

SNOWLANDS

Bulletin

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

Groomed Trails or Backcountry Skiing at Burton Creek State Park?

We currently have a unique opportunity to insure that skiers and snowshoers who desire a backcountry experience, as opposed to one on groomed trails, will have access to Burton Creek State Park at Lake Tahoe. The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is in the process of preparing a comprehensive long-range general plan to guide the use and management of Burton Creek State Park, CTC Dollar Property, Tahoe State Recreation Area and the Klausen Parcel within the Lake Tahoe basin. The plan to be developed includes both winter and summer use on these adjacent properties, which are located just outside the Tahoe City.

According to Karl Knapp of the California State Parks Sierra District, in general the public currently can use Burton Creek State Park lands for skiing, snowshoeing and snow play without paying the local Nordic center a trail fee provided they do not use the groomed trails. He also stated that not all the roads in the park are groomed.

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Will Yellowstone Decision Phase Out Snowmobiles?

Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks are collecting public comments regarding the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on snowmobile use. This document reaffirms the original decision to eliminate recreational snowmobile use.

Snowlands Network supports "Alternative 1A," which would allow only snowcoaches to operate over the groomed roads. We need to show the Bush administration that off-road vehicle abuse cannot be allowed in our nation's first national park.

The National Park Service has released a new analysis of the impact of snowmobile use on Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The Park Service needs to hear from you that it should not back away from its original decision

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Do You Support Our Work?

This issue of the Snowlands Bulletin contains a great deal of information on what we are doing to represent the backcountry ski, snowshoe and snowboard community. All our work is performed by volunteers, but we need your membership support in order to show government agencies that we truly represent the community. Your monetary contribution is also needed to cover expenses including the publication of this bulletin. After reading this bulletin, if you agree that the work of Snowlands Network is important, please complete the membership application on page 7, and return it to us in the enclosed postage paid envelop.

Marcus Libkind Appointed To Winter Recreation Committee

Decision Made To Enable New Ski Hut To Open

SnoPark legislation that took effect January 1, 2002 mandated the Director of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in California to appoint a Winter Recreation Committee to advise the director on winter recreation issues and review DPR proposals. Marcus Libkind, President of Snowlands Network was appointed to the committee to represent non-motorized winter recreationists.

At the Winter Recreation Committee's first meeting on February 15, 2002 it was agreed that the committee supported the funding of the Van Vleck Emergency Shelter near Loon Lake. Provided that the money can be made available from a tight budget, the shelter will be funded and constructed this summer. Construction of the shelter is the last piece in the puzzle to allow the Forest Service to open the Van Vleck Bunkhouse to winter use. (Look for more information on the Bunkhouse in the Fall 2002 issue of the Snowlands Bulletin.)

The location of the Van Vleck Emergency Shelter is centrally located so that it will also act as a midway point along the route to a planned hut at Shadow Lake.

The committee also decided to recommend to the Director that there be minority representation on the committee. Minorities constitute 50 percent of the snow players that visit

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Conflict Tracking Project

Forest Service policy assumes there are no conflicts between recreation users unless complaints are received to that effect. Efforts by Snowlands Network to represent the human-powered winter recreation community on issues of conflict are thwarted when the Forest Service claims that they have received no complaints. It is for this reason that Snowlands sponsors the California/Nevada User Conflict Tracking Project.

Through this project the public is provided with an easy method for contacting the Forest Service concerning conflicts between motor and non-motor vehicle users. Snowlands supplies the forms and transmits the completed forms to the appropriate agency.

Snowlands Network urges you to participate in this project. This is an opportunity to take a step beyond being frustrated by a lack of quality winter recreation opportunities and voice your concerns to the Forest Service.

We have enclosed an Incident Reporting Form. Complete it and return it to Snowlands Network if you have had a negative experience in the backcountry. Make copies of it for future use. The form can also be downloaded from the internet or filled out on-line at:

www.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.

Board of Directors

Marcus Libkind	President
Jim Gibson	Secretary
Charles White	Treasurer
Gail Ferrell	
Bill Flower	
Janet Hoffmann	

Regional Coordinator

Gail Ferrell	Lake Tahoe
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Editor

Marcus Libkind

Snowlands Network

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For Love of the Wild

Can You Make a Difference?

This may seem like an unusual place for an article that appeals to the Existential need to find Meaning in our lives. But my advocacy for backcountry skiing has brought more meaning to my life!

