The Friends of Hope Valley want to thank you for your past support. We hope that you will continue your membership in this non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic, recreational and scenic values of Hope Valley and Sierra Nevada’s eastern slope in Alpine County. With your help we can continue to address the sensitive environmental concerns of the eastern Sierra.

FRIENDS OF HOPE VALLEY 2022

$35 Friend
$50 Sponsor
$5 Other

Name (print clearly)

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip

Email

The FOHV email list is used only for the purpose of alerting our members and friends about time sensitive issues. Friends of Hope Valley is a 501(c)(3) organization. Please return this form and your tax deductible check to:

FRIENDS OF HOPE VALLEY, PO BOX 431, MARKLEEVILLE, CA 96120

Winter 2022

Post Tamarack Fire Summary Report Curtz Lake and Indian Creek Reservoir
By Jim McLain

The Curtz Lake and Indian Creek Reservoir area was hard hit by the Tamarack fire during the summer of 2021. At the request of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Alpine Trails Association conducted a two-day damage and condition assessment of the surrounding trail system. Areas inspected included the interpretative trail around Curtz Lake, the Summit Lake trail, Indian Creek Campground (ICR), the Carson River trail and the eight-mile loop trail.

With the exception of the loop trail and the lower portion of the Carson River trail, all other trails remain mostly intact. Damage includes standing dead, burnt trees that pose a potential hazard should they fall, large holes as a result of stumps completely burned out (this includes the historic Comstock stumps), fallen trees across the trail, plus some minor erosion. At this point, all of these trails appear to be in reasonable enough condition to allow repairs to be made.

Other damage includes eight of the thirteen interpretive signs at Curtz Lake, which were partially or completely destroyed. The recently installed kiosk and the historic wooden fence were damaged beyond repair. The ICR campground, support structures and the surrounding reservoir wooden fence have been significantly damaged.

Per recent meetings, plans are currently in development for area refurbishment. BLM has applied for a $1 million grant specifically designed for these projects. The proposal also includes replanting regional vegetation. Hazardous burnt standing trees will be removed. Water flow and soil managers have begun their analysis and will make recommendations for improvement. The campground, including all supporting structures, will be rebuilt. Interpretative signage will be assessed for possible revised wording and replaced. Fencing will be mended. Where possible, trails will be restored to their original status.

It is anticipated that the information gathered, along with photographs and GPS readings, will be compiled and submitted to the BLM Carson Office during the month of November. Repair efforts will take time. With the onset of winter, minimal work will be possible. But this time period will most certainly be used to organize projects, form collaborative efforts, prioritize schedules and develop resources. Most likely, in spring of 2022 will see considerable strides forward in offsetting the damage created by this dreadful natural disaster. Contributions are now being accepted to help with the restoration and should be sent to the Friends of Hope Valley, P.O. Box 431, Markleeville, CA 96120.
FOHV Updates
Fish Barriers on the Carson River
Trout Unlimited, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and other resource management entities are working toward Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) recovery. Their efforts include an evaluation of the feasibility of placing a physical barrier on the upper reach of the East Fork Carson River to limit upstream passage by non-native fish. This strategy would reduce the threat of non-native predation and competition with LCT and would create an LCT stronghold in the upper East Fork Carson River watershed.

What is unclear at this time is how the existing non-native fish above the barriers will be eliminated. In the past, this elimination process consisted of the use of rotenone, a naturally occurring poison to kill off all species of fish and macro-invertebrates in the river. Treatment to kill off unwanted species would involve a huge network of streams, including Wolf Creek.

Dispersed Camping is Out of Control
Dispersed camping is camping anywhere outside of a designated campground, which is usually but not always allowed on public lands. Dispersed camping means you are on your own—no facilities, no trash pickup. It can (and should) be done well, using a "leave no trace" mentality, but, unfortunately, dispersed camping often means serious problems for public lands. That’s certainly true in the Hope Valley area. In high use areas, finding the coveted camp spot often means driving through fragile meadows, camping too near the water source, but also to the creation of impromptu campsites that then merge into “megacamps”, causing erosion, severe vegetation damage, and ultimately large, deep gullies of bare soil that further increase the risk of pollutants in the waterways. Insensitive dispersed campers can also compound the damage by chopping off branches and saplings for campfires, not to mention leaving trash (including used toilet paper).

