

SNOWLANDS

Bulletin

*Promoting opportunities for quality, human-powered
winter recreation and protecting winter wildlands*

OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION DIVISION CIRCUMVENTS COMMISSION

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division, part of California's Department of Parks and Recreation, runs the state's Sno-Park and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program, which includes managing eight State Vehicle Recreation Areas. Funded 88% by state gas taxes and the remainder from OHV registration and SVRA entrance fees, the Division disburses millions of dollars each year in the form of grants to local, state, and federal agencies to promote and manage OHV recreation. One recipient of these funds is the U. S. Forest Service, which uses the money to groom snowmobile trails and pay for winter law enforcement.

Beginning in 1970, the winter recreation program grew gradually to become an annual \$2 million program by 2002, providing plowing, grooming, and law enforcement. The creation and expansion of the snowmobile trail system was carried out with very little environmental review and has led to the displacement of non-motorized recreation in many areas. National Forests welcomed the recreational funds as the demand for all forms of recreation increased, and the yearly grants became an important part of their recreation and law enforcement budgets.

Policies for the OHMVR Division are set by a 7-member Commission, made up of appointed citizen volunteers representing OHV, law enforcement, land owner, environmental, and other interests. The Commission has the responsibility for approving all grants and cooperative agreements the Division enters into with other agencies.

In 2002, an environmentally-conscious majority on the Commission began to reverse the trend of increased funding for snowmobile trail grooming. Several forests received no funding at all for grooming or winter law enforcement for the 2002-2003 season. The sudden funding loss created much consternation in the OHV community and apparently within the Division itself, which began to gather information on how the loss of funding could adversely affect local economies. Strongly committed to the snowmobile program, the Division began planning ways to provide funding

for grooming without Commission approval and without involving their own Winter Recreation Committee and OHV Stakeholders Roundtable.

Those plans are likely to see fruition this winter. Under newly-appointed Deputy Director Daphne Greene, the Division has implemented a plan to contract with National Forests to provide grooming of snowmobile trails on national forest land, with the Forest Service doing the actual grooming. The State will, in effect, take over control and management of the snowmobile trails and use the federal government as a contractor. The grooming will be funded out of the Division's internal support funds and not out of the \$17 million budgeted this year for external grants.

This convoluted arrangement is necessitated by the State laws that govern the activities of the OHMVR Division. By law, the division cannot give a grant or enter into a cooperative agreement with another agency without the approval of the Commission, which in this case it does not have. In addition, state law only permits the Division to use its internal support funds for lands and trails within the state park system, which does not include National Forests.

Snowlands Networks is of the opinion that the Division is acting illegally by 1) acting outside the policies set for it by the Commission, 2) entering into a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service without the approval of the Commission, and 3) spending support funds on trails not in the state park system.

The Division is also fragmenting the winter recreation program by separating grooming and enforcement. They are funding grooming, plowing, and facilities out of support funds and depending upon the Commission to fund law enforcement. These two efforts should be funded and managed as a single program.

It would seem that the OHMVR Division believes it has a higher mandate than existing law and long-established policy to ensure that the snowmobilers of California will have groomed trails this winter. In attempting to skirt the intent if not the letter of the law, the Division is placing the entire winter recreation program in jeopardy.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you think that the OHMVR Division is acting improperly in funding snowmobile grooming using support funds instead of grants to the Forest Service, write a letter to:

Ruth Coleman, Director
California State Parks
P. O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296

Consider including in your letter the following points:

- The OHMVR Division is acting illegally in funding OSV operations on federal land using support funds that should be spent on lands and trails within the state park system.
- The Division is violating state law by entering into an agreement with the federal government without approval of its Commission.
- The Division is planning on spending \$800,000 this year on grooming, plowing, and other benefits for snowmobilers despite the fact that registered snowmobiles contribute less than \$200,000 to the program. The Division is subsidizing snowmobile operations unlike other forms of recreation, such as downhill and cross-country resort skiing, which are funded out of user fees.
- The system of snowmobile trails in California was created without adequate environmental analysis and without consideration of the impact on other forms of recreation.

Please send a copy of your letter to: Snowlands Network, PO Box 230, Livermore, CA 94551, or e-mail a copy to issues@snowlands.org.