About four years ago I found myself increasingly angry at the oppressive effect of snowmobiles on skiing in the Tahoe Meadows area. This four-square-mile area just west of the Mt. Rose Summit between Reno and Lake Tahoe is a popular cross-country skiing and sledding area. Over the years the steady increase in snowmobiles and their accompanying speed-hazards, noise and smell overwhelmed this place of once quiet beauty and drove off former users. I found myself avoiding Tahoe Meadows and that made me mad.

I committed myself to doing something about this problem. In time I showed that 93 percent of the users of the Meadows are there for non-motorized recreation, yet motorized use dominated the recreation experience. It seemed only a matter of time before a snowmobiler would collide with a child on a sled, a dog, or a skier making an unexpected turn.

I began my new advocacy effort by making an appointment with the District Ranger of the Forest Service. Yes, I was nervous. I did not know what to expect, or even how I would approach this problem. During that appointment I learned a revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan was about to begin and it was an opportune time to sway the Forest Service on land-use restrictions. A 60-day period for public comment was about to begin.

I knew that changing the status quo in Tahoe Meadows would be difficult. I thought the most effective thing I could do right away was line up as many supporters as possible, so I immediately began collecting e-mail addresses, placing mastery of Forest Service regulations second in priority. I made up flyers and passed them out at places like Earth Day.

After almost a year, I had hundreds of email addresses. In the process, I connected with other activists, which was very encouraging. It boosted my morale and showed that building support and gaining expertise could take leaps as well as small steps. Marcus Libkind of Nordic Voice (now of Snowlands Network) and Sara Michael of the Nordic and Backcountry Skiers Alliance of Idaho had much experience and also had lists of supporters of quiet outdoor winter recreation. With their help, and the local Sierra Club chapter, we generated 2000 letters to the Forest Service.

It took over two years of generating public comments, meeting with the Forest Service, taking photos and creating reports of snowmobile violations in the Meadows. A big breakthrough came in getting support from Senator Harry Reid. Then it finally happened. This winter the Forest Service closed approximately 70% of the Tahoe Meadows to snowmobiles.

When I go to the Meadows now, I am filled with a sense of gratitude and peacefulness: I made a difference. You can too.

Gail Ferrell

Snowlands Network Board of Directors Meets

We would have rather been out skiing, but there were issues to be discussed and work to be done. So we resisted temptation and stayed indoors to hold the fourth meeting of the Snowlands Network Board of Directors at Tahoe City on Saturday, February 2.

Snowlands Network is still new enough that a fair amount of time was spent on “start-up” issues – we polished the mission statement, refined our website, revised the bylaws, and discussed how to best communicate among ourselves and with the various winter-recreation communities. And a portion of the day was spent on bureaucratic matters – finances, business details, and the composition of the board. Marcus Libkind and Charley White were elected to three-year director terms starting July 1.

But, most importantly, we spent much time discussing the critical issues that are the reason for our existence – promoting opportunities for human-powered winter recreation and protecting the winter wildlands. We reviewed winter-access issues – both successes and continuing conflicts – regarding Tahoe Meadows, Forestdale Creek, and Brockway Summit, and we discussed possible non-motorized projects for the California State Off-Highway Vehicle Division.

The day following the board meeting, four board members skied in the Brockway Summit area to gain additional insight into how the Forest Service might better resolve conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users. Read about it in *The Buzz on Brockway Summit* on this page.



Snowlands Network Board of Directors met February 2 in Tahoe City, CA. – back row: (l-r) Charley White, Bill Flower; middle row: Marcus Libkind, Janet Hoffmann, Jim Gibson; front: Gail Ferrell.

The Buzz on Brockway Summit

After spending all day Saturday indoors at Tahoe City in a Snowlands Network board meeting, four of us – Jim Gibson, Gail Ferrell, Charley White and I – were happy to join local activist Jeff Erdoes at Brockway Summit on Sunday. We wanted to better understand the situation at Brockway Summit by skiing it. Only two of us had ever skied Mt. Watson Road from the summit, and that had been over 10 years ago.

The small parking area is just on the Lake Tahoe side of the summit and on the west side of Highway 267. We took the last two parking places – there are about six available to the general public. The snowmobile concessionaire apparently has exclusive use of the north end of the parking area, which they marked with cones. Fortunately Jeff and Charley left their vehicles at the Martis Peak trailhead, about a mile away. Otherwise there would not have been enough room for us all to park.

