

# 2017 Recreation and Parks Study

## League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County

### INTRODUCTION

The current study is an update of one conducted by members of the League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County in 1987 which made two recommendations:

- 1) providing public recreation facilities and programs by means of a County Recreation Service Area or Recreation District and
- 2) funding by user fees, grants, donations and taxes or charges that reflect ability to pay.

The current study was undertaken to determine whether any progress has been achieved on the recommendations of the 1987 study of recreation in Nevada County, to identify current issues and unmet needs, and to make recommendations relevant to improving the status of recreation and parks within Nevada County.

### BACKGROUND

#### Description of Nevada County

Nevada County is located in the Mother Lode country of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California. Nevada County is comprised of the Truckee-Grass Valley, California Micropolitan Statistical Area, which is also included in the Sacramento-Roseville, California Combined Statistical Area.

Ecologically, the County ranges from lightly wooded grasslands and savannas at lower elevations in the foothills to heavily forested mountain watersheds, where conifers and oaks dominate. The watershed is drained primarily by the Yuba River and also by its tributary, the Bear River. Numerous creeks flow through western Nevada County but only a few flow year round, i.e., Wolf Creek and Deer Creek.

A significant portion of the land above 3000 feet in elevation consists of public lands managed by the United States Forest Service with significant protected areas, i.e., parts of the Tahoe National Forest and Toiyabe National Forests. Some County lands at lower elevations are managed either by The US Bureau of Land Management, while other lands throughout the watershed are managed by Nevada Irrigation District (NID), which also provides trails and campgrounds near reservoirs and irrigation canals.

The initial census in 1860 recorded 16,446 residents, but by 1880 the population had reached more than 20,000, close to a 20% increase. The population remained steady or declined until 1970 when it increased by 26%, then increased by 96% by 1980, and 52% by 1990. This period of rapid growth over three decades led to a projection that Nevada County's population

would reach 200,000 by the year 2000. This, however, did not come to pass, and as of the 2010 census the population was 98,764 and was estimated at 98,877 in 2015 (Appendix A).

## **A Brief History of Nevada County**

The Gold Rush in the mid 1800's was arguably the most iconic event in California history, and Nevada County played a central role. Before the discovery of gold in 1848 at Sutter's sawmill, the region which was to become the Mother Lode was inhabited primarily by the Nisenan people, who like other First Peoples along the western coast of the American continent, were hunter-gatherers (The Union, 2014). But by 1849 fortune seekers from not only the United States but from around the world quickly inundated the region, which until then had been largely unexplored by the few white settlers who had passed through the area as they immigrated to the central valley and coast. It is estimated that about half of the newcomers used overland routes to reach the Mother Lode, and many arrived via two historic trails which traverse Nevada County. After overland immigrants summited Donner Pass, many followed the Pioneer Trail which led from the Bowman Lake area to Nevada City or the Overland Emigrant Trail which followed the Bear River to Garden Bar and beyond to Sacramento.

Following the discovery of gold in 1850 near what is now Grass Valley, mining camps sprang up and grew quickly into towns serving the needs of the miners. Nevada County was incorporated a year after California became a state in 1850. It was named after the mining town of Nevada City, which became the county seat. The County includes an extension to the east to access the lumber and railroad town of Truckee, which is now the largest town in population within Nevada County.

## **Economic Prosperity in Nevada County**

Mining in Nevada County from the Gold Rush to current times has yielded more than one half of California's total gold production. Gold mining techniques included hard rock mining, hydraulic mining and placer mining, all of which involved exploitation of the environment and have had long-term detrimental impacts. In 1884 the Sawyer Decision banned hydraulic mining, after the mining technique washed enough debris down the Yuba River to fill the Panama Canal seven times, causing the bed of the Yuba River to rise 25 feet in some places, ruining farms downstream, causing floods, and sending silt all the way to San Francisco Bay. (Gold County History, 1988).

Nevada County's mining industry was the source of local prosperity for many decades until the WWII years, when the United States went off the gold standard. In 1942 the mines were closed when all nonessential civilian industries were put on hold (McKinney, 2017). Even Nevada County's Narrow Gauge Railroad was shut down, and its rails sold for scrap to help the war effort.