The mission of Snowlands Network is to promote opportunities for quality human-powered winter recreation and to protect winter wildlands. We will educate the public and government agencies about winter recreation and environmental issues.

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Snowlands Network

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E-mail: info@snowlands.org
Website: www.snowlands.org
Editor: Jim Gibson

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Deputy Director Greene Responds

Thank you for providing the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division the opportunity to provide information regarding the changes in the California Winter Recreation program.

As many are aware, I accepted the position as Deputy Director for the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) program because of my deep commitment to the provision of high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities that can be sustained through sound environmental practices. As Deputy Director of the OHMVR Division it is my responsibility to uphold California State Parks Mission as well as the OHMVR Division Mission. To this end, one of my goals is to define and address the common needs of recreationists as well as the issues that divide recreation communities and individual users.

The provision of winter recreation opportunities is an excellent example where the needs and issues require analysis and change. As California's population and demand for recreation increases the OHMVR Division is continually working to balance the needs of winter recreationists with concerns associated with the environment. The current California State Parks winter recreation program provides 21 Sno-Parks throughout the State. This program is funded solely through the sale of Sno-Park permits. In addition, The OHMVR program encompasses a winter recreation element which provides for the plowing of motorized snow parks, snowmobile trailheads, trail grooming, cleaning of restrooms & emptying of trash, etc. Traditionally, this program has been funded through the grants process. Fierce competition and changing priorities has decreased the emphasis for this recreation opportunity, but by no means has decreased the need for it. The Division has recognized the need for a comprehensive winter recreation program, which embraces both non-motorized and motorized recreation and is moving towards combining the two separate winter recreation programs into a single program to better meet the needs of Californians. Appropriate, stable funding is a key goal.

Contrary to your statements, the OHMVR Division is not attempting to undermine the OHMVR Commission and I am concerned by your suggestion that the Division is acting illegally. To that end, the OHMVR Division has legal authority to enter into agreements with various public and private entities for the provision of OHV recreational opportunities. The OHMVR Division welcomes input regarding the implementation of the snow program and the OHMVR Commission has indicated a desire hear comments on this issue at upcoming meetings in 2005.

The OHMVR Division desires to work collaboratively and in true partnership with the OHMVR Commission, various recreation groups and communities, the environmental community, law enforcement and Federal, State, and local agencies to create a fun, efficient and safe winter recreation program in California.

Daphne C. Greene, Deputy Director

DODGE RIDGE EXPANSION PLANS IMPROVE

Dodge Ridge Ski Area (DRSA) wishes to build parking lots and a lift-served, fee-based snowtubing area. While backcountry skiers may welcome the additional parking, the snowplay area will be built in the area currently occupied by the beginning of the Gooseberry Nordic Ski Trail.

Stanislaus National Forest issued a decision in September 2004 that found no significant impact for the project, permitting the construction of the parking lots to proceed, but deferred a decision on whether to allow the snowtubing facility. Snowlands is pleased to report that the decision rejected the original Proposed Action, which would have required the Gooseberry Nordic Ski Trail to be relocated to a very undesirable location, resulting in the trail melting out early in the Spring because of a southern exposure.

The Environmental Analysis and Decision documents may be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/stanislaus/projects/dodge/index.shtml>

The Decision as it was issued requires that the Gooseberry Trail be moved, even if the snowtubing facility is not built. However, comments from Snowlands Network and other concerned individuals lead the Forest Service to choose Alternative 4, which relocates the trail to a place where it is less impacted. It also requires that DRSA reserve 16 parking places near the new trail head for cross-country skiers and snowshoers, and build an informational kiosk at the trailhead. The decision on building the snowtubing facility was held up pending analysis of the impact of the facility on the nearby commercial snow play area at Leland Meadows.

Although Alternative 4 is much better than the Proposed Plan, Snowlands appealed the decision because the Gooseberry trail would be relocated, and snow conditions adversely affected, even

if the snowtubing facility was not built. Snowlands also disputed the claim by the Forest Service that moving the trail would improve safety. There had been no data introduced in the original environmental assessment of a safety problem at the current location, which would still be used by the public if the trail is moved.

