



COMMUNITY NEWS

Re-Imagining Martis Valley's Forests

BY DAVID BUNKER



▲ Each year local students work with the Sugar Pine Foundation to plant trees in Waddle Ranch.

Scattered across Waddle Ranch are clues to what Martis Valley's forests once were. Old-growth Sugar Pines that escaped the hungry axes of 1870s loggers cluster in hidden stands. Stately Ponderosa Pines stretch to the sky.

It's a reminder of the fire-resilient forest that once covered Martis Valley, and a look into the future forest that the Truckee Tahoe Airport District is diligently shaping on the nearly 2,600 acres it owns in the valley.

Over the past decade, the airport has allocated more than \$2 million in maintenance and countless hours of work into Waddle Ranch and other land surrounding the airport's runways. The results have been transformational. Areas where fire-prone White Fir once choked the landscape are now thinned, opening the landscape for Jeffrey and Ponderosa Pines to reclaim their rightful place. Areas of dangerously thick vegetation that sat like tinder boxes near Truckee neighborhoods Juniper Hills and Glenshire are now thinned and less susceptible to catastrophic fire.

"The airport has shown what it is to be a good steward of the land," said Truckee Fire Protection District Fire Chief Bill Seline. "They have been a good example for our community."

But, as the largest landowner in Martis Valley, the Airport District is not done yet. The District is now branching into wetlands and forest restoration, planting disease-resistant Sugar Pines in partnership with the Sugar Pine Foundation and restoring the rich ecology of one of the Northern Sierra's most picturesque valleys.

Partners in Preservation

How the Truckee Tahoe Airport District became the owner of Waddle Ranch, a large swath of forest northeast of Highway 267, dates back more than a decade to a time when the future of Martis Valley was still being decided.

Waddle Ranch was owned by the Pritzker family of Hyatt hotel fame and was slated for development of up to 1,000 housing units under the Martis Valley Community Plan. A group of conservationists, led by the Truckee Donner Land Trust, marshaled community support to purchase the property, with the airport contributing generously to the effort.

The airport's main interest in the property was to prevent new neighborhoods from springing up along the flight paths to the airport, which could lead to complaints about aviation noise. But the District was also looking for ways to support important environmental community projects.

"As our region continues to grow, more resources have become available to the District. The board and staff have made a real commitment to see what meaningful things we can do to benefit the community," said Truckee Tahoe Airport General Manager Kevin Smith.

While the Truckee Donner Land Trust

and the Trust for Public Land led the effort to purchase Waddle Ranch, they transferred ownership of the land to the airport once the purchase was complete. That meant that the airport would have the ongoing responsibility to care for and protect the land. "This is a commitment that the Airport Board is very much behind," said Dave Hoffman, Director of Operations and Maintenance for the airport.

Within Waddle Ranch, that included caring for a forest that had suffered centuries of man-made impacts. Throughout history, the property has seen seasonal Native American encampments, ranching, mining, and aggressive logging. Much of the forest was cut to the ground during the Comstock Era silver mining boom when timber was rushed to Virginia City and other mining towns to shore up mineshafts and build boomtowns, to be baked into charcoal for locomotives, or cut into shingles or cordwood.

Those 1800s clear-cuts were then followed by decades of fire suppression, which led to an unhealthy and overgrown forest. Thickets of White Fir grew up among

Truckee Tahoe Airport District to study and plan restoration for Waddle Ranch.

Because White Firs have no taproot, they are less resistant to drought, yet consume large quantities of water through a network of shallow roots. Once White Firs dominate a forest, it is very hard for pines to regain a foothold because of the thick shade that the closely grouped trees cast on the ground and the water they suck from the soil.

"When we talk about White Fir, they are not this evil species. It is just that they are growing where they historically have not," said Bradfield.

The Airport District devised a plan to thin the White Fir and return the forest to its historic density, in effect mimicking what nature would have done with regular low-intensity fire in the era before wildfire suppression eliminated forest-cleaning blazes from the landscape.

