



Donner Summit Association

DSA Vision

- We envision Donner Summit as a vibrant, cohesive, year-round Mountain community that provides opportunities for the residents, businesses, and visitors alike to thrive in a beautiful alpine environment

DSA Mission Statement

For the benefit of its residents, businesses, and visitors alike, the DSA will promote and strengthen Donner Summit, protect its heritage, steward its future and provide a voice for the entire community through its leadership as:

- An advocate for economic investment in appropriate infrastructure via long-range master planning;
- A liaison with government authorities;
- A coordinator and promoter of local projects and events.

Developing the Area Plan

SODA SPRINGS AREA PLAN COMMUNITY MEETING

When:
Tuesday, December 2, 2014
5:00 to 7:00 pm

Location:
Clair Tappaan Lodge
19940 Donner Pass Road
Norden, CA. 95724
(530) 426-3632

***Parking is available on the south side
of Donner Pass Road

Topic:
Historical, Recreational and
Natural Resources

For more information please contact:

Nevada County
Planning Department
Larkyn Feiler, Associate Planner
(530) 265-1254
larkyn.feiler@co.nevada.ca.us
www.mynevadacounty.com



The public process to develop the "Soda Springs Area Plan" is currently underway. This Plan will establish specific land use goals and development policies unique to the Donner Summit Area, with emphasis placed on the historic U.S. Highway 40 commercial corridor in Soda Springs.

Active community participation is critical to ensure that the Area Plan genuinely reflects the vision of the Donner Summit Community. Please join us!



HELP FURTHER DEFINE THE
VISION OF THE
DONNER SUMMIT AREA!

SODA SPRINGS AREA PLAN COMMUNITY MEETING #6

When:
Wednesday, August 26, 2015
6:00 pm

Location:
Soda Springs Ski Resort
10244 Soda Springs Road
Soda Springs, CA 95728

Topic:
Review Draft Introduction
and Economic Development
Area Plan Chapters

Contact information:

Nevada County
Planning Department
Patrick Dobbs, Senior Planner
(530) 265-1423
patrick.dobbs@co.nevada.ca.us
www.mynevadacounty.com



The public process to develop the "Soda Springs Area Plan" is currently underway. This Plan will establish specific land use goals and development policies unique to the Donner Summit area, with emphasis placed on the historic U.S. Highway 40 commercial corridor in Soda Springs.

Active community participation is critical to ensure that the Area Plan genuinely reflects the vision of the Donner Summit



HELP FURTHER DEFINE THE
VISION OF THE
DONNER SUMMIT AREA!

Welcome – Donner Summit Historic Gateway – 2016/2017



Welcome to Donner Summit

First Planning and Design

Then Construction and Installation

Visitors' Center Feasibility Study

2018 Phase I

2019 Phase II

2018

CREATING A TRAIL AND HISTORY HUB AT DONNER SUMMIT



Draft

Donner Summit Public Use, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Plan



Funded by Placer County
Transit Occupancy Tax
Tourism Business Improvement funds



2019

Development of a Comprehensive Public Use and Recreation Master Plan for Donner Summit I & II

