



# territory

this land is your land

special places, people and events ~ brought to you by Nevada Land Trust

Fall 2013 · Volume 15 · Issue 2

## Sheep Flat Enters Home Stretch

by Alicia Reban

Good things come in small packages. 1.76 acres. Doesn't sound like much – but it's the location that makes it special. Extraordinary, even. You probably know exactly where it is – up there in Sheep Flat – known by others as Tahoe Meadows. North side of the Mt. Rose Highway where the waters come together to form Ophir Creek. Where the shepherd's cabin used to stand, and where the remnants of the Ophir flume hide beneath the willows and sage. Where kids and their families spend sunny winter afternoons playing in the snow, and coyotes race the full moon all year. Most people who go up to play in the Meadows no doubt assume it's all public land and open to all – but technically, that's not so – at least not yet. If Nevada Land Trust is able to complete this project by November 2013, this “missing piece” will finally be added to the public's beloved outdoor playground, and more of Nevada's fascinating history can be shared with future generations. Thanks to a generous new gift from a private fund holder at the Community Foundation of Western Nevada, a successful federal funding nomination for a major portion of the cost, and the many donors who responded to the special fund drive over the summer, we're now only \$17,000 away from our completion goal. If you've been one of the friends of Sheep Flat/ Tahoe Meadows, thank you for helping us get this far. If not, there's still time to be part of this amazing project (see inside for ways to give!) – help us cross that finish line!

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## Thoughts from the Executive Branch

by Alicia Reban



Quite the ride, these past few months. The skies are Nevada blue again, but many of us spent weeks beneath intensely smoky skies from the Yosemite Rim Fire. Kudos and thanks to the thousands of firefighters that helped contain the maelstrom – with a nod to Mother Nature for doing her part to help calm things down. Are we ready here for the next fire? I kind of hate to bring it up (let me pause to knock on wood), but it's critical that the lessons learned in the northern Nevada region from the Caughlin Ranch and Washoe Drive Fires just over two years ago are still in the front of our brains. Nevada Land Trust's restoration team, ably led by Lynda Nelson, has designed a rapid response program with Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County for the next time we see smoke on the horizon due to a fire burning in the region's watersheds. Yosemite was a reminder that we can't be too careful, can't be too ready – let's all err on the side of caution. My husband and I are clearing the rabbitbrush and sage that's gotten too close to our house – won't you join us in looking at your property through the lens of defensible space? If every homeowner and landowner will take similar steps in the right direction, we'll all be better off. Help with some of the volunteer weeding and replanting efforts in public spaces if you can. I can guarantee you that Nevada Land Trust will continue to monitor the success of our fire restoration efforts, and bring our best game to the next time. Which, let me be very clear, I hope there won't be, but as the Yosemite fire reminded us, and the Caughlin and Washoe fires taught us in the winter of 2010-2011 – it can happen anywhere, and it could happen at any time - there's no such thing as a fire "season" anymore.

It is with mixed emotions that I report Nevada Land Trust's longtime Projects Director Becky Stock has saddled up her horse and headed back to her home state of Oregon to be closer to family and manage projects at the Deschutes Land Trust in Bend. Becky helped to build Nevada Land Trust, and her fingerprints are on everything from our conservation easement program to the Banff Mountain Film Festival annual tour event. She is sorely missed, but as is her style, she left things in great shape. We sent her off with our deepest appreciation for a job well done since 1999 – and she promised to visit from time to time. Good luck, Becky – Nevada was lucky to have you here for so long, and Oregon is certainly lucky to have you back!

Front page photo: Tahoe Meadows by M. Blach

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## NLT assists with historic acquisition 'In Canyon Below'

by Alicia Reban

Next time you're headed up to Virginia City from Reno on Geiger Grade, NV 341, check out the Nevada State Historical Marker just before the road flattens out in the Highlands. The sign tells of the Old Geiger Grade ('In Canyon Below') constructed by Davison Geiger and John Tilton in 1862 to link Virginia City's Comstock Lode to the Truckee Meadows. If you are one of the area's many mountain bikers you may already be familiar with the canyon road - which can be accessed from 341 or down Toll Road past the pavement.

