

Letter: Restoration Day a success on South Shore

To the community,

On June 4, community members gathered to restore and stabilize the banks of the Upper Truckee River in South Lake Tahoe as part of Restoration Day – a new annual day of environmental restoration organized by the League to Save Lake Tahoe.

“We are grateful to all of our volunteers, as well as our partners with the city of South Lake Tahoe, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the California Conservation Corps,” said Marilee Movius, the League’s community engagement manager. “It’s great to see everyone coming together to restore the natural environment of the Upper Truckee River and protect Lake Tahoe’s clarity.”

Participants in Saturday’s Restoration Day event helped protect 363 native plants along 3,650 feet of stream bank of the Upper Truckee River near Lake Tahoe Airport in South Lake Tahoe. This stretch of river has been the subject of a number of restoration efforts in recent years, including last year’s Tahoe Forest Stewardship Day. The restoration of stream bank vegetation provides habitat for wildlife and prevents erosion that clouds the water and degrades Lake clarity.

“Revegetation has been challenging during the recent drought years, and this work will enable the young native plants to become more established and able to survive on their own,” said Jason Burke, stormwater program coordinator for South Lake Tahoe. “The volunteer day also provides everyone the opportunity to get outside and check on the success of the larger effort to restore this section of the river.”

Volunteers used shovels to build berms around recently-planted wood rose plants – the extra berm will help the plants capture

and retain more rainfall during the summer. Participants also applied mulch around the plants and gave them a little extra water from the river to help them make it through the drier months.

“The efforts by the volunteers on Saturday are so important. It’s vital to revisit restoration sites multiple times after the initial work to ensure that plants survive and we get the intended restoration needed to protect the environment,” said Jen Greenberg, an environmental planner with the California Tahoe Conservancy.

“The hard work by Saturday’s volunteers will help the streamside plants survive and thrive in the summer heat, which will help continue to improve the condition of this reach of the Upper Truckee River, ultimately helping to prevent erosion and keep fine sediment from making its way to Lake Tahoe,” said Zack Bradford, the League’s natural resources manager.

As a thank you for their efforts to protect Lake Tahoe, Ernie’s Coffee Shop of South Lake Tahoe provided each volunteer a voucher good for a free meal at their restaurant.

Jesse Patterson, Lake to Save Lake Tahoe deputy director