Nevada County's post war economy continued to decline gradually as mining languished due to rising costs, labor unrest and the fixed price of gold. The loss of mining employment was only partially compensated for by the gradual growth of employment opportunities in local government, retail, lumber, agriculture, and state and national parks, and residents wondered what could replace gold.

Following the construction of the Golden Center Freeway through Grass Valley and Nevada City in the mid 1960's, Nevada County's scenic beauty and recreational opportunities began to attract retirees and tourists seeking access to recreational opportunities and historic locales. By the mid 1970's and 80's, a new boom was underway with rapid population growth, some of it related to television video and broadcasting equipment designed and manufactured by the Grass Valley Group. Many of the newcomers came from large coastal cities in California where parks and recreation departments were a prominent part of city and county services.

Given the rapid population growth, future growth was projected to be 200,000 residents by 2010, but this proved to be overly optimistic (Appendix A). The 2010 United States Census reported that Nevada County had a population of 98,764. Demographically, the racial makeup of Nevada County was 90,233 (91.4%) White, 8,439 (8.5%) Hispanic or Latino of any race, 1,187 (1.2%) Asian, 1,044 (1.1%) Native American, 389 (0.4%) African American, 110 (0.1%) Pacific Islander, 2,678 (2.7%) from other races, and 3,123 (3.2%) from two or more races ([wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)).

### **The Value of Recreation**

For the purposes of this study, recreation is defined as something people do to relax or have fun, activities done for enjoyment (Merriam-Webster.com). Recreation is an activity of leisure, leisure being discretionary time. The "need to do something for recreation" is an essential element of human biology and psychology. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure and are considered to be "fun" ([wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)). There is also considerable scientific evidence that recreational exercise is vital to physical and mental health (National Geographic, 2016; California State Parks, 2005 ).

The multiple positive impacts that parks and recreation facilities can have on physical, social and mental health of people and their communities have been well documented by both scientific studies and general observation (National Geographic, 2016). Increasingly sedentary lifestyles have been recognized as a major contributing factor to many of California's health and social issues. Health benefits include reductions in obesity and risk of chronic diseases, e.g., diabetes, heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, depression, stress, crime and substance abuse, as well as improvements in the immune system, personal and spiritual satisfaction, and social bonds (California State Parks, 2005).

Parks and recreational resources can also be valuable economically in attracting tourism. In the most recent national study available (2011) "the outdoor recreation economy, all \$646 billion of it, was nearly as much as Americans paid for pharmaceuticals and motor vehicle sales and parts, combined (Rassler, 2016). The importance of this economic asset is recognized by the federal REC Act (Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act), which was passed by Congress in 2016 and will provide regular economic analyses of outdoor recreation's contribution to the nation's gross domestic product.

Currently, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council devotes most of its budget to attracting new business and about 8% to attracting tourists (Gregory, 2016).

## **Recreation in Nevada County**

From the mid 1800's and through much of the following century, gold mining required tremendous physical labor. Even daily life apart from mining required considerable physical exertion, and the need for recreational exercise was not a priority until well into the 1900's. Lake Olympia in the Brunswick Basin was a favorite gathering place for about 90 years from the early 1900's to late in the century but was eventually redeveloped as a shopping center after the dam containing Lake Olympia burst. Efforts by the Chamber of Commerce and others to promote the desirability of Nevada County's economy and historic and recreational resources date back to before the beginning of the 20th century (Cottrell, 1978). By the 1970's an increasing flow of tourists and new residents seeking outdoor recreation was attracted to Nevada County's scenic forests and rivers. Families sought recreational services to provide sports leagues and other organized recreation opportunities for their children.

Nevada County, however, had no plan to build community parks or trails or to provide recreation services. Although large tracts of state and federal lands were available for recreation, access to amenities like trails and trailheads was generally lacking.

During the 1980's efforts to develop parks and recreation districts within the County met with resistance to financing them via parcel taxes, and several ballot measures to establish local or county-wide recreation districts failed. Volunteers from various non-profit organizations (NGO's) attempted to fill this void, including Gold Country Trail Council (GCTC) and Bear Yuba Land Trust (BYLT).