DONNER SUMMIT



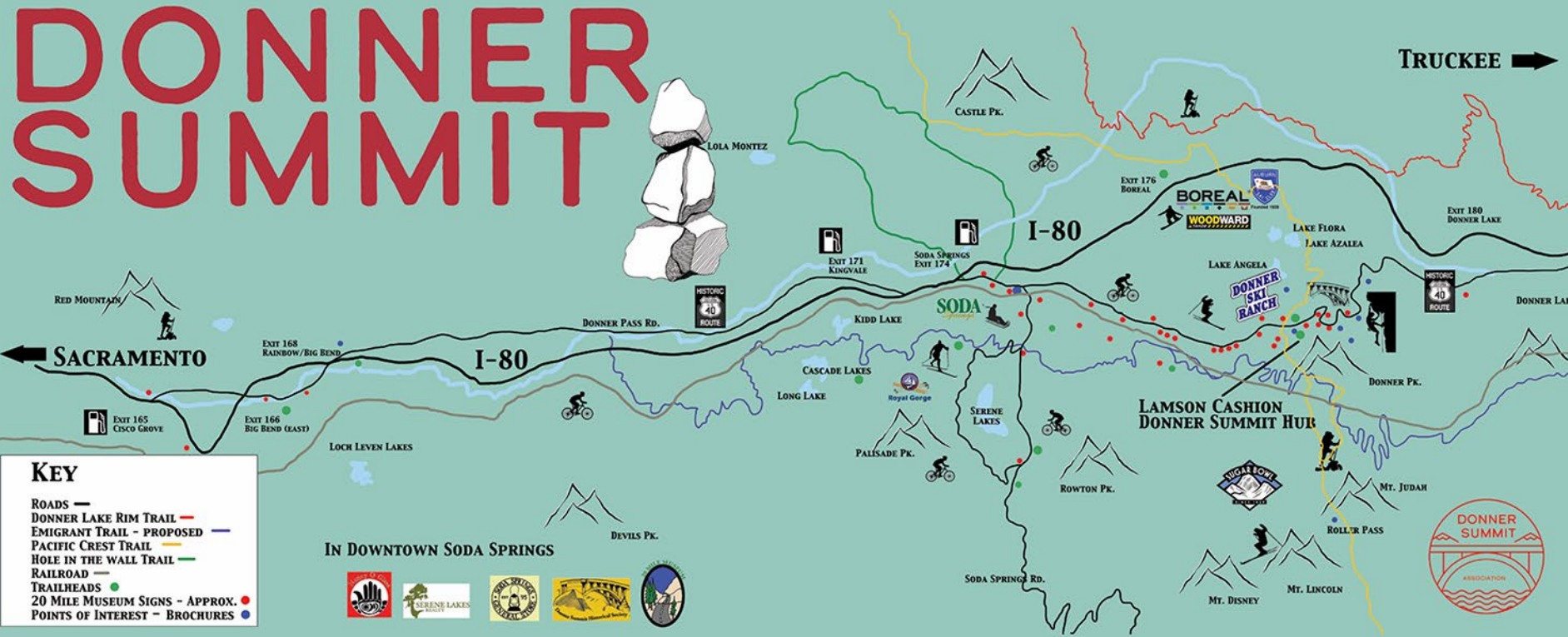
TRUCKEE →

← SACRAMENTO

KEY

- ROADS —
- DONNER LAKE RIM TRAIL —
- EMIGRANT TRAIL - PROPOSED —
- PACIFIC CREST TRAIL —
- HOLE IN THE WALL TRAIL —
- RAILROAD —
- TRAILHEADS ●
- 20 MILE MUSEUM SIGNS - APPROX. ●
- POINTS OF INTEREST - BROCHURES ●

IN DOWNTOWN SODA SPRINGS





About Graffiti



Graffiti is art and should be celebrated -
but these tunnels are not the canvas

The Chinese railroad workers spent two years on Donner Summit risking their lives and health to lay the rails and build the summit tunnels of the transcontinental railroad. They faced avalanche, accident, pneumonia, explosion, rock slide, disease, and cold, continual cold, in winter.

The railroad was the engineering marvel of the 19th Century. It opened California to the world and the world to California.

The sacrifices of the Chinese changed California and the nation. Their legacy and memorial are important features on Donner Summit – the summit tunnels and the snowsheds. They celebrate the heroism of the Chinese and as such, are almost sacred spots.

These tunnels are the center piece of transcontinental railroad construction, which is designated as a State Historic Landmark. As such, these prehistoric and historic cultural resources are subject to protection by federal and state law from vandalism. The train tunnels are owned by Union Pacific Railroad and the petroglyphs are under jurisdiction of the U. S. Forest Service... The graffiti paint obscures and threatens the design, materials and workmanship of these historic rock features. The urban stamp of graffiti is totally out of character with the historical and natural setting of Donner Summit with motifs such as aliens, robots, animals and even Krusty the Clown. They trivialize our national heritage and destroy the integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association of the place.

Susan Lindström, Ph.D.,
Consulting Archaeologist
Truckee, California

Without the Chinese, it would have been impossible to complete the Western portion of this great national highway.

Leland Stanford



At the half-way point through Tunnel 6 can you find these examples of tool marks left by the Chinese railroad workers in 1868?

Please enjoy the historic sites and recognize the sacrifices of those who came before.