Marcus Libkind and Jim Gibson of Snowlands met with Stanislaus NF Supervisor Tom Quinn and NF staff to discuss the Snowlands appeal. Quinn expressed concern about preserving the opportunity for backcountry skiers and finding the best location for the Gooseberry trail. He agreed to monitor the snow conditions this season and possibly next season to see if the proposed trail location has good snow cover in the spring. Quinn also explained that if the trail were not relocated, DRSA might not agree to set aside parking for backcountry skiers and build a kiosk. Marcus also brought up the issue of downhill skiers using the Gooseberry trail as an out-of-bounds downhill ski trail.

In a letter to Quinn after the meeting, Marcus stated under what circumstances Snowlands would withdraw their appeal. Quinn responded saying that he would agree (with clarifications) to all requests except for prohibiting DRSA customers using the Gooseberry trail. The agreement includes monitoring snow depth for one or more years before determining to where the trail should be relocated. The best location, with limitations should the snowtubing facility be constructed, will be determined collaboratively between the Forest Service, Snowlands Network and the Nordic Ski Patrol.

Since the tentative agreement provides the backcountry ski and snowshoe community a good outcome, Snowlands plans to withdraw its appeal.

SNOWMOBILE REGULATIONS INSUFFICIENT

On June 1 a Federal appeals court ordered the EPA to review and clarify regulations that would allow thousands of new snowmobiles to be sold with outdated, inadequate pollution controls, even after new EPA rules take full effect in 2012.

“Over and over, EPA has argued that its 2002 emissions standards for snowmobiles are as protective as they can possibly be,” said Earthjustice attorney Jim Pew, who represented Bluewater Network and Environmental Defense. “The court has disagreed, and sent EPA back to the drawing board.”

The conservation groups went to court to challenge the EPA’s inadequate national emissions standards for snowmobiles powered by inefficient, dirty engines that dump 25-30 percent of their fuel unburned out their tailpipes.

“The federal court of appeals has given EPA its marching orders: to put in place tough standards that will protect public health and the environment from snowmobiles,” said Environmental Defense senior attorney Vickie Patton. “The court’s decision shows that there is no place for these high-polluting engines when cost-effective

clean air solutions are at hand.”

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to set standards reflecting the greatest degree of emission reductions achievable through technology that will be available. Yet the agency’s 2002 snowmobile standards—which will not be fully implemented until 2012—do not even require manufacturers to use technology that is already available. In fact, the standards allow nearly one-third of the snowmobiles manufactured in 2012 to be almost as dirty and noisy as those being made today.

“Today’s precedent setting ruling makes clear that the Bush administration’s snowmobile pollution rules were arbitrary and capricious and appeared to focus on protecting industry’s bottom line rather than our national parks and wilderness areas,” said Sean Smith, Bluewater Network’s public lands director and a former park ranger. “It’s time for the EPA to do its job and require the snowmobile industry to clean up its act.”

Snowlands Network is proud to have Bluewater Network as an affiliate member.

PARKING REGULATIONS

Have you ever wondered if it is legal to park in that pullout along the side of the road or that cleared area made by a snow blower? Skiers, snowshoers and snowboarders trying to gain access to lessor-used and more remote areas are often faced with this dilemma.

This article tries to answer the question of where it is legal to park during the snow season. Be sure to read the disclaimer at the end of the article.

Section 22510 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC) grants various authorities the right, for the purpose of snow removal, to prohibit or restrict the parking (or standing) of vehicles on designated streets or highways. The section describes in detail how the roadways must be sign-posted in order to make the prohibitions or restrictions effective.

The authority to implement such snow removal regulations is not often invoked. The most likely places to see such prohibitions or restrictions are at locations used by CalTrans to turn-around their equipment.

If specific prohibitions or restrictions are not invoked via CVC 22510, then it appears that CVC 22504(a) is the governing regulation. It states that upon any highway (without curbs) in unincorporated areas it is illegal to stop, park, or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the roadway except in very specific situations. In short, it is illegal to park on the roadway of any highway except in some special situations.

The California Vehicle Code also defines "highway" and "roadway" as:

CVC 360 "Highway" is a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. Highway includes street.

CVC 530 A "roadway" is that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel.

One conclusion that could be drawn is that barring specific prohibitions or restrictions it is permissible to park adjacent to a roadway in a pullout or to the right of the fog-line.

Be aware that some cities and counties, especially in the greater Lake Tahoe area, have very restrictive winter parking regulations. For example, in the Serene Lakes area at Donner Pass there is absolutely no parking on the roadway side of the snow stakes.

