

Opinion: Tahoe not immune to climate change

By Joanne Marchetta

For 20 years, every August we've paused to reflect on our collective commitment to Lake Tahoe's restoration at the Lake Tahoe Summit. This year, with Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., hosting the event, the issue of climate change will be front and center. Climate change poses incredible challenges for Tahoe, affecting not only the health of its famously cold, clear waters, but the health of its expansive forests and what is to become of our \$5 billion outdoor recreation-based economy.

The 2016 State of the Lake Report by UC Davis highlights how climate change is already impacting Tahoe. Drought and warmer temperatures are changing precipitation patterns that contribute to tree mortality in Tahoe's forests. Scientists are studying how these same warming trends are affecting the lake's ecological conditions and may be threatening the long-term health of Tahoe's environment.



Joanne
Marchetta

TRPA and dozens of partners are working together to meet the challenges of climate change and ensure that Tahoe's environment and communities are resilient and sustainable.

Over the last two decades, an unparalleled partnership has been continuously investing in the Lake Tahoe Environment Improvement Program. We have halted the long-running declines in lake clarity; thinned overgrown forests to reduce wildfire risk; restored wetlands, streams, and wildlife habitat; and improved roads and communities to reduce stormwater pollution. But responding to climate change means we must continue.

Five years of severe drought have stressed Tahoe's forests. While tree mortality at Tahoe is far less severe than in other parts of the Sierra Nevada, we are taking every step now possible to improve long-term forest health and resiliency and prepare our communities for wildfire.

In the 10 years since the devastating Angora Fire in 2007, Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team partners have thinned 50,000 acres of forest to reduce hazardous fuels, helped thousands of homeowners create defensible space, and worked tirelessly to educate people about the importance of wildfire prevention and preparedness.

All 117,000 acres of wildland urban interface in the Tahoe basin—the most dangerous areas where forests and communities meet—will have been treated over the next decade. That work now needs to extend to the larger forest setting. Through the Lake Tahoe West Partnership, we are planning landscape-scale projects to thin overstocked forests, improve water quality, and enhance recreation access throughout 59,000 acres of Lake Tahoe's West Shore, an area extending from Emerald Bay to Squaw Valley—a model we can apply to other parts of the Tahoe basin.

TRPA and transportation partners are continuing to build a system of alternatives to the private automobile. We are building bike and pedestrian trails around the lake and doubling down on increased transit service, particularly to popular recreation sites, to reduce traffic congestion, make it easier for people to travel without driving, and reduce

greenhouse gas emissions. With a plug-in electric vehicle readiness plan, we are also working to enhance charging infrastructure and make the Tahoe-Truckee region a leader in the deployment of zero-emission electric vehicles.

TRPA and its research partners are working to understand the potential impacts of climate change at Tahoe and make certain the region's environmental conservation and restoration programs are as effective as possible. Sustainability and resiliency to climate change are top of mind in TRPA's planning initiatives, from shoreline planning to transportation, forest health, water quality, the fight against aquatic invasive species, and community revitalization.

Partners are taking major steps toward sustainability. The city of South Lake Tahoe has committed to getting all its electricity from renewable sources by 2032. Vail Resorts, which runs Heavenly, Northstar, and Kirkwood, has committed to securing all its electricity from renewable sources and eliminating landfill waste from its resorts by 2030.

Responsibility for this work must not be someone else's problem. Please play your part in working toward sustainability solutions. From walking or biking instead of driving a car to recycling, small actions taken on a large scale make a world of difference. If you'd like to learn more about how you can help fight climate change at Tahoe, TRPA's award-winning Sustainability Action Plan identifies many steps individuals and organizations can take.

Climate change poses unprecedented challenges. But we have a history of partnering together to meet challenges for the health of Tahoe's environment and communities. By continuing to work together as responsible environmental stewards, we can make certain that future generations will be able to enjoy the treasured lake, forests, and mountains we all are working hard to conserve and restore.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Letter: Rotarians make commitment to B&B

To the community,

The Tahoe-Douglas Rotary Club is partnering with Bread & Broth by hosting five Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsorships over the next 10 months.

