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We are human power in action.
We promote wilderness values.
We preserve and protect our public lands.



Formula For Progress?

Collaboration in the Lake Tahoe Basin On Winter Issues

In response to Snowlands' lobbying of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), the Forest Service convened a two-day workshop in October, bringing together representatives of the skier and snowmobile communities to begin a collaborative process of resolving winter recreation conflicts. The workshop involved over fifty people, including five moderators, representatives from the LTBMU, the Humboldt-Toiyabe and Tahoe national forests, Nevada DOT, Washoe County Parks, Snowlands, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, the Sierra Club and several local snowmobile clubs.

Snowlands appreciates the substantial commitment of LTBMU Supervisor Nancy Gibson and Assistant Supervisor Jeff Marsolais in putting together this workshop. For the first time in many years, representatives of the adjoining national forests and recreation user groups met in

a constructive manner to address winter recreation conflicts in the Tahoe basin. We believe there is significant common ground that can be reached in a collaborative effort between skier and snowmobile groups in such areas as reducing wilderness trespass and, perhaps, in accelerating the transition of snowmobile users to less polluting machines. Snowlands has committed to working with representatives from the snowmobile community on these issues, and will keep you posted as these collaborative meetings progress.

At the same time, we and the snowmobile community agreed that the user groups were not likely to reach a collaborative solution on the critical issue of land use management, including, for example, the closure of areas to motorized travel. Accordingly, we continue our call on the LTBMU to take responsibility for addressing winter motorized travel restrictions in its revised management plan and to begin winter travel management under Subpart C of the Travel Management Rule. (Articles in recent newsletters have discussed these issues.)

Your voice is important in this process. Together we can create and preserve readily-accessible areas that are free from

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snowmobile noise. Together, we can ensure that our mountains continue to provide fun powder days for the largest number of users. Please write the LTBMU and tell them how motorized recreation in the Lake Tahoe basin affects you.

And, please, do your part in assisting with this collaborative effort. We committed to respecting snowmobile users who are operating legally. We believe everyone will be better-served if we all confine our disagreements over legal behavior to the meeting rooms and other venues where such debate is appropriate. If you are bothered by snowmobiles operating legally, please do not hassle them. Instead write – or visit – the LTBMU! Tell them what you think so they can better manage our national forest lands.

You can address your comments to:

Forest Supervisor Nancy Gibson
Deputy Supervisor Jeff Marsolais
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
35 College Drive
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150



Sardine Creek Drainage (photo by Jeff Erdoes)

President's Corner

By Gail Ferrell

Let's Make This Work

We have a rare opportunity beginning this winter to work in collaboration with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the United States Forest Service along with other user groups that have an interest in winter recreation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. I hope you will join me in this effort.

Beginning early winter, Snowlands Network members will meet with snowmobilers, and others interested in snow sports. We will be part of the Mt. Rose Corridor Winter Collaboration Group. The purpose of this voluntary group is for users of U.S. Forest Service lands to arrive at solutions to some of the problems created as a result of winter recreation.

Among these problems are noise, environmental degradation, user conflicts, parking and safety. The group will work collaboratively to discuss, and hopefully find solutions to address winter recreation problems along the Mt. Rose Corridor within the Lake Tahoe Basin.

One of the great concerns of Snowlands Network is the legal use of snowmobiles at Chickadee Ridge. This area is extremely popular for skiers and snowshoers. However snowmobilers are using this area more frequently, leaving almost no area reserved for non-motorized winter recreation.

Another of our concerns is the use of two-stroke snowmobiles in the Lake Tahoe Basin. As you are probably aware, two-stroke jet skis are banned from the Lake Tahoe Basin due to the large quantity of pollutants they discharge into the environment. Two-stroke snowmobiles pose similar problems, and the Lake Tahoe Basin should be protected from these highly

polluting machines.

These are just two of the many issues that the Winter Collaboration Group will address. We may not be able to come up with solutions to each of the problems, and some topics may not be useful to discuss. However we must participate in this collaborative process and show our willingness to listen and work with user groups that have differing views.

I hope you will join me in our meetings. To find out more, you may contact me through our Snowlands website:

www.snowlands.org



Year-End Fund-Raising

YOU WILL SOON BE RECEIVING THE END OF THE YEAR LETTER FOR YOUR TAX-DEDUCTABLE DONATION TO SNOWLANDS NETWORK. WE ONLY ASK ONE TIME EACH YEAR FOR A DONATION. YOUR GENEROSITY WILL ALLOW US TO CONTINUE OUR WORK PROTECTING WINTER WILDLANDS AND ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN-POWERED WINTER RECREATIONISTS. WE ARE WORKING IN CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA TO ENSURE YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR QUALITY WINTER RECREATION ON PUBLIC LANDS. PLEASE DONATE ONLINE OR BY MAIL AND KNOW YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE NOW, AND FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.
THANK YOU.