Disclaimer

The preceding information has been assembled after contacting the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Alpine County Sheriff's Department, and reviewing sections of the California Vehicle Code. However, its correctness and/or completeness are not guaranteed.

To read the CVC online go to:

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>

Then check the box for "Vehicle Code," in the search box type what you want to search on, and in the next dialogue box click on the portion of the CVC that you want to read. According to the CHP Sections 22500 through 22526 contain all the parking laws.

FEE DEMO IS PERMANENT

It really doesn't make a difference if you call it the Recreation Fee "Demonstration" Program (the official name) or the "Recreation Access Tax", what was a demonstration program dating back to 1996 and extended multiple times, is now all but permanent.

Fee Demo has been praised by some, but for the most part the environmental community, including the Sierra Club, has opposed it. Snowlands Network's directors went on record as opposing it with their vote on May 3, 2003. Those opposing the program view it as one more step in the commercialization and privatization of our public lands that is being pushed by corporate America, with very little proven benefit to our public lands.

In a see-saw battle, filled with shenanigans and what some call dirty politics and brutally applied abuse of raw power, a ten-year extension of Fee Demo became law on November 20, 2004. The extension was included as a rider on the Interior Appropriations Bill, and was pushed by Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), the original author of Fee Demo and whose state has no affected public lands. Extending Fee Demo through a rider means that the House of Representatives was never given a chance to vote on the bill (HR 3283) and the bill was never introduced into the Senate.

Supposedly the new law specifically states where and what a fee may and may not be charged for. The question that remains unanswered is whether this will put an end to the current policy where fees can be charged even if all you want to do is pull over to the side of the road, spread out a blanket, and have a picnic lunch.

TAHOE MEADOWS NIGHT PATROLS

Snowlands Network continues to push for a complete ban of snowmobiles in Tahoe Meadows. Snowmobiles, which are able to hit speeds in excess of 100 mph, regularly leave the area set aside for them and enter the Mt. Rose Wilderness and Galena drainage. Both areas are closed to snowmobiles.

Last winter the Carson Ranger District spent \$40,000 on enforcement in the area and issued two citations for illegal use of snowmobiles in the Galena drainage. Both were to the same party of two people. Over the past two years the District recorded only one trespass into the Mt. Rose Wilderness. During the same period the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit recorded more than 100 trespasses into the Wilderness.

In a surprise recent announcement, the Forest Service now says that they have a problem greater than their data shows. They now say illegal incursions into the backcountry continue and appear to increasingly be taking place at night.

District Range Gary Schiff says that could prompt a change in patrolling strategy. He says the plan is for more night patrols and more tickets. He says the Forest Service wants to send a message.

The Nevada States Parks has again given the Forest Service

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Tahoe Meadows, *continued from page 4*

\$40,000 to enforce the snowmobile regulations in the Tahoe Meadows area. We've done the math, and this sum of money should put a team on the ground almost every day throughout the winter. Snowlands will wait and see if they do any better this season citing the bad guys.

In contrast to past Forest Service data, Snowlands Network's most active monitor of the area has reported 37 snowmobile intrusions in the Mt. Rose Wilderness and the Galena drainage over the last four years to the Forest Service. Many of his reports included photos.

How can you help? It's easy!

Simply go skiing, snowboarding or snowshoeing in Galena drainage or Mt. Rose Wilderness. If you see any evidence of snowmobile

use in these areas, record the following information:

- Date and time
- Location (as specific as possible)
- What you saw:
 - snowmobile tracks
 - actual snowmobile use in a closed area
 - unsafe snowmobile use
 - damage to soils and plants from snowmobile use
- How the snowmobile use affected your experience

Photos or video of the trespass are helpful, but not necessary. E-mail the information to gail@snowlands.org or mail to Gail Ferrell, P.O. Box 18554, Reno, NV 89511, along with your name, address and telephone number. Feel free to contact Gail with any questions or comments.

CONFERENCE STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF FORGING RELATIONSHIPS

Snowlands Network Directors Marcus Libkind and Gail Ferrell attended the three-day Second Grassroots Advocacy Conference, hosted by Winter Wildlands Alliance at Bogus Basin Ski Area, Idaho, in October. Marcus and Gail also serve on WWA's Board of Directors.

