



Post Office Box 5145  
 Bear Valley, CA 95223  
 www.bvri.org



Bear Valley Residents Incorporated

# Newsletter

Bear Valley, California

Summer 2009

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DAVE MORLEY

I am honored to have been elected President of BVRI again. My wife and I have owned our home in Bear for over 40 years and I am dedicated to keeping our area as pristine and natural as possible. I am also very passionate about reducing the fire danger so we won't lose it all in one big fire.

At this time, BVRI is considering the following major issues (there are of course other issues):

1. The EIR and how it affects the condo and lot owners in Bear Valley
2. Managing the forest so as to reduce fire danger
3. The tertiary plant being considered by the BV Water District

If you wish to send an email to BVRI, you may do so via the email address: [bvri@goldrush.com](mailto:bvri@goldrush.com). Please also check the BVRI.org website from time to time to learn of new issues.

## ALPINE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CERTIFIES FEIR AT JUNE HEARING

ERIC JUNG

On Friday, June 29, the Board of Supervisors approved the Final EIR for village development. There were about 30 audience members, including BVRI Board members Mitzi Nelson, Paul Petersen, and Eric Jung. There was surprisingly little oral input during the public hearing portion. There were last minute letters from Calaveras County (Thursday) and CalTrans (4 hours before the meeting) objecting to traffic impacts and asking the Board not to certify the EIR yet. The Supervisors and county staff expressed disappointment at the last minute objections, since there have been months of meetings with Calaveras County and CalTrans to work out traffic mitigations. The people who signed the two letters just got into their jobs and weren't involved in the meetings. Calaveras County's planning department has been in turmoil for three years, and is backlogged with project applications going back 2 to 3 years. So it seemed pretty arrogant of what may be the worst planning department in the Central Sierra to be sniping at this project and ignoring the negotiations that went on leading up to this.

The Supervisors were having none of it. After the environmental consultant and BVVP's EIR attorney rebutted the objections, the Board members scolded Calaveras County and CalTrans for "bad faith". Even though the county staff suggested that the Board continue the hearing and certification to a later date to allow time to work on the CalTrans letter which was very long and technical, Supervisor Veatch said he was ready to vote. Terry Woodrow reminded all that Alpine County has donated \$20 million of state and federal road money to Calaveras County road projects. Don Jardine said that objecting to 65 acres of infill development was silly when Alpine County participated in a land swap that took 15,000 acres off the tax roll and into public ownership. Veatch moved to certify, Woodrow seconded, Jardine and Bennett in favor.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

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- STUDY FINDS LAKE ALPINE ONE OF THE STATE'S CLEANEST LAKES
- BEAR VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL'S PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
- BVRI SET TO INSPECT PROPERTIES FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE
- MONTE WOLFE HISTORIAN TO PRESENT ON BEHALF OF EP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE WITH 100 ' DEFENSIBLE SPACE

KATHERINE AITKEN-YOUNG

Why 100 feet? A Defensible Space of 100 feet around your home is required by law. The goal is to protect your home while providing a safe area for firefighters.

Following these simple steps can dramatically increase the chance of your home surviving a wildfire!

1. Clearing the 30 feet immediately surrounding your home is critical. Maintain this firebreak by removing and clearing away all flammable vegetation and other combustible growth within 30 feet of your home. Single specimens of trees or other vegetation may be retained provided they are well spaced, well pruned, and create a condition that avoids spread of fire to other vegetation or to a building or structure.

2. The fuel reduction zone in the remaining 70 feet (or property line) will depend on the steepness of your property and the vegetation. Horizontal and vertical spacing between plants improves the chance of stopping a wildfire before it destroys your home. Trees should be spaced to reduce fire spread. The amount of space will depend on how steep the slope is and the size of the plants. Lower tree limbs should be removed to reduce the "fire ladder" effect.

Trim trees at least 10 feet from your chimney and remove dead limbs that hang over your home. The law also requires a screen over your chimney outlet of not more than 1/2 inch mesh.