“The Tahoe-Douglas Club is happy to support Bread & Broth’s wonderful program and looks forward to a strong relationship with B&B and its fantastic volunteers,” commented Ashley Colvin, Rotary’s acting president.

Hosting the Monday Meal dinners, which serve the less fortunate of our community, aligns with the club’s mission to serve others by working side-by-side with the community on local service projects.

On Aug. 7, the Rotary Club hosted its first AAD. Volunteering along with Colvin at the dinner were fellow Rotarians Chris Croft, Matt Grime, Greg Felton and Paul Thibodeau. In addition to serving the community, the Rotary Club encourages their members to “focus on fun and fellowship in all we do”. True to form, these five volunteers enjoyed their time welcoming and serving the 85 dinner guests who came for a tasty and filling meal at St. Theresa Grace Hall.

B&B is very thankful for the support that the Tahoe-Douglas Rotary Club is providing to our organization. Partnerships

through the AAD program provide both monetary and volunteer support which guarantees our Monday Meal dinners will continue to be provided to help ease hunger for our food insecure community members. B&B is looking forward to the Rotary's next AAD sponsorship in October.

To partner with B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: Setting the facts straight about rafters

By Nate Rangel

Twenty-three years ago, back in 1994, Bernard Carlson filed suit against El Dorado County and the permitted professional outfitters on the South Fork of the American River. He claimed that the granting of permits, under existing law which protects the environment, the community and local taxpayers, was a discretionary act and that the then existing River Management Plan and accompanying EIR was deficient. It turned out that he was right, and as part of the settlement that the county and my colleagues reached with him we engaged in what became an extensive seven-year process which resulted in a new management plan, along with a comprehensive and all-encompassing EIR. That management plan, backed up by its EIR, is the current "general plan" for the South Fork of the American.

Larry Weitzman, in his **July 31 opinion** piece titled "Rafting companies need to pay to play", seems to have just discovered

river recreation in El Dorado County. His list of grievances and alleged taxpayer subsidies are all matters that were dealt with and satisfactorily mitigated within that plan. In reality, Weitzman is a couple of decades late to the party and appears to have jumped on the "alternative facts" bandwagon. Or, put another way, he doesn't know what he's writing about.

He starts his list of complaints by discussing the huge burden that we pose on county search and rescue operations, and he backs that up with the one incident he was able to find – the tragic disappearance of a non-rafter on the Cosumnes River. It's puzzling how that single event on another river bears any relationship to our operations here, but I'm sure Weitzman has it all figured out in his mind.

He then goes on to boldly claim that "taxpayers are spending about \$30,000 a year on a bus shuttle, purely to benefit the commercial rafting industry." Again, he's more than a bit fact challenged on this one. The shuttles he's talking about are partially paid for by DMV registration fees specifically earmarked for pollution fighting programs such as this. They come via grants from the local Air Quality Management board that help satisfy traffic mitigation requirements within the existing Management Plan for private boaters. They utilize vehicles and trailers that were partially paid for by funds from the county's River Trust Fund (the dollars that commercial outfitters pay to the county) and – here's the best part – none of those shuttles, nor any of the dollars spent on them, is used by the commercial rafting industry. Nada ... zilch ... zero ... not one red cent.

Weitzman proceeds to expose the "potential slush fund" that the River Trust fund represents. According to him it pays for one single county employee which is – guess what – completely wrong. Those monies fund the entire river management program which includes one river recreation supervisor, two assistants, and other staff within the Parks Division, including the parks manager, to the degree that their time is

allocated to river recreation issues. He decries as insufficient the dollars that outfitters spend toward our activities citing only the user-day fees paid to the county. He neglected to mention the put-in and take-out fees that we pay for use of Henningsen- Lotus Park, the fees paid to State Parks for use of Marshall Gold as well as the take-out at Folsom Reservoir, the dollars paid for lunch use at Cronin Ranch, a BLM managed resource. Or the money we spend annually in property taxes for our equipment to the county, or the county's possessory interest tax we spend yearly based on our permits or the dollars we pay to get an environmental health permit so that we can feed our guests meals. The list goes on and on. The bottom line is we do pay to play, and we pay big time.