The 40 attendees came from across the country and included activists, Forest Service personnel, skiers, snowshoers, snowmobilers, attorneys, and a soundscape consultant. Conference sessions included: how to participate in the complicated process of travel management planning, legal strategies, building a diverse statewide advocacy group, membership and fund-raising, and the economic significance of non-motorized users. In short, there was something for everyone.

One of the highlights of the conference was the keynote address by Mike Finley, former Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park and current President of The (Ted) Turner Foundation. During his address, Finley told attendees that the key to success is developing relationships with uncommon allies.

Dave Holland, Director of Recreation and Heritage for the US Forest Service, discussed how to use the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that Winter Wildlands Alliance signed earlier this year with the Forest Service. He specifically suggested that activists use the MOU to partner with local Forest Service personnel to develop much needed research projects that result in unequivocal data. Holland noted that this research and data is sorely needed for better management of public lands, citing the highest need for social data including economic impacts, demographics and how skier/snowshoer presence can have a positive effect on surrounding communities.

The finale of the conference included three case studies of groups

who have experience both successes and failures in working with the Forest Service. Of special interest to Marcus and Gail was Dale Neubauer's (Central Oregon Backcountry Skiers) talk on strategies to engage land managers. His examples included the safety issue of having pedestrians (skiers and snowshoers) in the same area as high speed machinery (snowmobiles); the importance of resubmitting existing information previously provided to the Forest Service in the past; and using the press to publicize issues. He also discussed the importance of capitalizing on setbacks, pointing out that if the Forest Service acknowledges an issue, does not act upon it, and there is a problem, it becomes a public relations nightmare for them.

Sally Ferguson, acting Director of Winter Wildlands Alliance, finished the conference by reiterating Finley's earlier message. She told the crowd that the biggest lesson from the weekend was that forging relationships – be it with similar constituents, diverse groups with similar goals, the land management agency, and even the opposition – is one of the basic tools that will bring success.

Marcus and Gail returned home to California and Nevada, respectively, with new ideas and plans to be more effective.

Winter Wildlands Alliance is the national version of Snowlands Network. They work on issues that Snowlands does not have the ability to address. They give the backcountry non-motorized winter recreation community a national presence. The Memorandum Of Understanding with the Forest Service is an excellent example of what they can accomplish for us.

You can contact Winter Wildlands Alliance at 910 Main Street, Suite 235, Boise, ID 83702, 208-336-4203, info@winterwildlands.org or www.winterwildlands.org. Tell them that you heard about them from Snowlands.

SNOWLANDS SPEAKS OUT

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division has a big impact on non-motorized winter recreation because they are responsible for Sno-Parks and they promote snowmobile opportunities to the tune of approximately \$800,000 per year. The directors of Snowlands Network regularly attend Division meetings and speaks out on behalf of the non-motorized winter recreation community. In this article we describe two recent meetings.

Commission Meeting

On October 29, Jim Gibson and Marcus Libkind attended the OHMVR Commission meeting where grants to the Forest Service and other agencies were considered. This year grants for snowmobile trail grooming were not considered in this process, but grants for enforcement were.

Jim and Marcus were both disappointed with the lack of sufficient funds approved for winter enforcement. This is the second year in which this has happened. On the bright side, we were able to help push through three important grants.

One grant funds the Mono County Sheriff and one grant funds the Bridgeport Ranger District to enforce the motor vehicle closure both winter and summer on the Proposed Hoover Wilderness Additions. This is a big deal because the Forest Service had previously stated that they would not enforce the closure because of a lack of funding.

The third grant provides funding for Stanislaus National Forest to hire a facilitator to oversee meetings aimed at moving their winter recreation plan forward. This will give us a wonderful opportunity to put forth ideas that improve human-powered winter recreation along the Bear Valley corridor.

Winter Recreation Workshop

On December 11, Janet Hoffmann and Jim Gibson attended a public workshop hosted by the OHMVR Division. The Division is in the process of trying to revamp it's winter recreation programs, and the purpose of the workshop was to bring together interested parties and agencies to brainstorm ways to make the OHMVR program more responsive to all winter user groups. Public agency representatives at the meeting, in addition to OHMVR staff, included people from the US Forest Service for the California Region as well as from Plumas and Eldorado National Forests and a sheriff from Calaveras County. Representing the motorized community were snowmobile concession owners with permits in the Hope Valley and Bear Valley, two private snowmobilers from the Highway 108 area, and a representative of the California Nevada Snowmobile Organization. Representing non-motorized users was a person from the Audubon Society and the two Snowlands Board members.