More recently a part of the historic Bain Springs Ranch, NLT worked with the Tanner family to nominate a 271-acre portion of the Toll Road canyon for public purchase in Round 9 of the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act. The project includes a section of the Old Geiger Grade, the Newton Creek drainage, a rare buckwheat plant, and mule deer habitat - and the dramatic Owl Rock, standing guard over all.

Allan Tanner, whose parents first purchased the property for a dude ranch in 1941 and exchanged part of the upper canyon for the lower section in 1956, offers a fascinating glimpse of life there as a child, when it was wise to keep rattlesnake

and black widow antivenin in the ice box as they were fifteen miles from town. He helped clear the way to the spring, kept the tack clean, and helped care for the multitude of animals that shared the ranch. Allan bonded with the land on his boyhood adventures, such as when he would ride his horses up Toll Road or herd the sheep up-canyon to a shady "copse," lay his rifle across his lap, and get lost (as much as one could, while keeping an eye on the livestock) in James Fenimore Cooper's stories.

Allan first contacted Washoe County and Nevada Land Trust back in 2008, looking for ways we might help the family protect the Toll Road Canyon and the Bain Springs Ranch long-term. With deepest gratitude for the vision, persistence, and patience of Allan and the Tanner family, and with sincere appreciation for the dedicated work on the part of the Bureau of Land Management staff in the Carson City office to complete the acquisition, we celebrate this newest heritage gift to all Nevadans.



## Can We Talk?

*5 ways you can help save land, water, and wildlife*

It can be tough to think about sometimes, but planning your financial future in a way that takes care of the people and causes you care most about well after you're gone (and even while you're still here) can actually set your mind at ease.

If you have a strong connection to Nevada's epic landscapes, its water, and its wildlife – if you want future generations to know the places that matter to you – Nevada Land Trust can help. If you want to ensure that Nevada's rivers are protected, that herds of deer and pronghorn continue to roam, and that when the opportunity arises to conserve a vital spring, work with a ranching family to conserve their land, or fill in the missing piece for a trail project, we can do that - on your behalf.

It's in our name. Trust. In NLT's first 15 years, landowners, donors, agencies, and other partners have trusted us to get the job done. 42,000 protected acres later, NLT has shown it has the mettle, the relationships, and the ability to deliver conservation success. You can trust that your legacy investment in the future of Nevada's vital land and water will make a difference to the things you care about. NLT cares about perpetuity – it's part of our mission, and it's part of our conservation toolkit. It's a very long time horizon, but one that we approach thoughtfully and strategically.

You can:

- Designate Nevada Land Trust as a beneficiary in your will. Simple language can allow for a specific amount, percentage, or remainder to be added to the Nevada Land Trust Endowment at

the Community Foundation of Western Nevada.

- Give a gift of real estate to NLT (with or without conservation values), which may offer you distinct tax advantages. NLT can later sell a non-conservation property such as a home or business and utilize the proceeds to support conservation efforts elsewhere in Nevada. Gifts of conservation properties are considered individually in close consultation with the landowner.

**“Where we love is home – Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts.” Oliver Wendell Holmes**

- Contribute gifts of stock or other securities to NLT, which may have significant capital gains benefits.
- Name Nevada Land Trust as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy or retirement plan.
- Consider whether a Charitable Lead Trust – which supports NLT for a period of time before assets transfer to your heirs – or a Charitable Remainder Trust – which can generate lifetime income for you or a loved one before the principal passes to NLT – is right for you. Nevada Land Trust works closely with the Community Foundation of Western Nevada to offer these and other philanthropic instruments to our legacy donors.

