



Board Meeting Attendees

Date: November 4, 2014

Location: Incline Village, NV

Board Members in Attendance		Forest Service Representatives	
X	Randall Osterhuber		Joe Flanery
X	Bob Moore		
X	Jason Oelkers		
X	Mark Bunge		
X	Dave Paradysz	Forecasters	
	Todd Offenbacher	X	Brandon Schwartz
		X	Andy Anderson
X	Chip Morrill	Observers	
X	Holly Okom	X	Steve Reynaud
X	Dave Fiore	X	Travis Feist
X	John Laine		
	David Bunker		
Board Advisors in Attendance		Guests	
X	Debbie Broback		Adrian Thatcher
	Cameron Bordner		Adam Babcock
	John Swanson		
	Larry Heywood		
	Justin Broglio		

	Jeremony Jackson	
Program Manager		
X	Don Triplett	

**Sierra Avalanche Center - Regular Board Meeting
November 4, 2014 – Time 5:30pm
Incline Village Public Library
Incline Village, NV 89451**

AGENDA – Items may not be heard in the order they are listed

A. **CALL TO ORDER** - Establish quorum/Introduction of guests - 5:30 PM

B. AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL

Motion: John Laine

Second: Dave P.

Approved: All

C. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Chip

Second: John L.

Approved: All

D. **PUBLIC COMMENT** - *Any member of the public may address the Board of Directors on any matter that is not listed on the agenda. Comments will be limited to 5 minutes. Should discussion be required the item will be placed on a future board agenda.*

Eric Petlock- introduced himself as a prospective Board member. He currently is employed by the Theodore Roosevelt Institute, a non-profit, working on public land issues. He is currently working with Sugar Bowl Ski area to mitigate the parking issues in Donner Lake due to the Donner Lake Run. Eric has also had some discussion with the Homeowner Group and SAC now has an educational event scheduled.

Travis Feist- Gave an educational update. He passed out an AAA proposal to split into professional and recreational tracks. Level 1 would remain the same. Add a Level 1+. Travis passed around a paper AAA developed: Proposal For a Revised U.S. Professional and Recreational Avalanche Training Curriculum (this is not available on the web). Would

require Certification for pro employment. For courses for SAC this winter Travis will be using some recently developed AIRE courses as a beta tester.

E. CORRESPONDENCE (10 min)

None.

F. PROGRAM REVIEW (45 min) - Executive Director

Don highlighted items in his monthly report to the Board, attached.

G. FOREST SERVICE REPORT –(15 min)

No Forest Service representative attending.

a. Forecaster's Update – Brandon Schwartz and Andy Anderson

Brandon- "Waking" the program up from the USFS side.

Maintenance of the snowmobiles is scheduled.

Brandon will follow-up with the Budget and Accounting folks to get the most up to date numbers. Right now about \$28,000 in the Collection Account.

Andy- New payment processor now set-up.

H. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS (10 min)

Committee to assist ED with grants and funding. Don needs assistance at times with preparing grants and the follow through with miscellaneous projects.

-Discussed developing "Red Flag" cards similar to AIARE, but make them SAC specific, samples passed around. Don, Randall and Travis to work on this project.

-Local graphic designer Lisa is designing a new sticker. Don, John and Jason will represent SAC.

I. TREASURER'S REPORT – Randall Osterhuber (10 min)

Discussed the Operations budget that had been developed. The Board increased the line item expenditure for logo merchandise from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Randall will be updating the current budget.

J. DIRECTORS REPORTS (10 min)

No reports.

K. NEW BUSINESS (45 min)

Discussion of website banner ads. Details in the ED report.

SAC Fiscal Sponsorship collaboration with Bridgeport

Bridgeport Avalanche Center - BAC has a need to have a fiscal sponsor. They prepared an informational package (attached) describing their needs. Holly led the discussion with Adrian and Adam answering questions and discussing their needs. Holly has done research on how fiscal sponsorship would work. An overview of the needs:

- USFS cannot create websites. They have to be done by contractors or a non-profit.
- BAC needs a mechanism to do a website.
- Their "Group" will not be able to gain non-profit status this year.
- Their financing is via the CSP grant.
- Will need a MOU to formalize arrangements
- Will eventually form own Friends Group.
- Right now in "legalize" will be considered a "project of SAC".
- Andy will work up server costs and other related costs for their budget.
- Adrian will work up the draft MOU from the Forest Service between SAC and BAC.