### BEAR VALLEY'S 2009 FREE CHIPPER PROGRAM

This is the 6th year this program is being provided in our village. Do your part to make your property fire safe and comply with the CAL FIRE 100 ft. Defensible Space State Law by taking advantage of this FREE chipper program available to private property owners in Western Alpine County. Chipping is a great alternative to hauling and burning. This program is being offered on a first come first served basis. The 2009 Chipper Request Form Packets will be available May 23, 2009 at the Bear Valley Fire Department, Bear Valley Library, The Bear Valley General Store, and Premier Properties in Bear Valley. If you have any questions, please call Terry Woodrow at 209 753-2551.

For chipping, brush piles must be placed on your property adjacent to a driveway or street (not on the county road). The chipper can accept material up to 6" in diameter (no root balls or rocks). The material will be chipped and redirected back onto your property. This free service requires an "Application for Chipping" form be submitted before an inspection will be completed on your brush piles. The County also requires a Hold Harmless Agreement to be signed before any work will be started on your property. The Bear Valley Chipper Program Application also includes detailed instructions for your review. Chipping dates will be determined by the chipping contractor, with approximate start date around the end of July, depending on how many completed forms are submitted by that time.

### BURN PERMITS

Burn permits are required in order to burn on your property. Each year burn permits can be obtained at the Bear Valley Sheriff's Substation/Bear Valley Fire Department. All rules and regulations for burning are printed on the burn permit-which is good for two years.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR !!  
 COMING TO A BEACH NEAR YOU . . .

## Annual BVRJ Picnic

SATURDAY, JULY 4, 2009

TIME – 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM

MUSIC – THROUGHOUT THE PICNIC

HULA HOOP COMPETITION – 3:30 PM

SAND CASTLE AWARDS – 4:30 PM

DINNER SERVED – 5:00 PM

RAFFLE – 6:30 PM WITH LOTS OF GREAT PRIZES

BENEFITS THE BEAR VALLEY PARENTS GROUP

BVRI BOARD MEETING SUNDAY, JULY 5 10 AM

BVRI NEWS AVAILABLE 24 X 7 AT

[WWW.BVRI.ORG](http://WWW.BVRI.ORG)

As a reminder, BVRI Board Meeting minutes as well as financial reports are posted for your viewing on the BVRI website [www.bvri.org](http://www.bvri.org). You are also reminded that BVRI board meetings are open to the public. Please contact BVRI President Dave Morley if you have specific topics to discuss at a particular board meeting so it can be added to the agenda. The BVRI website also contains specific information on board members as well as other links to Bear Valley websites. Please note, e-mail correspondence addressed to BVRI should be sent to: [bvri@goldrush.com](mailto:bvri@goldrush.com).

## SUPPORT BVRI SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY !

PLEASE JOIN BVRI TODAY AND HELP US HELP YOU KEEP  
 BEAR VALLEY CLEAN, SAFE, AND BEAUTIFUL!

TO JOIN TODAY:  
 FILL OUT THIS FORM AND MAIL IT WITH YOUR  
 ANNUAL \$ 100 MEMBERSHIP TO:

BVRI  
 PO Box 5145  
 BEAR VALLEY, CA 95223

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 BEAR VALLEY HOME/LOT/CONDO NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
 BV STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 BEAR VALLEY PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CO-OWNER'S NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The above information is for BVRI business only and is never released to the public, with one exception: BVRI has a reciprocal information exchange agreement (addresses only, not phone numbers or e-mail) with Alpine County, the Bear Valley Water District, and local title and real estate companies. This is to keep the database addresses current.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please check here if you don't want BVRI to exchange your mailing address.

