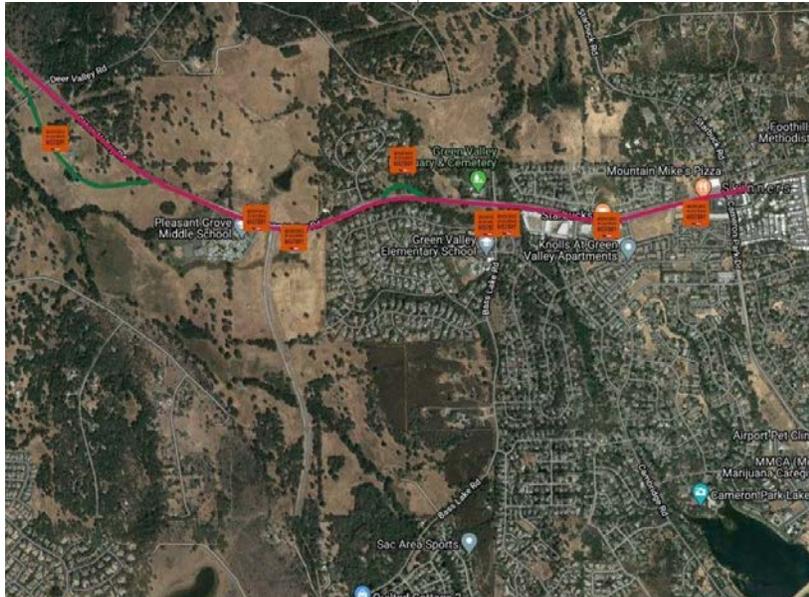


# The **BASS LAKE BULLETIN**

Vol. XX No. 7 The Voice of the Bass Lake Community July 2022

<http://basslakeaction.org>

## HISTORY OF GREEN SPRINGS RANCH



By *Kathy Prevost*

As one of the oldest documented pioneer settlements in El Dorado County, the first ownership of Green Springs Ranch and the builders of the Green Springs Hotel are believed to be John and Nicholas Hobart. They were assessed \$3,000 in value for a Green Springs Hotel in 1850, but this could not be confirmed in the 1850 census. However, the Hobart's were advertising the Green Springs Hotel in the Placer Times newspaper with four rooms on each floor, available for rent and served by the Birch Line in June of 1850.

In 1849, Rufus Hitchcock and his family moved to California and they were listed twice in the El Dorado County 1850 United States census. Although Hitchcock may have

completed the necessary paperwork for the purchase of the ranch and hotel, it was not filed with the county and his family apparently took over the ranch in 1850, when it became known as the Hitchcock Ranch. Travelers and local miners on the Overland Trail in the early years of El Dorado County would stop at Rufus Hitchcock's Green Springs House, which was an Inn and supply stop along the old Coloma Road.

Hitchcock had an interesting history according to a synopsis (no publication information was provided) a family member of Rufus Hitchcock shared with the El Dorado County, California Pioneer Cemeteries Commission. Apparently he had settled in Fremont County,  
*(continued on page 2)*

## 2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORTS FIRST OF TWO PARTS

By *John Davey*

The 2021-22 El Dorado County Grand Jury released the reports for their session on June 23, 2022. The reports cover several topics, and are typically directed to operations of County officers, departments, agencies, school districts, and local government special districts in El Dorado County.

The Civil Grand Jury (Jury) is composed of 19 members who serve for one year, from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. State law requires that applicants be a United States citizen, 18 years of age or older, of ordinary intelligence and good character, a resident of El Dorado County for at least 1 year with a working knowledge of the English language.

California state law requires that all 58 counties impanel a Jury to serve during each fiscal year. (Penal Code Section 905, California Constitution, Article I, Section 23.)

The Jury is an investigatory body created for the protection of society

*(continued on page 3)*

## HISTORY OF GREEN SPRINGS RANCH *(con't)*

Iowa in 1839, with Arthur Burris (also spelled Burras or Burrows) and Mrs. Rice, all from Indiana. They were in the liquor trade and were the second settlers in the region residing in Pleasant Grove, Iowa in 1839 and 1840.

There were problems in the Burris marriage and they separated in the fall of 1840.

Supposedly, Mrs. Burris divorced her husband and married Hitchcock and they traveled westward in 1847 or 1848.

