



Sierra Wildlife Coalition

Promoting Humane and Practical Solutions for Living
with Beavers, Coyotes and all our local Wildlife

Summer/Fall Newsletter, 2017

It's been a while, and an unusual winter, since our last update. In general, all the extra rain and snow were good for creeks and their beavers; although some dams were washed out, the beavers seem to be OK.

At the US Forest Service Site at Taylor Creek, South Lake Tahoe, not only did the 'main' dam near the Stream Chamber wash out, but the heavy flows from rains took out two of our Levelers as well! (Note – the third, smaller Leveler on the side channel that comes out of the display is fine, and still working perfectly, as that channel is closed off in the winter.)

The Forest Service has built new raised walkways that will eliminate trail flooding issues - We have been advocating for these for years. (*photo at right*)



Our South Lake Tahoe Director Toogee Sielsch, and star volunteer Dwayne Crenshaw, waded into the creek as soon as it was safe earlier this summer, and found and pulled out our leveler pipes and other materials, which were (really) buried under all the logs and debris that washed down from the rains. We at Sierra Wildlife Coalition want to be sure not to leave any of our own debris in the creek or meadows.

The good news is Toogee and Dwayne also found a nice, new beaver lodge downstream in lower meadows at Taylor Creek, with a large food stash, so all the beavers there are safe and sound.

We also kept an eye on our two Levelers out in Tahoe Donner (NW of Truckee, for those not from this area) and both stayed in place and flowed nicely, keeping water levels below the nearby trails and boardwalks. The Leveler in Tahoe Vista also stayed in place, and continues to flow when water levels from Snow Creek rise, but we have not seen beavers there in two years – that smaller creek dried up quite early the last two summers, and we guess the beavers did not think it was a safe place to be.

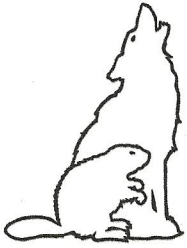


As usual we were busy at booths throughout the spring and summer. Earth Day in April at Squaw Valley and the Native Species Festival in June at USFS Taylor Creek (*photo at left*) were again popular events, with lots of interest from all the families.

New this year, we were invited to the "Tales & Trails Festival" at Sugar Pine Point State Park, July 29, celebrating "natural and cultural history of Lake Tahoe's West Shore State Parks". We look forward to keeping in touch with State Parks, as many of them have good beaver habitat. HUGE thanks to Toogee and Dwayne for all their great help at all the events!

COMING UP! TAYLOR CREEK'S FALL FISH FESTIVAL, SATURDAY & SUNDAY, OCT. 7 & 8

Come meet us at our booth Sat. or Sun., and see how the Kokanee salmon can easily navigate the beaver dams there. We have already seen lots of 'red fish' way up the creek, half a mile above the Stream Chamber, and above all the beaver dams. Beavers and salmon thrived together for centuries without human interference – we're trying to convince the USFS to let beaver dams be!



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Sierra Wildlife Coalition also presented "The Beavers of Taylor Creek" at the USFS Lake of the Sky Amphitheatre there at Taylor Creek, for the 3rd consecutive year, as part of their regular Friday evening series. Our SLT Director Toogee introduced the slide show, and also introduced SWC's big project for the summer - a Mosquito Study for the prestigious Glenbrook subdivision!



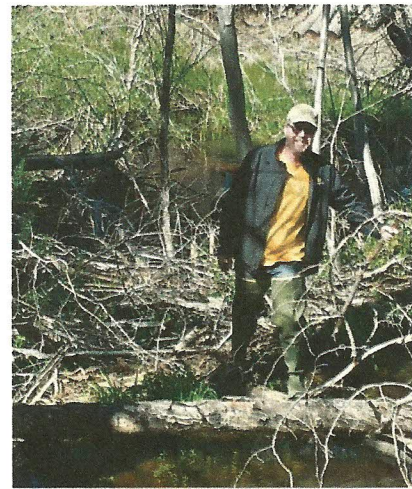
Toogee dipping for mosquito larva, Glenbrook

Friends there had been monitoring beaver activity in North Canyon Creek (also called Slaughterhouse Canyon), and contacted us when other homeowners were concerned about what they saw as overgrown vegetation and potential mosquito habitat. Toogee (*at left*) volunteered his time and expertise to do a Mosquito Larval Density Study for the Glenbrook Homeowners Association (GHOA), sampling 6 sites every 2 weeks for 6 months, May to Oct. (Toogee's 'day job' is senior technician for El Dorado County Vector Control, the agency which monitors and controls mosquitoes and other 'vectors' of disease.) Contrary to popular belief, beaver ponds are not large mosquito breeding habitat – in fact the mosquitoes were breeding prolifically upstream in upper Slaughterhouse Canyon, in areas not attached to any beaver ponds.

Toogee's expert study is included with an official environmental report of the lower watershed commissioned by GHOA. We hope homeowners will take note of the science, instead of going with the old mistaken notion that beaver ponds can breed disease, and use practical and proven alternatives to trapping and killing beavers in the future.

Now fall is upon us, and this is when "busy beavers" are truly busy, cutting and stockpiling a food stash for winter. Since beavers do not hibernate, they gather branches of deciduous trees and stick them in the creek-bottom mud near their lodge, for safe access under possible ice in the winter. (They can live on the under-bark, or cambium layer.)

So please keep an eye out in your own neighborhoods for any beaver chewing that might cause a problem. Sierra Wildlife Coalition can provide education and volunteers with simple and inexpensive ways to protect valuable trees – it's as easy as mixing some fine sand with non-toxic latex paint, and applying that gritty mixture to tree trunks. We've protected dozens of trees for the US Forest Service, US Army Corps, and private homeowners.



Star Volunteer 2017-Dwayne Crenshaw

Please see our website at www.sierrawildlife.org
for practical and proven solutions for any beaver issues

Visit us on Facebook too, for news of beavers here in the Tahoe area and around the U.S.
Or email us at sierrawildlifecoalition@gmail.com with any questions or observations.

Thanks for your support and interest, and have a wonderful fall and holiday season.