Visit the Donner Summit Hub

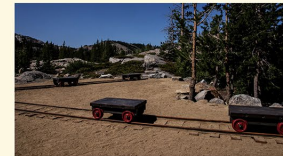
The Trailhead of Trailheads



Interesting Unique Architecture
12 Large Exhibits of Donner Summit
Brochure Rack
full of brochures about Donner Summit
Bike Rack
Bike Repair Station
Rest, picnic, and debrief after your visit or
just get ready for your adventure.



This photo by George Lamson





Elev. 7088





Elev. 7088















WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU

The Lamson Cashion Donner Summit Hub is a community effort to help visitors as they enjoy all that Donner Summit has to offer.

Community Volunteers and participating companies

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Norm Saylor | Mt. Lincoln Construction |
| Pat Malberg | Sugar Bowl |
| Don Malberg | J K Architecture |
| Dick Simpson | Ecosense Design |
| Anne Reisenauer | Chris Gibbs Roofing |
| Chris Parker | Hansen Bros. |
| Ed Bubnis | Donner Spitz |
| Cathy Bubnis | Buckley Construction |
| Mark Himmelstein | (John Isegreen) |
| Lori Poch | Dan Goddard Construction |
| Bill Oudegeest | Ron Gregg Rocks |
| Nancy Oudegeest | |
| Roger Drosd | |
| Kelly Hobstetter | |
| Tim Kustic | |
| Sue Busby | |
| Jon Harvey | |
| Kitty Harvey | |
| Mike Spain | |
| Mike Hann | |
| KC McElhenny | |
| John Svahn | |



PARTNERS

Donner Summit Association (DSA) long lamented the many problems associated with this historic and iconic spot: no restrooms; haphazard and dusty parking; lack of information about important or interesting sites nearby; sketchy wayfinding; no water for hikers; uninviting as a place to gather; increasing usage with little infrastructure. Something needed to be done.

DSA discussed the need for a comprehensive Trails and History Hub at this site with Sugar Bowl Ski Area management and the possibility of using this shed and surrounding area to address the myriad problems and to help visitors understand the history of the area and easily access various trails. The most historic square mile in the State, perhaps in the entire West, needed to be properly introduced to visitors and locals alike. In 2018 and 2020, DSA applied for and received generous grants from Placer County to create the Lamson and Cashion Trail Hub on Donner Summit in Nevada County!

At this same location, in addition to offering information about history and way-finding, DSA created a gathering place where educational and artistic or cultural programs might be offered. The amphitheater has a unique seating and stage area that reflects the importance of the railroad that once passed beneath, via Tunnel 6. Take a moment to sit, reflect, and appreciate the beauty and meaning of this extraordinary area.

Thanks to the energy, donations, and hard work of community volunteers, along with the generous grants from Placer County.



Many thanks to our partners on this project:

- Placer County
- Nevada County
- Sugar Bowl Resort
- Donner Summit Historical Society
- Serene Lakes Property Owners Association
- Truckee Donner Land Trust Association
- Soda Springs Mountain Resort
- Boreal Mountain Resort
- Nancy O Glass Gallery
- United States Forest Service
- Pacific Crest Trail Association
- Donner Ski Ranch
- United States Forest Service



THE DENZLER FAMILY

DONATED BY THE
FISCO FAMILY

IN MEMORY OF
MARY AND WILL POLITE

To know these mountains
is to have friends
for life



With gratitude to the DSA, from the
Dorothy & George Gester Jr. Family

"OF ALL THE PATHS YOU TAKE IN LIFE,
MAKE SURE A FEW OF THEM ARE DIRT."
JOHN MUIR

*Enjoy the many dirt paths of
Donner Summit.*

THE RAYMOND FAMILY

BILL AND NANCY
TAHOE TRUCKEE BROKERS

HAPPILY DONATED BY THE CHILD,
JAMES, LLOYD-TUCKER AND TIGHT
FAMILIES OF SERENE LAKES.