Many campers do stay on established backcountry roads as they drive into the woods, but too often people decide to create their own roads, taking that time-saving shortcut to their secret camping spot and, in the process, driving over easily damaged terrain. In Hope Valley, you can see many new “user created” roads. As these new roads develop, the Forest Service and other agencies tend to just leave them alone, which only, unfortunately, reinforces the negative, go-where-you-want-to-go behavior of some visitors. We are currently working with the Forest Service and the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreations Partnership to find some doable, practical solutions to these problems.

Lands Pass: Bureaucratic Stonewalling
The “Lands Pass” is a required fee to visit public lands managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). This requirement has been established in various places in Hope Valley. Friends of Hope Valley is opposed to this ludicrous ruling. Practically speaking, with limited cell service, passes cannot be purchased once a visitor is in Hope Valley. Further, the CDFW lands dotted across Hope Valley are surrounded by Forest Service lands with absolutely no clear, defined boundaries. Friends of Hope Valley has worked hard since the 1980s to make Hope Valley a public place easily accessible to all. To limit ill-defined parts of Hope Valley to those few who are willing to pay to take walk is counterproductive in our view.

We have met with CDFW several times on this issue, but they seem completely unwilling to change or to adjust the Lands Pass requirement in any way. In fact, they have not responded to our concerns in over two years. The Alpine County Board of Supervisors and our group are now looking into other potential avenues that may lead to an exemption from the required Lands Pass for Hope Valley. Stay tuned.

Volunteer Work Days
We had a good crowd for our annual spring work day and general meeting. Multiple projects were undertaken. As always, litter was picked up on highway 89, from Picket’s Junction to Luther Pass (our Adopt-A-Highway section). We also swept the path to fishing piers used by the disabled, as well as the piers themselves. As always we also worked on fence repair along various sections of Hope Valley.

One additional project was part of the annual Alpine Watershed Group’s work day: Limbing trees and bushes along the path to the fishing piers used by the disabled. The path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors.

This fall we also hosted an Aspen Celebration Day. The highlights of the event were the various hikes we offered. Most popular were the “Enamored Trail Up Devil’s Ladder” hike and the “Beavers, Mines and Aspen” hike. But the kids’ favorite hike was up an old Washoe route, which has now become a favorite bear path. It’s always fun to dig into the droppings of the wildlife, were the “Emigrant Trail Up Devil’s Ladder” hike and the “Beavers, Mines and Aspen” hike. But the kids’ favorite hike was up the path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors. The path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors.

Volunteer Work Days
We had a good crowd for our annual spring work day and general meeting. Multiple projects were undertaken. As always, litter was picked up on highway 89, from Picket’s Junction to Luther Pass (our Adopt-A-Highway section). We also swept the path to fishing piers used by the disabled, as well as the piers themselves. As always we also worked on fence repair along various sections of Hope Valley.

One additional project was part of the annual Alpine Watershed Group’s work day: Limbing trees and bushes along the path to the fishing piers used by the disabled. The path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors.

This fall we also hosted an Aspen Celebration Day. The highlights of the event were the various hikes we offered. Most popular were the “Enamored Trail Up Devil’s Ladder” hike and the “Beavers, Mines and Aspen” hike. But the kids’ favorite hike was up an old Washoe route, which has now become a favorite bear path. It’s always fun to dig into the droppings of the wildlife, can’t-miss-it piles of bear droppings filled with all sorts of organic stuff like seeds, husks, and even berries. Just ask the kids! Music for the event was provided by the local Crow Band (Many thanks to the band!).

