

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



8th Anniversary

Marcus Libkind

March 15 marked the 8th anniversary of Snowlands Network's efforts to promote opportunities for backcountry skiers and snowshoers. During those years we have worked hard to represent your desire for quiet, pristine winter wildlands to visit.

We have had some big successes like the preservation of lands at Tahoe Meadows for non-motorized winter recreation and the Alpine County Winter Recreation Project (see article below) that created two winter non-motorized areas in the Hope Valley area.

There have been numerous smaller successes that include stopping the introduction of commercial snowmobiling at Echo Summit and halting a plan for a snowmobile trail around Lassen Volcanic National Park that would have allowed snowmobiles to pass through the McGowan non-motorized winter recreation area on Lassen National Forest. These are two examples of where we were not trying to change the status quo, but rather holding onto the status quo.

Many people don't realize that our work is year-around. The Forest Service's planning process is year-around so our monitoring is, too; every year we try to mark winter trails in the late summer or early fall; and planning our many events is an endless task.

Thank you for your support over these eight wild and busy years. We could not have accomplished what we did without your financial support and the knowledge that there are people like you who really appreciate our work.

Forestdale Creek Closed to Snowmobiles

Alpine County Winter Recreation Project

The Forestdale Creek area, just east of Carson Pass on Highway 88, was closed briefly during the winter of 2007-2008 to snowmobile use for the first time ever. That was the first implementation of a part of the Alpine County Winter Recreation Project. This season the area was closed for the entire winter. This will be the norm in future years because the Project states that snowmobiles are prohibited in the entire Forestdale Creek area when there is sufficient snow for them to stage at the Blue Lakes Sno-Park.

Marcus Libkind, Chairman of Snowlands Network and long-time advocate for the Forestdale designation points out, "The closure is a great thing, but it in itself

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Quiet Quadrant

A place at Lake Tahoe for skiers, snowshoers and snow players

As part of their participation in the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit planning process, Snowlands Network is combining several small requests for non-motorized winter recreation areas into a single request for a "Quiet Quadrant" extending from Brockway Summit to Spooner Summit along the northeast shore of Lake Tahoe (see map on page 8). Gail Ferrell, the local coordinator on this project, points out, "We're looking for land planning that fosters a balance in opportunities for winter recreation. Without the designation of some areas non-motorized in winter, the proliferation of snowmobile use will eventually drive

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Chairman's Overlook

Marcus Libkind



I'm very pleased to announce that Art Ewart was elected a Snowlands Network director. Art brings extensive skills to the board and I know from spending time with him that he also brings a great deal of enthusiasm. I personally want to take this opportunity to thank Art for volunteering to guide Snowlands on its journey into the future filled with opportunities.

At dinner one evening with Art and Director Bill Flower the discussion drifted to the question of what does it take to increase our membership and in doing so increase our power to advocate for the skiers and snowshoers throughout California and Nevada? I've repeated this question to myself endless times with no definitive answer. The statistics are that Snowlands has between 400 and 500 members and the California Nevada Snowmobile Association has a few thousand members. That's very frustrating because there are many times more skiers and snowshoers in California and Nevada than snowmobilers.

Bill quoted my saying that "we are our own worst enemy." That referred to my belief that at least in part the problem is that

by nature skiers and snowshoers are almost solitary in nature. They choose to travel in the winter backcountry in small groups and shy away from organizations and organized events. This is not the best picture for recruiting members.

The fact that you are reading this Bulletin says that you are very likely a member of Snowlands Network. I thank you for your support and your trust in us. Now I want to ask a favor of you.

You are Snowlands Network's best source of new members because you already believe in what we stand for. Explain to one, two or three of your ski or snowshoe buddies why it is very important for them to support us through their membership. We are their voice for a quiet winter backcountry!

We'll have over one thousand members if every member gets two friends to join. Do that two years running and we'll have four thousand members. You can make it happen.

To sell the idea to your friends, tell them that I will send them a free copy of *Ski Tours in Lassen Volcanic National Park* if they join at the \$30 membership level. If they join at the \$50 level I'll send you a copy too. Just tell them to make a note of this when they join.

Together we can make a difference!

Art Ewart Joins Board of Directors

Art Ewart joined the Board of Directors of Snowlands in December, 2008. He recently retired as Director of Mental Health for Sonoma County after a 36 year career. Art is a life-long skier, climber and backpacking enthusiast having enjoyed many backcountry ski trips including trans-Sierra adventures. For

the last ten years, telemark skiing has been his passion. He is the author of "John Muir and Vertical Sauntering" in "John Muir: Life and Works" and "They Came Every Summer, Sorensen's Resort from 1876," a history of that old Hope Valley resort. Art has also recently been named to the Board of Directors of the California

Alpine Club.