We had a fairly gentle ski along a rolling road with spectacular views of Lake Tahoe. There had been snowfall a couple days before, and then the weather had cleared on Saturday but remained cold so snow conditions were perfect. Unfortunately it was difficult to find any slopes along the route to Mt. Watson to enjoy the powder, because they had all been well tracked by snowmobiles.

We were expecting light traffic because it was Super Bowl Sunday, but the game didn't start until 3 PM and the snowmobile groups were out in full force all day. Gail kept count, and we were passed over 150 times by a snowmobile during the course of our ski from 10:30 AM until 4 PM.

The concessionaire groups were polite and easy to identify. They traveled together and made a “slow-down” arm signal when they saw us, and then slowly passed on the opposite side of the road. Private parties were less considerate and often passed us with little or no reduction in speed.

Jeff collected various pieces of snowmobile debris to add to a collection that he started last summer while hiking and biking the trails around Lake Tahoe. He has over 40 pounds of rubber bumper pieces, spark plugs, reflector fragments, and pieces of drive belts, which he has collected and carefully catalogued.

Jeff was a human dynamo in his litter removal and snowmobile-impact stories. He lives in Carson City and is very active in the conflict areas of Tahoe Meadows and Spooner Summit. He divides the snowmobile world into the “on-trackers,” who show some consideration for common good, and the “off-trackers,” who show none. He illustrated the problem of enforcement with photos he took showing snowmobile tracks going right by the closure sign in Tahoe Meadows. A lesser-known problem Jeff has documented is the topping of partially snow-covered trees by machines running over them.

Jeff pointed out the many black spots on the snow explaining that the exhausts of idling machines made them. The machines are still predominantly two-stroke and dirty. Some manufacturers are pushing quieter machines with

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Burton Creek State Park

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Snowlands Network desires to insure that the general public maintains free (or low cost) access to the state park lands in winter. Snowlands believes that it is possible to provide both groomed (for fee) and backcountry (no fee) winter recreation in the area. It is our desire to insure that the long-range plan for the park includes this diversity.

We are late in getting involved in this issue. Snowlands Network only recently learned about this planning project although it began in 2000. In February the DPR published their preferred alternative, which states that “the cross-country ski facilities will remain,” referring to the commercial concession, but it did not describe plans for continued winter use by the general public.

The next step is for the DPR to prepare an environmental impact report. But before that happens, we need to let the DPR know that the public wants continued free access to Burton Creek State Park and the adjacent lands for skiers and snowshoers who do not use the groomed trails.

Let your voice be heard – send your comments to:

Mr. John Knott, District Superintendent
Sierra District California State Park
P.O. Box 266
Tahoma, CA 96142-0266

Your letter or postcard can be short. Consider putting the following thoughts into your own words.

– You are submitting comments on the Preferred Alternative for the Burton Creek State Park General Plan that was published in the February 2002 “The Messenger.”

– You are a cross-country skier (or snowshoer) who enjoys skiing (or snowshoeing) in the backcountry and do not seek groomed trails to recreate. Give some insight into why and how you enjoy recreating in the winter.

– Burton Creek State Park is very important to you because of its proximity to Tahoe City.

– You want to see Burton Creek State Park remain open to the public who desire to ski (or snowshoe) without groomed trails. This should include easy-to-follow roads in the park and access to national forest lands.

– The Department of Parks and Recreation should support a board spectrum of non-motorized winter recreation in the park, not just expensive commercialized ski opportunities. The department should provide parking and marked, easy-to-follow backcountry trails for the general public.

It would be helpful if you send an e-mail to marcus@snowlands.org indicating when you sent in your comments, or better yet, send a copy of your comments to:

Snowlands Network
P.O. Box 230
Livermore, CA 94551

Yellowstone National Park

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(which was based on years of study and overwhelming public involvement) to protect these national treasures by phasing out snowmobile use in the two parks. Please write the Park Service and ask it to **confirm the original phaseout decision**.

Background

In November 2000, after a three-year public process that included 22 public hearings and over 65,000 public comments, the National Park Service issued a decision to phase out snowmobile use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks over a four-year period. The existing mass transit system would be expanded to ensure public access to the parks. The decision, based on a decade of scientific studies by university researchers and government agencies, found that snowmobiles are damaging the parks, wildlife, clean air, natural sounds and quiet, and unique experiences that Americans expect to find in their national parks. The Environmental Protection Agency described the underlying science as “among the most thorough and substantial base that we have seen supporting a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document.”