Having only operated the Inn since 1850, Hitchcock passed away in 1851, most likely from smallpox, and his wife, Nancy Hitchcock, remained at the ranch with one of her daughters from her first marriage. She formally purchased the land from the Hobart brothers on November 3, 1851, for \$500 and filed a preemption claim on the property in late 1851.

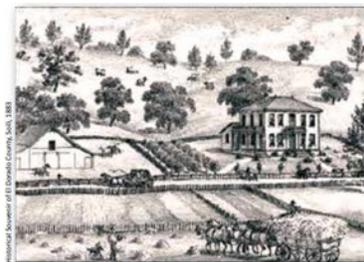
Unfortunately, Nancy Hitchcock was one of three residents who contracted small pox (17 cases reported in the Green Springs Ranch area) and passed away. The property was advertised in December of 1853, as a probate sale of her estate which was to be conducted on January 16, 1854. The Green Springs Rancho included the Green Springs House, 320 acres, stables, barns, and outhouses.

William Dormody, who had moved to the gold country from Illinois and Wisconsin, purchased the Green Springs Rancho on December 21, 1853, for \$6400. Dormody, who

was a native of County Kilkenny, Ireland, had been a successful merchant and businessman in the Midwest and he opened stores in Georgetown, Coloma and Kelsey.

The Hill family ran the Coloma store and hotel for Dormody and Mrs. Hill had a sister, Sarah Francis Norton, who was born in Ireland and had immigrated to the United States at the age of three with her family. They had first lived in New Orleans and later they moved to California in 1855. In January of 1856, at 43 years of age, Dormody married Sarah Frances, who was 20 years old at the time, and they had eight children by their 10th anniversary.

When the Hitchcock Post Office was established at Green Springs House, William Dormody was appointed as the first postmaster on October 9, 1860.



The Green Springs House was one of the more regal roadhouses along the old Coloma Road. It sat on the north side of the road, just east of Deer Valley Road.

*(image credit: <http://rescuehistorical.org/>)*

There were nine people listed as living at Green Springs House according to the 1860 US Census which included William Dormody, 48, England, farmer; Sarah, 24, Ireland; Mary, four; Thomas, 3; and Dora; Bridget Hannon, 19, Ireland, domestic; and three laborers: John Munson, 34, New York; Robert Riddon, 26; and Samuel Long, 27, Robert and Samuel were both from Missouri.

As one of the grander road houses, it was a popular location for weddings and other festivities and a place for travelers to rest on hot summer days. Located east of Deer Valley Road on the north side of the old Coloma Road, the house and stables were built with the best materials and the horses had custom silver mounted harnesses and tack. The Dormody's "place was a mecca for the influential and elite" with their parties and formal dances.

Dormody died from injuries received in an accident when he lost control of his team and crashed his wagon in September of 1876. Both he and his wife, who passed away 26 years later, are buried at St. John the Baptist Cemetery in Folsom.

Once William passed away, Sarah managed the hotel, tavern, post office and 1,000 acre ranch and she passed away on September 5, 1902.

Members of the family continued to live at the Ranch until 1955, when the Dormody estate sold the property to Howard and Beatrice Greenhalgh on October 4, 1955, and it was divided into several parcels in 1976. With 107 Ranchettes, Green Springs Ranch Rural Development which is also known as The Green Springs Ranch Homeowners Association is one of the largest parcels at 520 acres.

The descendants of William and Sarah Dormody still own twenty eight acres while twenty acres became the Pleasant Grove Middle School on Green Valley Road which is across the road from the Pleasant Grove House and Pony Express Station originally built by Rufus Hitchcock.

*(continued on page 3)*

## HISTORY OF GREEN SPRINGS RANCH *(con't)*

The El Dorado Union High School District owns the twenty acres adjoining the middle school and the remaining 146 acres, which was planned to be an Equestrian Center, has recently been sold.

Remnants of the original Coloma Road can still be seen near the entrance to the ranch and west of Pleasant Grove Middle School.



