



# Friends of Hope Valley Newsletter

Spring, 2010  
Volume 25, Issue 1

For the preservation of the scenic, recreational, and historic use of Hope Valley and Alpine County's eastern Sierra slope.

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## THE LITTLE MOUSE THAT ROARED

*FOHV's US District Court Trial Date Set*  
John Barr

More than ten years after the Dressler family closed trails through Pleasant Valley – trails used by the public for hundreds years to access the Alpine County high country, including the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and the Mokelumne Wilderness Area – the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California has set a jury trial date of January 11, 2011 for *FOHV v. Frederick Company, et al.*

Currently FOHV is engaged in a time- and resource-intensive process of pre-trial discovery, which must be completed by August 6, 2010. As the trial date approaches, FOHV is in need of both additional witnesses for the case who used the trails before and during the 1970s and financial support for its legal efforts.

The trails were closed in 1999. During the years following the trails' closure, FOHV tried to persuade the landowner to voluntarily reopen these trails for public use. For eight years all efforts to come to an amicable resolution were rebuffed. With no other recourse, FOHV filed a lawsuit in an effort to reopen the trails.

FOHV has engaged the eminent San Francisco environmental law firm Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP (SMW) in pursuing the goal of reopening the closed trails to the public. Attorneys Matthew Zinn of SMW and Rod Kerr of Kerr & Wagstaffe LLP filed the lawsuit on FOHV's behalf.

FOHV's position is that the long history of continuous public use of the trails in Pleasant Valley has created by implied dedication public easements where the trails cross private land. There is ample evidence demonstrating lengthy historical use. Washoe tribes used the trails to access the high country. A map drawn by a state judge

in 1864 depicts a trail running through Pleasant Valley, as do USGS topographic maps of the region.

If you or someone you know enjoyed visiting Pleasant Valley during or before the 1970s, please send this information to [info@hopevalleyca.com](mailto:info@hopevalleyca.com) or to the address below. It is crucial that we identify as many witnesses as possible to demonstrate that Pleasant Valley was widely used by the public during these years.

FOHV is also reaching out to organizations and individuals who are like-minded for donations to fund the continuing pursuit of victory in this lawsuit.

**Your support is appreciated.** Please send tax-deductible contributions to Friends of Hope Valley, PO Box 431, Markleeville, CA 96120



Pleasant Valley and Raymond Peak

**WINTER SAFETY DAY**

Jim Donald

On February 20, FOHV co-sponsored with CA Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division a Winter Safety Day in Hope Valley. The event focused on avalanche awareness and hazards faced by winter recreationists.

Local, state and federal agencies took part in the daylong event. Snowmobile groups were well represented by the California Nevada Snowmobile Association and the Tahoe Sierra Snowmobile Club. Alpine County Chamber of Commerce, CHP and Caltrans assisted. Care Flight flew in its medivac helicopter with flight nurse and medical technician to talk about its winter rescue capabilities.

Mini-courses taught by Lake Tahoe Community College avalanche instructor David Reichel, survival instructor Dave Beck, and by USFS's Steve Hale and Frank Machler, who discussed trip preparation, were an important aspect of the day. CNSA brought a safety trailer with videos, computerized testing, and handouts focusing on winter hazards.

Alpine Search and Rescue demonstrated training and search and rescue techniques. Their table was a hub of activity throughout the event. Hope Valley Outdoors displayed winter recreation equipment including skis and snowshoes and provided Sno-Park permits to participants who needed them.

The morning's snowy weather cleared allowing a full slate of events through early afternoon, but heavy snow showers caused the event to wrap up earlier than anticipated.

Winter Safety Day was a small part of a CA Parks & Recreation OHV education grant awarded to FOHV to establish winter recreation protocols for Hope Valley and eastern Alpine County. The event was a success, and the buzz is to hold a similar event next year.

**HELP US WITH OUR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

This year FOHV is asking you – our members – to inform like-minded outdoor enthusiasts of FOHV and its work, encouraging them to become FOHV members. We have included an extra newsletter we hope you will pass on to someone who enjoys Alpine County's eastern Sierra slope. You can send potential members' addresses to [info@hopevalleyca.com](mailto:info@hopevalleyca.com), and newsletters will be sent to them. Or direct your friends to our website which links them to the newsletter: <http://www.hopevalleyca.com>

This year we offer a \$500 dollar lifetime membership to those who feel strongly about what we are doing this year and can make a sizeable contribution.

**CHARITY VALLEY TO GROVER HOT SPRINGS**

Greg Hayes

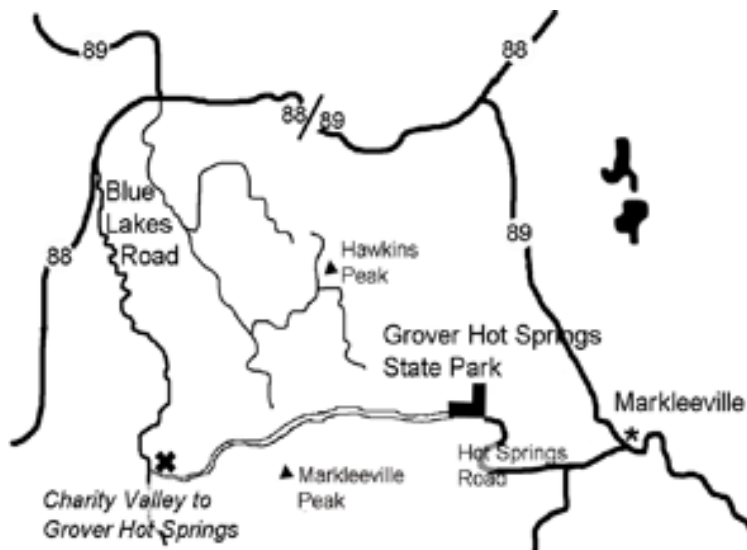
Here's a fun idea: A pleasant hike *and* a dip in the local hot springs. Begin the hike in Charity Valley, one of Hope Valley's nearby, lesser known sisters, and end at Grover Hot Springs just outside Markleeville. The hike isn't difficult; in fact, there's a net downhill of nearly 2,000 feet and the reward of a soak in a hot springs.