DONNER SUMMIT

THE CHINESE LABORERS

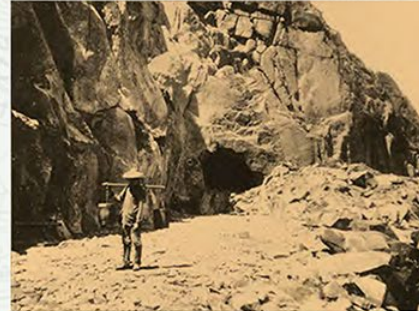


In constructing the transcontinental railroad Central Pacific found there was not enough labor and turned to importing Chinese labor. The Chinese eventually made up 80% of the work force of up to 12,000 workers. The Chinese were extremely courageous. Leaving their native homes in China for an unknown land and culture, they faced prejudice, discomfort, danger, and death. The Chinese laborers turned out to be instrumental to the construction of the railroad which tied California to the rest of the country enabling commerce, immigration, and the development of the West.

CHINESE EXPERIENCE ON DONNER SUMMIT

Originally the idea of using Chinese labor was laughed at. The Chinese were small in stature. Each rail weighed 532 lbs. and was 24 feet long. How could the Chinese ever lay those rails? Charles Crocker countered saying, "Did they not build the Chinese wall, the biggest piece of masonry in the world?" In fact the Chinese proved to be exceptionally hardworking and skilled workers and became the Central Pacific's primary laborers.

The Chinese endured frostbite, avalanche, accident, pneumonia, explosion, rock slide, disease, and continual cold through the winter. The Chinese lived in uninsulated buildings and during winter they sometimes went weeks without seeing the sun as they traveled from their camps to the work through snow tunnels. The winter of 1866-67 had one of the highest snowfalls on record: 40 feet. There were a total of 44 storms that winter with one multi-day storm dropping 10 feet of snow.



The work was long and hard, done all by hand and black powder explosives. Rocks were moved using baskets and small carts. The work went on 10-12 hours a day six days a week. In the tunnels they worked by candle and lantern light putting in eight hour days. The air was filled with rock dust and black powder residue.

For the work, the danger and the discomfort, the Chinese earned \$28, then \$30, and finally \$35 a month, a third less than the white laborers who also had their board covered by the railroad.

"WITHOUT THE CHINESE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THE WESTERN PORTION OF THIS GREAT NATIONAL HIGHWAY."

Leland Stanford



"I wish to call your minds that the early completion of this railroad we have built has been in large measure due to that poor despised class of laborers called the Chinese - to the fidelity and industry they have shown."

Sacramento Daily Union May 8, 1869

A FORGOTTEN LEGACY

With the completion of the transcontinental railroad, celebrations immediately broke out. In Sacramento there was a grand parade that included bands; the militia, the National Guard accompanied by artillery, firemen, machinists, blacksmiths, boiler makers, wagons with machinery; contingents of civic organizations; a boiler and attached smokestack; 29 omnibuses, carriages, and wagons of school children; politicians; a contingent of weavers; carriages, buggies, and horsemen, rail workers; wagons from the telegraph company and Wells Fargo; etc. Participants arrived in 18 trains. There was bunting, banners with stirring quotes, and flags; music, speeches and poems.

There were however no Chinese at all. They'd been left out even though they had made up the vast majority of CPRR workers who filled the cuts, bored the tunnels, leveled the hills, cut the trees, drilled the holes, blasted and moved the rock, and laid the rail. They were the ones who laid the record ten miles of track in one day to win a bet for Charles Crocker, one of the Big 4.

Not far in the future mobs would burn out Chinatowns and Chinese businesses along the route of the railroad and assault individual Chinese. Prejudice would be officially mandated by court decisions in California. Nationally, the Chinese Exclusionary Act would be passed just a dozen years later excluding Chinese from immigrating to the United States.

Today the Chinese laborers that worked on the construction of the Transcontinental railroad have been recognized in the 150th anniversary celebration for the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. Their stories and legacy are being shared to honor the amazing contribution and sacrifices they made as a key part of building this monumental project.

"...the Chinese workers persevered, and played a key role in building one of the greatest infrastructure projects in the world."

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao
150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike Ceremony.



China Wall

China Wall was constructed by the Chinese railroad workers using the material excavated from the tunnels. The face of the wall is constructed using no mortar. Instead, the rocks were shaped to fit against each other. One can still see the tool marks on the rocks.