References:

<http://rescuehistorical.org/wp-cms/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Dormody.pdf>

[https://www.edcgov.us/landing/Living/Stories/pages/green\\_springs\\_ranch.aspx](https://www.edcgov.us/landing/Living/Stories/pages/green_springs_ranch.aspx)

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green\\_Springs\\_Ranch](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Springs_Ranch)

<https://pitsenberger.com/maps>

## 2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY *(con't)*

and the enforcement of the law. It is an arm of the Court and a representative of the public. Although it is an arm of the Court, it operates independently of direct Court

supervision. It is a check against governmental authority. It is not a branch of the County, nor is it answerable to the District Attorney.

The function of the Civil Grand Jury is to investigate the operations of El Dorado County departments and agencies, city governments, school districts and special districts. The Jury determines which issues will be investigated during its term of office.

Written complaints can also be submitted for investigation by private residents. Investigations are at the discretion of the Jury. The Civil Grand Jury cannot investigate disputes between private parties, or activities outside their jurisdiction.

- Each Jury determines which issues to investigate.
- Juries are free to choose their methodology. In recent years, the usual practice has been to divide into committees, which then select the officers, departments or agencies to investigate.
- State law authorizes Juries, as representatives of the local citizenry, to review and evaluate the effectiveness and cost/benefit of procedures, methods, and systems.
- During their investigations, jurors may inspect and audit books, records, and financial expenditures; interview civil servants and others who may have pertinent information; and inspect government facilities, before issuing reports with findings and recommendations.
- After a judge reviews the reports to confirm legal compliance, copies are

provided to the appropriate - departments, which are required by law to respond. The Jury then releases the reports to the public via the Civil Grand Jury website and the media.

The reports contain a significant amount of analysis, data, and findings of the Grand Jury. While too large to repeat fully in the Bulletin, we're offering a look at some of the reports, including the summary, the Grand Jury Findings, and the Grand Jury Recommendations. The Bulletin will include two Grand Jury Reports in July, and another two Grand Jury Reports in August. For full details about each report, follow the links to the individual Grand Jury reports, saved as PDF files.

### COUNTY STAFFING CHALLENGES

**Case 21-05 – June 23, 2022**

**SUMMARY** The El Dorado County (County) Grand Jury investigated the County-wide issue of low staff levels and low compensation. Further, the Grand Jury reviewed the recruiting process and staff retention. A review of the budget vs actual for salaries and benefits for the last few years has demonstrated a consistent payroll and benefits budget surplus in the millions of dollars, indicating that not all budgeted positions have been filled.

**DISCUSSION** The County has had challenges in filling vacant positions for many years; the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this issue. County management and supervisory employees have repeatedly used the phrase “training ground” in reference to employment with the County.

*(continued on page 4)*

## 2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY *(con't)*

Many staff gain their experience and knowledge and then leave to work for better compensation in other counties or private industry. This exodus of staff from the County, including the costs of recruiting and training, as well as the loss of institutional knowledge, is of concern to the taxpayers as a waste of resources.

In interviews with staff members, the Grand Jury discovered that one of the main reasons for leaving is remuneration. The County Board of Supervisors commissioned a class and compensation study from Koff & Associates (Koff) in 2017 to attempt to bring compensation up to the median pay of comparative counties. The study used Placer, Butte, Merced, Napa, Sacramento, Shasta, Sutter, Tuolumne, Solano, Nevada, and Yolo counties, and the State of California to calculate compensation amounts.

While several of the counties included in the Koff study are comparable in population and composition to the County, they are not significant competitors for the workforce living in or near the County. It would be valuable to place more emphasis on Placer and Sacramento counties, and even including Amador County, as these would be competitive locations for potential staff. This analysis also did not include the substantially higher pay of private industry, leaving the County struggling to keep employees who can be paid significantly more for similar work.

The County used the results of the Koff study as a guide for increasing

employees' salaries during the 2017 through 2021 timeframe, although the Human Resources Department has updated the amounts and fine tuned some of the classifications. The County's goal was for the employees' salaries to ultimately reach the adjusted median salary. Each year, 2017 through 2021, the employees' salaries were increased below the adjusted median level, with the result the County salaries consistently undershot that median. On April 19, 2022, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved an employee salary increase to meet the recalculated median.

