

BASS LAKE BULLETIN

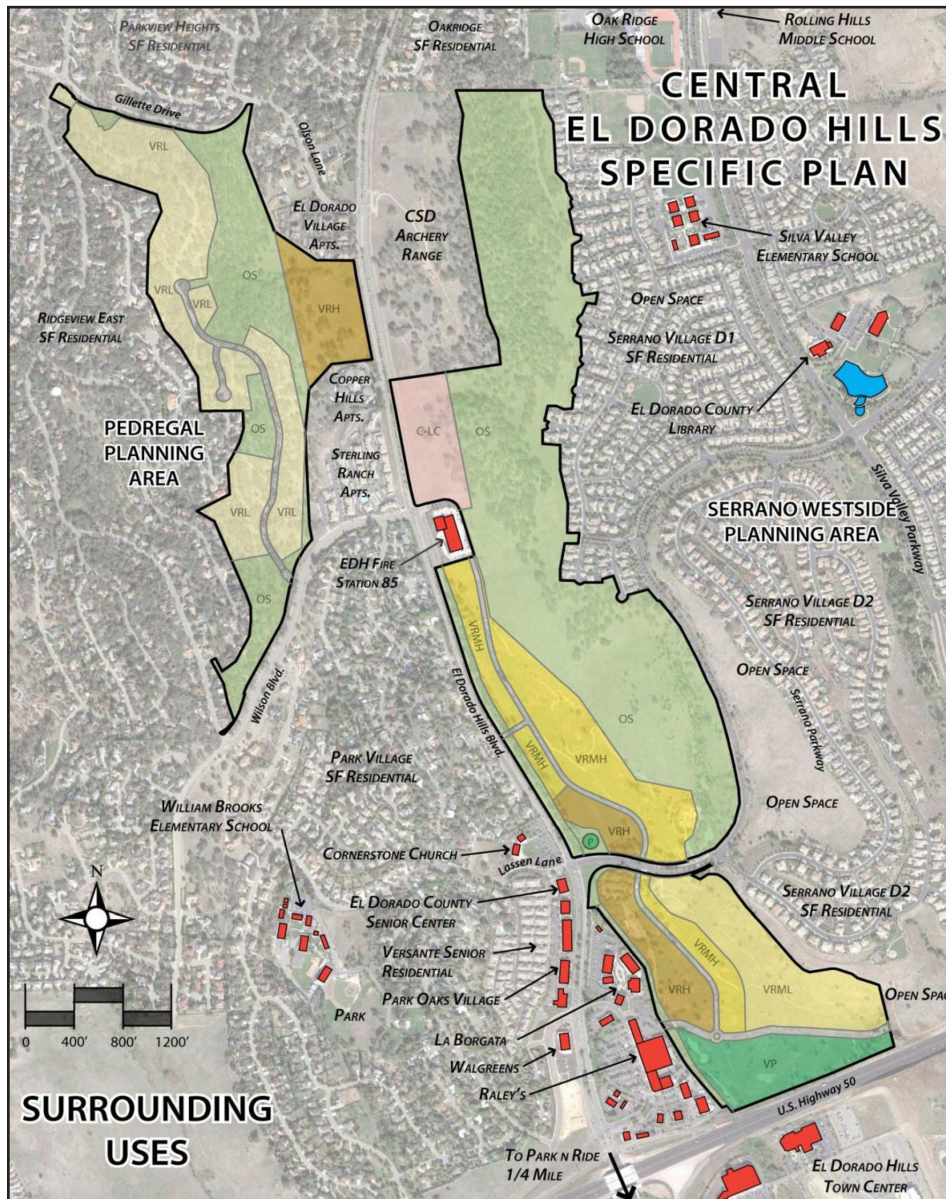
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The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

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www.basslakeaction.org

MORE HEARINGS FOR CENTRAL EDH PLANS



Map of Central El Dorado Hills Specific Plan

One to be held in El Dorado Hills

The El Dorado County Planning Commission has announced two new hearings to be added to the previously announced November and December Hearings for the Central El Dorado Hills Specific Plan. This plan includes development of the proposed Serrano Westside (Old Executive Golf Course) and the Pedregal (west of El Dorado Hills Blvd at Wilson Way) planning areas.