Snowlands Network is very fortunate to have Art join the Board and bring with him his passion for the winter wilds and his many talents.



Snowlands Bulletin

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Mission

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

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Bill Flower

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Monte Hendricks, Highway 50
Jeff Erdoes, Lands Monitoring

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Annette Glabe, Membership and Administration

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Yellowstone: A Rollercoaster Ride

Like a rollercoaster, the number of snowmobiles allowed into Yellowstone National Park repeatedly climbed and fell through the summer and fall of 2008. When the snow settled, a whopping 720 per day were permitted to shatter the quiet of winter of the park. Suzanne Lewis, Yellowstone's superintendent, claims that she was complying with court orders when she imposed the new limit, but few agree with her interpretation of the rulings.

At the beginning of last summer it appeared that 540 snowmobiles per day would be allowed into Yellowstone. That was the result of the Bush administration's third review of Yellowstone's winter-use plan. The Clinton administration's review plus Bush's first two reviews all concluded that snowmobile use should be phased out of the park.



Snowmobiles roar through Yellowstone.

Courtesy of Tom Murphy.

September 15, 2008 was a special day; Judge Emmet G. Sullivan of Federal District Court in the District of Columbia ruled that the Bush Administration's decision authorizing snowmobile use in Yellowstone violated the fundamental legal responsibility of the National Park Service to protect the clean air, wildlife, and natural quiet of national parks, including Yellowstone, for the benefit of all visitors.

The court found that the Administration authorized snowmobile use despite scientific conclusions by the National Park Service that its decision would result in significant increases in noise and unhealthy exhaust, which disrupt the experiences of visitors, and traffic that harms Yellowstone's wildlife, including bison. The Court directed the National Park Service to substitute a plan that ensures all visitors can safely experience the park, and uphold laws that require stronger protection of Yellowstone's air quality, wildlife, and natural sounds.

In response to Sullivan's ruling, the National Park Service began to prepare winter-use plan that would allow 318 snowmobiles in the park per day — still far too many, but likely the best possible compromise in the short-term.

New Website Coming

Funded in part by a generous grant from the Resources Legacy Foundation, Snowlands Network will continue its strategic planning and outreach in the next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009. The outreach will include a new website that is scheduled to be up and running in the fall of 2009. The new website will focus on user friendliness and materials that benefit our members in their on-the-snow activities. It goes without saying that it will be our showcase for prospective members and a source for information on Snowland's advocacy efforts.

Subsequently Judge Clarence A. Brimmer of Federal District Court in Wyoming issued a separate decision on snowmobile use in Yellowstone. He regretted the fact that Judge Sullivan had ruled on the subject, but he deferred to his decision. According to Judge Brimmer's decision, "The ruling of the D.C. District Court [shall] remain undisturbed here." However, Superintendent Lewis crafted an interpretation of Brimmer's ruling that required her to increase snowmobile use to 720 per day.

While the snow is disappearing the efforts continue on behalf of skiers, snowshoers and other winter visitors to Yellowstone who desire a healthy and quiet experience. The goal is to re-institute the science-based analyses of the first three reviews that conclude that snowmobiles harm the environment.

Snowlands Network stands by their position that snowcoaches afford the public access to all the places within the park that snowmobiles offer access while reducing noise, pollution and stress on winter wildlife. At the same time the snowcoaches can supply transportation that meets the needs of everyone, including the elderly and disabled, at a lower cost than snowmobiles, and provide a guide for interpretation of the geologic features, wildlife and other aspects of the park for which it is famous and for which people visit. There is absolutely no need for snowmobiles in the park in order to provide public access.

Those who want to explore beyond the reach of the snowcoaches (and this would also be beyond the reach of snowmobiles) can do so on skis, snowshoes or hiking, and do so without the noise and odors of snowmobiles. Snowcoaches can be used to drop-off and pick-up muscle-powered recreationists near the park's sights thereby improving total accessibility. The end result is better protection of the delicate winter ecosystems of the park and improved accessibility.

Not surprisingly, snowcoach use has grown 89 percent from 2002 to 2008 due to increasing visitor demand for comfortable and educational park tours.

Snowlands Meets Morgan Challenge

Fundraising a success this year

Snowlands Network is thrilled to announce that they met their goal of \$40,000 and have received a matching donation from the Morgan Family Foundation. Marcus Libkind, Chairman of Snowlands Network, said, "I'm impressed with the outpouring of donations from old and new members alike. It really shows that there are people who care about the future of muscle-powered winter recreation in California and Nevada, and are willing to support it even in difficult economic times."

This is the second year in a row that the Morgan Family Foundation has provided a challenge grant to Snowlands Network. The Board of Directors of Snowlands can't thank them enough for their trust and support in our efforts to represent backcountry skiers, snowshoers, snowboarders and snow players.