DONNER SUMMIT FLORA AND FAUNA



WILDFLOWERS

Among Donner Summit's riches are its many species of wildflowers. One reason for this richness is the diverse habitats or niches: the forests surrounding the meadow, the soggy meadows as well as the drier parts, the meandering stream banks, and the dry rocky habitats. Each habitat has its own variety of species, a display that unfolds as spring moves into summer.

One very special spring wildflower is the Camas Lily, which blooms in very soggy sunny meadows. It was gathered by Tahoe's native people as a staple and enjoyed for the sweetness of its bulbs, which were eaten after being roasted in earthen ovens.

Creeping Phlox is also an early bloomer. It carpets dry, rocky habitats with its white to lavender flowers. Be sure to kneel down to inhale their sweet fragrance. As the summer proceeds and it becomes drier, the white flower will turn to a delicate pink.

The Crimson Columbine, with its red and yellow flowers, nods gracefully in drying forest habitats, as well as in sunny wet meadows and on stream banks. Look closely and you may notice a tiny hole in the swollen tips of the flower. These are created by honey bees that bite the flower to sip its sweet nectar.



A fascinating exploration is to hike the Pacific Crest Trail from Donner Pass to the source of the Yuba River's south fork, which begins as a spring that seeps out of the ground below the west-side slope of Roller Pass, above the Sugar Bowl Ski Resort.

Donner Summit's wildflowers are truly a gift. They attract insects, birds, and other wildlife as well as people of all ages, with their beauty and easy accessibility.

Jillie Corbett



Photography by George Lantieri

BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies discovered the attractions of Donner Summit eons before the Native Americans, the wagon trains or the railroad. Donner Pass is a low pass with lots of ecological diversity, making it a good home for many species. There are 155 species of Sierra butterflies. 115 can be found on Donner Pass and almost all of them can be found in and around Summit Valley. The species present at any one time vary depending on which plants are flowering. Butterflies are heliothermic, needing the sun's heat to fly, so look in sunny areas.

Each species has been evolutionarily engineered. Their tongues and leg lengths match their host plants or "adult nectar sources."

One iconic Summit species is the Gray Blue Agriades Podarce. The males are gray blue and the females a rich brown. Its host is the Shooting Star, Dodecatheon Jefeysi. The plant can be found on the edges of streams meandering through the upper half of the meadow.

Dr. Art Shapiro



Magnificent Donner Summit

Nothing can be more charming than the woods of the Sierra summit in June, July, and August, especially in the level glades margining the open summit valley.... The pines and firs, prevailing over spruces and cedars, attain a height ranging from 100 to 200 feet, and even more. Their trunks are perfectly straight, limbless for fifty to a hundred feet, painted above the snow-mark with yellow mosses, and ranged in open, park-like groups affording far vistas.... Huge boulders [sic] of granite relieve the vernal coloring with their picturesque masses of gray, starred with lichens.... Thickets of wild-rose and other flowering shrubs occur at intervals, giving an almost patristic variety to the woodland scene. The crimson snow-plum lifts its slender shaft of curious beauty.... Sparkling springs, fresh from snowy fountains, silver-streak these forest meadows, where birds come to bathe and drink, and tracks of the returning deer are printed. Once more the quail is heard piping to its mates, the heavy whirring flight of the grouse startles the meditative rambler, and the pines give forth again their surf-like roar to the passing breeze, waving their plumed tops in slow and graceful curves across the sky wonderfully clear and blue. ...Here beauty and happiness seem to be the rule, and care is banished. The feast of color, the keen pure atmosphere, the deep bright heavens, the grand peaks bounding the view, are intoxicating. There is a sense of freedom, and the step becomes elastic and quick under the new feeling of self-ownership. Love for all created things lifts the soul as never before. One listens to the birds as to friends, and would fain cultivate with them a close intimacy. The water-fall has a voice full of meaning. The wild-rose tempts the mouth to kisses and the trees and rocks solicit an embrace. ...The spirit worships in an ecstasy of reverence. This is the Madonna of a religion without dogma, whose creed is written only in the hieroglyphics of beauty, voiced only in the triple language of color, form, and sound....

Plunge into the unbroken forests- into the deep canons; climb the high peaks; be alone awhile, and free. Look into Nature, as well as at Nature, so that the enjoyment shall be not merely sensuous but intellectual.