Finally, Weitzman accuses the rafters of wanting, through the auspices of the River Management Advisory Committee, to "tell the county how to run the river concessions. Isn't that the tail wagging the dog?" I can only suppose that's because we have one single commercial outfitter representative on RMAC. The fact that the RMAC is only an advisory to the Board of Supervisors and consists of six other appointed positions representing private landowners, State Parks, local businesses, one private boater and two at-large seats seems to have escaped him. But, again, in Weitzman's world somehow our one vote is "wagging" that dog.

Weitzman's headline alleging our failing to "Pay to play" is ironically accurate only in that he has failed to pay the price of being a legitimate journalist. His entire hit-piece is replete with lies, half-truths and irresponsible allegations with no basis in reality. The next time Weitzman goes trolling for a new crusade I'd suggest he pick a battle that wasn't previously waged 20 years earlier, that he do his homework and that he get his facts straight.

Nate Rangel is a local resident and professional river outfitter. He is the current appointed outfitter

representative on the El Dorado County River Management Advisory Committee.

Letter: Zero tolerance for racism, white supremacy

To the community,

We have been witness to the violence that has taken place this weekend during the white nationalist march in Charlottesville, Va. One of the marchers photographed has been identified as a UNR student.

Racism and white supremacist movements have a corrosive effect on our society. These movements do not represent our values as a university. We denounce any movement that targets individuals due to the color of their skin, their religious beliefs, political beliefs, sexual orientation, ability/disability, or whether they were born in our country. As an institution, we remain firm in our commitment in denouncing all forms of bigotry and racism, which have no place in a free and equal society.

UNR is a caring and safe community of students and employees from a broad range of backgrounds with differing beliefs. This community will not be divided by hateful language and violence. Our learning environment respects the right to freely express views and debate openly in civil discourse. There will be clashes of beliefs and opinions, but they must be peaceful. As a community, we abhor violence and it has no place on our campus. If we are to come to greater understanding of each other, it will be through open, honest, non-violent discussion and exploration of all ideas. Educating

ourselves on the other's point of view is the key to understanding and peaceful co-existence.

The tragedy that occurred this weekend in Virginia is an important reminder that we must recognize the perspectives of all individuals. Peaceful assembly and exchange of ideas is part of the bedrock of any free society. We will maintain a commitment to the safe, peaceful expression and exchange of ideas on our campus.

Marc A. Johnson, UNR president

Letter: Generosity helps hungry youth

To the community,

The Summer B&B 4 Kids program is off to a roaring start. Thanks to the foresight of Vail President Rob Katz and his wife, Elana Amsterdam, the South Lake Tahoe summer program is in full swing. Vail and B&B have been amazed and excited to be able to provide children up to the age of 18 a full bag of nutritionally balanced food each week to help them stay healthy and active.

We even had three generations of a charitable family from the Bay Area come and bag with us. Grandad Norman Harris, mom Marlene Common, and son Zachary Common along with friend Devin Smith were kind enough to donate their vacation time to help ease hunger in South Lake Tahoe.

"It was more fun than we thought and never a dull moment. We are happy to volunteer with such wonderful new friends," said

the family.

To date the Summer B&B 4 Kids program has given away bags of nourishment to over 700 South Lake Tahoe children. If you would like to help, please contact mavecilla24@gmail.com.

Evye Szant, B&B 4 Kids

Opinion: Time to pull the plug

By Larry Weitzman

In the Wall Street Journal on Aug. 7, there was a column by Christopher Mims entitled “Electric Car Hurdle: Not Enough Chargers.” It described the coming dilemma that there will not be enough public electric charging stations for all the coming millions of electric cars, courtesy of Tesla which says it will sell 500,000 EVs next year.