Only you can determine what's best for you and your family – Nevada Land Trust recommends you consult your professional advisors to help determine which is most suited to your financial needs and philanthropic wishes.

*Please contact Alicia Reban for more information – all inquiries will be held in the strictest of confidence.*

*775-851-5180 or [a.reban@nevadalandtrust.org](mailto:a.reban@nevadalandtrust.org)*

## the art of conservation

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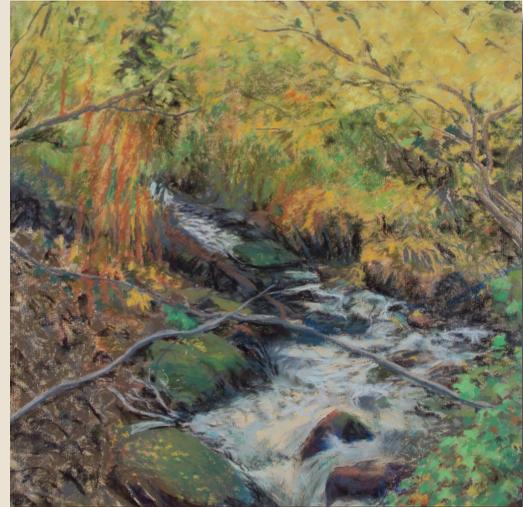
By Tracy Visher

July was Artown in Reno and it also heralded the premier of Nevada Land Trust's very own art show, Open Spaces and Special Places: The Art of Conservation. The event was held at the Wilbur D. May museum in Rancho San Rafael Park the weekend of July 20-21st.

In 2012, NLT's director Alicia Reban serendipitously crossed paths with Erik Holland and Judy Hilbish, two well known local artists who, among others, had devoted time and energy to protecting the Winnemucca Ranch property north of Reno. With two parallel missions, a collaborative art show was born.

The Winnemucca Ranch art show has been in the area for a number of years under Erik's leadership, but this was NLT's first time helping facilitate a similar event. The participating artists graciously offered to donate 50% of their proceeds from this new show to support NLT's efforts to protect the lands that inspire them.

As a lead-in to the event, Friday July 19<sup>th</sup> NLT sponsored two sessions of free children's plein air events at the park, because art can be one of the most important vehicles available to encourage future generations of conservationists. That evening NLT hosted a member's catered VIP party at the museum where attendees were first to see a sneak preview of the upcoming weekend show. Sales that night got the event off to a strong start, followed by more than 300 people coming through the show over the weekend. Twenty five paintings were sold, exceeding expectations for a first year event. Plans are already under way to make next year's events even bigger!



Galena Creek by Eileen Fuller

## acreage check

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Nevada Land Trust has restored, preserved or acquired more than 42,000 acres in the Silver State.

## accreditation corner

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The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. Nevada Land Trust is applying for accreditation and has been accepted into the first round for 2014. A public comment period is now open. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org) and click on the "submit feedback" button, or email your comment to [info@landtrustaccreditation.org](mailto:info@landtrustaccreditation.org). Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 112 Spring Street, Suite 204, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on Nevada Land Trust's application will be most useful by December 31, 2013.

## an insider with an outside view: Harry Parsons

*Part of a regular series of interviews with NLT board, staff and friends*

By Ela Zawadzka

When he needed space, young Harry Parsons would grab a few belongings, hop on his bike, and head up to Hunter Creek to spend a weekend in solitude beneath the starry Nevada sky. Harry's parents, both raised in Nevada, instilled in their son a strong connection to place, and the sense that if you needed it, the land would provide. Especially if what you needed was to "sort some things out."

Today, Harry is a well-known partner and CPA with Pangborn & Co., Ltd. He's devoted to his family and is a respected leader in our community as well as in national accounting standards circles. He helped to found Hot August Nights, Care Chest, the Great Basin Youth Soccer League, among others, and the area is truly a better place because of him.