Snowlands Bulletin

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Mission

We promote opportunities for quality human-powered winter recreation and protect winter wildlands. We educate the public and government agencies about winter recreation and environmental issues.

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Snow School at Galena Visitor Center Winter 2012 Season

A cooperative effort for Washoe County Children
Snowlands Network • Great Basin Institute • REI Reno • Columbia Sportswear

Snow School

Snow School is an active educational experience for elementary and middle school children in the greater Reno, Sparks, and Lake Tahoe area. The goal of the program is to educate 4th–8th graders in winter ecology. Children participate in active learning sessions indoors and then snowshoe, applying their winter ecology education while having fun outdoors. Not only do children become engaged and energized through physical activity, they also learn how to have fun safely in the snow, protect the winter environment, and learn the skill of snowshoeing.

The Snow School program is flexible. Participation can be by groups, such as boy or girl scouts, entire schools, classes within a school, or informal groups of children. The number of lessons in which groups participate is variable, allowing between one and fourteen meetings.

Snowlands Network's participation in the Snow School program helps to support our goals by introducing the next generation to low-impact winter recreation. It also supports our goals of educating the public about winter ecology and encouraging greater protection for winter wildlands and wildlife. We hope that Snow School will help build future leaders for sustainable winter recreation and a cleaner environment!

Snow School will take place at Galena Visitor Center on the Mt. Rose Highway, west of Reno.

Costs include transportation to and from the site and minimal materials fee.

Contact Gail Ferrell at gail@snowlands.org to see how to get your school, class or club involved.

You can also contact Gail through our Snowlands Network web page: www.snowlands.org.

Happy Holidays!

Are you stumped for the perfect gift for family and friends? Want it to be meaningful, without spending hours shopping? We have a great gift idea for you

A Snowlands' Membership!

It is a "win-win" situation for all:

- You have the perfect gift
- You are helping Snowlands Network's mission to ensure peaceful and serene winter wonderlands in the Sierra Nevada
- Your gift is tax deductible because Snowlands is a registered 501(3) organization, and it's getting close to the end of the year
- It is easy! Fill out the membership form and indicate it is a gift and where you wish us to send the acknowledgement. Or go on-line at www.snowlands.org and pay via credit card through secure PayPal. Be sure to indicate in "Comments" who is the recipient of the gift membership.

While you are shopping, do something good for yourself – send your own end-of-year donation. Make copies of the donation form and mail along with your gift membership(s) or donate on-line.

Thank you all for your continuing support and all the best for a wonderful holiday season and fabulous New Year!!!

New Members

Snowlands welcomes these new members!

Gary Zaepfel
Dave and Pamela Straley
Ken Allstead
L.W. Tichenor
Cameron Stewart
Laura Brigham and Brian Beffort
Carl Gould
Kenneth M Freeland
Elizabeth and Tom Beyer
Lynn Bowering

Are you a member of Snowlands?

Omnibus Public Lands Management Act 2009

A sharp dose of alphabet soup and some fresh snowmobile standards with respect to the Pacific Crest Trail...

One provision of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act (OPLMA) of 2009 added more than 40,000 acres of Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (HTNF) to the Hoover Wilderness. This increased protection for the West Walker River drainage abutting Yosemite National Park.

Another provision of the OPLMA designated the Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area (BWRA), located southeast of Sonora Pass, California, and directed the HTNF to develop a plan to integrate snowmobile off-road activity onto 7300 acres of land, where in the past snowmobiles were not allowed. Thus, the BWRA increased California acreage available for off-road snowmobiling.

In May, 2010, the HTNF issued its management plan for the BWRA. Among other measures, the HTNF developed practical and enforceable criteria for snowmobile season starting and ending dates on the BWRA. The HTNF now requires every recreational visitor on the BWRA to self-issue and carry an entry permit during snow season. For more details on BWRA see Snowlands' Summer 2011 newsletter.

Immediately south of Sonora Pass, the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) switchbacks through the rough and tumble upper drainage of Sardine Creek. To enable snowmobiles to get quickly from the nearby BWRA down to snow-bound Highway 108, the OPLMA directed the HTNF to designate a crossing point along the PCT, which is otherwise protected by law from motorized activity.