Snowlands Network also received generous continuing financial support from the Fairweather Foundation and Arthur Shultz. We were very pleased to receive from Linda Agerter, a new member, a very generous contribution. The Directors of Snowlands showed their belief in the organization with a combined giving of more than \$6000.

But it goes without saying that every member's donation is important regardless of the amount. It is through our strength in numbers that Snowlands is effective.

Going, Going, Gone Digital

As we struggle with hard economic times, the need to be environmentally friendly, and the desire to produce the *Snowlands Bulletin* on a regular basis, Snowlands has migrated to a digital Bulletin.

Beginning with this issue, the *Snowlands Bulletin* is created as an Adobe PDF file to be downloaded by the recipient. Four times a year subscribers will receive a short email notifying them that it is available. A simple click will bring it to your computer to read or to print.

Snowlands will still print and mail paper copies to those who request that service. However, we hope that with the proliferation of high speed internet services you will choose to help us save money, trees and volunteer time.

Email Annette Glabe (aglab@snowlands.org) or write her at Snowlands Network, P.O. Box 230, Livermore, CA 94551 to change the method of delivery of your copy of the *Snowlands Bulletin*.



Donations to Snowlands Network support advocacy on behalf of our winter wildlands. Courtesy of Jeff Erdoes.

Wolfgang (Wolfie) Lert

1917-2009

Although his legacy is heavily tied to the development and growth of alpine skiing, Wolfgang Lert was a major figure in the backcountry ski community; there was no difference between the two sports in the early days of the skiing. Born in 1917 in Kiel, Germany, to symphony conductor Richard Lert and novelist Vicki Baum, the Lerts came to the United States in 1931 so that Baum could work on the film version of her novel, "Grand Hotel," which won the Oscar for Best Picture in 1932.

Wolfgang Lert captained the first UCLA ski teams, leading them to many victories at Lake Arrowhead, the Bruin ski headquarters. He was promptly hired as coach as soon as he graduated.

He was a founding member of the Ski Mountaineering and Rock Climbing sections of the Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club. Skiing was always central to his life. In later years he wrote for numerous ski magazines and, with his business partner Hans Hagemeister, was the original importer of such products as Bogner ski clothes and Henke boots, including the first-ever buckle boots.

He celebrated his 90th birthday a couple of years ago by fulfilling a lifelong dream to ski in Chamonix. In January, his son Peter wrote Snowlands Network on the eve of a showing of his father's movie "The Original Mugelhupe Movie" that his father was dying, but his father was very happy that we would be showing his movie. It starts with his first skiing experience in Switzerland in 1930 and describes the changes in the sport as it developed in California. It concludes with an outrageously funny "chase" down Mt. Baldy near the Sierra Club's San Antonio Ski Hut.

Peter ended his letter with "He [Wolfgang] inspired many of us with a love for the mountains." What a fitting tribute to a wonderful and colorful person. He died on February 13, 2009, three weeks short of his 92nd birthday.

Field Seminar on Monitoring

On Saturday, January 24, 2009, Jeff Erdoes conducted a Snowlands Network and Friends of Hope Valley sponsored seminar on how to recognize, record and report wildland impacts of snowmobile misuse. Four students met Jeff at Sorensen's Resort in Hope Valley, although the rain did not bode well. Fortunately it was snowing at Forestdale Road east of Carson Pass where the training would take place.



Students take rest on field seminar.

Courtesy of Jeff Erdoes.

During the carpool to Forestdale, Jeff and Ken caught sight of two snowmobilers launching from a pullout along the highway. The two rode briefly along the highway and then cut quickly up slope and right past a pair of bright orange "no snowmobile" markers newly placed by the Forest Service at the origin of the trail to Crater Lake. Jeff exclaimed, "Did you see that?" Ken was stunned to silence by the brazen, carefree lawlessness of the trespassers. It turned out that these were the only two snowmobiles they would see all day.

At Red Lake, four or five inches of new snow had restored Forestdale Road to a lovely trackless beauty. Once on the trail, moments of sunshine increased and the snowfall became sporadic. Unfortunately the blanket of new snow made it impossible to track and study evidence of recent snowmobile violations in the area. Nevertheless, since all had previously encountered snowmobile violations in the Lake Tahoe region, they had plenty to share about the impacts of snowmobile misuse and excess such as wilderness trespass, trampling of exposed woods and shrubs, as well as visitor and resident impacts arising from snowmobile noise, odor, unsafe conditions and toxic exhaust in the air and snow. They discussed simple and reliable methods to document these various impacts.