Volunteer Work Days
We had a good crowd for our annual spring work day and general meeting. Multiple projects were undertaken. As always, litter was picked up on highway 89, from Picket’s Junction to Luther Pass (our Adopt-A-Highway section). We also swept the path to fishing piers used by the disabled, as well as the piers themselves. As always we also worked on fence repair along various sections of Hope Valley.

One additional project was part of the annual Alpine Watershed Group’s work day: Limbing trees and bushes along the path to the fishing piers used by the disabled. The path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors.

This fall we also hosted an Aspen Celebration Day. The highlights of the event were the various hikes we offered. Most popular were the “Enamored Trail Up Devil’s Ladder” hike and the “Beavers, Mines and Aspen” hike. But the kids’ favorite hike was up an old Washoe route, which has now become a favorite bear path. It’s always fun to dig into the droppings of the wildlife, can’t-miss-it piles of bear droppings filled with all sorts of organic stuff like seeds, husks, and even berries. Just ask the kids! Music for the event was provided by the local Crow Band (Many thanks to the band!).

Help with Improving Your Forest’s Health Post-Tamarack Fire
By Greg Hayes
The Tamarack fire confirmed what I have long felt: The more wooded portions of the land my friend, Rich Harvey, and I bought many years ago in Markleeville are ripe for damage by fire. Before the Tamarack fire, we had already been searching for funding to help us thin about three acres of our land. But the fire killed all the trees in our forest. Fortunately, the insurance company paid us something, and we had enough money to get started. The work would need to be started within one year to complete everything.

We felt very lucky. Most agencies fund restoration work only on public land. The few that deal with private land include NRCS, the agency we were already involved with, CalFire, and the Office of Emergency Services.

What types of restoration work are included in the conservation plan? The largest amount of work addresses needs over about 30 acres of our land, which sits immediately south of the Markleeville townsite. The work includes improving the forest stand by cutting or selling selected trees or understory vegetation, removing branches and leaders to meet the conservation objectives, and creating a woody biomass from all trees and branches cut, to be spread over those parts of our land that most would benefit. Other parts of the project include establishing/maintaining vegetation to reduce wind and water erosion, implementing forest improvement by planting trees to help create more structural diversity, and by utilizing snags, den trees, and coarse woody debris to add useful wildlife habitat.

Finding a contractor with the know-how and equipment to implement the plan successfully is perhaps the hardest nut to crack. Those that are good are also very busy. It probably makes sense to find that someone who can really do the work for us. We were fortunate to find that person early in the process.

It takes some real effort (and, in my case, I thank my friend, Rich Harvey, for doing the heavy lifting), but there is help out there for which you just might qualify.

Why Do Some Aspen Leaves Turn Immediately Brown?
By Peter Lathrop
When fall comes, Hope Valley traditionally provides a colorful display, most notably the golden yellow of the aspen trees, but also some oranges and reds here and there. But in the midst of this display, some aspen leaves may skip the color and turn immediately brown. Why?

The normal change occurs when a cold snap signals to the tree it’s time to pull the green chlorophyll (essential to photosynthesis) out of the leaves and into a more central location for storage until springtime. With the dominant green color removed, the leaves display the pigments that were hidden all along underneath the chlorophyll. But sometimes the leaves simply die without any color revealed; they simply turn brown. The reason? That particular leaf or group of leaves or limb, simply did not have sufficient available water—either because water was entirely absent or what water was present was frozen and inaccessible. Less than sufficient water means the cells of a given leaf will not live long enough to show their colors before death—they will simply dry out, shriveling up, and turn brown.

A long, hot dry summer is the usual culprit, causing some leaves to lose more water than can be brought up from the roots. The leaves then turn brown, a process known as “leaf scorch.” The leaves scorch, but den trees, and coarse woody debris to add useful wildlife habitat.

Finding a contractor with the know-how and equipment to implement the plan successfully is perhaps the hardest nut to crack. Those that are good are also very busy. It probably makes sense to find that someone who can really do the work for us. We were fortunate to find that person early in the process.

It takes some real effort (and, in my case, I thank my friend, Rich Harvey, for doing the heavy lifting), but there is help out there for which you just might qualify.