Planning for the crossing became more complex when the USFS discovered extraordinary wildlife — Sierra Nevada red fox — in the neighborhood. Congressional directive also proved to be a challenge to fit legally within the existing forest land plans and guidance.

Wisely, the USFS obtained a detailed avalanche assessment of terrain within the switchback area and was finally convinced that it could not designate a snowmobile route through prominent avalanche terrain. Unreasonable avalanche risk made a compelling justification for considering a 'two-crossing' OSV route instead of a higher elevation corridor which would cross the PCT only once.

The Forest Service has published the Environmental Assessment and Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which constitute the official decision on the PCT crossing project. The HTNF PCT crossing press release is a pithy summary. Jeanne Higgins, Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest Supervisor, selected the Adaptive Management Alternative (Alt 4).

Adaptive management enables the HTNF to be versatile and responsive. For example, the new plan starts by offering the PCT crossing lane for two-way snowmobile traffic. If such traffic in the sensitive upper reaches of Sardine Creek proves uncontrollable — if off-road motorists routinely spill from the corridor onto protected surroundings or if two-way traffic proves unsafe — the corridor may be limited only to descending traffic exiting the BWRA. Adaptive management expressly enables additional measures if necessary.

The supervisor's decision recognizes many potential impacts of snowmobile off-road recreation in this area as well as the need for monitoring and enforcement and adaptation as necessary to meet plan objectives.

From the perspective of knee-reliant travelers, the new rules are a welcome addition to snowmobile management in the area. One virtue of the HTNF's 'two-crossing' decision is that it helps protect the heart of the PCT switchback zone and preserve the slopes there from the fall-line vehicular hashing which in the past rendered them inimical to ski access.

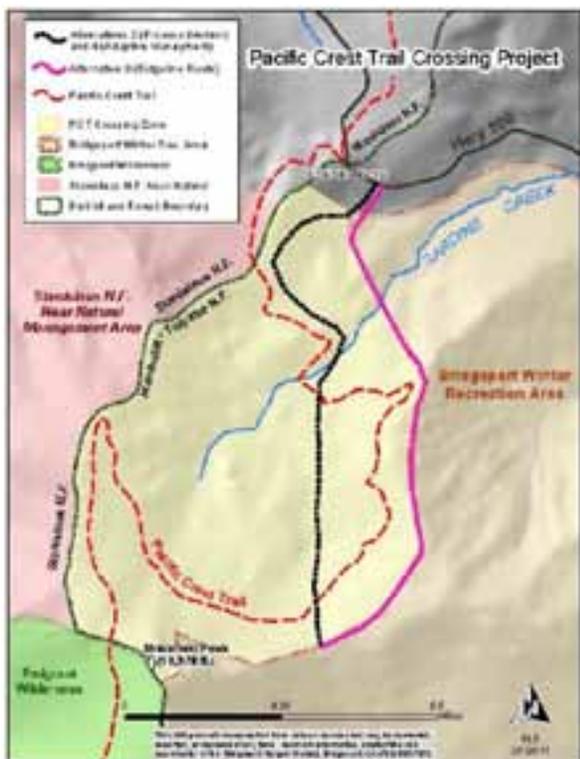
This HTNF decision serves to affirm that snowmobiling is prohibited on the PCT except at authorized crossings, and that the PCT enjoys legal protection even when the trail itself is snow bound. In keeping with this, the designated crossing route steers motorists away from the non-motorized Near Natural Area and the PCT on adjacent Stanislaus NF.

The HTNF will be monitoring the area for wildlife and other impacts; if necessary, human activity in the area may be restricted for certain periods or snowmobiles could be rerouted. Likewise, based on avalanche monitoring, the snowmobile crossing route may be reevaluated.

Bipedal visitors will want to know...

- An entry use permit is required for every recreational visit on the BWRA during snow season. Each visitor's permit may be

Continued on next page



Omnibus Public Lands Management Act *(continued)*

obtained in advance from the forest service or self-issued at the trailhead. (It's easy). The permit is not required for bipedal travel on the PCT here, which is situated entirely outside the BWRA.

- The snowmobile crossing corridor will likely be 10 to 20 feet wide. Pedestrian access in this PCT switchback zone will ordinarily be unlimited — apart from the fact that the heights are steep and demand keen awareness of conditions and attention to avalanche avoidance.

- The snowmobile corridor crosses the PCT twice; the crossing points are about one kilometer apart.

- Snowmobile season opening on the BWRA is never earlier than the first Saturday in December and is otherwise triggered when the minimum snow depth at the Leavitt Lake road & Highway 108 junction is at least 24 inches. If the BWRA is not open to snowmobiles, neither is the snowmobile PCT crossing.