That will be a good trick, considering Tesla is current losing \$13,000 per car according to the latest financial report, the second quarter of 2017. If you consider the loss per car for the first half of 2017, the loss per car goes up to about \$14,500 per car produced.



Larry Weitzman

For the column, the author left out the two most important words regarding EVs and everything about them, "incentives and mandates," for without those keywords there would be no EVs and their ghastly expensive attendant charging stations. The article even discussed making lampposts into charging stations. First it would be 110v and plugging in for even as much as an hour it would only add three to four miles of range. Think of the inconvenience, repairs and perhaps a public cost in people being electrocuted, like plugging in during rainy weather. This idea is absolutely brilliant, like an inefficient incandescent lightbulb.

As to those incentives and mandates here is a partial list 1. federal tax credits; 2. state tax credits; 3. zero emitting vehicle credit; 4. federal and state requirements for the production and sale of EVs; 5. federal CAFÉ standards; 6. conventional car mandates, regulations, and requirements which raise the price of conventional cars; 7. gas guzzler taxes; 8. state EV car pool lanes; 9. potential new massive incentives from California Assembly Bill 1184 which is already halfway through the Legislature and there are many more, too numerous to list.

And then there are all the giveaways to Tesla. It has been estimated by many noted economists that Tesla has received in excess of \$5 billion in total incentives. And for what, so Musk can continue to build his house of cards?

About a week ago Tesla released its latest earnings performance to roars of approval because it lost less money than expected, this time only \$336 million. But there is an analysis done by Insideevs.com that says that the loss should have been over \$400 million. So, what did the stock do? It went up. Insideevs.com also wrote that Tesla sold \$100 million in ZEV credits (created by government mandate and incentives) which without would have extended their loss over \$500 million for the quarter.

In the first quarter of this year losses were \$330 million with no ZEV credit sales. In the second quarter losses were up to \$400 million, including ZEV credit sales of \$100 million, meaning that to compare the quarters, the actual losses from their business for the second quarter rose by 50 percent over the first quarter, \$330 mil compared to \$500. The loss per car actually rose from about \$16,000 per vehicle to about \$17,000 per unit (ZEV credit sales were \$4,000 per vehicle) and overall income from the sale of cars actually dropped by about one percent. Total losses for Tesla have now grown to over \$2.4 billion.

Tesla is literally burning through cash like, not a drunken sailor, but the entire crew of the aircraft carriers Harry S Truman, Carl Vinson, Teddy Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and the Nimitz combined. Last quarter's cash burn was over \$1 billion (\$1.16B) and it's expected to continue. Tesla's cash position of about \$3 billion will be exhausted in less than three quarters especially with the ramp up of the Model 3, another losing proposition.

As a result of this dwindling cash position, Tesla is going to sell up to \$1.5 billion in bonds to raise cash with about a 5.25 percent coupon. Yesterday, \$600 million sold. Total debt for Tesla will reach close to \$10 billion. At 5 percent, their debt service will be \$500 million a year or \$5,000 per car at the current rate of approximately 100,000 units. Even if they sell 500,000 cars, it will add \$1,000 of cost to every vehicle. Ford and GM make from sales of 7-8 million vehicles a year a net profit of about \$1,400 a vehicle. You can do the math.

But what about the Model 3, the new inexpensive EV Tesla has started producing and selling. They claim a base price of \$35,000, but most will leave the factory at over \$50,000. But why is the base Model 3 about half the price of the base Model S? And therein lies an interesting story.

If you stop and think about it, it should cost almost as much. In the long-range Model 3 the battery pack is about the same size and almost every other internal component of the Model S is used in the Model 3 or vice versa. Back in the late 1950s, it was said that it only cost \$300 more to build a Cadillac than a Chevy, but the Cadillac sold for double the price. When you think about it, the parts and labor for each car cost the same, putting a door on is putting a door on, an a/c compressor is an a/c compressor as is an electric power steering rack, the only different is the amount of steel and leather over cloth (base Model S does not have leather, anyway). A V-8 engine is a V-8 engine, no matter what the size, they essentially cost the same as the components are the same. Ditto for an electric motor. The amount of steel or aluminum in the cost of producing a car is insignificant. It's the cost of the components and the assembly labor and those are required for any car in similar amounts. Just because it is smaller, doesn't mean it costs that much less to build. It doesn't. In fact, most manufacturer's give away their compact cars so they can sell pickups, crossovers and SUVs for large profits because of, that's right, government regulations (CAFÉ) and intervention in the market place.