The agenda items put on the table for group input were Sno-Parks, snow play, OHV trailhead parking, snow grooming and plowing, use conflict, planning and safety. One need which was identified early was for the State OHMVR Division to coordinate more with other agencies like the US Forest Service, Cal-Trans and various county sheriff's departments. The OHMVR Division is authorized to contract with the owners of lands adjacent to state facilities, such as the US Forest Service, in order to help provide recreational opportunities. Based on this authority the state has provided snow

grooming money for trails on National Forest Land. (see article on page 1.) However it is up to land managers such as the Forest Service and various county sheriff's departments to regulate the use of snowmobiles on or around these state funded trails, thus creating a need for coordination of programs between agencies.

Another issue that was raised was that of irresponsible and sometimes dangerous use of snowmobiles rented from concessionaires who provide limited instruction and do not guide their customers on the trails. However, no one was able to provide an estimate of how much of the irresponsible use could be attributed to snowmobile renters.

Representatives of snowmobile groups at the meeting argued for the need for more access and a larger system of trails to meet growing demand. Problems with expansion which were brought up included infringing on non-motorized use areas and lack of funding for grooming more trails. One suggestion for funding was a user fee system for groomed trails. Permits and limits on trail use were also discussed.

It was generally agreed that having separation of trails for motorized and non-motorized users would be the best way to deal with user conflicts. The sticking point appears to be in how to divide up the easily accessible areas because neither group wants to lose any of it's current use area. It was also suggested that increased education of all users as to trail etiquette would lead to fewer conflicts and increased safety for all users. However this does not address the basic conflict between any motorized use and non-motorized users who seek a peaceful, unpolluted atmosphere in which to enjoy nature.

This was the an early attempt to involve the public in resolving some long-standing issues and problems. The OHMVR Division has promised to have more of these meetings as their planning process continues. We will provide notification of these meetings through our alert system so please attend future meetings if you are able. They need more input from the non-motorized community so let us know if you want to become more involved with these issues.

Snowlands Editor:

I would like your readers to know that beginning this winter Lost Trail Lodge, located 4 miles from Truckee up snow-covered Coldstream Canyon, will rent on a per-person per-night basis as well as the entire lodge to a single group. The difference is that the group rate includes Sno-Cat transportation for equipment and food while the per-person rate does not.

We are providing this new option because we know it is difficult to assemble a group of 16 necessary to fill the entire lodge. Other than the mechanized transportation, the amenities are the same including gourmet kitchen, full baths in each room, and a beautiful parlor.

Thank you for your efforts to represent the needs of the backcountry ski and snowshoe communities. David Robertson, Lost Trail Lodge, 530-320-9268 www.losttrailodge.com

THIRD ANNUAL FALL BENEFITS A SUCCESS

Snowlands Network hosted two benefit events this year on Nov. 5 and 6. The event on Nov. 5 was in Berkeley to facilitate attendance by East Bay supporters who were unable to make it to Palo Alto last year. The event on Nov. 6 was once again at the Patagonia facility in Reno, where Gail Ferrell has built up a large group of loyal Snowlands supporters. This year's speaker was Ben Marshall, a mountain guide and artist who has traveled to many areas of the globe. He showed slides and talked about his trip to South Georgia Island near Antarctica. His group retraced on skis the route taken by Ernest Shackleton during his ill-fated voyage to Antarctica in 1914. His program was filled with personal insights and anecdotes as well as information about the amazingly abundant wildlife and diverse landscapes of Antarctica.

Refreshments were served at both locations with time to munch and meet fellow supporters of Snowlands Network. It was gratifying to see many new faces among the crowd and hear some of our supporters concerns and interests. There was also some enthusiastic bidding on our auction items, donated by businesses and individuals who support the Snowlands cause. All in all the event was a success for Snowlands in raising much needed funds to continue our work. I also think that it was a very worthwhile evening of entertainment and interaction with fellow supporters of winter backcountry recreation and preservation. We want to thank all of those who participated for their help in making this year's events a success.