Why Do Some Aspen Leaves Turn Immediately Brown?
By Peter Lathrop
When fall comes, Hope Valley traditionally provides a colorful display, most notably the golden yellow of the aspen trees, but also some oranges and reds here and there. But in the midst of this display, some aspen leaves may skip the color and turn immediately brown. Why?

The normal change occurs when a cold snap signals to the tree it’s time to pull the green chlorophyll (essential to photosynthesis) out of the leaves and into a more central location for storage until springtime. With the dominant green color removed, the leaves display the pigments that were hidden all along underneath the chlorophyll. But sometimes the leaves simply die without any color revealed; they simply turn brown. The reason? That particular leaf or group of leaves or limb, simply did not have sufficient available water—either because water was entirely absent or what water was present was frozen and inaccessible. Less than sufficient water means the cells of a given leaf will not live long enough to show their colors before death—they will simply dry out, shriveling up, and turn brown.

A long, hot dry summer is the usual culprit, causing some leaves to lose more water than can be brought up from the roots. The leaves then turn brown, a process known as “leaf scorch.” The leaves scorch, but
**FOHV Updates**

**Fish Barriers on the Carson River**

Trout Unlimited, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and other resource management entities are working toward Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) recovery. Their efforts include an evaluation of the feasibility of placing a physical barrier at the lower end of the Carson River to limit upstream passage by non-native fish. This strategy would reduce the threat of non-native predation and competition with LCT and would create an LCT stronghold in the upper East Fork Carson River Watershed.

What is unclear at this time is how the existing non-native fish above the barriers will be eliminated. In the past, this elimination process consisted of the use of rotenone, a naturally occurring poison to kill off all species of fish and macro-invertebrates in the river. Treatment to kill off unwanted species would involve a huge network of streams, including Wolf Creek.

**Dispersed Camping is Out of Control**

Dispersed camping is camping anywhere outside of a designated campground, which is usually but not always allowed on public lands. Dispersed camping means you are on your own—no facilities, no food, no garbage pick-up. It can (and should) be done well, using a “leave no trace” mentality, but, unfortunately, dispersed camping often means serious problems for public lands.

That’s certainly true in the Hope Valley area. In high use areas, finding the coveted camp spot often means driving through fragile meadows, camping too near the water source, but also to the creation of impromptu campsites that then merge into “megacamp”, creating erosion, severe vegetation damage, and ultimately large patches of bare soil that further increase the risk of pollutants in the waterways. Insensitive dispersed campers can also compound the damage by chopping off branches and saplings for campfirepits, not to mention leaving trash (including used toilet paper).

Many campers do stay on established backcountry roads as they drive into the woods, but too often people decide to create their own roads, taking that time-saving shortcut to their secret camping spot and, in the process, driving over easily damaged terrain. In Hope Valley, you can see many new “user created” roads. As these new roads develop, the Forest Service and other agencies tend to just leave them alone, which only, unfortunately, reinforces the negative, go-where-you-want-to-go behavior of some visitors. We are currently working with the Forest Service and the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreations Partnership to find some doable, practical solutions to these problems.

**Lands Pass: Bureaucratic Stonewalling**

The “Lands Pass” is a required fee to visit public lands managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). This requirement has been established in various places in Hope Valley. Friends of Hope Valley is opposed to this ludicrous ruling.

Practically speaking, with limited cell service, passes cannot be purchased once a visitor is in Hope Valley. Further, the CDFW lands dotted across Hope Valley are surrounded by Forest Service lands with absolutely no clear, defined boundaries. Friends of Hope Valley has worked hard since the 1980’s to make Hope Valley a public place easily accessible to all. To limit ill-defined parts of Hope Valley to those few who are willing to pay to take walk is counterproductive in our view.

We have met with CDFW several times on this issue, but they seem completely unwilling to change or to adjust the Lands Pass requirement in any way. In fact, they have not responded to our concerns in over two years. The Alpine County Board of Supervisors and our group are now looking into other potential avenues that may lead to an exemption from the required Lands Pass for Hope Valley. Stay tuned.