Tesla cannot survive because of the Model 3, you can't lose money on every sale and make it up in volume.

The sooner the government pulls the plug on Tesla incentives and mandates and leave the free market unto itself, the sooner this house of cards can come tumbling down. EVs are a pipedream until "unobtainium" is discovered. They only way EVs are even remotely succeeding is because of government's attempt at behavior modification. Fiddle with human nature at your peril.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Letter: Yoga group gives back to community

To the community,

A gold star for outstanding Adopt A Day of Nourishment volunteer service goes to Still Water Yoga. This limber and very kind and thoughtful group of women was a joy to have hosting Bread & Broth's July 24 meal.

To Karen Eberlin, Shannon Liebel, Lucy McLaughlin, Susan Glasson and Liz Norman, B&B would like to thank you and would love to have your yoga group back any time.

The \$250 donated for the sponsorship meal enabled the B&B cooks to offer pulled pork and roast beef sandwiches, broccoli, cole slaw, and fruit salad on the evening's menu.

In addition to serving the meals to the dinner guests, the Still Water Yoga crew helped bag fruits, vegetables, dairy products and baked goods to send home with the diners to help supplement meals later in the week.

At the end of meal, this hardworking crew helped the B&B volunteers with the meal's breakdown and cleanup.

"It was a pleasure to be able to help serve the community," said Shannon Liebel. "Thank you for being so organized and allowing us this opportunity."

B&B is so pleased to have the support and help of our community partners like Still Water Yoga who take this opportunity to help ease hunger and improve the lives of those in need.

To partner with B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: Storm water bill would evade taxpayer protections

By Geoff McIntosh, San Francisco Chronicle

If Senate Bill 231 (Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys) becomes law, property owners would be saddled with thousands of dollars in additional, annual property taxes. What's worse is that this bill would allow these tax increases to be implemented without a vote of the people.

Political sleight of hand? Yes, and here's how.

SB231 redefines the word "sewer" to include storm water and storm drains, thereby allowing local governments to evade Proposition 218 taxpayer protections. That 1996 initiative requires that all new property-related taxes and most fees proposed by a local government or agency be approved by two-thirds of voters. If SB231 is enacted, local governments can assess property owners to fund storm water infrastructure projects without voter approval.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Ex-CAO keeps haunting EDC

By Larry Weitzman

Everyone knows that El Dorado County is short of money for road maintenance, funding employee pensions and dozens of other items that need attention. In fact, the county is so short of money there was an attempt to eliminate senior legal which costs the county about \$250,000 annually, a pittance when compared to the over quarter billion-dollar General Fund budget. So, you would think that if turning over a rock would benefit EDC by even \$100, they would do it. Maybe not. And because of that we need answers.



Larry Weitzman

It's time for EDC to not turn over a rock, but start rolling big boulders. On Nov. 4, 2014, a transition agreement and release of claims was executed by EDC and former CAO Terri Daly. It provided for the payment to Daly the sum of \$153,519.73 incumbent on her to keep certain promises which were a substantial part of the consideration for this payment.

Daly agreed in paragraph 4 (a) of that agreement to assist the "county in regards to matters in which she was involved during her employment including but not limited to assistance in

connection with any actual or threatened claims, complaints, litigation or lawsuits in which the county and/or Daly, in her official capacity, are named as subjects or defendants ...”

The same paragraph further states, “In consideration of the foregoing, county will pay Daly a total of nine (9) months base salary ... \$153,519.” Seems pretty clear cut even to a non-legal lay mind.

