



# Sierra Wildlife Coalition

Promoting humane and practical solutions for living  
With beavers, coyotes and all our local wildlife

## Fall/Winter 2016 Newsletter

We had another busy season, especially at the US Forest Service Visitor Center at Taylor Creek, near Camp Richardson on the south shore, as reported by our South Lake Tahoe Director, Toogee Sielsch:

On the South Shore of Lake Tahoe we of the Sierra Wildlife Coalition are mainly focused on our partnership with the USFS at Taylor Creek. This last year has presented us with a new set of challenges and solutions to those challenges. We were lucky enough to gain access to the right ear in upper US Forest Service management, and they not only listened, but took our advice and built a new raised boardwalk at the lowest part of the Rainbow Trail along Taylor Creek. This was an area of chronic flooding during any rain event, or in spring during the snow-melt season. (See photo at right – high water can rise and fall under the boardwalk, which stays safe and dry for visitors.)



The beavers that make Taylor Creek their home are healthy and happy.....and quite busy! Which also keeps SWC busy....

With a great deal of help and commitment from our star volunteer Dwayne Crenshaw, we have been able to stay ahead of the curve and notch dams during high flow events, and sand-paint trees that, if fallen by the beavers, may create a safety hazard to trail users. When Dwayne isn't busy kissing frogs, (Please note that no frogs were harmed for this photo ☺ and that bullfrogs are a non-native and invasive species at Tahoe.) he's hard at work in the creek notching dams to adjust flow levels, or trying to blend in while sand-painting a big cottonwood to protect the tree from beaver chewing. Dwayne helped man our SWC booth at the Squaw Valley Earth Day celebration, and helped facilitate the beginning of the Kokanee Salmon run by joining Big Mike from the USFS and I in notching all the beaver dams up the creek to the Stream Profile in early October (to help the salmon get upstream). He also helped us install two large Pond Levelers at a privately owned pond in Grass Valley.



We are a small grass roots organization and cannot exist without committed volunteers like Dwayne Crenshaw. Thank you Dwayne! And thank you Toogee Sielsch, for all your help, including bringing Dwayne on board!



Dwayne sand-painting cottonwood (above)



Pond Leveler installed, Grass Valley (left)





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## Fall/Winter 2016 Newsletter Continued

We were gratified to have the US Forest Service invite us to a meeting in May to discuss and solidify our partnership (leading to the construction of the boardwalk at Taylor Creek). The Forest Service also referred several calls to us from people with beaver concerns on the Upper Truckee River near South Lake Tahoe – we were happy to meet residents who enjoyed beavers and were able to reassure them that a beaver dam had partially washed away naturally (not thru vandalism) and that the beavers were still safe in their bank den. We helped other residents protect large trees from beaver chewing with sand-paint (it makes a gritty surface the beavers don't like, and has been very successful at Tahoe).

While we are always happy to get out in the field to show agencies and homeowners the very simple remedies to any problems caused by beavers, our main focus is education about benefits of beavers to our watersheds, and benefits and means of peacefully coexisting with beavers and all our wildlife.



Toogee & Sherry & young friend, Fall Fish Fest

At Earth Day in Squaw Valley, photo at right, SWC was next to the BEAR League, where Toogee is also a board member. People enjoy Sheri Hartstein's wonderful beaver photos, and kids like the coloring pages and beaver tails.

SWC had booths this year at Earth Day at Squaw Valley (April), and both Native Species Day (June) and the Fall Fish Festival (October) at Taylor Creek, where we met and talked to dozens of families.

We also returned to Taylor Creek this summer for an evening presentation on July 29 at the outdoor amphitheater – "The Beavers of Taylor Creek", introduced by Toogee Sielsch, which was again well-attended and enjoyed by many families.



SWC also got some more good press! Tim Hauserman wrote another nice article about us for the Tahoe Weekly in May - the link is <http://thetahoeweekly.com/2016/05/protecting-natures-dam-builders-%C2%B7-sherry-guzzi/> which also refers readers to Tim's earlier article for the Tahoe Weekly "Enjoying the Beauty of Beavers".

We continued to monitor beaver ponds and our Pond Leveler installations. The Levelers in Tahoe Donner and Tahoe Vista all continue to function perfectly. However the beavers did not return again this year to the CA Tahoe Conservancy pond in Tahoe Vista - the creek there is small, and dried up entirely fairly early last summer. With a better winter, hopefully beavers can return and thrive, along with all our wildlife. There are active beavers in many more of our local creeks – be sure to check your neighborhood for signs, and please let us know of any potential problems. You are our eyes and ears!

Check out our website at [www.sierrawildlife.org](http://www.sierrawildlife.org) for more information, and/or keep posted on current happenings on our Facebook Page. You can always reach us at [SierraWildlifeCoalition@gmail.com](mailto:SierraWildlifeCoalition@gmail.com)  
Thanks for your interest and help – together we can protect and enjoy beavers and all local wildlife.