An additional challenge faced in determining compensation for County employees is the calculation of total compensation. The County provides many benefits, including pension and health insurance, in the compensation packages, so while a weekly paycheck may be less for a position in the private sector, total compensation may be similar. However, for many reasons, people may opt for a higher wage or salary rather than a better benefits package, resulting in a smaller selection of potential candidates. Although there has been no study completed to determine the specific costs of hiring new staff, there is an unquantified cost to County services. The elements of these employee turnover costs include attracting and hiring new employees, training expenses, loss of institutional knowledge, personal burnout of overworked staff who are covering for understaffed positions, and the ultimate decrease in services to the citizens of the County.

### FINDINGS

F1. The County has historically set pay levels below the median of other counties, based on compensation

studies; as of April 19, 2022, they have adjusted this upward to meet the median.

F2. The comparative compensation levels determined by the County include other California counties and the State of California, but do not include local private industry.

F3. Many employees see the County as a place to develop their skills and then leave for higher-paying positions in other counties or private industry, resulting in the County paying for training for which it does not receive the ongoing benefit.

F4. The County does not have knowledge of the cost of hiring a new individual, including the recruitment process, County training, and learning the role, duties, and responsibilities.

F5. Due to the length of time required to complete the recruitment process, departments have lost potential candidates.

F6. If there are not enough acceptable applicants for a position, the hiring department and the Human Resources Department can rewrite the specifications and advertise a revised position listing to attract more potential recruits.

F7. With the pandemic, the County is attempting to become more telework-friendly by allowing certain staff to work from home. This tends to be on a hybrid schedule, as determined by an employee's manager.

F8. Many managers expressed that there is a lack of morale among staff due to low staffing levels contributing to burnout and more staff attrition.

*(continued on page 5)*

**2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY** *(con't)*

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1. The Board of Supervisors should direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide an annual recommendation to maintain, at a minimum, pay levels in the County at the calculated median total compensation, based on comparative analysis.

R2. The Board of Supervisors should ensure that future compensation studies include pay levels only from Sacramento and Placer Counties and, where appropriate, similar classifications in local private industries.

R3. The Board of Supervisors should direct staff to develop and implement policies that focus on employee retention as a priority within one year of the date of issue of this report.

R4. The Board of Supervisors should commission a study into the true cost of recruiting and training new hires within one year of the date of issue of this report.

R5. The Human Resources Department should maintain ongoing lists of potential candidates for all positions to decrease time to bring in new employees and keep the application process for lower-level positions open on a continuous basis, within 90 days of the date of issue of this report.

R6. The Human Resources Department, in conjunction with County departments, should review that job descriptions are written to the lowest possible level for the position

(especially recurring) to ensure the largest selection for that role, completed within 180 days of the date of issue of this report.

R7. The Chief Administrative Officer, in conjunction with the Human Resources Department, should expand the option of the hybrid telework model to as many positions as are practical within 180 days of the date of issue of this report.

R8 The Board of Supervisors should direct the Human Resources Department and elected department heads to implement a program to foster teamwork and morale-building throughout the organization within 180 days of the date of issue of this report.

Full report:  
[http://basslakeaction.net/case-21\\_05](http://basslakeaction.net/case-21_05)

**EDH CSD MANAGEMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS Case #21-08 – June 30, 2022**

**SUMMARY** The 2021-2022 El Dorado County (County) Grand Jury investigated the El Dorado Hills (EDH) Community Services District's (CSD) management of Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts (LLAD). The investigation focused on the following questions:

- Are the David Taussig and Associates (DTA) Annual Engineer's Reports (ER) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2019-2020, FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022 understandable and complete, and do they correctly calculate the LLADs' assessments?
- Is there a defined, functioning, and understandable LLAD complaint and assessment appeals process for parcel owners to follow?

- For LLAD improvements that generate rental income, is this income credited to the underlying LLAD to offset costs?

- Is there a conflict between the interests of EDH CSD Board (Board) and the individual LLADs?

**DISCUSSION** The Grand Jury focused on reviewing the EDH CSD Board approved ERs for Fiscal Years (FY) 2019-2020, FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and examining the issues related to individual LLADs. Issues in this discussion related to specific LLADs do not necessarily represent nor exclude similar or other issues in all LLADs.

**Engineer's Reports (ER)** Regarding the ERs, the Grand Jury discovered issues related to the consolidation of LLADs, specific improvements, boundary maps, upcoming deferred maintenance, usage surveys, the calculation of the Benefit to Property Outside the Assessment, assessment refunds and maximum assessments.

