

Lake Tahoe Basin's forest supervisor moving to Alaska

By Kathryn Reed

Being connected to the land, walking it, seeing what her employees are working on – these are things Terri Marceron likes about being forest supervisor of Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

She might not have the same luxury when she takes over as forest supervisor of the Chugach Forest in Alaska in October.



Terri
Marceron

After close to five years at the helm of the office based in South Lake Tahoe and managing about 153,000 acres, Marceron is headed to Anchorage to manage 5.4 million acres. It's the second largest national forest behind Tsongas, which is also in Alaska.

"It's similar in that what they try to do is maintain quality habitat and recreation experiences," Marceron said of Chugach compared to Tahoe.

The Exxon Valdez oil spill of 1989 impacted islands she will be responsible for. Her experience dealing with Tahoe's lake clarity issues should benefit her there.

She will also be taking over at a time when money for restoring the damage done by the spill is drying up, much like

she and others here are contending with fewer dollars from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

Tahoe was always a draw for the 50-year-old. In her youth she spent time backpacking and hiking in the Sierra Nevada. This was one forest she always wanted to work in.

“The basin is such a unique forest. It’s political, has a lot of stakeholder interest, is a small area, has enormous recreation use, some conflicting values and activist people who want in on it,” Marceron said. “On the one hand I am really sad to leave, and on the other I am really excited to apply what I learned here in Alaska.”

As special as the Sierra is to Marceron, Alaska has that same draw for her husband. But she expects to one day again call Tahoe home – once she’s retired.

Her replacement has not been named.

In Alaska, Marceron will oversee the Copper River Delta, one of the largest wetlands in the United States. It provides critical habitat for the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. The forest is home to all five species of Pacific salmon.

Marceron is proud of the work she has accomplished since arriving here in 2005.

“It’s the employees who deserve the credit. It’s a really special place for that. There are a lot of employees who are really good at what they do. I’m glad I could support them,” Marceron said.

For many locals, the nearly 3,100-acre Angora Fire of 2007, which burned mostly Forest Service land, is one of the more visible issues Marceron had to deal with during her tenure.

“Angora to me was probably the hardest thing I had to go through on this unit. The loss of homes. The whole magnitude of that event was distressing,” Marceron said.

Other significant accomplishments Marceron points to include: resolution to the Meyers Landfill lawsuit, acquiring Incline and Quail lakes for public access, creation of Generation Green Program, completion of Heavenly Mountain Resort's master plan, improving recreation via things like the Van Sickle Bi-state Park and Daggett Summit decision.

One thing she won't be able to complete before the end of October is the new Forest Plan.

"There will be things I wish I could have finished before I left, but I'm going to work my tail off the next two months," Marceron said.