- Snowmobile PCT crossings close at the earliest of any of

these events:

1. Caltrans opens Highway 108 to wheeled traffic

2. Bridgeport District closes snowmobile season on the BWRA (according to snow depth criteria)

3. Snowmobile season end on BWRA is never later than the last Sunday in April

- During snow season, the OSV crossing corridor should usually be identified with removable standing markers. By comparison, if snow is delightfully fresh, the snow-bound switchbacks of the PCT will be invisible. Mmmm.

- Note that significant terrain near to and neighboring the BWRA, such as 20 or more miles of snow-bound highway 108, is not subject to the snowmobile season limits which apply on the BWRA. Snowmobile activity on non-wilderness surroundings of the BWRA may continue even after the BWRA and PCT crossings are seasonally closed to snowmobile use.

A Successful Trail Marking Event

Three Trails Marked on One Weekend!

So many people showed up to help mark trails in the Loon Lake area over the weekend of September 10 and 11 that we had to double-up in the group campsites. But the high turnout meant that we could mark three trails in the Loon Lake area and still have time to rest and chat.

There were 21 volunteers, many volunteering two days, and they all deserve a special thank you.

This was another co-sponsored event between Snowlands Network and El Dorado Nordic Ski Patrol. On the agenda were three trails to be re-marked; the Zephur, the Glissade and the Campground. All three trails intersect on the Loon Lake Campground road. All the trails were in poor condition due to the harshness of the winters and new forest growth, even though some had been marked more than once in the past. Some of the work was especially hard due to the thick brush, yet no one abandoned the trip.

The Zephur trail links the Loon Lake Chalet and the campground road. Whether you are visiting the Chalet for a day or several days, this trail allows you to ski from the Chalet to other trails.

The Campground trail follows a road out to a campground near Loon Lake while the Glissade trail is an outstanding loop that begins on the Loon Lake Campground road and provides great terrain, outstanding vistas and a superb downhill return run.

Participants:

Ken Barnes	Mike & Shirley Barnes
Barry Calfee	Art Clark
Tom & Kris Cumpston	Jim Gibson
Carl Gould	Monte & Julie Hendricks
Janet Hoffmann	Marcus Libkind
Scott Martin	Janet McMartin
James McPherson	David McQuate
Craig Morgado	Rich & Nancy Platt
Bill Potts	David Thesell

For more information on the web about the Chalet, visit www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado/recreation/cabins/loonchalet



Taking a break while marking trails in the Loon Lake area this September

Andesite Peak

Andesite Peak is only ¼ mile off the most heavily used ski and snowshoe trail in California, yet it is visited by few people.

Difficulty: Intermediate west of Andesite Ridge or intermediate-advanced along Andesite Ridge.

Length: 4.6 miles west of Andesite Ridge or 3.4 miles along Andesite Ridge.

Starting Elevation: 7200 feet

Cumulative Elevation Change: +1000, -1000 feet.

Navigation: Road and map.

Time: Half day.

Season: December through mid-April.

Snowmobiles: Low.

Maps: USGS 7.5' series: Norden.

Start: The plowed loading zone on the north side of Interstate 80 at the Castle Peak Area and Boreal Ridge exit. Parking is at the Donner Pass Sno-Park located at the east end of the frontage road on the south side of the interstate at the same exit.

Andesite Peak is a dramatic setting for a snack or lunch. The peak is the high point on Andesite Ridge, overlooks Castle Valley to the east, and has a primo panoramic view that includes Castle Peak. And while this tour begins on what is probably the most heavily used ski and snowshoe trail in California, both of the routes described here avoid all but 0.3 mile of it.

There are two basic routes to the summit of Andesite Peak. The easier route in terms of skiing difficulty skirts Andesite Ridge to the west and ascends the broad west ridge of the peak to the summit. The direct route along Andesite Ridge is more difficult because it is steeper, but it is shorter and easier to follow. The terrain of the more difficult tour is certainly more interesting, and it also takes you past an old miner's cabin.

The first section of both routes is part of the popular Castle Valley and Round Valley (Peter Grubb Hut) route. From the trailhead (1) [numbers in parentheses correspond to numbers on map] ski east on the snow-covered road that parallels the interstate and then northwest for a total of 0.3 mile until you reach a road junction (2). The road continuing northwest (straight) leads to Castle Valley and is closed to snowmobile use. The tours described here follow the road to the west (left).

The route west of Andesite Ridge

Turn west (left) and ski west and then northwest on the road for a total of 0.7 mile until you reach a meadow (4). You may see a road junction shortly after beginning this section; take the north (right) fork if you do.