Become a Steward

Adopt a Winter Trail

Snowlands Network is seeking volunteers interested in adopting a winter trail. These backcountry ski and snowshoe trails, which were previously marked with blue diamonds and signs, are in need of loving volunteers who will scout them yearly and report on necessary repairs and improvements. Trails in the Anderson Ridge and Iron Mountain Sno-Park area along Highway 88 and trails in the Yuba Pass area are the most in need.

Ideally the volunteer will take an active role in leading the maintenance work parties because they will know best what needs to be done. Snowlands will provide the equipment and materials for repairs, and will arrange for volunteers to do the work.

Scouting can begin in summer, so don't put off this opportunity.

Snowlands is also seeking volunteers interested in leading efforts to mark ski and snowshoe trails in other areas such as the Mount Rose and Spooner Summit areas near Lake Tahoe.

Please contact Marcus Libkind at 925-447-0486 or malibkind@snowlands.org if you are interested.



Modern aids like compact digital cameras and GPS navigation units with mapping software make it possible for casual forest visitors to document snowmobile violations with tremendous accuracy and detail. Such detail can help in efficiently targeting limited law enforcement resources at portals of illegal snowmobiling and other violation hot spots. But Jeff points out that, "Because the Forest Service has very little resources to field officers, it is very, very important that visitors report any evidence of snowmobile misuse even if the report consists of nothing more than a short email stating the most basic what, when and where of the observed violation."

So, while photos, videos, sound recordings, GPS data and even bagged samples of contaminated snow can provide compelling information about snowmobile abuses on protected wildlands, such detail is generally of secondary importance. Snowlands Network provides a simple, fast and reliable online system to report events and evidence of snowmobile misuse that you witness on public lands. It's available at www.snowlands.org/issues/conflicts/tracking.html.

Thanks go to Phil, Yvonne, Sam and Ken for their participation, insights and dedication. Together they set two miles of beautiful trail during the four-hour seminar and traded a ton of information. Snowlands Network hopes to expand this seminar into a curriculum and methodology that will mobilize citizen vigilance on behalf of public lands throughout the snow season.

Echo Summit Trails Get Spruced Up

Plans were changed, but in the end early season rains didn't stop 12 volunteers from adding blue diamond markers and trail signs to the two loop trails near Benwood Meadow at Echo Summit on Sunday, October 5. After rain washed away hopes of doing the scheduled maintenance work on Saturday, the Sunday trail marking scheduled for Carson Pass was moved to Echo Summit where the need was deemed more critical.



Another trail sign goes up.
Courtesy of Marcus Libkind.

The crew consisted of Eldorado Nordic Ski Patrolters Monte Hendricks, Julie Hendricks and John Stroud. There were also nine Snowlands volunteers: Nina Vansickle, Susan Ayres, David McQuate, Teri Brack, Mark Johnson, Barry Morgan, Jeff Erdoes, Guy Ayers, and Marcus Libkind. Marcus Libkind coordinated the Snowlands volunteers.

Thank you all for volunteering. It is through efforts by you and others that Snowlands is successful in meeting their goals.

A trail description can be found at www.backcountryskitours.com/pages/tours_0800/0814_tour.htm.

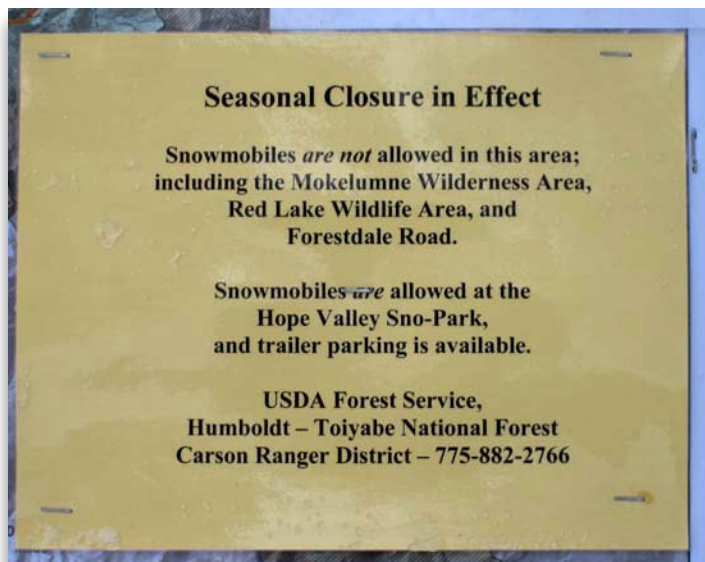
Forestdale Creek Closed to Snowmobiles

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does not mean 100 percent compliance. There are going to be snowmobilers who trespass and it is going to be up to the Forest Service to aggressively enforce the closure if the trade-offs in the Project are going to work. Snowlands will take a key role in monitoring progress in enforcement."