GCTC, founded in 1981, partnered with the US Forest Service to build non-motorized trails and trailheads in Tahoe National Forest for use by equestrians, hikers, and cyclists. GCTC members recall that County officials showed no interest in cooperating with them to establish trails and later rejected opportunities to acquire properties with recreational potential at low prices, e.g., Loma Rica, Kenny Ranch. Among their accomplishments, GCTC members developed the historic Pioneer Trail from the Bowman Lake area to Nevada City, opening this non-motorized trail to local hikers, cyclists, and equestrians from near and far. The Pioneer Trail was designated a National Recreation Trail in 2003. While a similar opportunity exists with the Overland Immigrant Trail from Bear Valley to Garden Bar and Nevada County owns the easements, the Board of Supervisors has not opened that trail to the public.

In 1990 BYLT, formerly named Nevada County Land Trust, was founded in response to increasing residential and commercial development and worked to conserve local farms, ranches, meadows and forests and to develop walking and cycling trails on both public lands and privately owned easements. Both BYLT and GCTC collaborate with other NGO's with similar missions within and beyond Nevada County.

## **Current Status of Recreation in Nevada County**

Nevada County's General Plan (2012) includes a Recreation element developed in 1995 which states that "provision of public park facilities by the County and by local park districts has been hampered due to rapid growth and funding limitations." It includes objectives designed to maintain and implement a Parks and Recreation Master plan, funding strategies and coordination. The smallest fraction of the County's annual budget in the 2015-16 budget was

the 1.47% (\$2,959,109) dedicated to Education, Recreation & Culture. Of that total, Recreation Mitigation Fees constituted \$98,665 and Conservation \$22,784 (Nevada County, 2016).

At this time recreational needs are met with varying degrees of success in different parts of the County as local options. In eastern Nevada County, Truckee, with a population of about 16,000, has both public parks and recreation services. In western Nevada County, Grass Valley, with a population of about 13,000, has several parks but no recreation department or services. Nevada City has a population of about 3000 and has both a park and a recreation department. Western Gateway Park in Penn Valley has a park which it leases from the County, but offers limited supervised services. Bear River Recreation District in southern Nevada County offers services but has no dedicated facilities; it relies on public school playing fields and facilities. (Oak Tree Park and Recreation District in the San Juan Ridge area was not included.) These facilities are financed by local taxes but used by county residents who do not contribute tax revenues for this purpose. In addition, private facilities are available to residents of Lake of the Pines and Lake Wildwood. Thus, access to public parks and recreation services is distributed very unevenly in a patchwork pattern throughout the County.

In recent years, several studies have focused on the role of recreation in Nevada County. In 2006 our Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) hired private consultants to conduct the Nevada County Recreation and Parks Services: Municipal Service Review. Existing recreation resources in southwestern Nevada County, mid Nevada County, and eastern Nevada County were surveyed, and future needs were explored. In brief, findings included that Bear River Recreation and Park District was seriously underfunded; funding sources were inadequate for needed capital improvements in Grass Valley's Park and Recreation District; Nevada City lacked a specific plan related to its parks and recreation programs and needed a full-time Parks and Recreation Manager; and revenues from Nevada Irrigation District's amenities were not adequate to provide for upkeep and improvements of its facilities. Truckee Donner Recreation and Park District revenues were projected to exceed service costs, and Western Gateway Recreation and Park District's revenues appeared sufficient. Though the Service Review was to be repeated in 2013, it was not.

In 2013 Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment. The purpose of the Assessment was "to identify contributing factors that create both barriers and opportunities . . .to liv[ing] happier lives." While the county-wide mortality rate was within normal limits overall in the Hospital Service Area (HSA), two "Communities of Concern" were identified (zip codes 95945 and 95975) as well as other areas dispersed throughout the county but "not easily identified by zip codes." These Communities of Concern were characterized by significantly greater risk of problems with physical and mental health than either the state average or the County average.

Among the prioritized health needs identified by the 2013 Assessment was lack of access to recreational activities, e.g., opportunities to exercise, youth programs, etc., which reduce the threat of chronic diseases and obesity. Lack of access to parks was noted as one of the largest barriers to engagement in physical activity associated with an active lifestyle. "The vast majority of the HSA has very limited access to parks," and lack of places to exercise in the HSA was noted as a contributing factor, e.g., rural roads unsafe for walking.

## **METHOD:**

A questionnaire (Appendix B) was designed by a committee comprised of five League members who volunteered to participate in the Recreation and Parks Study. The questionnaire covers a broad range of topics relevant to the history and current status of recreation and parks in Nevada County and formed the basis of a structured interview which was conducted with all respondents.