This will be a 1 year arrangement, but may be reconsidered if it works out. Holly will be doing further consultation with Cameron.

BAC needs our assistance and consultation to be able to move forward with generating a product.

The Board discussed this. It was decided to continue this discussion in broader terms at a future "retreat".

L. CLOSED SESSION (30 min)

Observer pay rate. Discussion item. Pay rate raised. Randall will follow through with the Observer's.

M. ADJOURNMENT - Next Meeting Date Dec 2nd 5:30pm Incline Library



October 2014 Board Report

Date: Oct 30, 2014

Correspondence -

- Facebook posts doing well with avy awareness and education posts. 3 posts reached 9000 people last week
- Sponsorship connections going well.

Meetings

- California Avalanche Workshop - Sold out, good presentations and networking with other avalanche centers, good community event. Headed to bigger venue next year. Good opportunity to start a yearly event. SAC could develop early season Avalanche Education Events as fund raisers to bring community together and share information. Similar programs done in Utah, NW, Colorado, Gallatin.
- Jim Hammeral - Xtrophy google grant marketing and ski day programs for season outreach and goals

California State Parks Grant

The CSP 2013-2014 Grant was awarded (\$41,101). Project Agreement papers received and project outlined. Snowmo classes scheduled for Feb 13-14 SLT and March 20-21 Truckee. Meeting with Walt Saborio on 11/10 to straighten out last years grant funding and move ahead with this years progress.

Fundraising Work and Events

- Events - Powderwhore: 6 shows, CAW honorarium and moment ski movie net \$3630

- **Sponsorship work continues: Alpenglow, Tahoe Mtn. Sports, Tahoe Sports Hub, Granite Chief all want High sponsorship Looking for SLT and Reno shops to join and hold events. Need help from board here to develop programs and make connection.**
- **Parasol Wish List year end giving application accepted**
- **Give Back Tahoe - Season end giving campaign through TTCF approved**
- **Raffle Gear: Many connections made for gear and items arriving. Still making requests. Should have good amount of gear for events**
- **Steep and Deep planning underway shooting for 1.30 at Squaw. Request out to Cody Townsend and Elyse Saugstad to present. Sean Kristl trying to help connect me to Martina and Andy for ski day tickets**
- **Ski Days coming in: Vail echo reception SLT (chip) 11/11 north shore (don) 11/12, Bear Valley tentative date 3/27 (waiting for confirmation), Mt. Rose - waiting to hear from Mike Ferrari Reaching out to Tahoe Donner, Boreal, Auburn Ski club. Homewood and Sugar Bowl set.**
- **REI presentation set for 2/18 at Reno store 6:30 avy awareness & BC talk Raffle to benefit SAC. we supply gear.**
- **CSP grant Snowmobile avy education classes scheduled for 2/13-14 SLT and 3/20-21 North Shore, In planning for shop night presentations**
- **SAC Avalanche Awareness NEED TITLE -“ In to the fold, Avy I primer, An intro to Avy safety” Schedule - Reno 2/6 Patagonia outlet, Truckee 1/31 TDRPD downtown, Tahoe City Tahoe Cinema 2/25, SLT LTCC Student center 1/16 Travis and Todd O.**
- **BC Ball Dec 12 Daron Rahlves, Grant Barta: Mtg with John Monson first week of Nov. to finalize details. Suggested - \$20 tix, \$25 at door, Dinner, drinks, silent auction, music, vendor village. Good times**

Opportunities:

- **Google Snowtacular event? - contact lifestyle perks department Lisa Park 1500 employees listed skiing and snowboarding as interests on their entrance profile**
- **1% for the planet corporate donation list**
- **charity.org Corporate giving programs. Need someone to research and find details.**
- **Corporate donation lists are common in large business**
- **Logo Merchandise sales in stores**
- **Logo pint glass for sale at BC Ball - Special beer sales for night**
- **End of year giving Campaign - TTCF Give Back Tahoe, Parasol Non Profit Wish List, Crowd Funding campaign? Crowd source funding for program development- Importance to board? Someone to take lead? Develop program**
- **Contact at SNC for intern , Rosie Hackett in content from Todd O. In process of getting details together**
- **STEEC board mtg 1/6. Invited to talk about potential involvement with SLT schools programs for KBYG**
- **Snowmobile Shop presentations for avy awareness to bring Snowmo shops into the mix: Sierra Mountain Sports SLT, Dupont Power Quincy, Toms Snowmobiles Sierra City, Elk Grove Power sports, Adrenaline Powersports Citrus Heights(Sac), Michaels Reno Powersports, Reno Cycles & Gear**
 - This list provided by Duncan who is on board to co teach and do presentations at shops with us this winter. I spoke with him and he is psyched to work with us and is going to get his instructor certification as well.
- **Blog for SAC website Any interest from board?**
- **Affiliated Marketing potential with Tahoe Mountain Sports and beyond -discussion topic**