The trade-offs refer to the give-and-take that allowed a diverse array of interested people, including skiers, snowshoers, environmentalists and snowmobilers, to support the Project. The Project also calls for nearly all of the north side of Highway 88 from Carson Pass to Pickett Junction to be off-limits to

Through the "wonders of email" all participants were informed of the change and a surprising number were still able to make the Sunday trip at Echo Summit. The day dawned clear and cool with only a slight breeze in the afternoon. People climbed ladders, pruned trees, replaced deteriorated markers and added new markers over 1.8 miles of trails that form two loops. Forest-Service-supplied signs were also added.



snowmobiles all winter. This area includes Stevens Peak, Crater Lake and Scotts Lake.

In return for the snowmobile closures, there will be improved access for snowmobiles to the Monitor Pass area and Highway 4 from Markleeville as money is made available for implementation. The Project also calls for parking improvements for both



Looking south in Forestdale Canyon.
Courtesy of Jeff Erdoes.

motorized and non-motorized winter recreation. Snowlands appreciates all who sent letters to the Forest Service supporting a grant for the Red Corral non-motorized trailhead in Hope Valley. The grant was not obtained, but Snowlands is working with the Forest Service to obtain Federal stimulus funds for the project.

The Winter Recreation Project is the outcome of two lawsuits waged by the individuals who started Snowlands Network and by Friends of Hope Valley aimed to designate the Forestdale Creek area non-motorized in winter. These lawsuits caused the Forest Service to abandon their first two travel management plans for the Forestdale area. Heading into their third plan, the Forest Service chose to include the Forestdale Creek area in a more far reaching winter recreation plan, the Alpine County Winter Recreation

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Patagonia, Reno: One of Many Events

After a two-year hiatus, Snowlands Network returned to the Patagonia Outlet, Reno on January 29 to revel in a night of entertainment, great eats and drinks, a silent auction and special friends. As expected, the Patagonia event still remains one of Snowlands' most popular outreach and fundraising events.

Entertainment that evening included the presentation "Best Ski Tours in the Sierra and Beyond" by Marcus Libkind and was topped off with a showing of "The Lost People of Mountain Village" that won the Jury Award at "Mountainfilm in Telluride" festival. The silent auction included a marvelous array of items including magazine subscriptions, snowshoes, ski equipment, stays at resorts, artwork, massage and even a sea kayak.

The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour, cosponsored by REI and Snowlands Network on March 13 and 14, was again a spectacular success with the Eagle Theater in Los Altos filled to capacity both evenings. The World Tour is produced by Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre, and features award-winning films and audience favorites from approximately 300 films entered in the annual festival in Banff. Look for this event again in 2010.

Snowlands also hosted the Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival in Truckee and, in cooperation with the Lake Tahoe Community College Adventure Club, in South Lake Tahoe. Other events throughout the fall, winter and spring included films at UC Berkeley in cooperation with the Cal Hiking and Outdoor Society, at Orvis in Reno, and at Seaman's Lodge in Nevada City, which was sponsored by Wolf Creek Wilderness.

Marcus Libkind, Chairman of Snowlands Network, also made presentations at meetings of the Sierra Club's Loma Prieta Chapter Ski Touring and Peak Climbing sections, and at a meeting of the Nordic Skiers of Nevada County.

It was a busy year for Snowlands Network with lots of time on the road spreading the word about the important work done by the organization.

Thank You!

Snowlands Network appreciates the generosity of the individuals and businesses that supported the January 29 silent auction at Patagonia this year.

Alpine Skills International/ASI
Atlas Snowshoes
Backcountry Magazine
Bicycle Bananas
Bicycle Warehouse
Charlotte Cox
Cindee Davis
Foundation for Deep Ecology

Helaine Greenberg
Hearts of Light Gallery
Hope Valley Outdoors
Ellen Lapham
Marcus Libkind
Lost Trail Lodge
MSR
Mount Rose Ski Resort

Ortovox
Patagonia
REI, Reno
Rock Creek Lodge
Scheels
Silver Peak Restaurant and
Brewery
Sorensen's Resort

Starbucks Coffee
Sugar Bowl Ski Resort
Tony Rowell
Tubbs Snowshoes
Victoria Wallington
Western Mountaineering
Wolf Creek Wilderness

SOS a Grand Success

The "Snowlands On Snow" guided winter tours for 2008-2009, now in its second year, were expanded and attracted skiers and snowshoers alike. This season the number of scheduled trips was expanded to 12. The seven snowshoe trips and five ski trips covered a wide range of locations and abilities. Included was a snowshoe trip dedicated to GPS navigation and a ski trip focused on basic backcountry ski techniques. Two of the ski trips included instruction in map and compass navigation.



Practicing techniques with Pyramid Peak in background.
Courtesy of Marcus Libkind.