**Consolidated ER** The Consolidated ER lacks specifics about the improvements for each LLAD and only summarizes the special and general benefit calculation components without showing the actual calculations for the individual LLADs.

Under the Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972, each LLAD sets up a benefit formula, and each parcel in the service area is assessed according to the benefit it receives from its improvements. The Grand Jury found that in the Consolidated ER, which covers 25 individual LLADs, assessments were calculated as if all LLADs were just one overall LLAD. Each LLAD has its own formation document and was created

*(continued on page 6)*

**2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY** *(con't)*

independently and should be treated as such because the special benefits are tied to its unique improvements.

In a report submitted in April 2020 to the Board, the EDH CSD General Manager stated:

*“LLADs are formed through a process conducted by a 3rd party consultant known as an Assessment Engineer. The formation process includes an analysis of the direct/specific benefit assignable to the parcel owners included in the LLAD, and an analysis of the indirect/general benefit that is assignable to all other members of the community.”*

The challenge with consolidating LLADs is that each LLAD offers different benefits. While one LLAD may confer benefits such as lighting and medians, which provide more benefit to the people living in the immediate vicinity, another LLAD may include a village park with unique improvements, which is used by the greater community. Therefore, consolidation of the LLADs may have resulted in inaccurate benefit assessments.

**FINDINGS**

F1. The Consolidated ER does not show the ratio or calculation to determine the special and general assessment for each LLAD.

F2. The Consolidated ER does not properly use the service radius to determine the special and general assessment for each LLAD.

F3. The ERs are incomplete and lack the required information for improvements and do not list upcoming major maintenance projects for each LLAD.

F4. Periodic surveys regarding park usage have not been conducted to determine if the special versus general benefit calculation for each LLAD is correct.

F5. Heritage Park in the Carson Creek LLAD #39 has not been accepted by the EDH CSD, yet assessments have been collected and the maximum assessment has increased every year since FY 2015-2016.

F6. There were differences found between the EDH CSD assessment file sent to the County Auditor-Controller and the property tax statements for Carson Creek LLAD #39 for FY 2019-2020 and FY 2020-2021.

F7. The EDH CSD does not transfer the general benefit amount specified in the ER to the LLADs.

F8. The LLADs do not receive credit for rental income for the usage of their improvements, and thus, the ER does not use the rental income in its assessment calculation.

F9. The EDH CSD contracted with Zuri Alliance to outsource contract services that will impact LLAD assessments.

F10. The LLAD parcel owners’ complaint and assessment appeals process is unclear.

F11. The EDH CSD created a webpage for LLADs; however, all of the information concerning LLADs is not consolidated on this page.

F12. There is an inherent conflict that exists between EDH CSD and the LLADs.

F13. The LLAD parcel owners do not have an LLAD Advisory Committee to represent their interests.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1. The Board of Directors should require the ERs for each LLAD to include:

- The defined calculation for the special and general benefit using each LLAD’s unique boundaries;
- An itemized list of improvements;
- Readable boundary maps (for each LLAD) that easily determine the boundaries;
- Deferred maintenance projects for the next year;
- Usage surveys for LLADs to review/adjust the public-at-large component of the general benefit calculation; and
- Recalculation of the Benefit to Property Outside the Assessment amount to eliminate the 50% reductions.

These updates are to be completed with the FY 2023-2024 Final Engineer’s Report.

R2. The EDH CSD should utilize the Carson Creek LLAD #39 deferred maintenance reserve to fund the approved assessment refund for FY 2021-2022. This should be completed by December 31, 2022.

R3. The EDH CSD should recalculate the maximum assessment for Carson Creek LLAD #39 using the current number of benefit units. This

*(continued on page 7)*

## 2021-22 EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY *(con't)*

recalculation should be completed by June 1, 2023.

R4. The EDH CSD should contract with an outside consulting firm to develop and implement a quality control process to ensure the annual assessment file sent to the County Auditor-Controller's Office is correct. This quality control process should be in place by June 1, 2023.

R5. The EDH CSD should transfer the general benefit amount as calculated in the ER to the underlying LLAD.