Look Ahead:

- **Finish planning of SAC avy awareness nights- Good progress thus far. Need a catchy title.**

- SAC Ski Day planning - Contact remaining resorts -Squaw/alpine, Waiting on reply from Mt. Rose, Contact Boreal, Auburn ski club, Sierra At Tahoe
- Winnemucca Alpine Club presentation 11/13 - Gas, lodging, food paid by club
- Winter kick off newsletter - Content developed, needs fine tooth comb
- Membership Campaign launch - Perks need ordered, Finalize plan, web page ready
- Lots of events on the schedule. Check the SAC calendar on google!

Membership Drive and Donor Cultivation

- SAC Membership Drive kick-off November asking for community wide support.
Membership levels-
 - \$35 SAC donor sticker with form letter “your money is supporting...”
 - \$50 Hat + sticker
 - \$100 Hat and T shirt+ sticker
 - \$250 Stitched logo fleece + sticker
 - \$500 Let us know what you want

Logo Merchandise	#	Mt Tam quote	W&T Quote	Subtotal
Women 10-s 15-M 10-L				
Men 5-S 20-M 25-L 20-XL				
Mens T shirt 100% cotton	70	\$628.60	\$7.50	\$525.00
Womens T shirt 100% cotton	35	\$314.30	\$8.00	\$280.00
Pullover hoody 100% poly 8 oz	30	\$1019.40	\$26.16	\$784.80
1/4 Zip top Fleece 8oz	30	\$1019.40	\$26.15	\$784.50
Visors	50	\$399.00	\$11.65	\$582.50
Koozie	200	\$376.00		\$0.00
Transfer set up fee	1	\$50.00		\$50.00
Stickers				
Logo Pint glass 1 color to sell at BC ball	72	2.99	\$2.69	\$193.68
\$48 set up fee and \$48 additional colors 144@ \$2.05				
Total		\$3809.69		\$3200.48

Membership 2014
44 - \$35

2015 Goal 250 members

48 - \$50

33 - \$100

28 - \$150

153 total members This may be off I saw 83 new members in Annual report

Discussion topics for Board Meeting

- **Marketing budget and targets: Ski days - local radio, NPR, print, social media, KQED**
- Title of Speaker series and content for avy awareness portion (Get the gear, Get Training, get the forecast, Get the Picture -Put it into practice “The Process”)
- Banner Ad \$ decision
- Affiliated Marketing pontential
- End of year giving campaign

Work Items for board direction-

- Strategic Plan and business plan update with vision for 3 -5 years and associated financial documents - Change of tracking in QB to help facilitate this growth and development. Review by professional from bookkeepers perspective ~ Peggy Rickets

Prepared by:
Adam Babcock, Avalanche Specialist
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Bridgeport, CA

11-03-14

Letter of Inquiry / Project Proposal:

Bridgeport Avalanche Center (BAC) would like to establish a formal relationship with Sierra Avalanche Center (SAC) in the form of a “fiscal sponsorship” common to many parent non-profit organizations and their “projects”. BAC has an immediate need for a website, and a long-term need for additional community and financial support.

As identified from Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area (BWRA) permits, most visitors to the BWRA come from Lake Tahoe and Mammoth Lakes, linking the users of Tahoe, Bridgeport, and Eastern Sierras backcountry. Linking the separate avalanche centers together may provide benefits of broader community support for the centers, as well as improved and consistent public safety product for the users.

The following project proposal describes:

- Bridgeport Avalanche Center’s mission
- Project area
- Current stage of development of Bridgeport Avalanche Center (“the project”)
- Project delivery of services / planned project activity
- Nature of relationship between SAC and BAC (what is a fiscal sponsorship?)
- Funding for Bridgeport Avalanche Center

Bridgeport Avalanche Center Mission:

Bridgeport Avalanche Center’s mission is to inform and educate the public and USFS employees about avalanche safety and backcountry avalanche conditions in the Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area (BWRA).