Janet Hoffmann

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Snowlands would like to thank those individuals and businesses who donated items and services for our benefit auction:

Bicycle Bananas, Reno, NV
Bicycle Warehouse, Reno, NV
Bittersweet Publishing, Livermore, CA
Charlotte Cox, Reno, NV
Doug Saum, Artist, Reno, NV
Erik Holland, Artist, Reno, NV
Jenni Eisenbarth-Porter, Elemental Wellness Massage, Reno, NV
KPSI3, Advertising, Reno, NV
Laughing Cat Coffee Roaster Coffee and Gifts, Reno, NV
Lost Trail Lodge, Truckee, CA
Marcus Libkind, Livermore, CA
Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe, Reno, NV
Mountain Adventure Seminars, Bear Valley, CA
Newman's Deli, Reno, NV

Polly Peacock, Artist, Reno, NV
Quiznos, 75 Damonte Ranch Parkway, Reno, NV
Raley's, 18144 Wedge Parkway, Reno, NV
REI, Berkeley, CA
REI, Reno, NV
Rock Creek Lodge, Toms Place, CA
Sierra Contra Dance Society, Reno, NV
Silver Peak Restaurant and Brewery, Reno, NV
The Sporting Rage, Carson City, NV
Starbucks, 18250 Wedge Parkway, Reno, NV
Terri Michel, Mt. View, CA
Trader Joe's, 5035 McCarran Blvd., Reno, NV
Victoria Wallington, Massage Therapist, Reno, NV
Western Mountaineering, San Jose, CA
Wilderness Exchange, Berkeley, CA
Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA

WHAT KEEPS US GOING?

There is a core group at Snowlands Network that volunteer untold hours to represent the backcountry ski, snowshoe and snowboard community. Time and again we ask ourselves, "Why we are doing this?" Certainly we would all rather be skiing, hiking or boating in the great outdoors. Some people wonder, "How do we endure the disappointments associated with being so close to the issues?"

The answer to these questions is lengthy and often philosophical. But when you get down to the nitty-gritty, what often keeps us going are just a few simple words from our supporters such as Skip Smith who wrote, "Many thanks to you for your amazing level of commitment to these issues. You are inspiration for all of us that revel in the experiences offered to us in the backcountry."

We also gain much needed moral support knowing that we have many long-time supporters that year-after-year renew their memberships, and seeing new members come on board each year. Member Susan Kotler recently wrote "Thanks for all your hard

work in preserving motor-free ski areas. Someday I hope to join you on one of your trips. For now I am in Alabama but support you from afar – Cheers!"

The Board of Directors at Snowlands Network thanks Skip, Susan, and all the others who have given us the will to keep going.

The Board of Directors

Volunteers

The Board of Directors of Snowlands Network would like to recognize Gay Havens for the help she has given us through her volunteer work. This past summer she converted countless hand-written names and address to a digital format. Thank you very much for the help.

DONORS, SPONSORS, AND MEMBERS

Snowlands Network's Board of Directors would like to express its sincere appreciation to our donors, business sponsors (see page 10) and those of you who became or renewed your membership over the past year. Your contributions are a vital link in making our work possible.

This month Snowlands Network will begin a search for an Executive Director. This is a major event in the evolution of Snowlands. It will permit us to more effectively represent you in the revision

process of the Land and Resource Management Plans that are beginning on many of California's National Forests. These plans are very important because they will determine how the forests are managed for the following 15 to 20 years and will affect the future of backcountry skiing, snowshoeing and snowboarding.

With your support we will make a difference!

The following list is for approximately 12 months ending November 30, 2004.

Gold Circle Donors (\$10,000)

Fairweather Foundation
Morgan Family Foundation
Anonymous

Silver Circle Donors (\$5,000)

Patagonia

Bronze Circle Donors (\$1,000)

Arthur Schultz
Sorensen's Resort
Recreational Equipment Inc.

Life Members (\$750)

John and Patty Brissenden
Gail Ferrell
Jim Gibson
Janet Hoffmann
Robin Leong
Clifford Liehe
Marcus Libkind
John Rawlings
Richard Simpson
Charles White

Benefactors (\$250)

Backcountry Skiing Section
Guy and Janet Ayers
Elsie Brown
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Lost and Found

A jacket was left at the Berkeley Senior Center on November 5 following Snowlands Network's Third Annual Fundraising Event. Please call 925-455-5816 or email marcus@snowlands.org if this jacket is yours.