R6. The EDH CSD should change its internal processes and begin crediting rental income to the LLAD that generated the income. This should be completed by December 31, 2022.

R7. The EDH CSD should provide the LLADs with more details on the financial effect the Zuri Alliance Consolidated Services agreement will have on their LLAD assessments. This should be completed by December 31, 2022.

R8. The EDH CSD should create and publicize policies and procedures, including timeframes and record-keeping requirements, in one accessible online location, to address assessment complaints and appeals. These policies and procedures should be completed and publicized by June 1, 2023.

R9. The EDH CSD should form an LLAD Advisory Committee with LLAD parcel owners to foster a productive environment between the EDH CSD and the LLADs. This LLAD Advisory Committee would provide input to park plans, financial

plans, and ERs and be established by December 31, 2022.

Full Report:

[https://basslakeaction.net/case-21\\_08](https://basslakeaction.net/case-21_08)

## EL DORADO COUNTY SHERIFF DEPT WARNS OF OPEN HOUSE THEFTS

*EDSO Press Release*

Dorado County sheriff's office officials say they have received numerous reports of thefts that occurred during open house events at homes listed for sale.

The investigation is ongoing and no suspects have been identified.

Sheriff's officials noted in some incidents the suspects may have been operating as a team, utilizing one party to distract the real estate agent or homeowner while the other remains in the residence placing items in a large handbag.

To help keep home sellers and their properties safe the Sheriff's Office shared a few tips to follow when buyers come for a tour:

- Store all your valuables somewhere safe and out of view.
- Do not leave things like purses, wallets, phones, keys, bank statements, documents containing personal information or prescription medications in plain view or somewhere they would be accessed easily.
- Safes and lock boxes should be locked or otherwise secured.

- Computers or other electronic devices should be turned off or passcode protected.

- Try to avoid having any family photos or artwork visible that contains names and identities of family.

- Talk to your realtor and request a limited number of guests being allowed inside at one time.

- Leave the main entrance as the only point of entry and exit. This will ensure nobody is utilizing a back door or side gate as an exit.

- Utilize security cameras to capture people coming and going or set up cameras inside the residence. Placing a sign on the front door that says, "cameras recording inside and outside the residence" will discourage thieves.

- Take note of guests who use large handbags or tote-style purses.

- When the showing is over, perform a walkthrough of the entire residence to check for missing items, left items or anything that seems out of place.

Anyone who thinks they have been a victim of a theft during an open house should call EDSO dispatch at (530) 621-6600.



El Dorado County  
Sheriff's Office

Press Release

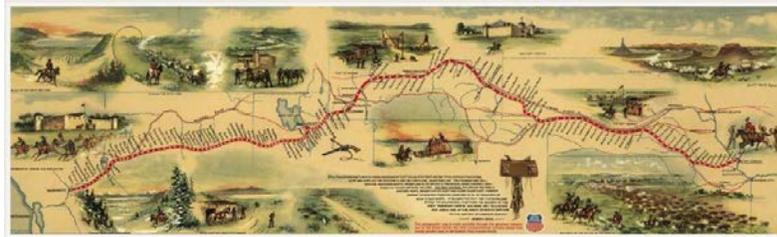
## THE OVERLAND TRAIL

By Kathy Prevost

For those of us who vaguely remember reading or studying about the Overland Trail in high school and were not history buffs, it was both a stagecoach and wagon road with parts of it used by trappers and explorers from the early 1820s, particularly the trails that would become the California, Oregon, and Mormon Trails. Following the Pony Express Trail route, Ben Holiday established the Overland Trail Mail route in 1862.

Some travelers who decided not to make the long and arduous trip to the West settled in an attractive area called "The Great American Desert" which consisted of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. Claiming the free land, they built towns and the growth continued to the West. Many of the new towns were mining camps which needed better and safer transportation for supplies.

Sacramento was one of these areas and it was at the end of the California branch of the Oregon Trail in the area where gold had first been discovered. New trails were built by the men looking for gold when it was found in the territories of Idaho, Utah, Montana and Colorado. As a result there was a greater need for food, clothing, tools and supplies which were moved from St Joseph, Missouri on the Missouri River that became the point of departure for all the major trails to the American West including the California, Overland, Oregon and Santa Fe Trails and the Pony Express.