In addition to this actual cash sum, Daly was paid other benefits, with the total amount perhaps approaching \$200,000. Almost enough to pay for senior legal which the Board of Supervisors were so willing to cut because the county is short of cash.

About 10 months after the execution of that contract and mutual promises which the county fulfilled by paying all sums and benefits due under the contract, two former BOS members, Norma Santiago and Ron Briggs file a lawsuit against the county for back pay of some \$200,000. Maybe they had spent the \$77,000 annual salary they each received for the prior eight or nine years and thereafter couldn't achieve gainful employment. Being a BOS member was maybe the highest paying “job” they ever had. In fact, Briggs has filed for another county job after filing and losing the race for county treasurer, a position for which he clearly wasn't qualified. Now he has filed for county clerk a job with a base pay of about \$120,000. Doesn't this guy have any marketable skills? I have the feeling Santiago will also seek public office again for the same reasons.

I digress. During the initial phase of that lawsuit which was decided in favor of the county solely on briefs and argument, Terri Daly, the ex-CAO who promised to assist the county in any litigation (lawsuits), filed a voluntary declaration under penalty of perjury saying effectively that Briggs and Santiago were entitled to their claim. Would you call that “assisting the county in litigation as per paragraph 4.a.? In fact, it

was the antithesis of her promises made for the payment of about \$200,000. Daly clearly breached her contract by taking a side that would be against the county. I and every other taxpayer should demand the county file an immediate lawsuit against Daly for breach of contract for her clear violation and seek the return of \$153,519.57 and all other payments and benefits paid to pursuant to the contract. She made promises she did not keep. She owes the county a lot of money.

The upshot of the Briggs/Santiago case was that they lost hands down because their claim violated the state Constitution. I wrote that would be the decision months before the actual decision and the judge in that case ruled correctly. It was very clear cut. There was obviously no appeal. And Briggs and Santiago have the audacity to run for another public office? That's a good definition of chutzpah.

I have discussed this matter with CAO Don Ashton as to if the county is so short of money as to even consider cutting senior legal, and you know Daly breached her transition agreement as I wrote about it nearly 18 months ago, why haven't we, the county, sued? He says he doesn't make that decision, but he could recommend it to the board. And the contract provides for reasonable attorney's fees to the prevailing party on top of the recovery of our money.

Why hasn't our county counsel recommended the recovery of this money; what it's small potatoes? So was senior legal which certain members of the board being so eager to cut. You can bet there are politics at play here, big time. If any incumbents are running for re-election and you can bet Mike Ranalli is, then he has to demand that we sue for recovery of the money. If they don't, they obviously do not care about the taxpayers' money. Why should they, it's OPM to them. But it's not to me when I get charged sales tax or worse write that property tax checks twice a year.

This lawsuit against Daly stealing our money needs to be filed

post haste as the statute of limitations will run on Nov. 3, 2018. The county is quick to raise taxes but not recover money from those that effectively steal from us. And if Mike Ciccozzi, county counsel, won't do it, why are we paying him over \$200,000 a year? The board should fire him. We need him as much as we need another do nothing bureaucrat. But with Ciccozzi we get bad advice and it costs the county twice or more.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Letter: Tahoe Swim Club says thanks

To the community,

The Tahoe Swim Club would like to thank the following supporters of our annual Swimming at Altitude Swim Meet:

John D. Marchini and South Tahoe Refuse, Manuel and Claudia from Taqueria Jalisco, 7-Eleven for ice, Ed at Fast Print for printing the programs, Valerie and Jerry Rudd and the many officials from Northern California and Northern Nevada, the Tahoe parents and swimmers who volunteered countless hours, and Louise Marin for once again organizing all aspects of the meet!

Our annual meet brings in over 400 swimmers and their families to Tahoe for a weekend of competitive USA swimming. Without this meet, the Tahoe Swim Club, a small nonprofit, would not be able to provide the only competitive swimming opportunity here on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe. Thank you to all who support our swimmers and our swim club.

Kathy Haven, Tahoe Swim Club