The new third and fourth hearings will be scheduled for January 2020. The first of these January 2020 Planning Commission Hearings will be held in El Dorado Hills, in the evening, allowing the opportunity for more El Dorado Hills residents to contribute to the process.

According to an announcement from the County, in the course of the recent agenda review meeting with Planning Commission

Chair Gary Miller, Dave Livingston, and Tiffany Schmid, the following Planning Commission hearing schedule was determined for the Central El Dorado Hills Specific Plan project. This will allow several opportunities for public testimony and also comply with the Board's direction on November 5th to hold a Special Meeting in January 2020 in El Dorado Hills during the evening.

Public Testimony will be taken at the November, December and January (Special Meeting) hearings and then closed for Planning Commission deliberation and action at the final hearing in January/February 2020.

Hearing 1 will be held November 14, 2019, at the Regular Planning Commission Meeting in the County Center Building C Hearing Room in Placerville. This meeting is to be continued to the December 12, 2019 meeting.

Hearing 2 will be held December 12, 2019, at the Regular Planning Commission Meeting in the County Center Building C Hearing Room. This meeting is to be continued to a Special Meeting in January 2020 in El Dorado Hills to be held in the evening.

Hearing 3 will be held at a January 2020 Special Planning Commission Evening Meeting in El Dorado Hills, time and location to be determined. This meeting is also to be continued to a Regular Planning Commission Meeting in January or February 2020.

Hearing 4 will be held January or February of 2020 at the Regular Planning Commission Meeting in the Building C Hearing Room, time and location to be determined. ~

Credit: El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee





BASS LAKE ROAD: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE CONCLUSION — AND SOME THOUGHTS

By John Davey

In the September and October editions of the Bass Lake Bulletin, Kathy and I have offered a look at the past, present, and future conditions of Bass Lake Road.

When we built our home here in 1995, the developer disclosed to us that Bass Lake Road was going to be “re-aligned” in the next two years. That “re-aligned” road would be the still pending Silver Springs Parkway – whose planning began in the 1980s, and is still not completed in 2019. The 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, the 2010s—that’s four decades. When constructed as is now expected in 2020, it will be the fifth decade.

Bass Lake Road in 1995 was rather ‘suspect’ in terms of road conditions for what had been approved, and the additional projects being considered. I feel that I might even be a bit generous with that description. But, not putting a lot of faith in the promise of a housing developer’s sales team in a “new Bass Lake Road” I began to do some homework on what was being planned for the area where we wanted to build our home. I looked for what I could find regarding future schools, parks, roads, shopping, and other residential developments.

Checking for future projects for the Bass Lake area was difficult to complete in those old dial-up modem days. In fact, most information was really only available from the County Planning Department in Placerville, and those documents you had to see in-person. Some information was available from the school districts, specifically, the Rescue Union School District, as they were preparing to build Pleasant Grove Middle School. At that time El Dorado Union High School District was also considering property next to Pleasant Grove MS, so some information about the future around Bass Lake Road could be found. We understood

from the 1988 El Dorado Specific Plan (Serrano and Town Center), that Bass Lake Road from Hollow Oak (then Stone Hill Road) was going to eventually get a new alignment to the west, and feature a connection with Serrano Parkway, which, in 1995 hadn’t been finished yet, and stopped at the Serrano Country Club entrance at Greenview Drive. Also, at that time in 1995, the final alignment of this section of Bass Lake Road was still being decided by designs of the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan.

The 1991 Bass Lake Road Study Area Environmental Impact Report (which was the base environmental review document for what would become the 1996 Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan - BLHSP) and the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 1988 El Dorado Hills Specific Plan (EDHSP) indicated that by 2010 Bass Lake Road would need to be a divided four-lane arterial road. In fact, I’ve seen one 1986 era document that had considered Bass Lake Road as a six-lane roadway!

Bass Lake itself was identified in the 1988 EDHSP as “Village R” intended to remain zoned open space recreational in perpetuity. The 41 acres on the northeast side of the lake, now owned by El Dorado County, in 1988 was privately owned, and preliminary plans were considered for townhomes, or condominiums on the property. In 1999, the County began efforts to trade a 16-acre County owned commercial property in Cameron Park, for the privately owned 41 acres at Bass Lake.