The volunteer leaders this season included Cathy Anderson, Craig Dostie, Gail Ferrell, Marcus Libkind, Peter Mayfield, Rich Steele, Bill Straka, and John Timmer. Thank you all for your dedication to Snowlands Network and its outreach program.

Next winter season Snowlands would like to add tours in the Lassen Volcanic National Park area; many people are not aware of the many opportunities in and around the park, which are easily reached in winter from the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento areas. Snowlands would love to find a person knowledgeable in snow crystals and willing to plan a tour with the emphasis on this. Or maybe you have expertise in winter photography and are willing to share it on a tour. The possibilities are limitless.

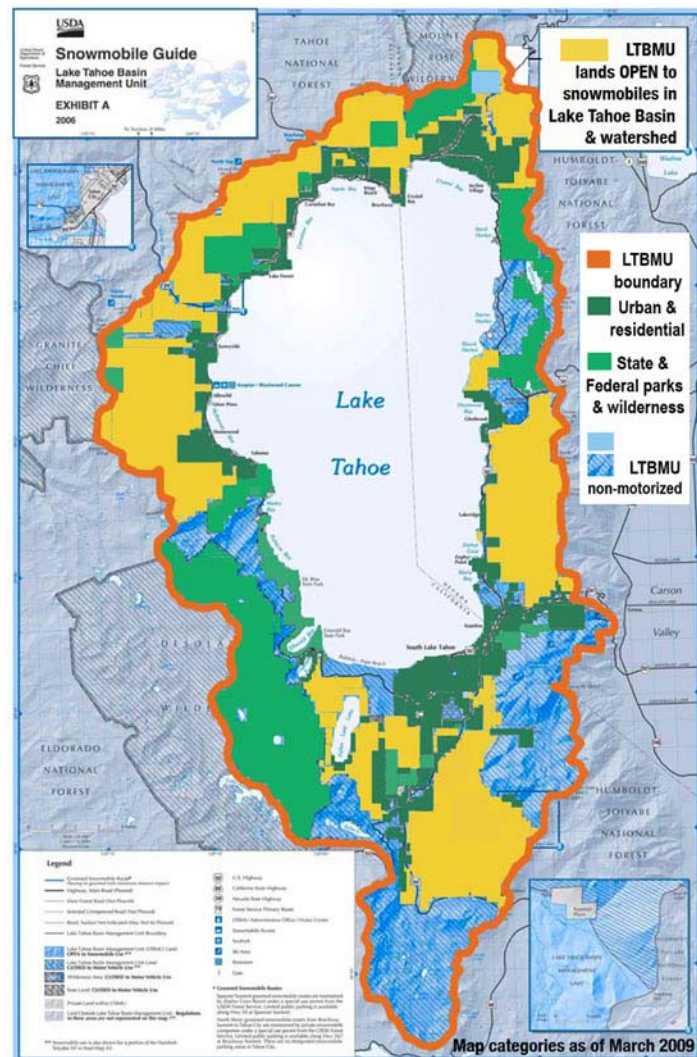
Please contact Marcus Libkind at malibkind@snowlands.org or 925-447-0486 if you are interested in participating in next year's SOS program as a leader or have an idea for an interesting tour.

Quiet Quadrant

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away all those who seek a safe, quiet, odor free place to recreate.”

There are three distinct areas that make up the Quiet Quadrant. They are the Martis Peak area at Brockway Summit, the Mt. Rose Highway at Tahoe Meadows including the newly Forest Service acquired Incline Lake property, and the north side of Spooner Summit.



Land allocation in Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

The Tahoe Meadows area on the Mt. Rose Highway has 40,000 visitors each winter and as many as 1500 on a single day. It is estimated that this number will increase 1.6% per year over the next 20 years. Over 95% of all visitors to this area in winter are muscle-powered – skiers, snowshoers and snow players. Unfortunately there are many unmanaged problems including noise pollution, air pollution, speeding and social conflicts from snowmobile use in this small area. Many skiers and snowshoers have been driven away from accessing the Mount Rose Wilderness and Galena drainage from Tahoe Meadows by the snowmobile use here. Unsafe sledding areas that terminate at the highway, inappropriate use of parking space, highway congestion and excess automobile speed are among additional management problems in the area.

Snowlands Network has long argued that the entire Tahoe Meadows area should be designated non-motorized in winter as it is designated in summer.

At Brockway Summit between Truckee and Kings Beach at Lake Tahoe, the Mt. Watson Road was a favorite place for skiers and snowshoers in years gone by. Now, 10,000 snowmobile user-days per winter, a combination of commercial and private, have essentially eliminated muscle-powered winter recreation here. On a Saturday or Sunday, a skier or snowshoer can expect to be passed by 180 snowmobiles or more in an afternoon.