**Volunteer Work Days**

We had a good crowd for our annual spring work day and general meeting. Multiple projects were undertaken. As always, litter was picked up on highway 89, from Pickett’s Junction to Luther Pass (our Adopt-A-Highway section). We also swept the path to fishing piers used by the disabled, as well as the piers themselves. As always we also worked on fence repair along various sections of Hope Valley.

One additional project was part of the annual Alpine Watershed Group’s work day: trimming trees and bushes along the path to the fishing piers used by the disabled. The path is actually the old Luther Pass road, and is a popular route for walking, biking and getting to the river. Our goal is to keep it open and safe for visitors.

This fall we also hosted an Aspen Celebration Day. The highlights of the event were the various hikes we offered. Most popular were the “Emigrant Trail Up Devil’s Ladder” hike and the “Beavers, Mines and Aspen” hike. But the kids’ favorite hike was up an old Washoe route, which has now become a favorite bear path. It’s always fun to dig into the droppings of the wildlife, can’t-miss-it piles of bear droppings filled with all sorts of organic stuff like seeds, husks, and even berries. Just ask the kids! (Music for the event was provided by the local Craig Crow Band. Many thanks to the band!).

---

**Help with Improving Your Forest’s Health Post-Tamarack Fire**

By Greg Hayes

The Tamarack fire confirmed what I have long felt: The more wooded portions of the land my friend, Rich Harvey, and I bought many years ago in Markleville are ripe for damage by fire. Before the Tamarack fire, we had already been searching for funding to help us thin about a third of the forest’s stands. Fortunately, fire removed this need, but I will always be grateful for this tidy little windfall.

Prior to the fire, the quest for funding lead to Trina Johnson at the Minden, Nevada office of the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) and the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service). The NRCS’s purpose is to help farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners conserve soil, water, air and other natural resources. While Trina wasn’t yet able to help us thin our forest, the Tamarack fire, Trina quickly informed us, had opened up a different funding source. Not only that, we were already in line.

With the fire under control, we then began working with our contractor who would do the work envisaged. A conservation plan emerged, offering funding just one buck shy of $64,000. The work would need to be started within one year and completed within five.

We felt very lucky. Most agencies fund restoration work only on public land. The few that deal with private land include NRCS, the agency we were already involved with, CalFire, and the Office of Emergency Services.

What types of restoration work are included in the conservation plan? The largest amount of work addresses needs over about 30 acres of our land, which sits immediately south of the Markleville townsite. The work includes improving the forest stand by cutting or killing selected trees or understory vegetation, removing branches and leaders to meet the conservation objectives, and creating a woody biomass from all trees and branches cut, to be spread over those parts of our land that would most benefit. Other parts of the project include establishing/maintaining vegetation to reduce wind and water erosion, implementing forest improvement by planting trees to help create more structural diversity, and by utilizing snags, den trees, and coarse woody debris to add useful wildlife habitat.

Finding a contractor with the know-how and equipment to implement the plan successfully is perhaps the hardest nut to crack. Those that are good are also very busy. It probably makes sense to find that someone who can really do the work right. We were fortunate to find that person early in the process.

It takes some real effort (and, in my case, I thank my friend, Rich Harvey, for doing the heavy lifting), but there is help out there for which you just might qualify.

---

**Why Do Some Aspen Leaves Turn Immediately Brown?**

By Peter Lathrop

When fall comes, Hope Valley traditionally provides a colorful display, most notably the golden yellow of the aspen trees, but also some oranges and reds here and there. But in the midst of this display, some aspen leaves may skip the color and turn immediately brown. Why?

The normal change occurs when a cold snap signals to the tree it’s time to pull the green chlorophyll (essential to photosynthesis) out of the leaves and into a more central location for storage until springtime. With the dominant green color removed, the leaves display the pigments that were hidden all along underneath the chlorophyll. But sometimes the leaves simply die without any color revealed; they simply turn brown. The reason? That particular leaf or group of leaves or limb, simply did not have sufficient available water—either because water was entirely absent or what water was present was frozen and inaccessible. Less than sufficient water means the cells of a given leaf will not live long enough to show their colors before death—they will simply dry out, shrivel up, and turn brown.