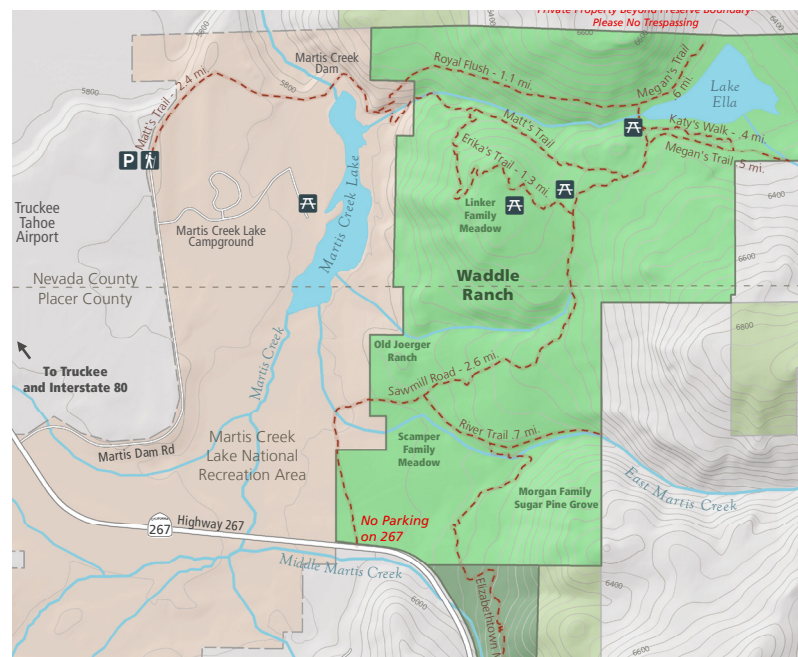
For fire officials who have long worried that a fire pushed by westward winds could flare up in the forests of Martis Valley and then march directly into Glenshire, the thinning provided much needed peace of mind.

"I feel better. I sleep better at night knowing what the airport has done," said Fire Chief Seline.

The Truckee Fire Protection District is even working in concert with the airport, networking fuel breaks on Waddle Ranch with other nearby properties to create a wider wildfire buffer that could help save Glenshire if a blaze moved toward the subdivision from the southwest. With a shaded fuel break along Highway 267 and more forest thinning on other properties near Waddle Ranch, "the effects are exponential," added Seline.

A Long-Term Commitment

The Airport District's forest work began in earnest in 2008 when Robinson Enterprises was brought in to thin the forest. Some of the forest material was trucked north to the Loyaltan Biomass Plant to be converted into energy. Forestry efforts continued for five years, thinning the forest with a particular eye toward



▲ Map of Waddle Ranch and Martis Valley. Courtesy Truckee Donner Land Trust.

the stumps of the old-growth Sugar Pine, Ponderosa and Jeffrey Pine.

In a matter of little more than a century, the forest transformed from widely spaced mature pines to a landscape where thickets of young firs and brush choked the terrain.

"It really sets the stage for catastrophic fire," said Danielle Bradfield, the Registered Professional Forester contracted by the

wildfire protection for Glenshire. But, as the forest work progressed, the Airport District began focusing on the entire ecology of the Martis Valley property.

That includes looking at the opportunities to restore the watershed throughout the landscape and working with organizations like the Truckee River Watershed Council.

"The goals for the property have morphed away from just fuels management to watershed restoration," said Hardy Bullock, Director of Aviation and Community Services.

The mindset that the airport brings to the more than 2,600 acres of land the airport owns within Martis Valley is a testament to the airport's long-term commitment to projects that benefit the entire community.

"Our ultimate goal is to provide benefit and value to all our constituents, not just those that fly and use the airport," said General Manager Smith.