"Summering in the Sierra" 1874 Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine

BIRDS

Donner Summit is rich in bird life during the temperate summer season. The Summit includes one of the largest wet meadow systems on the west slope of the Sierra, making it an excellent birding area. Of the more than 100 species of birds that come to Donner Summit, most are found on or around the meadow. Many different species, common and rare, can be spotted on an early morning walk out into the meadow.

Migratory birds such as ducks, geese and even Sand Hill Cranes stop over in early summer on their way north. There are also many "special status" species that inhabit the meadow including the endangered Willow Flycatcher.

Raptors of various kinds can be seen gliding over the Summit on the hunt for prey. Osprey, Red-tailed Hawks, Golden and even Bald Eagles soar overhead. It is an amazing experience to see a Bald Eagle snatch a fish from the talons of an Osprey over one of the many lakes on the Summit.

Birds come to the Summit in the Summer to nest and hatch their chicks. Predators including coyotes and martens prowl the meadow, but the birds are clever, making their nests in well hidden grassy tufts, shrubs and nearby trees. Be sure to tread carefully lest you disturb one of these families.

Dr. George Lantieri











Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass
The Most Beautiful Drive in the West

Discover the stunning views and historic sites along the scenic bypass route. This route offers a unique perspective of the region's natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Key features include:

- Stunning panoramic views of the lake and surrounding mountains.
- Historic landmarks and cultural sites.
- Well-maintained roads and scenic overlooks.

For more information, visit [www.hwy40scenicbypass.com](#)

& for the Future



A MOST SCENIC BYWAY

Get off the freeway and enjoy the California Sierra.



Donner Summit Historical Society
www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org
P.O. 1 Norden, CA 95724

A publication of the Donner Summit Historical Society, ©2015

SUMMIT CANYON



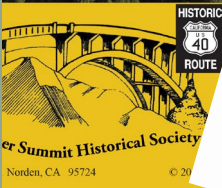
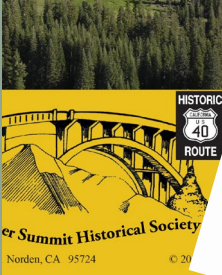
at Donner Pass

Explore California's Richest Historical Area



Donner Summit Historical Society
www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org
P.O. 1 Norden, CA 95724

Historic Hikes of Donner Summit



Donner Summit Historical Society
Norden, CA 95724 © 2015

NATIVE AMERICANS OF DONNER SUMMIT AND SUMMIT VALLEY



Donner Summit Historical Society

20 MILE MUSEUM

20 Mile Museum

Take the Scenic Route Along Old Highway 40 on Donner Summit

Donner Summit Historical Society

DONNER PASS

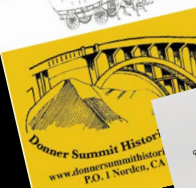
The Most Important Historical Square Mile in California



Donner Summit Historical Society

THE EMIGRANT TRAIL OVER DONNER PASS

Donner Summit Historical Society



Donner Summit Historical Society
www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org
P.O. 1 Norden, CA 95724

THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY



Donner Summit Historical Society

Donner Summit Historical Society

THE SNOWSHEDS

DONNER PASS

Donner Summit Historical Society



www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org
P.O. 1 Norden, CA 95724

The Incredible Summit Valley

Beautiful, Diverse & Rich

2013 Set aside for public access in perpetuity

Summit Valley is on Donner Summit just two miles east of the Soda Springs exit from I-80 on Donner Pass Rd.

TUNNEL 6

The Most Interesting Unknown Historical Spot in California

A Marvel of 19th Century Engineering

Donner Summit Historical Society

HISTORIC ROUTE 40

Old Time Sunday Drive Rocklin to Donner Pass & Truckee

Think back to Grandma and Grandpa. Think back to the old days when cars had lots of chrome and huge tail fins. Water bags hung from their fronts for the radiators. Burns and Allen or Jack Benny and Rochester were on the radio. There were Burma Shave signs along the roads and lots of billboards. There was plenty of time to read them too because traffic went more slowly. There were roadhouses and fruit markets and meat markets. There were even service stations with real service and air!