## STATE WATER QUALITY STUDY FINDS LAKE ALPINE ONE OF THE CLEANEST

JEFF GOUVEIA

In 2007, over 6000 fish from 18 species were collected from 152 lakes and reservoirs in California as part of the State Water Resources Control Board's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP). This effort marks the beginning of a new long-term, statewide, comprehensive bioaccumulation monitoring program for California surface waters. The document released just a few weeks ago presents a preliminary assessment of the statewide scope of the bioaccumulation problem. The report also provides lake-specific information that can be used to establish priorities for cleanup actions, and identifies lakes where additional sampling may be needed to support fish consumption advisories. Lakes were considered "clean" if all average pollutant concentrations (methylmercury, PCBs, dieldrin, DDTs, chlordanes, and selenium) in all species were below all California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) thresholds.

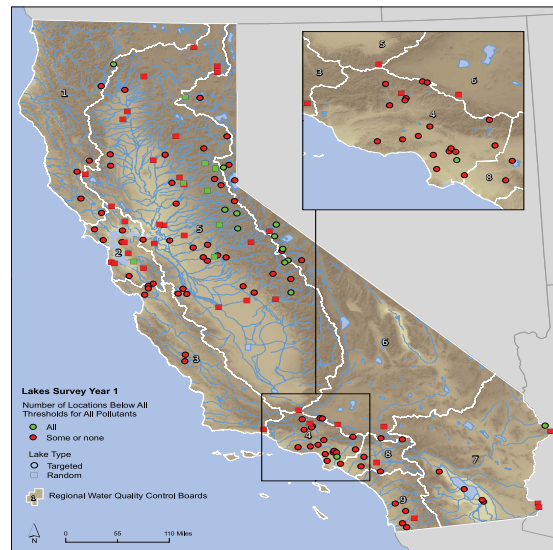


Figure 2. Lakes that were below all thresholds for all pollutants (methylmercury, PCBs, dieldrin, DDTs, chlordanes, and selenium). For each pollutant, the lowest OEHHA threshold was used for these comparisons. Concentrations are based on location composites and individual fish, from both targeted (circles) and random (squares) lakes. Colors represent the number of locations at each lake with all contaminants below thresholds.

### LAKE ALPINE MAKES THE "CLEAN" CATEGORY

Only 21 of the 136 lakes (15%) with complete data from 2007 were in the "clean" category with thresholds for all contaminants tested in sport fish tissue below all OEHHA thresholds. The findings suggest our own Lake Alpine, as well as Arnold's White Pines Lake, are among the state's cleanest waters and the fish are fit for consumption !!

The overall goal of this screening study is to determine whether or not fish in California lakes have concentrations of contaminants that exceed thresholds for protection of human health. The data generated by this effort is tailored to providing the information that the State Water Resources Control Boards will need to make hazard listing determinations. The report does not make recommendations for developing fish consumption guidelines. These decisions are made by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. Furthermore, whether these lakes are entirely clean depends upon whether high-methylmercury species such as largemouth bass or self-sustaining trout populations are really absent from these lakes.

Nevertheless, falling into the clean category in this survey is a positive outcome indicating that the most readily caught species in a lake have pollutant concentrations that are below thresholds for concern. These lakes can be considered to be low priorities for monitoring to support development of fish consumption advisories. Methylmercury was the pollutant primarily responsible for the remaining 85% of lakes having at least one species with an average concentration above thresholds.

## MUSIC FESTIVAL UPDATE

KATHERINE AITKEN-YOUNG

The Bear Valley Music Festival is going strong as we head into the 41st Season -- July 25 - August 9, 2009.

This music season at Bear Valley promises to be full of excellent entertainment. Opening night will feature Super Diamond, the Neil Diamond cover band from San Francisco. They were part of the Bear Valley Music Festival two years ago and they were a hit for all generations! Broadway Pops, July 29, will feature classic music from the Golden Era of Broadway along with music from the contemporary shows of today. This year's opera, August 8, will be Donizetti's L'Elisir D'Amore, (Elixir of Love), starring David Gagnon, who has performed in the Pops the past two summers, plus Katie Van Kooten, soprano, who recently made her stage debut at the Met! On August 1, the Bear Valley Orchestra will present "A Night in Old Vienna" performing the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert Program of December 31, 1939 featuring the music of Joseph Strauss, Jr. including the Overture to Die Fledermaus, Skater's Waltz, the beloved Blue Danube Waltz and other Strauss favorites. The full schedule is available online at [www.bearvalleymusic.org](http://www.bearvalleymusic.org).