A list of potential interviewees was generated by committee members. The list focused on a range of stakeholders including public officials, representatives of relevant NGO's, and community volunteers. All potential interviewees received a form letter describing the Study followed by a telephone contact to schedule an appointment for the interview. Several potential interviewees did not respond or declined to be interviewed.

All respondents (Appendix C) were interviewed by teams of two Study committee members in a structured interview. 31 interviews were conducted with respondents who agreed to participate in the study. Of these, eighteen were public officials, ten were representatives of non government organizations (NGO's), two were recreation volunteers/activists and one was a utility district board member.

All respondents were assured that their responses would be held confidential and that none of their responses would be published without their written consent, though unattributed quotes may be used.

Responses to each questionnaire item were transcribed for all questionnaire items. Responses were compared across each item and analyzed qualitatively.

## **RESULTS:**

Items 1 through 9 were designed to provide a clear picture of the various stakeholders and their role in the community. Responses indicated that respondents' brought an average of at least ten years of experience in assessing Nevada County's needs. Items focused on respondents' description of the role played by their agency or organization or individual efforts in Nevada County recreation.

Item 10 focused on opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders and Nevada County public officials in regard to recreational needs. Interviewees' responses suggested little collaboration occurring in the past or present among the various interested parties and public officials.

Items 11 and 12 inquired about respondents' participation in the 2006 Nevada County Recreation and Parks Service Study conducted by LAFCO and about their understanding of why the Study was not updated in 2013 as planned. None could recall being interviewed. The

respondent representing LAFCO stated that the study wasn't repeated because nothing had changed in the seven years following the initial study.

Items 13 inquired about respondents knowledge of funding mechanisms currently in place for funding recreation and parks within the County. More than half of the respondents had at least a basic understanding of currently available funding sources, and most agreed that funding for recreation and parks was inadequate.

Item 14 asked respondents about the findings and recommendations of the 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital. Most respondents were unaware or at best vaguely aware of the findings.

Item 15 inquired about respondents awareness of recreation and parks districts in Nevada County. While several respondents believed there were no districts, most could name several districts. Most were only able to identify those they personally utilized. For example, those in South County knew mainly of the Bear River district, while Truckee residents knew primarily of Truckee area facilities and services, with the exception of those who were directly involved in some aspect of maintaining the resource or overseeing funds.

One respondent suggested that the scattered districts made little sense because users who may fund a particular district may often use others to which they don't contribute.

Another respondent voiced concern that the scattered districts make little sense, as they fail to provide for the recreational needs of the community as a whole, because funds must be generated within the district in order for the district to receive them. Therefore, if there is not significant development in the district, there is no mechanism through which to generate/receive funds, disproportionately affecting areas where no development is likely.

Item 16 asked respondents to recall any use by them or their family members of Nevada County recreational resources within the past 18 months. The purpose of this item was to check that respondents had first hand knowledge of local recreation resources and parks. All respondents described recent use of multiple parks and recreation resources, indicating good first hand familiarity with recreation in Nevada County. The majority had visited at least one park, trail or NGO-maintained property, and many mentioned visiting a number of resources. Several named private for-profit business entities—member-only country clubs and gyms.

Item 17 inquired about respondents' awareness that Nevada County has no Recreation and Parks department. While those in Nevada County government positions were keenly aware that the County plays no role in providing recreation resources, about 20% of those interviewed responded with surprise to the knowledge that the County plays no role in providing recreation resources. Several respondents mentioned two failed ballot initiatives in the 1980's which had sought to raise revenues for a County recreation district.

Item 18 tapped respondents' subjective impressions of the adequacy of Nevada County's recreation resources and why not. Only two respondents stated that the current resources are adequate.

Many of those interviewed voiced a need for additional trails and better connectivity in trails between neighborhoods, schools, and nature areas across the County, bike lanes, and access for the disabled, especially because of the lack of public transportation to trail heads. This contrasted with others who voiced a need for additional organized recreational opportunities for both children and adults, especially sports programs, and wanted expanded locations for active sports like softball, soccer, Little League, as well as structured after school activities for children, and adult sports leagues. Many mentioned a need for a recreation complex with indoor and outdoor facilities; parks with picnic tables, basketball hoops, tennis courts, swings, etc.; access for the disabled,

Respondents also suggested reasons why Nevada County's recreation resources are inadequate, attributing the lack of collaboration and funding to County officials' lack of engagement and noting that the burden for western Nevada County recreation falls on several cities with relatively limited budgets. One respondent asserted that revenues for funding recreation haven't risen in the past 17 years.