Project Area:

The Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area (BWRA) is a 7,200-acre world-class mountain venue for snowmobilers and skiers about 20 miles northwest of Bridgeport, CA. It was designated by Congress in 2009 and is the first winter motorized recreation area in the nation. Prior to designation as a recreation area, the BWRA was simply referred to as the “Sonora Pass” area, and has been a very popular destination for motorized and non-motorized recreational users

for decades. The United States Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center (MWTC) is also permitted to operate throughout the BWRA, adding layers of complexity and opportunity.

Much of the terrain in the BWRA extends above treeline with most ridgelines and peaks rising to elevations between 10,500' and 11,500'. Leavitt Peak, at 11,569' in altitude, lies just outside the BWRA boundary. The area is characterized by several high mountain cirques surrounded by steep avalanche terrain, including Ski Lake, Leavitt Lake, Koenig Lake, Latopie Lake, and the headwaters of McKay and Sardine Creeks.

Forest Road 32077 - the Leavitt Lake Road - is the primary access route into the BWRA. It splits from Highway 108 approximately 10 miles west of Highway 395. Several avalanche paths - on northerly aspects on the south side of the Leavitt Creek drainage, and on southerly aspects on the north side of the drainage - threaten the road.

Current Stage of Development:

When the BWRA was created, the Bridgeport Ranger District (BRD) was tasked with monitoring and enforcing its rules and regulations by marking boundaries and patrolling the area on snowmobiles. Recognizing the danger that USFS snowmobile patrollers would be exposed to in the course of their duties, Adrienne Thatcher, BRD Recreation Staff Officer, determined it was a critical safety need to provide avalanche information and education to protect Forest Service personnel and the public as well. In 2014 with funding from a California State Park OHV Education/Safety grant, Adrienne began to bring her vision of a Bridgeport Avalanche Center to life, and last year hired Adam Babcock, the BWRA's first avalanche specialist.

The Bridgeport Avalanche Center soon began providing a weekly summary of avalanche conditions, and training for USFS personnel, USMC soldiers, and public audiences. The USFS personnel at SAC provided very helpful assistance to BAC by spending time with Adam in the field and providing curricula for the snowmobile-specific avalanche awareness clinics.

2014 Delivery of Services: Funded by 2013 -2014 California OHV Education Grant

Adam started work on January 27, 2014 and was tasked with two primary duties:

- Education
 - o Establish safe travel protocols and offer avalanche training to USFS snowmobile patrollers
 - o Provide 3 avalanche awareness clinics tailored to snowmobilers at no cost to the public
 - o Conduct impromptu field educational sessions with BWRA recreational users, USFS employees, and USMC personnel
- Forecasting
 - o Provide informational updates about avalanche conditions in the BWRA to the public, USFS employees, and USMC personnel. This was accomplished by building an email list and sending once-a-week summaries via email. We need a more visible, accessible, and standardized format to provide public safety information, and to gather and share field observations. In short, we need our own website.
 - o Develop infrastructure necessary to gather observations and disseminate information - built email list and recruited observers.

2014 - 2015 Planned Project Activity: Funded through California State Park Education Grant

- Education
 - Offer at least 3 avalanche awareness clinics, free of charge to the public
 - Continue to capitalize on impromptu field opportunities to educate BWRA users about avalanche safety
 - Continue to train USFS snowmobile patrollers
 - Continue to develop relationship w/USMC
 - Develop new relationships with local groups (Paiute Indian Colony, school groups, Mono County Sheriff / SAR, etc.)
- Forecasting
 - Work with Andy Anderson and SAC to develop BAC website
 - Deliver more formal, standardized product - “Weekly Snowpack Summary”
 - Establish two snow study plots - one at Leavitt Lake and one at Sardine Meadows - to better track seasonal changes in the snowpack
- Safety
 - Purchase 4 avalanche airbag packs for employees to wear as a safety protocol and lead by example for the public.
- Other projects (wish list) Non- funded
 - Establish formal relationship with SAC (Fiscal Sponsorship) to fulfill immediate need for a website and possibly including creation of a BAC Advisory Board / 501(c)(3) for fundraising and marketing purposes.
 - Purchase and install a Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) to obtain accurate ridge-top wind data for the BWRA
 - Continue to develop an avalanche atlas for the BWRA by identifying, naming, and mapping individual avalanche paths.
 - Purchase and install a beacon practice park
 - Establish a “Rescue Cache” in the Leavitt Lake area

Nature of Relationship Between SAC and BAC:

The Sierra Avalanche Center and Bridgeport Avalanche Center already have an informal and beneficial working relationship. For the following reasons, it seems like a good “fit” to formalize our relationship via a “fiscal sponsorship”:

- SAC and BAC have almost identical missions, an informal and positive working relationship, and a shared client base.
- The majority of visitors to the BWRA come from the Lake Tahoe and Mammoth Lakes population centers, and while there is a need for avalanche forecasting and education in this area, Bridgeport is too small a community to support an avalanche center without outside assistance.
- BAC would like to offer more comprehensive services to the public starting with a website and fundraising operations - which require a private mechanism to support the federal program (i.e. 501(c) (3) Friends non-profit organization).