Whether that is managing forests in a way that protects neighborhoods like Glenshire from catastrophic wildfire, retrofitting fuel tanks to make sure the airport can fuel firefighting aircraft in the event of a wildfire, or encouraging pilots to call in smoke that they spot from the air — it is all part of the airport's focus on investing in the community it serves.

As Director of Operations and Maintenance, Hoffman works closely with the foresters, maintenance crews and planners who have invested heavily in the health of the forests, streams and trails the Airport District now owns.

"The quality of the work done by all groups is outstanding," said Hoffman.

For fire officials like Seline who see an overwhelming amount of fire prevention and forest management work ahead of them, having a hard-working partner like the Airport District makes a huge difference.

"There is no silver bullet," said Seline, of wildfire preparedness and prevention. "It is heavy lifting, and that is what the Airport District is doing."

Resources can be found at:
truckeeatahoearport.com
tdlandtrust.org
sugarpinefoundation.org
truckeefire.org

AT THE AIRPORT

FREE AIR SHOW OFFERS FAMILY FUN

BY JULIANA DEMAREST
 PHOTO ANNA SERBINENKO



The Truckee Tahoe Air Show & Family Festival returns Saturday, July 13 with what promises to be a fun-filled day for

the whole family. Event-goers will be delighted as world-renowned performers descend upon Truckee to dazzle folks of all ages with high-flying aerobatics.

From fighter jets to classic warplanes and private jets to helicopters, aircraft from throughout the history of flight will line the ramp as static displays — like an open-air museum! Attendees can walk the tarmac, exploring planes and helicopters and learning from pilot docents, while daredevil pilots buzz through the air against the backdrop of our famous Tahoe blue sky.

Making their Truckee Tahoe Air Show debut this year are air racer Bob Freeman with Freeman Air Shows, Mini Jet Air Show star Tom Larkin, the Erickson Aircraft Collection, and Demon-1 "Dracula" biplane pilot Kyle Franklin.

Franklin, as much an artist as he is an airman, will captivate air show attendees as he creates a story in the sky set to rock music. His blood-streak-painted biplane "Dracula" will twist and tumble through the air with crimson smoke streaming behind as spectators become enthralled by his theatrical aerobatics. An experienced wing walker, Franklin was born into the air show life and learned the art of mesmerizing an audience from his father, the late Jimmy Franklin.

Freeman who started flying in 1972 and has been doing aerobatics since 1981, will take to the skies in his Extra 330SC, a converted Red Bull Racer aircraft. Larkin, who was afraid of roller coasters and often got airsick as a child, ultimately entered the U.S. Air Force and currently is a pilot for a major airline. He flies a modified SubSonex Jet, a JSX003 that comes as a kit and reaches top speeds of 300 mph.

Based in Madras, Oregon, the Erickson Aircraft Collection features over 20 vintage aircraft — most of which remain in flying condition — and will share one of only six Lockheed P-38 Lightnings left in the world.

Returning performers and consistent showstoppers include Anna Serbinenko Sky Dancer, Mark Peterson with his loud energy-filled jet, the North American B-25 J. Mitchell Bomber "Executive Sweet," and the P-51D Man O' War. For a fee, guests can score a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take a ride in the Man O' War or Executive Sweet. For more information,

visit TruckeeTahoeAirShow.com/rides.

Another riveting highlight, Skydive Truckee Tahoe owner Mike Swanson and his team of jumpers will leap from the heights of the heavens and descend upon the crowd below. Swanson has been skydiving for 27 years and has 22,000 total jumps to his credit. He was even in the 2015 film, *Point Break*.

The 2019 air show welcomes Safe Launch Healthy Futures and the organization's Flights Above Addiction program, which invites youth to paint an actual airplane, a "souped-up" Cessna 182. After talking with Commander Ron "Crazy" Cuff, an ex-Navy carrier pilot who addresses the effects of drug addiction on young adults' brains, youths will be invited to depict their wishes, hopes and dreams for a healthy future on the fuselage of the Cessna.