Item 19 asked respondents to specify what needs were not being met and if they had been met in the past. Responses echoed those elicited by Item 18, especially the need for a community recreation center with a pool and gym; indoor sports facilities; parks and sports playing fields for adults and younger people; pickle ball courts for older adults; bike lanes, bike trails, equestrian trails, hiking trails including connectivity and access via mass transit, boating and water sports, structured after school activities, additional active sports coordination and playing fields, pools, senior pool facilities, indoor recreational opportunities, pickle ball courts, organized adult programs, disability access to existing trails and parks and additional organized recreational opportunities for the disabled, and universally designed playgrounds, enforcement of fire and safety code, and expanded parking at existing recreation location.

Respondents were unanimous in agreeing that these needs had not been met in the past.

The increasing loss of trail connectivity was lamented, especially the Overland Emigrant Trail and access to NID canal trails. Trails were also praised as an important way to reduce illegal marijuana growing and homeless settlements.

South County's recreational deficiencies received many comments, especially the lack of public access to recreational amenities and non-motorized trails.

Several respondents stated that recreational needs haven't been met in the past because County officials failed to acknowledge the need and rejected opportunities when they presented themselves, e.g., to make the Loma Rica property into a recreation complex.

Other respondents specified the absence of central planning and coordination of information about recreation resources to benefit local residents and to benefit the local economy by attracting more tourism. A few interviewees suggested that Nevada County's aging population and declining number of children and youths was a rationale for not investing in recreation.



Item 20 inquired about other issues and concerns related to parks and recreation. Respondents stated numerous concerns similar to those already mentioned above, e.g., need for a community recreation center, lack of collaboration among entities, absence of sports and after school programs for children and youth, patchwork distribution of recreation resources, funding problems like cities subsidizing use of their facilities by County residents, the County's failure to defend the Emigrant Trail easements, need for increased funding for maintenance of facilities, lack of connectivity of trails, and the need for a County recreation and parks district.

Other concerns not previously mentioned included lack of sidewalks for walkers and runners, need for a county-wide paved path for cyclists, loss of recreation areas due to proposed Centennial Dam, and private gates on NID canal trails prevent public access. Several respondents observed that Nevada County promotes itself as a recreation destination but doesn't live up to it because there is no recreation district to focus on needs, coordinate stakeholders' efforts, and promote better public access to recreation.

The respondents also had many suggestions for how to proceed in dealing with unmet recreational needs. These included a county-wide recreation district, better enforcement of public safety and fire prevention in watershed park lands, creation of a regional park at Conway Ranch, a study to determine the economic value of a County parks and recreation department, and working with YMCA, as other counties have, to develop an integrated recreation resource program.

Frequently mentioned was the apparent lack of desire by the County to provide actual leadership for community recreational needs, but many respondents felt that leadership would have to come from the County as the only entity able to affect the outcome. Some called on the County to create a Parks and Recreation Plan and to seek ways to implement the plan. Funding for acquisition, maintenance and upkeep was a concern, though several immediate cost-free opportunities to provide outdoor recreation were mentioned.

Item 21 asked respondents if they would be willing to participate in a followup interview if needed. All respondents stated they would be willing to do so.

Item 22 requested respondents to name others they suggested be interviewed for the Study. This provided a check to determine if there might be a significant pool of untapped knowledgeable respondents. The list of suggested interviewees overlapped significantly with those interviewed, suggesting a valid universe of interviewees had been sampled.

Finally, the structured interview ended with a probe asking respondents for any additional concerns not covered earlier in the interview. Responses covered possible funding mechanisms and a proposal that building a community recreation center could become the nexus for bringing various community stakeholders together.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The results of this study indicate that little has changed since the last study of Nevada County recreation and parks. No recreation and parks department has been established, and no equitable mechanism for funding recreation and parks has been developed.