Twenty-five years ago, the County was either in the process of planning, or had approved, major residential developments around Bass Lake: Serrano El Dorado, Bridlewood Canyon (already under construction in the late 1980s), Bass Lake Villages—The Hills of El Dorado, and Woodridge, Woodleigh Lane developments, Bass Lake Estates, Sierra Crossing, Silver Springs, Travois, and Emerald Meadows.

Serrano Villages in the Bass Lake Area, were residential, although Village J5 was intended to provide a shopping center on both sides of the future Sienna Ridge Road, but was downscaled in scope to the current version of the Sienna Ridge Shopping Cen-

ter, with the balance of the J5 commercial property on the northeast side of Sienna Ridge Road rezoned to residential and added to Village J6 in 2017. Our District 1 Planning Commissioner Jon Vegna in 2017 asked for turn pockets on Bass Lake Road when the rezone and revised commercial project at J5 was approved, but he didn’t receive enough support from the rest of the Planning Commission, or County Planning Staff.

This was a common sense consideration by Commissioner Vegna, but turn pockets and left turn lanes were not deemed warranted by the County Transportation Department, or County Planners. In fact, Commissioner Vegna, who is a retired County Transportation Department employee, had advocated to have a left turn lane added to the Bridlewood Canyon entrance for southbound Bass Lake Road at Bridlewood Drive in the late 1980s as he worked on the Bridlewood Canyon project, but the left turn lane planning consideration was rejected as not warranted.

Commissioner Vegna shared with me that he was surprised when a left turn lane was approved a few years later for the Woodridge entrance on southbound Bass Lake Road at Madera Way, seemingly without request. And he was equally puzzled that a left turn lane on northbound Bass Lake Road was approved for the El Dorado Irrigation maintenance yard on Bass Lake Road as part of the J5-J6 redesign in 2017, without a merited traffic warrant – he felt that all of these intersections should have included a left turn lane.

The Serrano J7 village at the Bass Lake Overflow, next to Bridlewood Canyon, at one point was considered for commercial development, and had signs posted along Bass Lake Road in the late 1990s as being available for commercial development. It was also identified in the 1988 EDHSP as a potential site for an El Dorado Hills Fire Department Station, or, alternatively, an El Dorado County Sheriff’s Department sub-station/office.

So residents, both existing and new, had been told that based on the County’s approved development plans, that a four-lane Bass Lake Road was on the way, as mitigation for the thousands of planned and approved medium and high density homes. Every subsequent project in the area has been approved based on the concept that a four-lane Bass Lake Road alignment was required (but not “conditioned”) by these major projects. This has been the bedrock belief of the community for twenty-five years. Also keep in mind, that Bass Lake

(continued on page 3)





The EDITOR'S CORNER

Hello Everyone,

I would like to thank Kathy Prevost and John Davey for a fine job of setting forth the story of Bass Lake Road in the recent issues of the Bulletin. One may drive along the road every day, but not know the rich history behind its existence.

We must remember that history is not all about the Gold Rush up in Placerville or Coloma. We have our share of history, as shown by the old ghost town of Clarksville and the Clarksville cemetery.

By the way, in May Clarksville Day of 2020 will mark the 10th anniversary of Clarksville Day. Be sure to bring the kids out to see the history of Old Clarksville, which eventually became El Dorado Hills.

I see that work continues apace on the Country Club Road realignment with Bass Lake Road. The contractor has said that if the weather holds he can complete the new road by the end of winter. Stay tuned to the Bulletin for the latest news.

Our Indian Summer seems to be hanging around a long time this year. The Old Farmer's Almanac predicts a winter with colder temperatures and less rain than normal. I hope they are wrong, and we get rain like we had last year.

December will see the annual BLAC Membership Meeting and Christmas Party, at which time the officers and directors will be elected for the coming year. The present board have all consented to run again and serve in 2020, so we have a full slate.

Here's hoping that you all have a Happy Thanksgiving. We all have so much for which to be grateful.

Sincerely,

John E. Thomson

Editor

BASS LAKE ROAD *(con't)*

Road is one of only a handful of north-south connector roads between Green Valley Road and US 50, so a safe, free-flow of traffic on Bass Lake Road is a major component of the County's Roadway Network.

