willow flycatcher is one of the first species to disappear. They depend on healthy meadows and their willow thickets to succeed. These little birds winter in Mexico and Central America before returning to their high Sierra meadows to breed. They set up nests specifically in willow thickets above standing water—this 'prime real estate' offers protection from predators and an abundance of flying insects, their primary food source.

In drying, degraded meadows, this habitat and its avian counterparts disappear. According to the Institute for Bird Populations, only 80 meadows with fewer than 200 breeding pairs remain in the entire Sierra Nevada. The Tahoe National Forest once supported a stable population of flycatchers, but their numbers have dropped steadily since the year 2000.

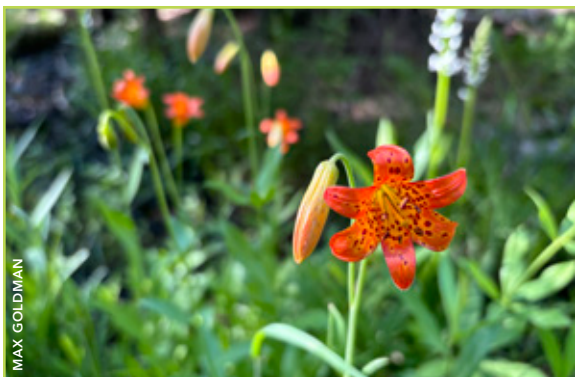


Water returns to Perazzo Meadows after restoration, creating habitat for willow flycatchers and other plants and animals.

We're helping reverse that trend. Our restoration in Perazzo Meadows was designed with the willow flycatcher in mind. TRWC reconnected streams to their historical remnant channels, letting spring runoff rise over the banks and water the adjacent meadows. Monitoring in the meadow indicates a 3–10-foot rise in groundwater as a result of our restoration. Now, 15 years later, Perazzo Meadows hosts the largest breeding population of willow flycatchers in the Tahoe National Forest.

Like the canary in a coalmine, willow flycatchers are a signal for the health of the whole ecosystem. Rebounding populations are an indication of better habitat that can support birds, bugs, fish, deer, and everything that depends on vibrant, wet meadows.

Sierra
tigerlily
(*Lilium
parvum*).
This native
lily grows
along
stream-
banks and
meadows at
elevation.



MAX GOLDMAN

Restore Forests, Preserve Watersheds

Key partnerships and current forest health restoration projects

Resilient forests are an integral part of a resilient watershed. That's why we partnered with the National Forest Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, and the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest to form the Middle Truckee River Watershed Forest Partnership (MTRWFP) in 2022. Together, we will increase the pace and scale of critical forest health projects and work towards treating 60,000 acres of forest in the Middle Truckee River Watershed in the next decade. Through this partnership TRWC was awarded \$3.8 million in state funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board, the National Forest Foundation, and California Sierra Nevada Conservancy to take the lead on three restoration projects: Sayles, Boca, and Hobart.

SAYLES FOREST AND MEADOW RESTORATION | 3,000 ACRES

The Sayles project is in Sierra County just north of Stampede Reservoir and east of the Highway 89N corridor. Large meadow complexes are found here, providing the opportunity to significantly enhance high-quality habitat conditions, while also reducing potential wildfire severity, and restoring forest health conditions.



This photo may be beautiful, but it shows a closed-canopy forest with a lot of snow caught in the treetops. When the sun comes out, much of that water will sublime back into the air instead of sinking into the soil where it would otherwise support vegetation.

BOCA FOREST AND MEADOW RESTORATION | 2,000 ACRES

The Boca project is just west of Boca Reservoir and north of Interstate 80. Overall tree health in the watershed has declined due to high stand density, recent prolonged drought, insects, and disease. Significant road networks have bisected existing meadows and disrupted the natural flow of surface and ground waters.

HOBART FOREST AND MEADOW RESTORATION | 2,541 ACRES

The Hobart project is north and west of Prosser Reservoir and east of Highway 89N. The area has experienced a long history of human-use impacts from logging, railroad building, and an obsolete dam. Also, forest health conditions were further impacted by the 1960 Donner Ridge Fire, which burned a considerable area of the watershed, leaving largely homogeneous stand conditions.

All three projects protect and enhance land above critical water supply infrastructure for Reno and Sparks in the State of Nevada. For Sayles, we completed assessments, developed a detailed harvest plan, and are in permitting phase. Design on the forest health portion of the project is complete and are in process for the meadow component. For Boca and Hobart, we are in the process of developing a detailed harvest plan.

The Forest-Watershed Connection

Forests are fundamental to how water is stored and distributed in the Sierra Nevada. Fire suppression and excessive logging for the past 150 years has resulted in our forests being out of balance for both human resources and resilient long-term ecological health. In a healthy forest, trees help stabilize and enrich the soil, protect our waterways from erosion and excessive nutrients, sustain quality habitat for a variety of species, and recover more easily from low intensity fire that was historically beneficial to our landscape.