The Overland Trail close followed the Pony Express Route, drawn by William Henry Jackson, 1860

The government changed to the Overland Trail from the Butterfield Southern Overland Mail route when the Civil War began in 1861, since it ran through a more northern territory from St Joseph to Placerville, California and it was called the "Central Route".

To read more information about the rich history of the Overland and other Trails, please see the following links:

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overland\\_Trail](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overland_Trail)

<https://www.legendsofamerica.com/w/e-overlandstage/#:~:text=The%20Overland%20Trail%2C%20also%20known,%2C%20Oregon%2C%20and%20Mormon%20Trails.>

### JULY 16, 2022 FIRE AT THE GLEN VIEW APARTMENTS ON BASS LAKE ROAD

*El Dorado Hills Fire Dept Social Media Post*

EDH Fire responded to the Cameron Park community for a reported apartment fire on the 2300 block of Bass Lake road. Units arrived to find a fire on the second floor of a two-story multi-unit apartment building. Fire Crews from Cameron Park Fire Department, El Dorado Hills Fire Department, Rescue Fire Department, El Dorado County Fire

Protection District, and CAL FIRE Amador-El Dorado Unit, quickly extinguished the fire, keeping it contained to one unit. The residents of the building were safely evacuated, and no injuries were reported. The cause of the fire is under investigation.



The response to this incident highlights the importance of our County's Fire Departments' great working relationship and robust automatic aid agreement.





## From The BLAC Board

### President's Letter July 2022

In our May Bass Lake Bulletin, I mentioned our first ever pond full of tadpoles, which are still here and growing but in much fewer numbers, thank goodness. Recently while letting the dog out to the backyard, I happened to look down at the threshold to find two very beady reptilian eyes staring back at me from under the threshold! My first instinct was that it was a snake but then I noticed the part of the tail I could see was not really snake like.



I had never encountered a similar lizard (although I know some of you have) and it was quite large compared to the normal lizards we see and was probably trying to cool off just

like snakes would have, under the threshold. I am definitely not an expert in lizards or anything reptile for that matter, but after searching for information on local lizards, I'm guessing it was either a Northern Alligator Lizard or a (California) Forest Alligator Lizard. After I slowly closed the door, it did scurry off and thankfully, and I have not seen it since.



My previous reptile encounters while living here have been very few and far between, a shed snake skin, a skink (which did scare me) in the flower bed and the occasional snake hit on Summer Drive when we walked our dogs. We did meet one very large king snake one time on Summer Drive near Madera Way that kept lying in the road which was finally its undoing.

As we all know, our local lizards (the regulars) do eat all kinds of garden pests, slugs and harmful insects which is good and they certainly have provided a lot of

entertainment for both my dogs and cats over the years. We rarely had a lizard in our yard in Danville that did not have a new tail. Lizards are very vulnerable to pollutants and the fact that they are in our yards is an indication of low levels of pesticides and heavy metals.

#### Reference:

<http://www.californiaherps.com/identification/sacramentoherps.html#Lizards>

#### El Dorado Hills Home Sale Statistics as of July 18, 2022

According to the latest information from Movoto's website, homes in El Dorado Hills were selling for a median price of \$995,000 in June of 2022, and usually sold after 41 days on the market as compared to 21 days last year. This year there were 274 homes sold in June as compared to 99 homes last year.

Currently the median sale list price is \$1,001,070, compared to a month ago when it was \$995,000, (\$880,990 in 2021) and the median home size was 2,821 square feet compared to 2,826 square feet one month ago.

According to Movoto, it was a seller's market in El Dorado  
*(continued on page 10)*

## President's Letter July 2022 (con't)

Hills in June because more people were looking for homes than homes were available and there are currently 372 active home listings with 37 new homes for sale. It will be interesting to see the July numbers when they are released because of the recent interest rate increase.

### References:

<https://www.movoto.com/el-dorado-hills-ca/market-trends/>

From year to year I seem to forget what the longer very warm days of July are really like as I look forward to summer, but then I remind myself that they, also, bring very pleasant warm evenings and beautiful starry skies.