Marcus Libkind, Chairman of Snowlands Network, thinks back to when he and friends would rent a nearby cabin and ski the Mt. Watson Road. Judy, a blind skier, would join them for an annual trip. “Today the Mt. Watson Road would be a horrible place for a blind skier. With heightened senses of smell and hearing, the conditions created by heavy snowmobile use would be horrendous for a blind person,” says Marcus.

Snowlands Network proposes that the opposite side of Highway 267 at Brockway Summit, the Martis Peak area, be designated non-motorized in winter to provide for a balance of winter uses in the area. Skiers, snowshoers and snow players are the vast majority of the users of this area. However, snowmobilers are permitted to speed up and down the Martis Peak road, often endangering other users, and definitely making conditions difficult for pedestrian travel. Then, once the snow conditions get bad, snowmobilers avoid the area, and skiers and snowshoers are left with a rutted jumble of snowmobile tracks.

There was a time when skiers and snowshoers could travel south on a snow-covered road from Spooner Summit enjoying the serenity of South Camp Peak, Genoa Peak and majestic views of Lake Tahoe. Today, the south side of Spooner Summit receives over 45,000 snowmobile user trips per year – not a very friendly or desirable place for a ski or snowshoe experience. Snowlands believes that this area can support both motorized and non-motorized uses. To do this, the north side of Spooner Summit must be set aside for non-motorized use.

Snowlands Network’s vision for a “Quiet Quadrant” along the northeast shore of Lake Tahoe is in keeping with the needs of the public. It is a fact that snowshoeing is the fastest growing winter sport in the United States. Healthy winter recreation requires areas where the average person can get away from the noise pollution and air pollution of snowmobiles. We deserve a place to recharge our internal batteries and our soul. It is the Forest Service’s duty to provide opportunities for this and Snowlands is letting them know exactly that.

Azalea Lake, Flora Lake and Lake Angela

Azalea Lake and Flora Lake are tucked away in a beautiful area rich in granite walls and steep slopes. In contrast, Lake Angela is situated in a barren area and its starkness is marred only by the powerline that passes nearby.

Difficulty: Beginner-intermediate from Donner Pass Road to the lakes with return to Donner Pass Road.

Intermediate from Donner Pass Sno-Park to the lakes or to Donner Pass Road.

Intermediate-advanced for loop beginning and ending at the Sno-Park.

Length: 2.5 miles to 3.6 miles depending on start and end points, and whether or not you venture over Boreal Ridge.

Starting Elevation: 7200 feet at Sno-Park and 7050 feet on Donner Pass Road

Cumulative Elevation Change: Up to +250, -250 feet or +550, -550 feet for loop

Navigation: Map or map and compass depending on route

Time: Several hours to half day

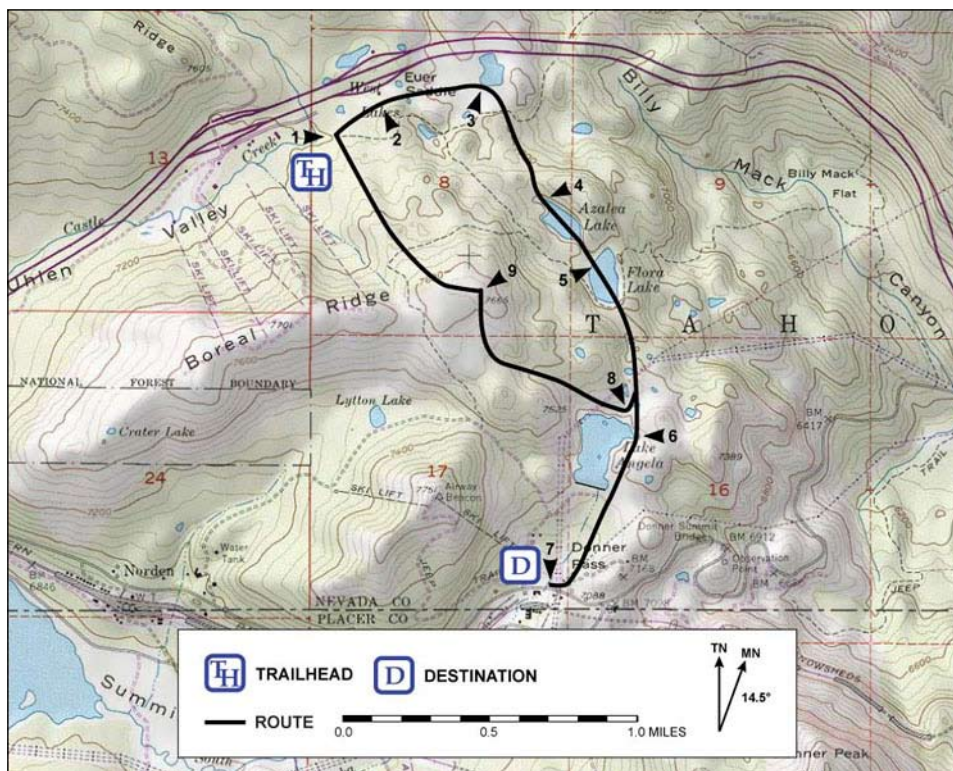
Season: Mid or late December through early April depending on route