The event abounds with kids' activities, including a Family Festival on the green with live music, puppet shows, face painting and much more! Kids 8 and older

can stop by the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) building to sign up for a free airplane ride with the Young Eagles program on Sunday, July 14. A STEM Expo will offer hands-on exhibits.

This free event is generously presented by the Truckee Tahoe Airport District. The culmination of tireless efforts by volunteers with a mission to foster the future of aviation, it represents a unique way for residents and visitors alike to connect with the airport. Gates open at 9 a.m., with plenty of free, onsite parking. The opening ceremony kicks off at 10 a.m., followed by a Veterans' Parade at 11 a.m.

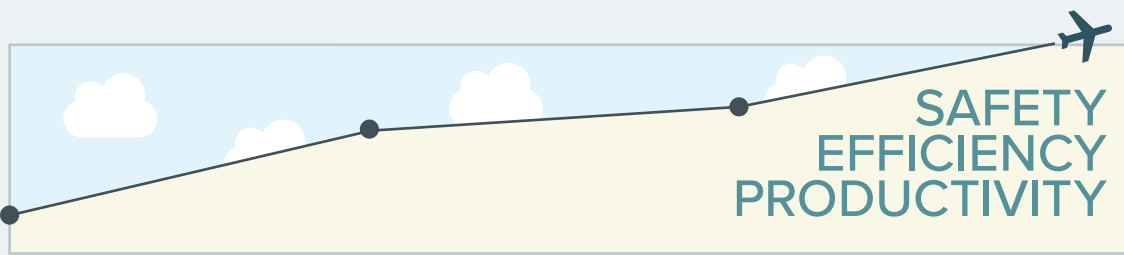
VIP Hospitality Tent Sponsored by Mountain Hardware and Sports

Purchase your "first-class" seat for the air show! \$75 in advance, \$100 on event day, \$25 children 12 and under. Price includes a catered lunch, lots of shade, beverages and more! Tickets go on sale starting June 1 at TruckeeTahoeAirShow.com.

ICAS Presents Air Show Emergency Response Team with Gold Award

In December 2018 the Air Show's Emergency Response Team was awarded, before a group of more than 1,000 industry professionals, the prestigious ICAS Pinnacle Gold Award for Excellence in Emergency Response. The award was accepted at the International Council of Air Shows Conference (ICAS) in Las Vegas.

THE BUSINESS OF THE AIRPORT IS YOUR BUSINESS



The Truckee Tahoe Airport District continually strives to improve safety, service and efficiency for users, and reduce noise and annoyance for local residents.

2019 Airfield Construction

Your Truckee Tahoe Airport District has over \$4.5 million in airport improvement and maintenance projects scheduled for the 2019 summer construction season. Airport users can stay up-to-date on posted project impacts, budgets and general information (once the jobs are scheduled) by visiting the airport's "Airfield Construction 2019" web page at truckeeatahoairport.com/aviation/construction.

On-Field Operator Updates

SKYDIVE TRUCKEE TAHOE opened to the public for the 2019 season on Friday, May 17. The Skydive Truckee Tahoe office and DZ (Drop Zone) are located off Hwy 267 at the very end of Martis Dam Rd. on the east side of the airfield. Just follow the signs. Tandem jumps are available. For more information, visit skydivetruckeeataho.com.