Take an old time Sunday drive at slow speed along Old Highway 40 from Rocklin to Truckee.

And be sure to take Grandma and Grandpa!

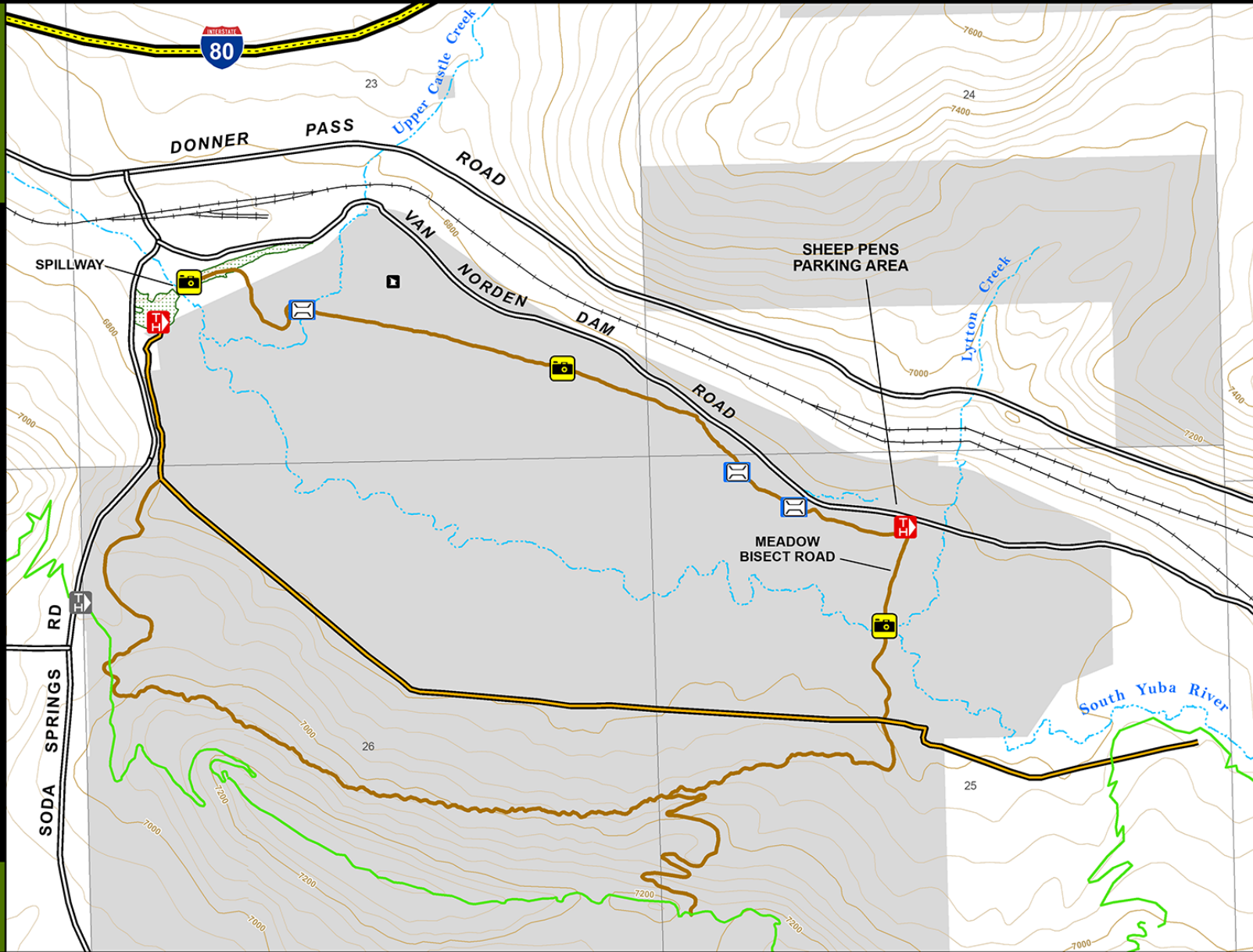
Old Time Sunday Drive Hwy 40 Scenic Byway



Van Norden Meadow Restoration and Recreation Project

Proposed Recreation Actions

- Map 3 of 3 -



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Tahoe National Forest
Truckee Ranger District