Snowmobiles: Low

USGS Topo: 7.5' series, Norden

Start: There are two possible places to start and end tours in this area. They are:

- Donner Pass Road at Donner Ski Ranch, 3.7 miles east of Interstate 80 on Donner Pass Road.
- Near the restroom at the east end of the Donner Pass Sno-Park on Interstate 80. Exit the interstate at Castle Peak Area and Boreal Ridge. Drive east on the south frontage road for 0.2 mile to the Sno-Park.



This tour description is provided courtesy of

www.BackcountrySkiTours.com

where you can find elevation profiles and GPS waypoint data for the tour.

Though the first of these lakes is only a mile from the Sno-Park at Donner Summit on Interstate 80, it is amazing that most skiers and snowshoers opt to visit the over-used Castle Valley area on the north side of the highway. Choose to visit the lakes in this tour and you will be treated to a more personal experience that includes a wonderful view of Donner Lake, the interstate and the transcontinental railroad from a small rise near Flora Lake. The small rise is a great place for lunch if the sounds of the vehicles below do not bother you. If they do, eat at one of the lakes. From Lake Angela you are treated to views south of Donner Peak, the ridge of which Mount Judah is a part, and much more.



Crossing Flora Lake to lunch spot.

Courtesy of Marcus Libkind.

Tours beginning at the Sno-Park roll across relatively level terrain and although technically not difficult, navigating efficiently can be a little troublesome due to the many little features that break up straight-forward progress in the first mile of the tour. The route description given here will help you through the first mile, but a couple of compass bearings is the ideal solution – use this as an opportunity to practice your compass skills.

The tour is described beginning at the Sno-Park on Interstate 80 and ending at Donner Pass Road, but you can just as easily turn around at anyone of the lakes and retrace the route back to the Sno-Park.

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Azalea Lake, Flora Lake and Lake Angela

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Another alternative is to visit the lakes in this tour by starting at Donner Pass Road and turning around at one of the lakes. This eliminates the complexity of navigating at the Sno-Park end.

More advanced skiers and snowshoers can visit all three lakes and return by climbing over the top of Boreal Ridge before descending back to the Sno-Park. Plan your trip right and you can revel in the powder that is often found on the north-facing side of the ridge that you descend.

Exercise caution before skiing across any of the lakes described in this tour.

Donner Pass Sno-Park to Donner Pass Road

From the trailhead (1) [numbers in parentheses correspond to numbers on map] ski or snowshoe northeast for 0.2 mile until you are adjacent to the rest area (2) on the south side of the interstate. Continue east and parallel to the interstate for 0.3 mile until you reach an open area (3).

Turn southeast and pick your way through convoluted, but relatively level, terrain for 0.5 mile until you reach Azalea Lake (4). Continue southeast for another 0.3 mile until you reach Flora Lake (5). Just to the east of the lake is a small rise with dramatic views!

At this point you are only 1.0 mile from the trailhead. If you choose to continue, ski or snowshoe south, picking the best route around little obstacles, for 0.5 mile until you reach Lake Angela (6).

If you are continuing to Donner Pass Road, ski or snowshoe southwest along Lake Angela to the dam, then gradually descend southwest and finally ski west for a total of 0.7 mile until you reach Donner Ski Ranch (7) on Donner Pass Road.

Returning from Lake Angela over Boreal Ridge

The loop tour, which climbs over Boreal Ridge before descending back to Donner Pass Sno-Park, leaves Lake Angela (8) from its north end. Climb northwest for 0.7 mile until you reach Peak 7665 (9). Finally, descend northwest for 0.7 mile until you reach the trailhead (1) at the Sno-Park.

Forestdale Creek Closed to Snowmobiles

Continued from Page 6

Project. Expanding the scope of planning allowed the Forest Service to improve both muscle-powered and motorized winter recreation. Libkind says, "When fully implemented and when enforcement has resulted in compliance we'll be able to call the Project a huge success, but not until then."

Asked if the implementation is working at Forestdale Creek, Jeff Erdoes said, "Compliance is not perfect, but with the boundaries at well defined locations there seems to be a marked decline in snowmobile trespass into the drainage." Jeff is Snowland's most active backcountry monitor.



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