Dense thicket of flammable lodgepoles. Frequent, low intensity fires would prevent these types of thickets from forming. Fires starting in dense forests like this can grow rapidly in size and intensity.

Highlights from a presentation by Amy Horne, PhD in Forestry and TRWC Board Emeritus:

Forest restoration occurs over longer time spans, and we can't "just add water" to forests the way we can to meadows. But we can manage vegetation to change how water is distributed in time and space.

Long-term watershed studies show that as a young forest grows, trees transpire. This increases the amount of water transpiring into the air and available water for streamflow declines. When you cut down a forest, stream flow goes up. In the Sierra, increasing streamflow benefits aquatic life, especially late in the growing season. Reducing the number of trees also means each individual tree has more water and is more resilient. Whatever water is in the soil on April 1st must last through the entire growing season.

When we suppress fire it's like removing a top predator from an ecosystem: eliminate foxes and the rabbit population booms. Eliminate fire and the tree population booms. The result: a forest of drought-stressed trees lacking immunity to insects and providing a lot of tinder for big wildfires.



Removing small diameter trees and excess fuels prevents fire from spreading rapidly through forests and into their canopies.



Camas lilies (*Camassia quamash*) blooming in a meadow in the Sayles Project area.

The fire our forests evolved with was different from big wildfires like Caldor and Dixie. It was a more gentle, frequent fire that mostly stayed low to the ground. It thinned out young and thin-barked trees and left behind a fire-resilient forest: trees of different ages, some dense clumps, some open spaces, and the rest irregularly spaced across the landscape. A slowly shifting, steady-state mosaic that makes good wildlife habitat.

If we want a more resilient watershed and a safer community, we need to re-create the forest mosaic using a combination of cutting trees and controlling fire in a way that mimics the kind of fire these forests evolved with. This is not a one-time fix. This is changing how we interact with our forests forever.

Stay in the Loop About MTRWFP

Visit www.truckeeforests.org to learn more about MTRWFP and stay up to date on trail closures related to implementation of projects.

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partners – U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest, National Forest Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

Thank you to the funders who are making this work possible- the donors of the Truckee River Watershed Council, California Wildlife Conservation Board, National Forest Foundation, and California Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Making a Difference

Did you know that when you donate to TRWC, your gift makes all our restoration work possible? Every dollar donated to the Truckee River Watershed Council helps. Each project first requires funds for building partnerships, planning, permitting, and design well before dirt can be moved, vegetation can be planted, and trees thinned. Your \$100 donation is leveraged 5–10 times through state and federal grants. Interested in giving? Please visit truckeeriverwc.org



STUART BRYAN

We thank the following donors

who have contributed since September 2024. Together, they provide the resources to fund solutions to protect, enhance and restore the Truckee River watershed.

To become a donor or if we missed or misidentified you or your organization, please call to let us know: 530.550.8760 x 5

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* These donors have helped sustain TRWC for 10 or more years. Thank you!

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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Continuing Work in Prosser Creek Basin

Most of the Middle Truckee River Watershed has been logged in the last 150 years. All that logging requires roads to haul timber out of the woods.

The Prosser Creek Basin has gone through extensive logging periods and now has a network of aging, eroding logging roads. Washouts and failing culverts contribute excess sediment to Prosser Creek and Prosser Reservoir, destroying aquatic habitat for spawning fish and the water bugs the fish eat.

This summer we are continuing work to improve drainage along 5 miles of roads to improve the health of the Prosser Creek sub-basin and prevent further degradation from excess sediment in runoff.



Roads with poor drainage contribute to excess sediment flowing into Prosser Creek and Reservoir

It takes a dedicated team to do what we do. Thank you to our partners – Truckee Donner Land Trust and 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 California State Water Resource Control Board.

Ways to Give with Greater Impact

- Make a charitable gift through a Donor Adviser Fund (DAF). Learn how DAFs work by scanning/pointing your phone camera at the QR Code.
- For IRA owners 70½ and older, you may gift your RMD to TRWC without incurring federal income tax on the withdrawal.
- Make a gift of appreciated securities and you may be able to deduct its current value while avoiding the taxation of capital gains.



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

Is TRWC included in your estate plan? Let us know!

A Word from Our Executive Director

*You can count on us—
we're counting on you.*



This summer, my first as Executive Director, I'm filled with gratitude — for our deeply experienced board, talented staff, dedicated partners, and generous supporters like you. Together, we're restoring meadows, improving forest health, protecting clean water, and shaping a more resilient watershed.

Our work is growing because the need is too. With climate challenges intensifying, we must act boldly now—and we can't do it alone. Whether it's a gift, volunteering, or simply spreading the word, **we're counting on you** to help us keep going.

Let's keep restoring, together.

With deep thanks,
Michele Prestowitz, Executive Director