A long, hot dry summer is the usual culprit, causing some leaves to lose more water than can be brought up from the roots. The leaves then turn brown, a process known as “leaf scorch.” This is lethal, and almost always with us and will come back as usual the following spring, though, of course, a profound enough lack of water could cause tree loss as well. In the fall, too severe and repetitive frosts at night can break the cell walls within the leaves, which will then whatever color display had begun. Leaf death and its hallmark brown color will follow. (Placing some aspen leaves in your freezer can demonstrate the process.)

Fortunately, for those of you who love fall, the total lack of a fall-color phase does not usually happen to all of the trees in a given area, nor even to all of the leaves on any one tree. The best falls may not happen every year, but an enjoyable color display is still the norm.
The Friends of Hope Valley want to thank you for your past support. We hope that you will continue your membership in this non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic, recreational and scenic values of Hope Valley and Sierra Nevada’s eastern slope in Alpine County. With your help we can continue to address the sensitive environmental concerns of the eastern Sierra.

**FRIENDS OF HOPE VALLEY 2022**

__________ $35 Friend
__________ $50 Sponsor
__________ $5 Other

Name (print clearly) _________________________________________________________________________________

Mailing Address ____________________________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip ______________________________________________________________________________________

Email _____________________________________________________________________________________________

The FOHV email list is used only for the purpose of alerting our members and friends about time sensitive issues. Friends of Hope Valley is a 501(c)(3) organization. Please return this form and your tax deductible check to:

**FRIENDS OF HOPE VALLEY, PO BOX 431, MARKLEEVILLE, CA 96120**

---

**Post Tamarack Fire Summary Report**

**Curtz Lake and Indian Creek Reservoir**

By Jim McLain

The Curtz Lake and Indian Creek Reservoir area was hard hit by the Tamarack fire during the summer of 2021. At the request of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Alpine Trails Association conducted a two-day damage and condition assessment of the surrounding trail system. Areas inspected included the interpretative trail around Curtz Lake, the Summit Lake trail, Indian Creek Campground (ICR), the Carson River trail and the eight-mile loop trail.

With the exception of the loop trail and the lower portion of the Carson River trail, all other trails remain mostly intact. Damage includes standing dead, burnt trees that pose a potential hazard should they fall, large holes as a result of stumps completely burned out (this includes the historic Comstock stumps), fallen trees across the trail, plus some minor erosion. At this point, all of these trails appear to be in reasonable enough condition to allow repairs to be made.

Other damage includes eight of the thirteen interpretative signs at Curtz Lake, which were partially or completely destroyed. The recently installed kiosk and the historic wooden fence were damaged beyond repair. The ICR campground, support structures and the surrounding reservoir wooden fence have been significantly damaged.

Per recent meetings, plans are currently in development for area refurbishment. BLM has applied for a $1 million grant specifically designed for these projects. The proposal also includes replanting regional vegetation. Hazardous burnt standing trees will be removed. Water flow and soil managers have begun their analysis and will make recommendations for improvement. The campground, including all supporting structures, will be rebuilt. Interpretative signage will be assessed for possible revised wording and replaced. Fencing will be mended. Where possible, trails will be restored to their original status.

It is anticipated that the information gathered, along with photographs and GPS readings, will be compiled and submitted to the BLM Carson Office during the month of November. Repair efforts will take time. With the onset of winter, minimal work will be possible. But this time period will most certainly be used to organize projects, form collaborative efforts, prioritize schedules and develop resources. Most likely, in spring of 2022 will see considerable strides forward in offsetting the damage created by this dreadful natural disaster. Contributions are now being accepted to help with the restoration and should be sent to the Friends of Hope Valley, P.O. Box 431, Markleeville, CA 96120.