Tickets are on sale now. Don't miss this wonderful event and help keep the music festival alive in Bear Valley! If you have any questions, visit the Website at [www.bearvalleymusic.org](http://www.bearvalleymusic.org), send email to:

[music@bearvalleymusic.org](mailto:music@bearvalleymusic.org) or call (209) 753-2574.

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

RON MURPHY

Since our last newsletter report, the Architectural Review Committee approved for construction two projects. One was for a new 2500 square foot home on Quaking Aspen Road and the other was a request for remodel to an existing home on Bear Valley Road that would remove a solarium and replace it with windows. A new metal roof was approved for a home on Orvis Road.

Only one project is under review at this time, a deck replacement/enlargement on Schimke Road.

Currently the ARC has no other projects under review. It is quiet on the home building front right now. We anticipate a few remodel or deck projects to be submitted now that the snow is melting, but so far, no new home applications.

Homeowners needing to replace their propane tanks are urged to consider burying them. New technology allows burying up to two 1000 gallon tanks, thus avoiding an above ground structure and its resulting construction and maintenance costs. It also looks better!

Reminder: It is the responsibility of the property owner to request and obtain ARC review and approval prior to new construction or any other exterior changes to a home. This includes re-paint or re-stain, re-roof, re-model, propane tank covering structures. Prior review and approval will avoid possible fines and fee increases, as well as having to dismantle unapproved construction.

The ARC members encourage you to contact them and let them assist you through the review and approval process. ARC members are Ron Murphy (Chair), Terry Woodrow, Nancy Zaracki, Gary Willard and Chuck Taylor.

They can be contacted through the BVRI website [www.bvri.org](http://www.bvri.org).

## DISH NETWORK SATELLITE WOES ??

### TRY THIS HELPFUL HINT . . .

Some BV homeowners have contacted us complaining that DISH Network is requiring them to view the Reno local channels instead of the Sacramento channels. One homeowner convinced DISH to switch them back to Sacramento by telling them we lived in Calaveras County (we're very close) and by giving them the address as "Lot xxx Quaking Aspen Road". If this fails, Direct TV allows BV residents to view Sacramento channels.

## FIRE PREVENTION & FOREST MANAGEMENT

DAVE MORLEY

### THINNING TREES ON YOUR LOT

Now is the time to start planning to thin the trees on your lot this summer. If you have done this in past summers, BVRI thanks you AND the forest thanks you.

By thinning the forest, we hope to stop the progress of the beetles as they attack and kill trees. We are also reducing the threat of a major fire in Bear Valley. Speaking as one who has had it done, I believe the trees on our lot are now much healthier and our fire risk is reduced. Over 60 lots have been thinned and BVRI is hoping that many, many more get thinned this coming summer.

The first step in thinning your trees is to contact Ross Richards at (209) 736-4988 or [rrrpf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rrrpf@sbcglobal.net) and ask him to walk with you on your property and mark the trees to stay. Ross is a forester and charges \$250 for this service. Ross will then contact Sean's Tree Service who will then contact you and give you a bid for thinning the trees. From my experience, Sean does a fine job. He is very, very careful. He will have to move some equipment around on your lot so there will be some raking necessary after he completes his job.

Your reward in this process will be to choose the trees that will be taken out rather than let mother nature choose a tree that you don't want removed. Your additional reward will be a much more fire safe home.