Respectfully,

Kathy Prevost  
President  
Bass Lake Action Committee

## UCCE MASTER GARDENERS FIRE RESILIENCY FOR EDH IN-PERSON CLASS

*UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County Social Media Post*

Fire Resiliency for El Dorado Hills - In Person Class  
Saturday July 23 9AM - 12PM

Location: EDH Fire Dept Station 85  
1050 Wilson Blvd El Dorado Hills, CA 95762



Contact: mgeldorado@ucanr.edu / 530-621-5512

**\*\*\* FREE Public Class \*\*\***

This class will focus on home hardening, present current guidelines as well as ideas for what to plant. This class will be held at the El Dorado Hills Fire Station #85 and presented by Master Gardener, Kit Veerkamp with assistance from EDH Fire Board Director and Master Gardener Tim White

## EDH FIRE DEPARTMENT CAUTIONS ON FIRE DANGER FROM BACK YARD GRILLS

*EDH Fire Department Social Media Post*

Over the past two weeks, the El Dorado Hills Fire Department has responded to three fires starting from a BBQ. Please enjoy #grillingseason, but please follow the attached grilling safety recommendations.

### SAFETY TIPS

- » Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- » The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- » Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- » Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- » Never leave your grill unattended.
- » Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.

### CHARCOAL GRILLS

- » There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- » If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- » Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- » There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.
- » When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

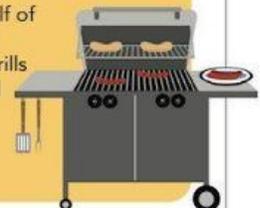
## PROpane Grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. **If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.** Do not move the grill.

If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least **5 minutes** before re-lighting it.

### FACTS

- ! July is the peak month for grill fires.
- ! Roughly half of the injuries involving grills are thermal burns.



## UCCE MASTER FOOD PRESERVERS OF EL DORADO COUNTY FREE PRESERVING CLASSES

*UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County Social Media Post*

Food Preservation classes and events are offered throughout the year. And, we are proud to present many classes in collaboration with Master Gardeners covering growing through preservation in topics such as Citrus, berries, and herbs.

Our classes teach our community safe and healthy food preservation practices and are always up-to-date. The schedule is full of great classes such as:

Basic Water Bath Canning

Tomatoes, Basic & Fancy

Dehydrating & Freezing

Meat Preserving

Jams & Jellies

Pickles & Sauerkraut

Cheese Making

and more!

Currently we are offering online and in-person classes.

### Dehydrating Your Harvest (in-person)

July 23, 2022 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
Bethell-Delfino Ag Building 311 Fair Lane Placerville, CA 95667

Contact: UCCE Master Food Preservers - 530-62

Dehydrating is a great way to preserve your harvest. Dehydrate vegetables, fruits, and herbs to use throughout the year. We will discuss the principles of dehydrating, show you what to look for when buying a dehydrator, and show you how to use it. Then we will give you lots of ideas for using your dried foods.

REGISTER HERE -

<http://ucanr.edu/jul23-mfpclass>

Pre-registration recommended; walk-ins welcome

### Salsa! (in-person)

July 30, 2022 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
Bethell-Delfino Ag Building 311 Fair Lane Placerville, CA 95667

Contact: UCCE Master Food Preservers - 530-621-5502

### Let's Make Salsa!

Learn the do's and don'ts about safely canning salsa. Salsa isn't always all about tomatoes. How about Peach, Mango, or Pear Salsa? Or use all those cherry tomatoes you have in a Corn and Cherry Tomato salsa. Come join us as we explain food safety issues and share canned salsa recipes.

REGISTER HERE -

<http://ucanr.edu/jul30-mfpclass>

Pre-registration recommended; walk-ins welcome



**SUBSCRIBE TO THE FREE MONTHLY BASS LAKE BULLETIN**  
CLICK HERE

OR VISIT:

<http://basslakeaction.net/SUBSCRIBE>

## BASS LAKE ACTION COMMITTEE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 8, 2022 at 7PM. All Bass Lake Action Committee Members are invited to attend. Members will receive an email invitation that will include the meeting agenda, location, and a Zoom Link for virtual attendance.

For further information about BLAC meetings and membership, please contact Vice-President John Davey at 530-676-2657, or email

[basslakemembers@gmail.com](mailto:basslakemembers@gmail.com).

Residents can also visit our online membership form at <http://basslakeaction.net/members> ~

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*Editor Emeritus John Thomson Ph.D.*

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