Currently, recreation and parks resources are not distributed evenly across Nevada County and many residents do not have reasonable access to these resources. Residents of Truckee, for instance, enjoy easy access to an extensive array of recreational resources, while residents of other parts of the County lack access to even the very limited resources near them, e.g., residents of south County.

Tax revenues supporting recreation and parks are not collected equally across the county. Residents living outside recreation districts partake of services and amenities without contributing to support them financially.

Historically, the Board of Supervisors has not designated recreation and parks as a priority. It appears that the County's public policy regarding recreation is not consistent with current needs. A prominent example is that currently the Board of Supervisors continues to deny the public recreation access to the Overland Emigrant Trail, for which the County owns the trail easements and despite years of work by trails advocates.

The County's failure to address recreation as a legitimate policy focus has created a vacuum which has been partially filled by the efforts of various NGO's attempting to remedy the situation by meeting residents' various recreational needs, e.g., Bear Yuba Land Trust, Gold Country Trails Council, etc. While these NGO's have provided valuable recreational amenities for the public's use, there are significant limitations inherent in such an arrangement which include:

- No reliable mechanism such as tax assessments to fund the cost of facilities and the public's use of them,
- No guarantee that funding will be sufficient or even exist in the future,
- No mandate to police and patrol public lands,
- No responsibility to provide for the needs of future residents,

In addition, NGO's often have difficulty qualifying for recreation funding.

This study provided evidence that there is considerable interest in and support for recreation and parks among a diverse group of stakeholders in government, NGO's and private activists; nevertheless, it appears that there is little collaboration among stakeholders, which likely is a significant factor contributing to the lack of progress since the League's 1987 recreation study.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

This study was intended as a followup on the status of recreation and parks in Nevada County almost 30 years after the League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County conducted the

original study of recreation in Nevada County. In general, it appears that little has changed since the original League study was conducted in 1987.

Despite the proven advantages of access to recreation and parks for the physical, mental and social well-being of County residents and their communities, as well as the benefits to the local economy of attracting increased tourism, little has been accomplished in establishing a County Parks and Recreation Department in the past 30 years. In a recent Other Voices article in The Union newspaper, Dan Miller, Chairman of the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, neglected any mention of recreation as he reviewed the Board's priorities (Miller, 2016).

Given that no progress is apparent, it is evident that recreation and parks continue to be a very low priority item for Nevada County's Board of Supervisors, as access to recreation and parks is not distributed evenly throughout the County. The Truckee area enjoys many recreational resources, while there is great variance regarding public access to recreational resources in western Nevada County. South County appears particularly underserved.

These disparities may reflect the perceived absence of political will within the County. This perception may derive in turn from the absence of coordinated effort by NGO's, activists and other residents in bringing these disparities to the Supervisors' attention. Certainly, opportunities for collaboration exist among the various interested stakeholders and County officials, but leadership has been lacking.

## **Recommendations:**

Ideally, public policy should align with current needs. To enhance the health and well-being of County residents and to enhance the local economy by attracting increased tourism, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors should make recreation and parks a higher priority.

We recommend establishing a Nevada County Parks and Recreation Department by hiring a full-time equivalent employee with experience in this specialty would be an important step forward. Funding options should be considered in light of the need for more equitable funding mechanisms.

We recommend the Board of Supervisors open the historic Overland Emigrant Trail for public access. Opening the Overland Emigrant Trail would be an excellent and relatively inexpensive first step toward meeting the recreational needs of underserved south County residents in particular and attracting tourists to this iconic historic trail.

We recommend local stakeholders work collaboratively with each other and County officials. But leadership is needed to focus and energize the effort. The League and other community organizations have the membership resources to provide this leadership and can effect change by informing the community via the Speakers Bureau and other forms of communication and by devising, organizing and supporting programs to facilitate communication amongst stakeholders.

We look forward to the Board of Supervisors recognition that parks and recreation are valuable and a legitimate focus of government oversight to benefit County residents as well as the local

economy and their assumption of leadership for improving access for all County residents to recreational amenities and services.