### CLEANING UP YOUR LOT

There was much progress last summer toward making the forest in Bear Valley healthier and safer from fire. That being said, there is still a lot to do this summer. Everyone must provide a defensible space on their lots and around their homes. BVRI will again be inspecting all lots (whether there is a home on it or not). We will be looking for dead trees, dead slash from trees, dead limbs within 6 feet of the ground – essentially anything burnable. Please remove all of the duff (down to the bare dirt) within 5 feet of your home. Otherwise, you can leave the duff on your lot. Duff includes pine needles, decomposing branches, and cones – the non-burnable material that has been on the ground for many years. Adjacent please review the inspection form that will be used to inspect your lot.

As we saw in the recent Santa Barbara fires, if there is a fire, the fire department will save homes that have a defensible space around them. A major fire can happen in Bear Valley and we must prepare our own lots so that a major fire does not become a conflagration.

Last summer, the sheriff contacted lot owners whose lots had been turned over to him by BVRI for not meeting the guidelines. Sometimes he got a response that the lot owner didn't want to "go against nature" by cutting trees or cleaning up their lot. The sheriff's response was that "nature" takes care of itself by forcing trees to die or by starting fires with lightning. Also, if you look back in history, the Indians started fires regularly to thin and clean up the forest. Humans haven't allowed that to happen in over 100 years. Therefore, the forest has become overgrown and needs to be thinned and cleaned up. We must do it before mother nature does it for us.

The BVRI inspectors will be finishing their inspections on July 7. Letters will then be sent to lot owners where there is burnable material. A grace period until August 1 will then be given to the lot owner so that the lot may be cleared of burnable material. If after August 1 the lot has not been cleaned up, the lot number will be turned over to the Sheriff. The Sheriff has the power, by Alpine County law, to issue a citation. At that point, the homeowner would have to explain the situation to a judge in Markleeville. The judge could have the lot cleaned up with the bill going to the lot owner.

Here are the names of contractors who are available to help you clean up your lot. Sean Hammes: (209) 588-9350, Joseph Ziblay: (209) 753-2538

## MONTE WOLFE'S TRUE IDENTITY ?

Historian Don de Young has solved the mystery of the true identity of legendary H mountain man Monte Wolfe. The Ebbetts Pass Historical Society will host a lecture by Mr. De Young on July 26 at 2 PM in the Bear Valley Music Festival tent. It's free and all are invited.

## BVRI ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT - 2009

### FIRE PREVENTION REPORT (CIRCLE AS APPLICABLE)

IS THIS A VACANT LOT?	YES	NO
ARE ALL DEAD TREES REMOVED?	YES	NO
IS THE GROUND CLEARED OF SLASH AND DUFF?	YES	NO
ARE DEAD TREE BRANCHES CLEARED UP TO 6 FT FROM THE GROUND?	YES	NO
FOR TREES TALLER THAN 18 FT, ARE TREE BRANCHES REMOVED UP TO 6 FT FROM THE GROUND?	YES	NO
ARE TREE LIMBS CLEARED WITHIN 10 FT OF THE CHIMNEY?	YES	NO
ARE THE ROOF AND GUTTERS CLEAR OF LEAVES, NEEDLES AND DEAD GROWTH?	YES	NO
IS DEBRIS (DEAD TREES, ANYTHING NOT NATURAL, ETC.) CLEARED FROM THE LOT?	YES	NO
IS THE CHIMNEY SPARK SUPPRESSOR (CAP) IN PLACE?	YES	NO
IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS WITH THIS LOT, AND IF THE LOT IS NOT CLEANED UP IN A TIMELY MANNER, SHOULD THIS LOT BE FORWARDED TO THE SHERIFF ?	YES	NO

### SAFETY REPORT

IS THE HOUSE ADDRESS VISIBLE FROM THE STREET?	YES	NO
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### APPEARANCE REPORT

ARE SNOWMOBILE(S) & OTHER GEAR STOWED PROPERLY?	YES	NO
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ARE TARPS ONLY BROWN OR DARK GREEN?	YES	NO
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IF NOT, WHAT COLOR?	---	---
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### PLEASE NOTE ANY OTHER COMMENTS: