

THE BASS LAKE BULLETIN

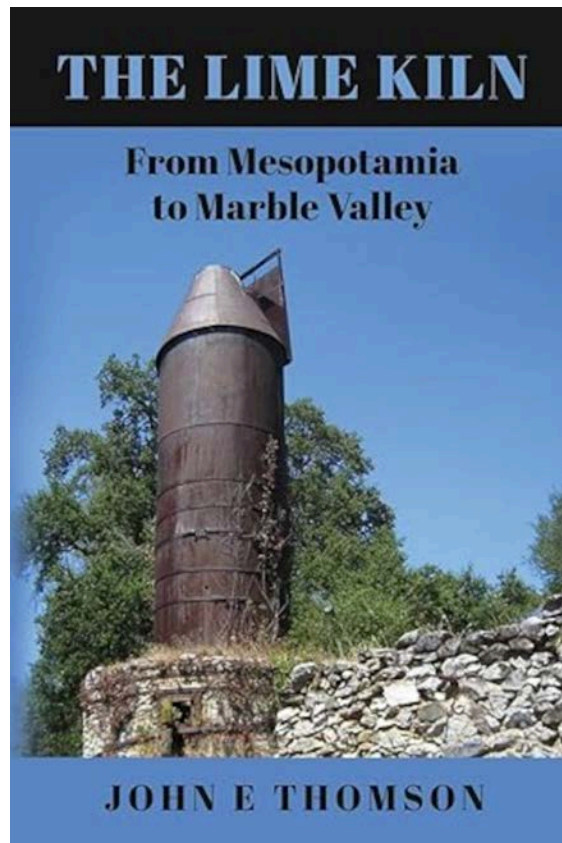
The Voice of the Bass Lake Community
<http://basslakeaction.org>

THE BASS LAKE ACTION COMMITTEE

The Bass Lake Action Committee was formed by a group of concerned property owners in the Bass Lake Area and incorporated in 2003 as Non-profit organization, a 501(C)(4) corporation.

Our Mission Statement:

To provide a voice for Bass Lake homeowners in dealing with the county and other community agencies.
To keep homeowners informed about issues and meetings.



The Lime Kiln - From Mesopotamia to Marble Valley
By John Thomson Phd.

BASS LAKE ACTION FOUNDING MEMBER RELEASES NEW BOOK THAT COVERS MARBLE VALLEY LIME KILN

By John Davey

The Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC) is proud to announce that one of our own founding members and former Board President, **John Thomson, Ph.D.**, has released a fascinating new historical work titled *The Lime Kiln: From Mesopotamia to Marble Valley*.

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NEW BOOK FROM BLAC COFOUNDER *(con't)*

For those who have followed the *Bass Lake Bulletin* over the years, John is a familiar name. He served as the editor of this very newsletter for seventeen years (2003–2019) and was a driving force behind the preservation and advocacy efforts that shaped our community. Though John and his wife Fran moved to Arizona in late 2020, his dedication to the history of El Dorado County remains as strong as ever.

A Journey Through Time: The Lime Kiln

John's latest book, published by Gatekeeper Press, is a deep dive into the evolution of the lime kiln - a crucial technological advancement that helped build western civilization. The book spans millennia, tracing the technology from its earliest origins in ancient Mesopotamia all the way to our local **Marble Valley**.

Lime kilns were used to produce quicklime, a vital ingredient for mortar, plaster, and cement. John's research explores:

- **The Ancient World:** How early civilizations first used "holes in the ground" to create building materials.
- **Architectural Evolution:** The development of massive vertical

apparatuses capable of industrial-scale production.

- **The Local Connection:** The final chapters bring the story home to the Marble Valley and El Dorado Hills area, highlighting the industrial history that often goes unnoticed beneath our modern landscape.

A Legacy of Local History

This is not John's first foray into the history of our backyard. His previous book, ***Bass Lake: A Gold Rush Artifact***, is considered the definitive history of our namesake lake. In that work, John revealed that Bass Lake - originally known as the **American Reservoir** - was actually a critical component of the mining ditch systems developed during the 1849 Gold Rush.

His ability to connect global technological trends to local landmarks makes his writing a "must-read" for any resident interested in why our community looks the way it does today.

"John's work reminds us that we aren't just living in a modern suburb; we are living on top of layers of industrial and pioneer history."
BLAC Board of Directors

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NEW BOOK FROM BLAC COFOUNDER *(con't)*

Recognition and Awards

John's contributions to history have not gone unnoticed. In 2019, he received the **Award of Merit** from the **Conference of California Historical Societies** for his scholastic work. Upon his retirement as editor of the Bulletin, he was also honored by the community and state representatives, as well as being named as **Editor Emeritus** of the Bass Lake Bulletin, for his tireless service.

[*The Lime Kiln: From Mesopotamia to Marble Valley*](#) is now available through major retailers including Barnes & Noble, Walmart, and Amazon. We encourage all our readers to pick up a copy and discover the incredible history of the structures that helped build the world—and our local Marble Valley.

Congratulations to John, on another incredible achievement!

EDH CSD FORENSIC AUDIT RESULTS IN NO CRITICAL FINDINGS

By John Davey

In a significant step toward transparency and rebuilding public trust, the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) has

released the results of a comprehensive forensic audit. The findings, presented by the independent firm Baker Tilly at the December 11 Board of Directors meeting, concluded that there were no critical findings or evidence of financial misappropriation during the period reviewed.

The audit was commissioned by the Board in response to public concerns following the departure of former General Manager Kevin Loewen. The firm focused specifically on fiscal years 2022 and 2023, scrutinizing financial documents that were either initiated or signed by Loewen.

A Thorough Investigation

The scope of the audit was extensive. Baker Tilly representative Michael Artiglio reported that the firm examined over 700 documents, accounting for \$60 million in revenue and \$38 million in expenditures. The investigation included:

- Examination of expenditure authorizations
- Use of District-issued credit cards and purchase orders
- Vendor contracts and payments
- Travel and reimbursement practices
- Compliance with District policies and state law

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EDH CSD FORENSIC AUDIT *(con't)*

Significantly, the auditor noted that the investigation found no evidence that the former General Manager received any personal benefits related to the use of District credit cards.

Strengthening Internal Controls

The audit determined that the District already had adequate internal controls in place regarding its finances. While the report offered recommendations for streamlining processes based on industry best practices, District leadership confirmed that these suggestions were immediately acknowledged and implemented.

The audit cost the District approximately \$75,750—an investment Interim General Manager Stephanie McGann-Jantzen described as essential to the District's mission. G.M. McGann Jantzen as well as the Directors acknowledged that the audit was an important part of rebuilding trust with the public, while also thanking the CSD staff for their professionalism throughout the process.

Moving Forward

The atmosphere at the meeting was one of relief and a desire to move forward.

The EDH CSD Board of Directors, officially accepted the final report. With the forensic audit now complete and the District's financial integrity verified, the EDH CSD looks to turn the page and focus on its continued service to the El Dorado Hills community.

SEAN COPPOLA STEPS INTO COUNTY TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR ROLE

By John Davey

El Dorado County has officially transitioned to new leadership in the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office. Sean M. Coppola was appointed to the role effective December 27, 2025, following the retirement of Karen Coleman, who had served as the elected official in the post since 2018.

Coppola's appointment by the Board of Supervisors was the culmination of a multi-year succession plan. Prior to taking the helm, Coppola served as the Assistant Treasurer-Tax Collector, a period during which he worked closely with Coleman to prepare for the responsibilities of the office.

A Prepared Transition

During the appointment process, Coleman endorsed Coppola, noting

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COPPOLA STEPS INTO COUNTY TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR ROLE *(con't)*

that he understands the county's investment policies and strategies and has been well-received by county leadership. His background includes significant training within the department, ensuring continuity in the oversight of the county's banking and investments.

"I am honored to serve as your Treasurer-Tax Collector," Coppola stated in a message to the community. "Our office's primary responsibilities include oversight of the County's Banking and Investments, along with a variety of tax collection activities. I take these responsibilities very seriously."

Continuing a Legacy of Growth

Coppola steps into the role following a period of significant growth and modernization for the department. Under the previous administration, the county's investment pool more than doubled, and property tax systems were integrated with new e-billing and payment processing technologies to improve efficiency for residents.

Coppola is slated to serve the remainder of the current term, which runs through January 2, 2027. His office, located on Fair Lane in

Placerville, remains responsible for managing the collection of secured and unsecured property taxes, business licenses, and transient occupancy taxes, as well as maintaining the financial health of the county's investment portfolio.

EDH CSD EXPLORES GILMORE SENIOR CENTER PURCHASE

By John Davey

The El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) has officially entered into discussions with El Dorado County to explore the potential purchase of the Moni Gilmore Senior Center. While the facility is a cornerstone of senior life in El Dorado Hills, its ownership and operation have long been shared between the two agencies—a dynamic the District now seeks to streamline.

A Layered History

The building, located on Lasselle Drive, carries a rich history of public service. It originally served as a fire station for the El Dorado Hills Fire Department before being decommissioned. Its transformation into a dedicated space for seniors was largely driven by the advocacy of the late Moni Gilmore.

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EDH CSD EXPLORES GILMORE SENIOR CENTER PURCHASE *(con't)*

A prominent community leader and advocate, Gilmore was instrumental in navigating the complexities of the County's purchase of the former fire station. Her vision was to establish a permanent hub for the area's growing senior population. Following her passing, her commitment to the community continued through a significant endowment from her estate, which was established specifically to support and enhance senior services within El Dorado Hills.

Current Operations

Under the current arrangement, El Dorado County owns the physical building and the land, but the day-to-day senior programming, activities, and services are managed and provided by the EDH CSD. This partnership has allowed the center to offer a wide array of classes, social groups, and resources to residents aged 50 and older.

Looking Toward the Future

The move to explore a purchase comes as the EDH CSD evaluates its long-term facility and master planning goals. Owning the building would give the District full control over the site, potentially simplifying future

renovations or expansions of senior services.



*Moni Gilmore Senior Center
image credit - Google Maps*

COUNTY APPOINTS CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

By John Davey

El Dorado County has announced the appointment of its first-ever Chief Information Officer (CIO), marking a significant shift in how the county manages its technological infrastructure and data security. David Earnshaw, a professional with extensive experience in information technology management, has been selected to lead the newly formed department.

The creation of the CIO position follows a strategic decision by the Board of Supervisors to consolidate IT services and elevate the role of technology in county operations. Previously, IT functions were

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COUNTY APPOINTS CIO

(con't)

distributed across various departments; the new structure aims to centralize these efforts to improve efficiency, enhance cybersecurity, and streamline digital services for residents.

A New Strategic Direction

As the inaugural CIO, Earnshaw is tasked with overseeing the county's information technology strategy, including the modernization of legacy systems and the implementation of new digital tools. His role will be pivotal in ensuring that the county's technological framework supports the needs of both staff and the public while maintaining high standards of data protection.

County officials noted that the appointment comes at a time when local governments are facing increasing challenges related to digital infrastructure and the need for robust defenses against cyber threats.

Background and Expertise

Earnshaw brings a wealth of experience to the role, having previously served in high-level IT positions where he managed complex systems and large-scale technology projects. His background is expected to provide the leadership necessary to

navigate the county's transition to a more centralized IT model.

"Technology is a critical component of everything we do," Earnshaw noted regarding the new department's mission. The focus will remain on providing reliable services that allow the county to function effectively in an increasingly digital world.

The Chief Information Officer will report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer, ensuring that technology initiatives are closely aligned with the county's overall strategic goals and budgetary priorities. District officials have noted that the talks are in the preliminary stages. Any potential acquisition would involve careful consideration of the building's maintenance needs and the continued honoring of the Gilmore estate's intent to benefit local seniors. For now, services at the Gilmore Senior Center remain unchanged as both the County and the District work through the details of the proposed transition.



JANUARY: IN THE LANDSCAPE

By John Davey

January is a quieter month in the garden here in El Dorado Hills, but it's far from inactive. In USDA Gardening Zone 9, winter can be a key time for maintenance, planning, and setting the stage for a healthy and attractive landscape in the spring.

Landscape & Lawn Maintenance

With cooler temperatures and seasonal rainfall, lawns typically slow their growth in January. This is an ideal time to:

Limit mowing to only what's necessary, keeping blades sharp to avoid tearing dormant grass.

Avoid excessive foot traffic on wet lawns, which can compact soil and damage roots.

Apply mulch to bare or thinning areas to reduce erosion and suppress winter weeds.

January is also a good month to inspect irrigation systems. Look for leaks, clogged emitters, or broken sprinkler heads, and adjust watering schedules to reflect winter conditions and local water-use guidelines.

Opportunities for New Planting

Winter planting is often overlooked, but January offers excellent opportunities:

Trees and shrubs establish well when planted during dormancy, allowing roots to develop before summer heat.

Native plants are especially well-suited for winter planting. California natives benefit from seasonal rains and typically require less water and maintenance once established.

Perennials can be planted now to encourage strong root systems and better spring performance.

When selecting plants, consider drought-tolerant and fire-wise options appropriate for our foothill environment, such as California lilac (Ceanothus), manzanita, coffeeberry, redbud, and western redbud, along



Western Redbud - image credit John Davey

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JANUARY: IN THE LANDSCAPE *(con't)*

with ornamental grasses like deer grass and purple needlegrass. Groundcovers such as yarrow and creeping sage, and perennials like penstemon and California fuchsia, provide seasonal color while reducing water use and maintenance.

Native Plant Care

Established native plants generally need minimal intervention in January. Focus on:

Removing invasive weeds before they spread.

Refreshing mulch to protect roots and retain soil moisture.

Avoiding heavy pruning, which can disrupt natural growth cycles for many native species.

Trees & Pruning

January is an excellent month for **structural pruning** of many deciduous trees while they are dormant. Proper pruning can improve tree health, reduce storm damage, and maintain clearance from roofs, sidewalks, and roadways.

- Remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches.

- Avoid heavy pruning of spring-flowering trees, which may already have buds set.
- If large trees are involved, consider consulting a certified arborist.

Flower Beds, Wildflowers & Bulbs

Flower beds benefit from winter cleanup—remove spent annuals and lightly cultivate soil where appropriate.

Wildflowers seeded in fall should be emerging; avoid disturbing these areas.

Spring-blooming bulbs planted earlier will continue developing underground. Keep beds lightly mulched and free of weeds.

A Reminder About Moss on Tile Roofs

Winter moisture creates ideal conditions for **moss growth on tile roofs**, a common issue in our area. Moss is more than a cosmetic concern:

- It can **trap moisture**, leading to roof damage and shortened roof lifespan.
- Many insurance providers now consider moss buildup a **maintenance risk**, which can result in **higher homeowners insurance premiums**.

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JANUARY: IN THE LANDSCAPE *(con't)*

- In some cases, unresolved roof conditions may even lead to **policy non-renewal or cancellation**.

Homeowners are encouraged to inspect roofs periodically and address moss growth using safe, professional cleaning methods that do not damage roofing materials.

January is a month for thoughtful care and preparation. With a little attention now, our landscapes—and our homes—will be healthier, safer, and more resilient in the seasons ahead.

PROJECT PIPELINE IN THE WORKS FOR UPPER AMERICAN RIVER WATERSHED

News release Dec 12, 2025

Exciting momentum is taking place to protect the upper American River watershed. The El Dorado Resource Conservation District has been awarded a grant to lead an important initiative that builds on the watershed management vision developed by the Upper American River Watershed Group. RCD's grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy through the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program will invest in the development of a pipeline of projects in the west slope of El Dorado County,

which will play a key role in restoring and maintaining the health of the upper American River watershed.

"There are many entities that contribute to protecting the watershed and increasing wildfire resilience and we are happy to support efforts that help streamline project development," said Angela Avery, executive officer at Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

"Enabling the RCD to create a framework for project implementation is critical for promoting collaboration and achieving landscape-scale improvements."

The upper American River watershed provides a multitude of benefits to local communities and those beyond its borders including approximately 9 million downstream users. Watershed management is multi-faceted and involves preserving natural and working lands, ensuring active forest management, protecting outdoor access and strengthening wildfire resilient communities. Building a pipeline of shovel-ready projects will enable regional partners to proactively identify the watershed's most pressing needs and competitively pursue new funding opportunities as they arise.

"Managing the watershed involves navigating many complex issues that cross jurisdictions," said Mark Egbert,

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PROJECT PIPELINE *(con't)*

RCD district manager. “We’re grateful that the Upper American River Watershed Group developed a shared vision of what is needed to sustainably manage the watershed and that we can

build upon that to create a project pipeline to put that vision into action.”

El Dorado Water Agency, the facilitator of the UARWG, looks forward to engaging in the project pipeline development alongside the UARWG members and other local stakeholders as on-the-ground projects are identified that will ultimately benefit us all. EDWA is helping in the development of the project pipeline by serving as a member of the project oversight and technical working groups.

FORMER EDH CSD GM LOEWEN ENTERS NOT GUILTY PLEA

By John Davey

The ongoing legal proceedings involving former El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) General Manager Kevin Loewen reached a new stage recently in the El Dorado County Superior Court. Loewen, who was indicted by a criminal grand jury late last year, has

officially entered a plea of not guilty to all charges.

The charges against Loewen include two felony counts of perjury and one felony count of participating in a government contract while having a financial interest. These allegations stem from an investigation into a conflict of interest involving Loewen’s outside consulting work for DTA, a firm that was a contractor for the CSD during his tenure as General Manager.

While the community has waited months for clarity following the initial grand jury report and Loewen’s departure from the District in December 2023, the judicial process is proving to be a lengthy one. The transition from the investigative findings of the Grand Jury to the criminal court system continues to draw a somber shadow over the District’s recent administrative history.

For many in the community, the progress of the criminal case against the former top administrator remains a point of significant concern and disappointment.

The court has scheduled a trial setting conference for Feb. 6, 2026. This hearing will determine the future timeline for the case and potential trial dates, ensuring that the legal cloud over the District’s past leadership may, unfortunately, continue well into the coming year.

JANUARY LOCAL MEETING RECORDINGS

By John Davey

Recordings of local meetings in El Dorado Hills and El Dorado County in January 2026.

El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee Meetings:

Typically the second Wednesday of each Month

January 14th Meeting

<https://www.youtube.com/live/3putyY8o maM>

El Dorado Hills Community Services District Board of Directors Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

January 8th Regular Meeting

<https://basslakeaction.net/edhcsd-1-8-26>

Shaping EDH with the GM

January 13, 2026 Meeting

<https://www.youtube.com/live/1mB3mg5 oYRU>

El Dorado Irrigation District Board

EID Meetings, Agendas, Minutes -

<https://www.eid.org/about-us/board-of-directors/meetings-agendas-and-minutes>

EID Recorded Meetings on EID YouTube Channel -

www.EID.org/YouTube



OR VISIT:

<https://basslakeaction.net/SUBSCRIBE>

BLAC BOARD MEETING



The next meeting of the Bass Lake Action Committee Board of Directors is scheduled for February 9, 2026

Members will receive the Meeting location details via email invitation. All Members are welcome, and are encouraged to attend.

For more information about meetings and membership, please contact President John Davey at 530-676-2657, or email basslakemembers@gmail.com.

Bass Lake Area Residents can also visit our online membership form at <https://basslakeaction.net/members>