What is Fiscal Sponsorship?

Wikipedia description:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiscal_sponsorship

Fiscal sponsorship refers to the practice of non-profit organizations offering their legal and tax-exempt status to groups engaged in activities related to the organization's missions. It typically involves a fee-based contractual arrangement between a project and an established non-profit. Fiscal sponsorship can enable projects to share a common administrative platform with a larger organization, thus increasing efficiency.

Gregory L. Colvin, Esq. presentation on Fiscal Sponsorship, Western Conference on Tax Exempt Organizations, November 17, 2006:

http://www.fiscalsponsorship.com/images/WCTEO_Gregory-Colvin.pdf

Fiscal sponsorship arrangements typically arise when a person or group (a **project**) wants to get support from a private foundation...or tax-deductible donations from individual or corporate donors. By law or preference, the funding source will only make payments to organizations with 501(c)(3) status. So the project looks for a 501(c)(3) **sponsor** to receive the funds and pass them on to the project.

...Fiscal sponsorship advantages are not limited to situations where the project lacks, or never will have, 501(c)(3) status. Fiscal sponsorship is often used for that temporary period before a new organization obtains its own tax exemption. Other variations occur when a small 501(c)(3) group needs the help of a larger 501(c)(3) organization to manage its financial affairs...

...It is possible to describe six different models by which a public charity, tax-exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3), can conduct a program of support to individuals and to nonexempt organizations that is legal and proper.

Model A: Direct Project

- The sponsor takes the project in-house. The project has no separate legal existence. The originators of the project may have approached the sponsor with a program idea that had not been part of the sponsor's activities in the past, but once the sponsor adopts it as a staff project, it belongs completely to the sponsor. Model A is probably the most common form of institutionalized fiscal sponsorship. These fiscal sponsors see themselves often as "incubators" for new charities, or "umbrella" organizations permitting several related projects to exist in one tax-exempt corporation.

Model B: Independent Contractor Project

- The project belongs entirely to the sponsor, but the actual operation of the project is contracted out to a separate legal entity, which could be a person, a business firm, or some other type of organization. This arrangement differs from a grant (Model C), in that the sponsor wishes to maintain control over the ultimate results of the project.

Model C: Pre-Approved Grant Relationship

Model D: Group Exemption

- Models D and E are advanced models which result in the project having its own 501(c)(3) tax status, able to receive deductible donations directly from donors, but still with a tax benefit derived from the sponsor. With the Group Exemption, the project gets 501(c)(3) status by being included in the group ruling issued by the IRS to the sponsor... (Sponsor obtains federal group tax exemption, confers 501(c)(3) status on subordinate projects.)

Model E: Supporting Organization

Model F: Technical Assistance

After reviewing the six models, it appears that Models A, B, or D may be the best choices for a SAC / BAC relationship. While Model A or B may be the best option for a SAC / BAC agreement for the 2014-15 winter season, Model D may prove the best long-term organizational structure if Mt. Shasta and Eastern Sierra avalanche centers decide to join SAC as well.

The fiscal sponsorship structure typically provides a mechanism for *funding* a project; the unique situation with BAC is that with our basic funding already secured, our immediate priority is to build a private website and we simply need a *mechanism* for operating that website (since we can't operate a private website as a federal entity and the Humboldt-Toiyabe website does not provide the visibility, accessibility, or functionality that we need).

Funding:

Adrienne Thatcher, BRD Recreation Staff Officer, will be the best person to address BAC funding and budget. She is on leave until November 2nd and was unreachable at the time of preparation of this document. My understanding is that current funding for BAC comes from three sources:

- Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (HTF), Bridgeport Ranger District (BRD), Recreation Program
- California State Parks OHV grant (this is the 2nd year BAC has been awarded the grant)
- National Avalanche Center

BAC was financially self-sufficient last winter season, and will be again this year - at least to provide the same basic services as last year plus building and operating a website. Additional funding may be needed for bigger projects like purchasing and installing a RAWs station.