Affiliate Members

Snowlands Network is very proud to have the following organizations as our affiliates. Through communication and collaboration we all become more informed and more effective.

Backcountry Skiers Alliance, CO
Bluewater Network
Carson Valley Trails Association
Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation
Friends of Hope Valley
Friends of Kirkwood
High Sierra Hikers Association
Natural Trails and Waters Coalition
Planning and Conservation League
Sierra Nevada Alliance

ENJOY THE BANFF MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL AND SUPPORT SNOWLANDS

This year REI has chosen Snowlands Network to co-sponsor the Banff Mountain Film Festival on Thursday, February 24 at Fremont High School in Sunnyvale (1279 Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road). The show begins at 7:00 PM. REI will donate the net proceeds from the event to Snowlands for support of our work.

Tickets are \$12 for REI members and \$15 for non-members in advance, and \$15 at the door if not sold out. You can purchase tickets for this showing of the festival at these REI stores:



Saratoga 400 El Paseo de Saratoga
San Carlos 1119 Industrial Road, Suite 1B
Fremont 43962 Fremont Blvd.

You can also arrange for Will Call tickets by calling 408-871-8765.

Beginning January 3 you can get more information, including tentative film list and directions to Fremont High School, at www.rei.com/stores.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Fall is the busiest season for Snowlands Network and for that reason you may be receiving the December *Bulletin* in January. The delay is not because we have been lazy. In the last two months we have met with the Daphne Greene, the new Deputy Director of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, attended two OHMVR Division and Commission meetings, attended the first meeting of the Pathway 2007 Forum for revision of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit management plan, attended the Winter Wildlands Alliance Grassroots Conference, hosted our two annual fundraising events, did the groundwork for this February's Banff Film Festival, and appealed the decision on a Dodge Ridge Ski Area expansion plan and met with the Forest Service regarding that appeal. Oh, and just one minor thing, Snowlands Network continued its funding raising efforts that resulted in major grants from two foundations and other sizeable donations. Combined with membership donations we are set to hire an executive director!

Although Snowlands believes that keeping you informed is a major part of our mission, these other things were just too important to miss. So here it is, the December *Snowlands Bulletin*. I hope that you find it informative.

Switching subjects, I want to say a few words about this year's November fundraising events in Berkeley and Reno. Regardless if we raised a penny or not, I personally believe that they are important because it is one of the few times the directors can put faces together with their names. I truly enjoy this time to meet, if only for a few minutes, with people who are otherwise only a name on a piece of paper.

As membership renewals come in I think about the many years some of these people have been supporting us. In most cases I have never met them. In too few cases have I corresponded directly with them. But with 450 members, and growing, it's impossible to stay personally in touch with everyone. That said, I would at least like to take this opportunity to thank every one of you, on behalf of the entire Board of Directors, for your support.

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season, a great New Year, and have lots of fantastic winter adventures in the months ahead.

Marcus Libkind

SNOWLANDS SEEKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Snowlands Network is actively seeking a full-time, experienced Executive Director to lead the transition from an all-volunteer organization to one with a paid staff. Duties include administration, constituency building, and fundraising. The successful applicant will develop, direct, and execute issue-related programs. The position requires excellent written and verbal communication skills, fundraising experience is a must, and knowledge of winter recreation issues a plus. The office will be located in the greater Sacramento/San Francisco Bay Area. See www.snowlands.org for more information. Send your resume to gail@snowlands.org or Gail Ferrell, P.O. Box 18554, Reno, NV 89511.

Join Snowlands Network Today ... Together we will make a difference!

Our success depends on generous individuals like you who care about the future of the winter environment and backcountry winter sports. Through your support Snowlands Network will be effective in representing human-powered winter recreation enthusiasts who seek a wilderness-like experience on our public lands.

Your membership in Snowlands Network will give you:

- ✓ The peace-of-mind that someone is representing your interests on winter environmental and recreation issues.
- ✓ The benefits of an organization networking with state and national environmental and recreation organizations on winter issues.
- ✓ Regular updates on current issues, both through e-mail alerts and a subscription to the *Snowlands Bulletin*.

Please be as generous as you can. Your membership contribution is tax-deductible.* Checks should be made payable to Snowlands Network or pay by credit card.

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12/04

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