However, since the overall Serrano project was downscaled from its approved 6000 homes to around 4000 homes, and the BLHSP project was downscaled by a few hundred homes, as well as the projected development on the north end of Bass Lake Road never materializing, those plans for a four-lane Bass Lake Road have been deemed unnecessary.

In 2016, with the BLHSP 1996 twenty year Development Agreement between El Dorado County and BL Road LLC expiring, the County and the developers worked on a new agreement that would trade parts of the previously approved Bass Lake Road improvements from US 50 north to Serrano Parkway for an immediate fix of realigning Country Club Drive north on Bass Lake Road. Included in this new conception was a signalized Country Club Drive Bass Lake Road intersection, bike lanes, and a park and ride lot. Gone was the previously designed divided four-lane Bass Lake Road.

This resulted in the developers "loaning" advances to the TIM Fee program, to get improvements constructed sooner, and those "loans" to the TIM Fee program would result in repayments to the first developers by subsequent development projects in later phases. This was an innovative approach, with an increased risk to the first phase developers, and one of the results is the re-alignment of County Club Drive, which is under construction now. But this has also resulted in a 40 year Community Facilities District – otherwise known as Mello-Roos fees, to finance this infrastructure, to be paid by property owners in the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan area communities.

In 2018 the County Transportation Department added a four-lane configuration of Bass Lake Road from US 50 north to Serrano Parkway to the County's twenty year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – however, the planning/environmental work, design, right of way acquisition, construction, environmental monitoring, and actual funding (identified only as sourced to the El Dorado Hills Zone 8 of the TIM Fee program) were scheduled to the years of 2028-2038—ten to twenty years out.

This year, less than a year after adding the Bass Lake Road four-lane project, the project was taken off of the twenty year CIP in favor of the signalization project of

the eastbound US 50 Bass Lake Road off ramp—partly due to the vagaries of where the line for rural region vs. community region falls on a map. In this case, Bass Lake Road north of City Lights Drive (the new Country Club Drive intersection) is a community region, while Bass Lake Road south of City Lights Drive to US 50 is a rural region, and has a lower Level of Service (LOS) trigger for improvements—the rural region being LOS E and the Community Region trigger being LOS F.

No one questions the need for improvements to the Bass Lake Road/US 50 interchange—afternoon traffic backs up on the eastbound off ramp onto the US 50 travel lanes. Nor does anyone question the need for improving the Country Club Drive and Bass Lake Road intersection, historically the worst performing intersection in the County's roadway system. Residents welcome these improvements – they were overdue even without the Bass Lake Hills residential projects, which are now under construction, and are providing the majority of the funding for these improvements.

The difficulty lies in the fact that the County conditions projects to only meet the lowest acceptable traffic conditions—like getting a D- grade in a class and proclaiming that you passed the class. Sure, a passing grade, but nothing to jump up and down about. So, the County improves our roadways to "just good enough" and expects those improvements to eliminate roadway capacity and safety issues in terms of long-range planning. And according to the County's traffic models, it does. The reality to residents is something else.

The same conditions exist at the northern end of Bass Lake Road. From Serrano Parkway, to just past Madera Way, the imminent 2020 construction of the Silver Springs Parkway connection is seen as the ultimate solution for our traffic concerns. And, indeed, removing the 25 MPH curve on Bass Lake Road will remove a major source of traffic collisions and fatal accidents, an improvement that has been proposed for four decades. But neighbors still have concerns about the proximity of the new Silver Springs Parkway and Bass Lake Road three-way stop intersection a



BASS LAKE ROAD *(con't)*

few hundred feet from the Madera Way intersection, which is only a few hundred feet north of the Bridlewood Drive intersection, which is less than 500 feet from the future Serrano Village J7 intersection at the curve along the Bass Lake Overflow, and 1100 feet from the new Whistling Way Bass Lake Road intersection for Serrano Village J6. That is five intersections within 2800 feet, six intersections within 4800 feet counting the traffic signal at Sienna Ridge Road/Serrano Parkway.

The County Transportation Department has concluded as part of the review of the Serrano Village J7 project that in conjunction with the lower number of residential homes from what was approved for the EDHSP, the BLHSP, the Silver Springs residential project, and the lack of other projected development in the area, that a four lane alignment of Bass Lake Road is not merited.