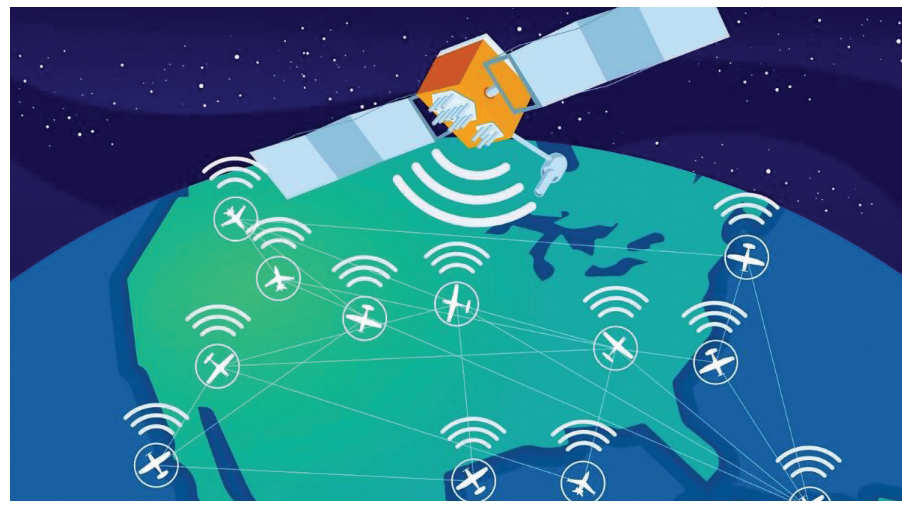
SIERRA AERO is a full-service FBO located at the Truckee Tahoe Airport in Hangar 1. Their services include aircraft maintenance, inspections, flight training and aircraft rentals. For more information, visit flytruckee.com.

MOUNTAIN LION AVIATION is a locally based charter operator and flight school. Their staff is made up of qualified professionals. They have a fleet of aircraft including a TBM and Cirrus SR22. Why drive when you can fly! To learn more, please visit mountainlion.aero.

TRUCKEE TAHOE SOARING ASSOCIATION (TTSA) opened Soar Truckee to the public for the 2019 season on Friday, May 24. The gliderport is located off Hwy 267 at the very end of Martis Dam Rd. on the east side of the airfield. Do you want to get a glider pilot's license, or maybe you have a glider ride on your bucket list? You can do it all at TTSA! Learn more at soartruckee.org.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Potential ADS-B Installation at KTRK



Similar to GPS, ADS-B uses satellite technology to broadcast and communicate the position of aircraft. The info is shared with air traffic control towers and other aircraft. The FAA has mandated that all aircraft be equipped with ADS-B by January 1, 2020.

Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) is a long term and a technical subject. The airspace over KTRK is NOT covered by radar, due to the surrounding mountainous terrain. ADS-B is the FAA's "Next Generation" solution designed to act as a data network of satellite and ground station coverage painting a full traffic picture for air traffic controllers and pilots (with ADS-B equipped aircraft).

The Truckee Tahoe Airport District (TTAD) has been working to gain permission to add ADS-B surveillance service volume at KTRK for the past two years. In August 2018 the FAA approved TTAD to enter negotiations with Harris Corporation to design and build an ADS-B station providing airborne coverage of aircraft from the ground to the flight levels over KTRK.

The Airport District's Board is currently reviewing

the merits of ADS-B installation at KTRK. The potential impacts to our community are being studied, as well as the potential benefits of increased safety, enhanced situational awareness, better aircraft control and operational data, and an airport ready to meet the transportation needs of our community. The cost is estimated at approximately \$1.7 million.

TTAD's Board of Directors is expected to hear presentations and discuss ADS-B at both the June 26, 2019 and July 24, 2019 board meetings, with a possible decision at the July meeting. Pilots and community members are invited to provide feedback to the Board regarding ADS-B. Direct questions or comments to Hardy Bullock, Director of Aviation and Community Services at (530) 587-7940.

For more information, visit truckeeatahoairport.com/aviation/ads-b. To see a short, two-minute video on ADS-B, please visit vimeo.com/300875793.

COMMUNITY NEWS

LOVE OF FLIGHT AND A PASSION FOR THE COMMUNITY

BY LAUREL LIPPERT; PHOTO TOM LIPPERT

If you sat down with David Diamond at Red Truck cafe for even a few minutes, you would be smiling, too, and laughing, listening to an entertaining story about his life as a musician, businessman and aviator.