Last year, however, Interior Secretary Gale Norton, reacting to a lawsuit filed by the snowmobile industry, directed the Park Service to reconsider its decision, claiming that science and technology had not been adequately studied in the original decision. The result, released in February, is an environmental analysis known as a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. This latest document, however, contains no new scientific or technological information. In fact, the SEIS itself points out that the snowmobile industry failed to provide the Park Service with any significant evidence that was not already part of the original decision to phase out snowmobile use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks.

In recent years, an average of 66,000 snowmobiles travel through Yellowstone during the three-month snowmobile season, and the best science continues to show that protecting Yellowstone Park requires a phase out of snowmobile use. Only one of the four management alternatives in the SEIS, “Alternative 1A,” would implement the original Park Service decision. Under the others, wildlife would continue to be harassed, soundscapes disrupted, and unhealthy pollution would continue.

Take Action

The release of the SEIS begins a public comment period. Public support for the original Park Service decision is the only way it will be implemented. Please support the Park Service’s decision to phase out snowmobile use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks by sending your comments via e-mail or by mail.

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Learning From Success

An Interview with Gail Ferrell

Snowlands Network is very proud to have Gail Ferrell on our board. Her energy and commitment are an inspiration. She was the driving force behind Tahoe Meadows being designated a non-motorized winter recreation area.

Since I am even newer to winter environmental activism than she, I have spent time talking with her to learn from her experiences, both personal and tactical. Here is some of our dialogue:

Q: Was this activism new to you?

A: I have been active in my profession (teaching) before. Twenty-five years ago, I created a center at San Diego State University for overcoming math-anxiety. But this environmental effort, in the community at large, is new.

Q: Were there any bleak moments, when you thought, "this will never work"?

A: Regularly, especially when people would tell me "you'll never make it happen."

Q: Any wonderful people, or awful people, you met?

A: No awful people, but a number of wonderful and supportive people. I was very honored to receive the annual award from the local Sierra Club chapter for doing good work. They gave me something like a trophy at their annual winter party.

Q: Did you hand out leaflets other than at Earth Day? Do you think broad canvassing like this yields many supporters?

A: I also passed out leaflets at Tahoe Meadows, which was the perfect place to recruit support. But in addition to supporters, the effort tied me into a new network of people.

Q: What do you think were key steps in building visibility, understanding and respect for the effort to make Tahoe Meadows non-motorized?

A: I think one of the steps was the local newspaper articles about the Meadows. I worked on a positive relationship with the writer because at times I felt that his articles were biased away from us. His later articles, and the fact that the local paper came out with an editorial in favor of closing the Meadows, were important to move this issue along.

Q: Any breakthroughs? Moments of inspiration?

A: I think the most exciting moment was meeting Senator Reid [D. Nevada] to explain what we were trying to accomplish.

Q: How did that come about? What happened?

A: I was participating in "Lobby Week" with the Natural Trails and Waters Coalition, a coalition of environmental groups working on off-road issues. I was there with Winter Wildlands, a national-level organization with the same purpose as Snowlands Network. I am also on their board. The organizers of that lobby week were able to get an appointment with Senator Reid through his environmental aide.

We were first directed into a private office and then lead through a subway under the House Building into a beautiful historic room where we sat eagerly awaiting the Senator. He came in, we briefly explained what was going on at Tahoe Meadows, and he asked what he could do. I asked him to contact the Forest Service and request that they close the

Continued at bottom of next column

Friends of Hope Valley

Snowlands Network is proud to work closely with the Friends of Hope Valley (FOHV) on issues related to winter recreation and environmental issues.

Many of you have probably skied in Hope Valley. Common destinations in the area include Forestdale Creek, Burnside Road, Crater Lake, Scotts Lake and Willow Creek. FOHV is concerned about these areas as well as the entire greater Hope Valley area both winter and summer.

FOHV is in the process of creating a list of activists, folks that will go to meetings and actually give of their time, instead of just sending money. Snowlands Network urges our readers in Markleeville, Lake Tahoe, Minden, Gardnerville and Carson City to consider their call for support.

To get involved with important local issues in the greater Hope Valley area contact:

Friends of Hope Valley
P.O. Box 431, Markleeville, CA 96120
(800) 423-9948 — dwaldear@gbis.com
www.hopevalleyca.com

Oops!!! Went Our Mailing List

Altogether the board members of Snowlands Network have about 50 years experience working on winter environmental issues. Our experience managing mailing lists is not nearly so extensive. Unfortunately, when we sent out our first issue of the Snowlands Bulletin in December, some of the names and addresses were scrambled, so you may have received a Snowlands Bulletin addressed to someone else, or you may not have received the first issue at all. We apologize for this error, and we have corrected the source of this mistake.

