



**Sierra Watershed
Education Partnerships**

*Fostering a sense of place
through hands-on community
projects*

Fall October 2005



Projects and Events

Leading by Example:

Tahoe Lake School community BMP demo site

During the 2004-05 school year, Tahoe Lake School (TLS) became a community BMP demonstration site after 1,200 ft² of pavement was replaced by a storm-water run-off catch basin and raised planter boxes.

This summer Rob Basile, civil engineer, and Scott Cecchi of the Tahoe Resource Conservation District (TRCD) created a master BMP retro-fit proposal for the entire TLS campus. The current proposal involves the removal of 20,000 ft² of pavement, replacing it with a 'meandering bioswale' (a vegetated area designed to allow water

to infiltrate, not run-off). Near the library, pavement will be replaced by native vegetation and a raised 'reading deck' where students can enjoy a good book during their free time or just hang out with friends.

The proposal was presented to parents and teachers Sept. 29 at the back to school BBQ, with plans for follow-up meetings to get feed back from those interested or concerned about the proposed plan.

Currently, Jessica Miller's 4/5 grade class is compiling a survey of the entire student body

to find out where students spend their time on campus and what areas they use for play and socializing.

Public meetings are scheduled for Oct. 18, Nov. 10, and Dec. 6 at TLS to discuss the project and proposed funding opportunities. People interested in the proposed plan are invited to attend to offer comment, concerns and questions.

SWEP continues to work with teachers and students to coordinate the educational component of this project.

Contact Jan Ellis for more information 775-831-2723.

Global Climate Change:

A symposium for TTUSD youth

This Spring (2006), Sagehen Creek Field Station and the Truckee River Watershed Council (TRWC) are hosting a weekend long symposium on global climate change. The event will kick-off on Friday with a youth symposium. Sagehen manager, Jeff Brown sees the youth symposium as a great venue for individual students, classrooms or even entire schools to engage the community in

a PBSL demonstration.

Although the causes of global climate change are disputed among academics and others, the effects of an increase in global temperatures are being seen. In the Sierra, a temperature increase of 1-2 degrees F could change our ecosystem from a snow melt system to a rain driven system. How would this affect our watersheds, including the communities that

are established there?

The project topics that are relevant to this symposium are vast, ranging from nearly all environmental topics to economic and social issues as well.

Sagehen Creek FS and the TRWC will make great partners for this event, providing resources from scientists to logistics coordination.

Contact Jeff Brown, 587-4830, or Lisa Wallace, 550-8760.

Project Citizen Workshop

November 7, 4-8pm

November 8, 8:30-3pm

This is a must attend workshop! **The Service Learning Partnership has received a grant to pay for substitutes, curriculum, lunch, attendance stipends and project stipends!!**

Project Citizen focuses on the role of state and local governments in the U.S. federal system. Working in cooperative teams, the students learn to interact with their government through a five step process that includes:

- 1) identifying a problem in their community that requires a public policy solution;
- 2) gathering and evaluating information on the problem;
- 3) examining and evaluating alternative solutions;
- 4) developing a proposed public policy to address the problem; and
- 5) developing an action plan to get their policy adopted by government.

Although the curriculum is designed for middle school, the process is appropriate for all teachers and students regardless of subject or grade!

To register, or for more information, contact Sarah Dorland, 582-2517.

<http://www.crfc.org/projectcitizen.html>



Dates To Remember

October 16: Truckee River Day

October 17: TREC Partnership meeting, 3:30-5:30, District Office, Truckee

October 18: BMP project plan mtg., @Tahoe Lake school 3:30-5pm

October 20: SWEP annual meeting, Sunnyside Restaurant, West Shore

November: 7-8: Project Citizen Workshop, Truckee

November 10: BMP project plan mtg. @Tahoe Lake School, 3:30-5pm

November 15: Site Advocates meeting

December 6: BMP project plan mtg. @Tahoe Lake school, 3:30-5pm

Place-Based Service Learning (PBSL) is a teaching method that focuses on the local community throughout the learning process. Students learn to value what is local; the unique watershed, history, environment, culture, economy, literature and art of their place through hands-on community projects

Truckee River Education Coalition (TREC)

TTUSD school board adopts PBSL policy!

The Truckee River Education Coalition (TREC) is ready for a great school year! TREC will kick off the 05-06 school year by hosting a partnership meeting October 17, where teachers and community partners can gather to learn more about PBSL, get ideas and plan projects.

TREC is a collaboration between teachers, community partners and non-profit organizations. The intention of the coalition is to provide a venue to discuss PBSL activities, events and outreach in our community. Anyone interested in building community, enhancing education through hands-on projects or youth leadership is encouraged to attend. TREC will meet monthly, then hosting larger 'themed' quarterly meetings that are intended to engage students, teachers and community in projects and topics of interest.

TREC's first measure of success has been getting the TTUSD school board to adopt service learning policy! This is a huge step forward in creating a culture of service in our district schools. Part of the work that this group will focus on this school year is how to achieve the goals outlined in the policy, specifically how to ensure that students at every grade span (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) have a PBSL experience.

Currently, TREC is seeking three teachers who are engaged in a PBSL project to be involved in a 'case study' for the 05-06 school year. The case studies are vital for thoroughly documenting projects and measuring our success to the school board and district administrators.

For more information about TREC, contact Laurie Martin 582-2522, or lmartin@ttusd.org.

Sagehen Creek Field Station

Jeff Brown, station manager

Since April of 2001, Jeff Brown, has been "making things happen" at UC Berkeley's Sagehen Creek Field Station. Realizing that student enrollment in the biological sciences was decreasing, UC administrators decided that Sagehen should focus its energy 50/50 on research and k-12 education, hoping that this exposure will increase student interest in the sciences. Since then, Jeff has been actively promoting Sagehen as an all encompassing venue for students and teachers.

Jeff hopes to increase formal involvement of TTUSD students and teachers by creating a PBSL teacher institute in the summer and possibly hosting students for a week-long 'camp', where they could work directly with researchers, explore the watershed and engage in

hands-on projects.

Sagehen's original buildings, dating back to 1951, have recently undergone major renovation with the addition of more bathrooms, a large kitchen and new bunkhouses. The technology has been updated to include wireless internet access and a webcam in the fish house for remote viewing of Lahontan Cutthroat trout!

This semi-remote watershed is home to many unique plants and animals, which is probably why it attracts so many researchers. For those of you who have experienced a day at Sagehen, you know what a magical place it is.

If you are interested in more information about using Sagehen, contact Jeff Brown, 587-4830 or visit <http://sagehen.ucnr.org/>



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