Raised in Southern California, Diamond graduated from high school at age 16, went to junior college and joined the rock 'n' roll band Berlin at 17. The gold and platinum record recipient says, "When I was eight years old, my dad and I would go out to the airport and watch airplanes. One day at LAX, I saw a big airplane painted red, white and blue, and yelled, 'Oh my gosh, there's Led Zeppelin's airplane!'"

"I wanted to be an airline pilot, but I got sidetracked by becoming a musician," says Diamond. In 1983, while playing

with Berlin in East Lansing, Michigan, Diamond chatted with a bartender who mentioned that he was a flight instructor. "I told him I always wanted to learn to fly, and he said, 'Come on over, and we'll go up,'" which they did the next day.

Seventeen years later Diamond took his first lesson. He earned his private pilot certificate in 2000 and says a valuable thing he's learned from flying that's applicable to his life is humility. "I can think of myself as a reasonable musician or writer, but I never think of myself as a good enough pilot. Music can be exactly the opposite, where you get too much praise and admiration for not doing much work or for just being in the right place at the right time."

Diamond enjoys meeting other pilots. "Aviation brings together people who might have different backgrounds—but we all understand stall speed and

density altitude. We've got this peculiar connection that supersedes everything else." He also flies missions for Pilots N Paws, which he describes as the best use he can think of for his airplane.

Communicating, and doing it well, is important to him. First managing the University of Southern California news service division in the early 1990s, Diamond became editor of USC's technology newsmagazine and then accepted a job at Apple as a senior manager of its technical publications. "To this day, I always consider myself a writer first," he says.

Diamond approaches challenges with determination, especially his flight training. "It was very humbling, because it was one of the few things that I really wanted to do that was super difficult for me." He began assessing how his flight lessons were presented and believed there were different ways to teach them. In 2005 ASA published *Flight Training: Taking the Short Approach*, written and illustrated by David Diamond, that is still sold today.

He first saw Truckee five years ago while camping at Fallen Leaf Lake. Three months later, he bought a house and moved to Truckee. "I was in love with the airport from the moment I saw it," says Diamond who owns a Cessna 182. "I emailed manager Kevin Smith, saying I wanted to volunteer and am happy to do anything." In time, he was invited to join ACAT (Airport Community Advisory Team). "It wasn't so much that I want to change things. Rather, I don't want this to get messed up." With obvious passion for the subject, Diamond says, "We've got an airport, and we've got a community. And it's unrealistic to think that you're going to extract one from the other. The way I see it, you have to govern collectively in a way that benefits both, because, if one is suffering, it's going to pull down the other."

"I'm not a rich person. I'm 55 years old and my airplane's only 10 years younger than me. Back when I was a kid, watching airplanes with my dad, my airplane was already flying. This is the reality of most of the aviators at the Truckee airport. We're there because we made life choices that enabled us to buy modest, single-engine airplanes versus boats, RVs or additions to the house. It's about community members who choose to do this as opposed to doing something else."

His genuine enthusiasm and love for the Truckee community is infectious. David still tours with Berlin, and a new album will be coming out soon.



▲ David enjoys being a part of the KTRK aviation community.

ABOUT THE AIRPORT

Hours of Operation

Airport: 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fuel: 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Red Truck: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon. – Sat.)

Contact

10356 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 587-4119
(530) 287-2799 (Community Hotline)
info@truckeeatahoairport.com

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Connect with the Truckee Tahoe Airport District on Facebook and Instagram to stay up-to-date with all the latest news and events.

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Truckee Tahoe Air Show
Back for the eighth year!
family-friendly event.
Don't miss this exciting
Free Admission
Free Parking
For animal safety, no pets allowed. The fair can reach temperatures of over 100 degrees.
Air Show & Family Festival



Truckee Tahoe Air Show & Family Festival
Saturday, July 13, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

10356 Truckee Airport Rd., Truckee, CA 96161

Truckee Tahoe Airport. Connected.