But if this second issue of the Snowlands Bulletin was not addressed as you would like it, or if you would rather we took your name off our mailing list, please let us know. Just send an e-mail to mailings@snowlands.org (or a note to Snowlands Network, P.O. Box 230, Livermore, CA 94551) specifying corrections or removal.

Let us know also if you would rather receive the Bulletin by e-mail, or if you missed the first issue and would like us to send you a copy (it may also be viewed on-line at www.snowlands.org), or if you would like us to send a copy to a friend.

Finally, if more than one member of your household is currently receiving the Bulletin, we can combine the mailings if you prefer – just let us know which mailings should be combined and how you want your issue addressed.

Unless we hear from you, your complimentary subscription to the Snowlands Bulletin will continue for the remainder of this snow season. Joining the Snowlands Network will extend your subscription for an additional year (see page 7).

Meadows to motorized use. He looked at his aide and asked if they could do that. The aide said yes. It was all over in about seven minutes and we felt like we had conquered the world!

Charley White

Yellowstone National Park

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Tell the Park Service

– Americans want Yellowstone and Grand Teton to remain peaceful places in winter where bison, elk, and other wildlife are not harassed by noisy vehicles.

– That snowmobiles in the two national parks continue to cause pollution, make rangers sick, and prevent visitors from hearing the eruption of Old Faithful or enjoying the solitude that Americans expect from their national parks.

– That the original, science-based phase out decision, “Alternative 1A,” should remain in place because it is the only way to adequately protect the nation’s first national park and nearby Grand Teton National Park.

Deadline

Comments must be received no later than midnight, Mountain Time, May 29, 2002. But don’t delay – do it now so you will not forget!

To be considered, comments must be in writing, by letter or e-mail, and must include the name and return address of the writer.

Write To

Winter Use Draft SEIS Comments
Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks
P.O. Box 352
Moose, Wyoming 83012

E-mail To

grte_winter_use_seis@nps.gov

SEIS On The Internet

You can view the entire Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on the internet at:

www.winteruseplanning.net

Buzz on Brockway

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cleaner four-stroke engines. Jeff said these machines are shunned by the off-trackers who seek maximum throttle-response.

All the machines out that day smelled a lot. The day was not very breezy, so the smell lingered. Once or twice, we encountered an odd snowmobile microclimate effect. A cloud of fumes would descend on us many minutes after the last snowmobile had passed and just as many minutes before the next came along.

Navigation is very easy on the groomed road, and although the terrain and vistas are perfect for skiing and snowshoeing, we saw only about six other skiers, most of them skating. Charley, who had narrower classic touring skis, complained about lateral stability on the washboard surface.

Overall we found a beautiful ski opportunity diminished by the noise, fumes, danger, and debris of snowmobiles. I once again realized why Mt. Watson Road, in spite of its accessibility and vistas, was an experience that I am not likely

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Judge to Rule On Forestdale Creek Lawsuit

After a final attempt to settle the Forestdale lawsuit, the plaintiffs have decided to amend the lawsuit and move to have the judge rule. Repeated attempts at reaching a settlement has drawn out the litigation that was filed on September 1, 2000. The lawsuit challenges the Forest Service’s management policy for winter motorized use of the Forestdale Creek area in Hope Valley.

Our hopes of a settlement in which the Forest Service and Alpine County would agree to a seasonal closure of the Forestdale Creek area to snowmobile use fizzled in December when snowmobilers opposed the proposal and the Alpine County Board of Supervisors did not act on it. The county is involved because they currently have jurisdiction over Forestdale Road. The basis of the desired settlement was that the Forestdale Creek area would be closed to winter motorized use when nearby Blue Lakes Road had sufficient snow-cover for their use. The Blue Lakes SnoPark acts as a staging area for snowmobilers and is the home of a commercial snowmobile concession.

The Forest Service made one more proposal for settlement in February 2002, which was rejected by the plaintiffs because it did not address the issues, but instead took a step backward in that it would start the whole analysis procedure again.

The plaintiffs have requested that their attorney Debbie Sivas of Earthjustice amend the complaint to challenge the Forest Service’s determination that Alpine County has jurisdiction over Forestdale Road, and move for the judge to rule on the merits of the case. A ruling by summer is anticipated.

Winter Recreation Committee

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SnoParks. Also discussed were bilingual signs, extreme traffic caused by the SnoPark at Echo Summit, SnoPark permit sales, and the loss of several permit outlets including REI.