Without the need for the four-lane alignment in the expected life of the County General Plan, the Transportation Department, which has right of ways for the four-lane alignment that would bring Bass Lake Road almost to the Bridlewood Canyon Gatehouse, has determined that the road frontage improvements—curbs, gutters, sidewalks, etc.—as provided in the 1988 EDHSP for Villages J7, and J6, would not be required to be constructed at this time. Instead they have opted to just collect road frontage improvement fees, to hold, and to be used at an unidentified future time when a four-lane alignment of Bass Lake Road would be warranted.

But if there is no warrant for a four-lane Bass Lake Road in the life of the County General Plan, why not build those frontage improvements now? No other Serrano Village lacks those amenities. It would improve traffic and pedestrian safety in our area. BLAC has spoken with Parker Development/Serrano Associates many times in the past several years regarding these projects, and many more times in the past few months. They have been very generous with their time, and have been genuinely interested in our traffic concerns. They have always indicated that they would provide any frontage improvements that are agreed to in both the EDHSP, and their Development Agreement with El Dorado County, but since the County won't ask for the frontage improvements, or determine the ultimate alignment of Bass Lake Road, they will contribute the road frontage improvement funds, as required by the County.

In reviewing the Village J7 project at recent Planning Commission hearings, several commissioners questioned the existing conditions on Bass Lake Road. The Transportation Department, hearing those concerns, asked Serrano Associates to pay for a new traffic study, whose results were provided to the County at the end of September.

Those results: generally, conditions on Bass Lake Road between Serrano Parkway and Madera Way are at LOS C and D—and the accident rate is half that of the County average. Capacity improvements in a Community Region—and this is in the El Dorado Hills Community Region—are triggered by LOS F.

We had pulled data from the CHP about collisions on Bass Lake Road between Serrano Parkway, and Green Valley Road for the period of 2009 through May 2019. That data showed 113 reported collisions, and of those 113 collisions, 73 occurred between Bridlewood Drive and Woodleigh Lane—about 64% of all the collisions occurring over a section of roadway less than 5000 feet long. If that accident rate is half the County average, then the County, in terms of road safety, really does have larger problems than Bass Lake Road.

I received a hard copy of the traffic study results on September 30th – on that day I was visiting a neighbor in Bridlewood Canyon. After my visit, as I waited to turn left from Bridlewood Drive to southbound Bass Lake Road at 3:45 PM, I waited for about two minutes for thirty-eight cars to pass (I counted), until I could safely make a left turn. The traffic study provided that the worst case stopped delay per vehicle on a minor street (Bridlewood Drive) is 22 seconds. The traffic studies are automated with equipment providing the raw data for study. My real-world experience, like many residents, was decidedly different.

Current conditions of LOS C and LOS D on Bass Lake Road between Serrano Parkway and Madera Way, in conjunction with the 2020 construction of the Silver Springs and Bass Lake Road intersection, indicate that no improvements will be warranted in the next 20 years. In short, Bass Lake Road, between Serrano Parkway and Madera Lane—even through to Green Valley Road, is an adequate, safe roadway, per County standards.

The opening of the Sienna Ridge Shopping Center is considered in those calculations, so the Transportation Department believes it should have no impact on warranting additional improvements on Bass Lake Road.

Lost in all of this data is the fact that there are no improvements planned for Bass Lake Road from Magnolia Hills Drive to Green Valley Road – the exception being a street intersection on the north side of Bass Lake Road for the Silver Springs residential project – Arapahoe Drive - at roughly the current Hill Road location, and two more intersections on the south side of Bass Lake Road for the thirty-six home Bass Lake Estates residential project – Trout Lake Court (which is really a circle) – just north of Tea Rose Court, and south of Woodleigh Lane. Three new intersections, all within a few hundred feet, on opposite sides of Bass Lake Road, between Magnolia Hills Drive and Woodleigh Lane—results in five intersections on about 4300 feet of Bass Lake Road, on a hill, on a curve.

Earlier this year, the County Department of Transportation had asked the Board of Supervisors for direction on building a maintenance yard on the south side of Bass Lake—directly across from Bridlewood Drive, and the planned Serrano Village J7 at the Bass Lake Overflow. That would have added a third intersection within 470 feet on a curve. Residents, concerned 1) about the inconsistent land use of a maintenance yard across the road from residential developments, and 2) with its impacts on the natural environment of Bass Lake were alarmed, to put it politely. Consequently, the planned maintenance yard is being considered for behind El Dorado Hills Fire Station 86 on Bass Lake Road instead.