I sat down recently with this self-described "country-city kid" to learn more about why NLT, which he also co-founded, and the conservation of Nevada's special places matters so much to him.

**Ela Zawadzka: Harry, tell me how it all started.**

Harry Parsons: I've always loved the outdoors and parks and open space. My mom and dad took us camping and hiking and hunting every chance we had. I especially treasure the memories of our Sunday mornings while camping when my mom would hold our own Sunday School. There was something about being outside in nature and pondering the mysteries of life. To this day, I find being outdoors is where my spirit is most at home.

**E: How did you become so engaged in the community?**

H: My parents were always involved in our lives, creating youth clubs and other activities for my friends and I. We saw them stepping up in the community as well because they wanted to make it better. I guess it's just who I am too. I spent four years during college at Nevada working for the Parks Department, and went on to serve on the Washoe County Parks Commission. There I helped start the Washoe Parks Foundation, which went on to become the Nevada Land Conservancy (now Nevada Land Trust) in 1998. I'm really proud of this one.

**E: Why did you get so involved with NLT?**

H: There's something unique about NLT and how we work. It's the connection and trust we have as a board and staff – and the care and respect with which we work with our landowners and other partners. The bottom line is conserving what's most special, and we've been able to accomplish quite a bit. I was on a school field trip to Bower's Mansion with my granddaughter and I was standing at the front window looking out over Washoe Valley with some people I'd just met. They were talking about how amazing the view was, and that it was so great that it was still there and not obliterated by homes and traffic. I said "You're welcome," and proceeded to tell them the story of how NLT put together the Washoe Valley Working Group to protect the 2,000-acre Old Winter's Ranch. They had no idea!

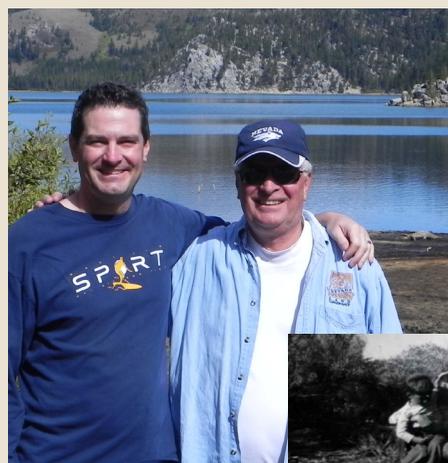
**E: Should we do a better job talking about our achievements?**

H: I do think that communication is a challenge for us, but we're getting better. I think if we can tell more of the success stories, people will see how effective NLT is and how supporting NLT means more conservation that matters. The 42,000 total protected acres have kept us really busy though, over our first fifteen years, so we haven't always spoken up. I can say, though, as NLT's Treasurer, that giving to NLT is a damn good investment overall!

**E: Why does conserving special places in Nevada mean so much to you?**

H: I'm part of NLT for my kids and grandkids. I like being able to take them out to camp and hike, and hunt, and fish just as my parents did for me. I've seen lots of changes here over my lifetime, and some of them aren't so great. Somebody's got to stand up for the special places that remain, because they need to stay that way.

*Photos below: Harry with his son Ron - also a NLT Advisory Board member. Black and white photo: Harry with his Mom circa 1950*



# the giving tree

*Thank You to our Donors*



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# going places

*see what's next on the horizon  
for the Nevada Land Trust*

## Banff Mountain Film Festival / 04.03.2014

Come join our celebration of the great outdoors! The adventure begins Thursday, April 3rd at 7 p.m. in John Ascuaga's Nugget Rose Ballroom. Tickets will be available in February through the Nugget 775-356-3300, janugget.com and REI 775-828-9090. Call NLT for details: 775-851-5180.

## The Art of Conservation / Summer 2014

Celebrate the beauty of Nevada through the eyes of the region's most distinguished painters at the second annual Open Spaces and Special Places: The Art of Conservation benefit event for Nevada Land Trust.



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