### **Acknowledgements:**

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Karen Schwartz, Chair  
Recreation and Parks Study

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## Appendix A

### Historical Population Census for Nevada County, CA

Census Year	Population	Percent Change
1860	16,446	
1870	19,134	16.3%
1880	20,823	8.8%
1890	17,369	-16.6%
1900	17,789	2.4%
1910	14,955	-15.9%
1920	10,850	-27.4%
1930	10,596	-2.3%
1940	19,283	82.0%
1950	19,888	3.1%
1960	20,911	5.1%
1970	26,346	26.0%
1980	51,645	96.0%
1990	78,510	52.0%
2000	92,033	17.2%
2010	98,764	7.3%

2015 (estimated)

98,877

.1%

U. S. Decennial Census Bureau. *United States Decennial Census*

## Appendix B

### LWV R & P Study Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ How long in this position? \_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Public Agency X

NGO X

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What role does your agency/organization play in Nevada County?  
(public vs. private; purpose)

What recreational services/facilities/opportunities do you provide, if any?

Are you aware of others who provide the same services?



Please describe the group you serve, your clientele.

How does the public learn about your services? Publicity? Out reach?

How large is your paid staff?

Do you depend on volunteers? How many? How are they recruited?

How is your organization funded? What is your annual budget?

Do you generate or receive funds for recreation and parks?

Is there a framework for integrating your services and collaborating with other agencies and NGO's (non-government organizations).

Were you or someone else from your organization interviewed in the 2006 Nevada County Recreation and Parks Services Study? (Municipal Services Review conducted by LAFCO [Local Agency Formation Commission])

Do you know why the 2006 Municipal Services Review wasn't repeated in 2012, as planned?

Are you aware of Nevada County Recreation Mitigation Funding Program and the grants process to access this funding?

Are you familiar with the 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital? Findings and recommendations?

Are you aware of any Recreation and Parks departments in Nevada County? If so, which ones?

What recreational facilities or resources in the County have you or your family visited in the last 18 months?

Are you aware that Nevada County doesn't have a Parks or Recreation Department?

In your opinion, are the recreation resources and parks in Nevada County adequate? If no, what is needed?

What recreational needs do you feel are not being met? Have they been met in the past?

What other issues or concerns should be included in this Study?

Would you be willing to participate if a follow-up interview is needed?

Who else do you recommend we interview?

NOTES: Additional topics, issues, interviewees to follow up:

## **Appendix C**

### **Respondents Interviewed for this Study\***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Ana Acton	Exec. Dir.	FREED
Richard Anderson	Supervisor	County of Nevada
Nate Beason	Supervisor	County of Nevada
Gordon Beatie	Board Member	Boys and Girls Club
Willie & Sue Brusin	Founders	Gold Country Trails Council (GCTC)
Ray Bryars	Volunteer	BYLT/GCTC/Recreation Activist
Dave Carter	Former Chair	Nevada County Recreation Commission
Mary Coleman-Hunt	Exec. Dir	Bear Yuba Land Trust
Caleb Dardick	Exec. Dir.	South Yuba River Citizens League
Jason Fouyer	Mayor	City of Grass Valley
Jamiel Fox	President	Bicyclists of Nevada County (BONC)

Morgan Goodwin	Vice Mayor	Town of Truckee
Matt Green	Chief Ranger	California Parks, Sierra District
Rick Haffey	CEO	County of Nevada
Holly Hermansen	Superintendent	County of Nevada
S.R. Jones	Exec. Dir.	Local Agency Formation Commission
John Keefe	President	Alta Sierra Property Owners Association

\*All respondents were guaranteed that their responses would be held confidential and would not be quoted without written permission.

Dan Landon	Exec. Dir.	Nevada County Transportation Commission
Howard Levine	Vice Mayor	City of Grass Valley
Jet Lowe	GIS Specialist	USFS, Tahoe National Forest/Y-BONC
Elizabeth Martin	CEO	Sierra Fund
Dan Miller	Supervisor/Chair	Nevada County Board of Supervisors
Jaede Miloslavich	Director	Emigrant Trail Conservancy
Jennifer Montgomery	Supervisor	Placer County
Ed Scofield	Supervisor	County of Nevada
Marlene Sharon	Gen. Manager	Bear River Recreation District
Duane Strawser	Council Member	Nevada City
Daniel Swartzendruber	President Member	Hospital Foundation Board Planning Commission, Grass Valley
Tina Vernon	Treasurer	County of Nevada
Nancy Weber	Board Member	Nevada Irrigation District
Dawn Zedonis	Supervisor	Nevada City Recreation District

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