Head southwest from Pickett's Junction, the intersection of Highways 88 and 89 in Hope Valley. At about 3 miles, turn left on Blue Lakes Road. Six miles down the road is a yellow trailhead marker with a hiker icon and, on your right, will be a small, unimproved parking area.

Markleeville Peak (9,415 ft.) rises abruptly ahead; keep it on your right. Charity Valley trail undulates through the seasonal flowers and decomposed granite of Charity Valley to the scenic bluffs of Hot Springs Canyon. At this point the trail drops steadily into the valley of Grover Hot Springs and eventually crosses a meadow to the hot springs itself. The total distance is about 7 miles.

To make this hike work you need to place a second car at Grover Hot Springs State Park, 4 miles west of Markleeville. (After entering Markleeville turn right at Montgomery Street and bear right onto Hot Springs Road.) When you enter the state park continue straight along the south side of the meadow and into the hot spring's parking area. There is a small fee for parking your car at the State Park, but you and your group will enjoy a soak in the hot springs pool at hike's end.

If you don't have a second car, you'll have to make this an out and back trip, enjoying views of Hot Springs Canyon as you retrace your steps back to your vehicle. (Thanks to Jerry and Janine Sprout, authors of the *Alpine Sierra Trailblazer*, for their help.)





**Join**

**FOR A DAY OF WORK AND MUSIC**

Debbi Waldear

June 6<sup>th</sup>, our first workday of the season, is a morning for planting willows along the West Fork of the Carson River. We are seeing measurable effect on the river in the areas we have planted over the past years. The banks once denuded of vegetation are now lined with willows, stabilizing the banks, preventing further channelization, reducing sediment accumulation and keeping the water temperatures cool.

\*\*\*\* Meet in Hope Valley, at Pickett's Junction, the junction of Hwy 88 and Hwy 89...9:00am sharp. Bring gloves, clippers and be ready to have fun in the Carson River.

**THE BACK 40 IS BACK...after work-morning**

The Back Forty Bluegrass band returns for a Friends of Hope Valley benefit concert. Ten Dollar Pony Band will also play its lively blend of music, including folk, pop, blues, and country rock. This event will take place at Sorensen's Resort located on Highway 88 in Hope Valley, near Pickett's Junction. Tickets are \$10 a person.

During the concert Sorensen's will make available their delicious BBQ at an additional cost.

**PLAN NOW FOR FALL WORK DAY**

Debbi Waldear

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Friends of Hope Valley will partner with the Alpine Watershed Group for a restoration project on the West Fork of the Carson River. The work will be done in lower Hope Valley where the river's banks are unstable resulting in channelization. Channelization straightens and deepens the river causing its water to run fast, preventing the water from dispersing during flood stages, creating a dry environment in the surrounding area. Before the river became so incised, its banks were lower and the valley flooded each spring; the earth soaked up the moisture – like a sponge, filtered the water before entering the groundwater. Because of river channelization, Hope Valley is rapidly changing from a fertile grassland to a dryer meadow dominated by sagebrush.

Stream bank restoration is the process of bringing a stream bank that's washed, back to its original condition by planting species of shrubs native to the area. Erosion can be decreased, and a natural habitat for wildlife can be created through this process. Willow is an ideal plant for restoration due to its fast growth and easy adaptation.

Our project will consist of various forms of willow weaving. Willow weavings allow for inexpensive custom-made structures made from locally harvested willows to fit specific sites without using fence posts, cable, entire trees, concrete, car bodies, and riprap. A huge advantage is that if the structures wash out, the willows will decompose or perhaps take root elsewhere – like beaver cuttings often do – not leaving unsightly and hazardous debris in and along the water.

Meet at Pickett's Junction. (Hwy 88 and Hwy 89 in Hope Valley). Be prepared to be in and out of the water. Bring clippers, shovels and work gloves. Lunch will be provided.

**Why join such a small organization?**

Over the past 25 years FOHV has been recognized for its efforts to preserve Alpine County's scenic eastern Sierra slope. Some of you have participated in work projects within Hope Valley, including the planting of willows along the banks of the West Fork of the Carson River and erecting fences to keep off-highway vehicles out of the valley's meadows. FOHV's restorative projects in eastern Alpine County are ongoing.

Recently FOHV has taken the lead in creating and implementing the Alpine County Winter Recreation Plan and has joined others in the attempt to prevent the use of a pesticide in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness to restore Paiute Cutthroat Trout. This past year FOHV assisted the Alpine County Historical Society to relocate a Basque oven from Hope Valley to the Society's museum in Markleeville. Presently FOHV is working with the US Forest Service and its eastern Alpine County Travel Management Plan.

This year, much of FOHV's effort has focused on reopening Pleasant Valley trails to the public. Preparation for FOHV's upcoming US District Court trial is a time- and resource- intensive process. Your membership and contribution are needed now. The larger our membership, the louder our voice. There is strength in numbers .... and dollars.



Friends of Hope Valley  
PO Box 431  
Markleeville, CA 96120

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 2010

\_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Friend \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Life Time

Name (Print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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**

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