Ski northwest for 0.9 mile until you reach the west ridge of Andesite Peak (5). Don't expect to see any roads in this area except where they form corridors



Castle Peak from Andesite Ridge

through trees. Only follow a road if it goes in the correct direction and if you see a road junction always take the north or east (right) fork.

Climb east and then north up the west ridge of Andesite Peak for a total of 0.4 mile until you reach the summit of Andesite Peak (7).

The route along Andesite Ridge

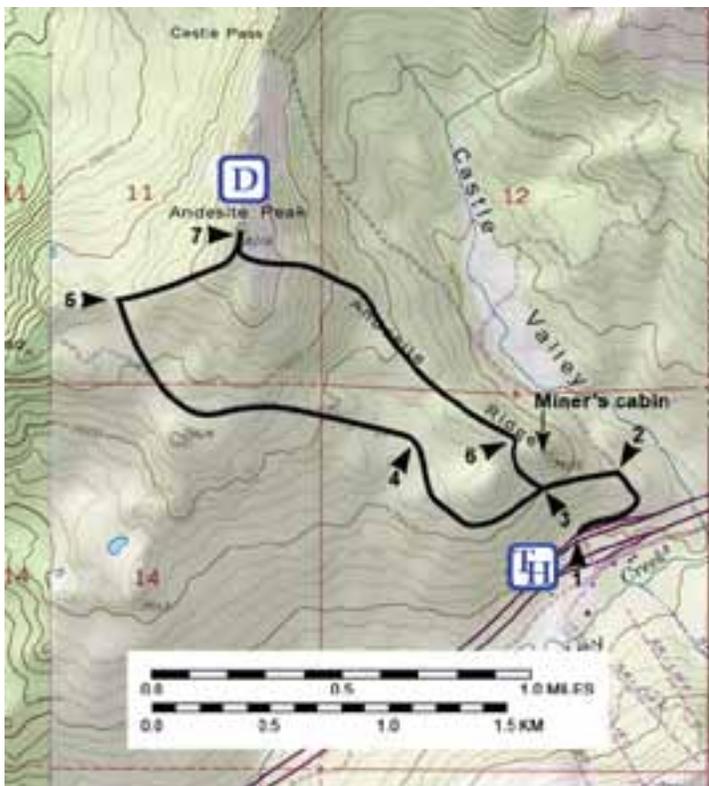
From the road junction (2), turn west (left) and follow the snow-covered road for 0.2 mile until you reach a location where you can leave the road to the north (3). There is no landmark here, but the route to the north heads up a drainage between two knobs.

Leave the road and ascend northwest and then north for a total of 0.1 mile until you reach Andesite Ridge (6). The miner's cabin lies to the southeast on the ridge and just to the northwest of Peak 7605.

Follow Andesite Ridge to the northwest for 0.6 mile until the terrain abruptly becomes more steep and then 0.5 mile more to the summit of Andesite Peak (7).

More information

Visit www.BackcountrySkiTours.com for more information on these and other destinations including mileage logs, elevation profiles and GPS waypoints.



Laurel Harkness Joins Snowlands Board

Laurel Harkness is the newest director of Snowlands Network. Laurel is the Executive Director of the non-profit Mt. Shasta Nordic Ski Organization which operates the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center and community winter trail network. As well, Laurel is also the board chairperson of the Mt. Shasta Recreation and Parks District. Laurel's professional experience has been focused around project management and natural resources conservation. An outdoor fanatic, Laurel spends her free moments skiing, fly-fishing, traveling, cycling, and kayaking. Laurel lives in Mt. Shasta, CA with her two kids. Laurel is a significant addition to the Board, and we welcome her to Snowlands.



Join Us!

Our success depends on you! Join and support us today. Also, please tell your friends about Snowlands Network. Together we can save and protect our snowlands.

Sign up here or join online: www.SaveOurSnowlands.org

\$30 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other _____

Got Bumper Stickers?

Help support Snowlands and share our **Wild About Snowlands**



message with friends! From bumpers to snowboards to school notebooks, our bold sticker is a striking statement. It measures 7-1/4" x 3-3/4" and has a bright blue mountain slope with black lettering.

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On The Town



Genny Wilson, Ranger, Carson District, Humboldt-Toiyabe Nation Forest and Gail Ferrell, President, Snowlands Network, at the showing of *Green Fire: A Documentary on Aldo Leopold*. The event was co-hosted by Snowlands Network, The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, and the Geography Department at the University of Nevada, Reno on November 12, 2011.

Snowlands Network

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