Other appointees include: Dick Simpson (Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter, Ski Touring Section), Glenda Marsh (Sacramento Backcountry Skiers), Nic Matulich (Bay Area Siberian Husky Club), Ron Rawlings (California Nevada Snowmobile Association), Bill Rugg (108 Sno-Drifters Snowmobile Club), Betty Morris (marketing and tourism representative), and James Ussery (snow players and small business owners). The committee also includes non-voting members representing the DPR, CalTrans, California Highway Patrol, sheriffs and the Forest Service.

to repeat again soon. If, like me, you used to enjoy skiing in this area, or like the others in our group would like to try it again, but are put off by the number of snowmobiles in the area, please complete a Brockway Summit Winter Use Survey form that is available on our website (www.snowlands.org) and return it to us. Complete the form even if you have never skied at Brockway Summit. This is your opportunity to voice your views to the Forest Service.

Janet Hoffmann

Business Sponsors

Snowlands Network is proud to welcome Sorensen's Resort as a businesses sponsor and hope that you will support all our sponsors.



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Hope Valley, CA 96120
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Publishes *Ski Tours in the Sierra Nevada* and *Ski Tours in Lassen Volcanic National Park*.

Volunteer Corner

Snowlands Network is truly indebted to Charlie Ferris for his volunteer work in researching the schedule for future revision of Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) for 13 National Forests. LRMPs are high level documents that guide the Forest Service in managing public lands. They are 15-year documents and most of California's National Forests will soon be revising them. This is a golden opportunity for Snowlands Network to promote changes in management direction for the benefit of our constituency.

Charlie Ferris volunteered to determine the current schedule for revision of LRMPs for 13 critical forests where winter recreation is prevalent. On short order, through the use of the internet and direct contact of forests, Charlie developed a list including the required revision date, expected start and end dates, and Forest Service contact information. This information will be used by the Board of Directors to make future plans.

The Board of Directors is indebted to Charlie. Thank you for your time and support.

Snowlands Network has similar tasks that need volunteers. For instance, we plan to add a booklist to our website which permits on-line ordering directly from Amazon.com. The purpose is three-fold: (1) to aide our website visitors, (2) to attract more visitors to our website, and (3) to generate additional income to support our efforts.

Let us know if you would like to use your computer to generate the booklist. Send an e-mail jim@snowlands.org if you are interested.

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.

- \$25 Supporter \$50 Contributor \$100 Patron
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President's Corner

Dedicating a major part of ones discretionary time to environmental activism brings mixed feelings to me. Some days I'm riding high, usually buoyed by a significant success or progress on some front that brings optimism. On other days frustration overwhelms.

The frustration is challenging because it leads to questioning why I devote 20 hours a week of my time; why I see so few people stepping forward to write a letter, fill out a survey form or be counted as a supporter through their membership; and how a political administration can see corporate growth and their expertise as the solution to all our ills. But let me also take this opportunity to thank all of you that do take the time to write or otherwise participate.

By chance, it was during one of these "down" periods that Paul, a college buddy that I still keep in touch with, rhetorically asked, "Why is it that people are blind to the fact that destruction of the environment is a threat to our lives" – certainly a threat to the lives and well being of our children and our grandchildren.

I wrote back to Paul, "The answer is that the thought of a clear, quick attack on ones life is as far as many people and our current presidential regime can see. A slow death to our planet and sooner death to our ability to experience a wilderness setting is something they can't see; it's beyond tomorrow."

Paul, like me being an engineer, ended our discussion with, "In management terms, people tend to do urgent tasks and forget about important tasks."

I believe both our responses to the question of apathy and lack of vision are valid, and together encompass a great deal of the problem. But as I write this column I realize that there is a third factor, the fact that many people live not only for today, but also only for themselves. And as I make that statement I realize that I give so much of my time to environmental activism because in giving I receive and in the end I feel very good.

I have set as a personal goal for the months and years ahead to give people an opportunity to volunteer a few hours on small projects knowing that these small projects taken together form the basis for a successful California-Nevada winter environmental program. In the last issue of the Snowlands Bulletin the volunteer work of Brenda and David Giese and Jeff Ball were cited. In this issue we report on what Charlie Ferris did for Snowlands Network. I hope that when someone contacts you asking for help you will step forward. Better yet, come to us, tell us, "I want to help."

As I so often say, "together we will make a difference."

Marcus Libkind, President