When asked about when residents might see improvements to Bass Lake Road, County Planners indicate that future improvements would be warranted by, and paid for by, undefined future developments. To most residents' thinking, there is not enough remaining land that could be developed in a scale large enough to provide these improvements.

El Dorado County, through its land use authority, has approved and conditioned the development of thousands of medium, and high-density homes in the Bass Lake Area. The County, through its Transportation Department, and Planning Department, maintains that Bass Lake Road, as configured, with planned improvements at the US 50 interchange, the new Country Club Drive intersection, and the future Silver Springs



BASS LAKE ROAD *(con't)*

Parkway intersection, is an adequate roadway for existing and future conditions in terms of capacity and safety. Residents, for the most part, disagree. Residents are concerned that when the Sienna Ridge Shopping Center opens, the increase in traffic volume from this project, along with the increase in traffic volume from the new Serrano J6 and J7 villages, and the Silver Springs residential project, will negatively impact the quality of life in our area.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are planned from Serrano Parkway south to US 50. There are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities on Bass Lake Road between Serrano Parkway and Green Valley Road. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities will be included in the Silver Springs Parkway project, but a gap remains from Silver Springs to the Sienna

Ridge Shopping Center. Also—there are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities from the planned Silver Springs Parkway and Bass Lake Road intersection, north to Green Valley Road—just a section of sidewalk between Green Valley Elementary, and Lambeth Drive

When a link to our petition for traffic and safety improvements for Bass Lake Road was shared in a public Facebook Group, a County Department of Transportation employee shared details of the as yet unreleased traffic study as resulting in LOS C, then mockingly derided concerned residents as ‘Chicken Littles’ and offered the advice that residents in the area shouldn’t complain about the road when we “...drive your \$60k Mercedes off Bass Lake Road.” This sort of treatment of residents’ concerns, although from only from one individual employee, demonstrates why residents are alarmed when our concerns and questions are perceived to be rejected out of hand.

So it seems that there will be no improvements to the northern section of Bass Lake Road, with the exception of the Silver Springs Parkway connection. The only changes will be increased impacts through already approved developments, that have no significant conditions to mitigate their impacts to Bass Lake Road itself.

If residents feel that these concerns are valid, they should respectfully contact the County Board of Supervisors, the County Planning and Building Services Department, and the County Transportation Department. Additionally, consider reviewing and supporting residents’ Bass Lake Road Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Petition. This is our community; the opportunity is now - make your concerns heard. ~

Credit: John Davey is Vice President of Bass Lake Action Committee

Notice to Readers

This article concludes our featured series about Bass Lake Road. Past Bulletins may be accessed at our website, basslakeaction.org.

—Editor



“Autumn” by Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898)

My November Guest

My Sorrow, when she's here with me,
Thinks these dark days of autumn rain
Are beautiful as days can be;
She loves the bare, the withered tree;
She walks the sodden pasture lane.

—Robert Frost

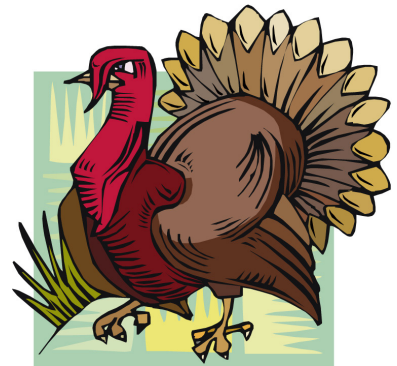


BLAC BOARD MET NOVEMBER 12, SET 2020 BOARD ELECTION, ANNUAL MEETING DATE

At their November 11, 2019, meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC), all of the current board members announced they would stand for office for 2020 at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting and Christmas Party will be held December 9, 2019, at the home of Fran and John Thomson, 501 Kirkwood Court, Woodridge, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762, 530-677-3039. This date was chosen to avoid conflict with the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend. Festivities will begin at 6:00 PM. Invitations have been sent to all BLAC members and invited guests, who are cordially invited to attend.

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



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