



Before the Board of Supervisors  
County of Placer, State of California

**In the matter of:** RESOLUTION SUPPORTING  
THE NATIONAL DESIGNATION OF THE DONNER  
SUMMIT TUNNELS AS A NATIONAL HISTORICAL  
LANDMARK AND ITS PRESERVATION THEREOF

Resolution No.: \_\_\_\_\_

The following Resolution was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer  
at a regular meeting held \_\_\_\_\_, by the following vote:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board

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WHEREAS, Placer County has many historical landmarks, and their preservation is valued by  
the County; and

WHEREAS, the designation of historical landmarks is done at the local, state, and federal  
levels; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Interior National Park Service administers the  
National Historical Landmarks Program as a federal designation program with the purpose to  
preserve the stories of nationally important historical events, places, and people for all  
Americans, amongst others; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Interior is currently considering an application for landmark  
designation of the Donner Summit Tunnels in our region via working with a local nonprofit  
organization called the Summit Tunnel Conservation; and

WHEREAS, the construction of the Donner Summit Tunnels is a part of the Transcontinental  
Railroad completed in 1869 that was made possible by the Pacific Railroad Act of 1862; and

WHEREAS, the Sacramento, CA to Promontory Point, UT portion of the railroad was devised and constructed under the Central Pacific Railroad Corporation headed by four men, better known as the Big Four, included Charles Crocker, Colis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins and Leland Stanford; and

WHEREAS, the Big Four hired Theodore Judah to map the railroad route through the Sierra Nevada Mountains that ended up being the most difficult construction portion due to the topography, geology and weather believed by many to not be feasible; and

WHEREAS, Charles Crocker became the construction manager and began hiring hundreds of Californians to construct the railroad; and

WHEREAS, by the time the railroad reached the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Crocker had hired 10,000 workers (with approximately 8,000 of Chinese descent) to lay tracks, fill ravines, build trestles and bore tunnels; and

WHEREAS, fifteen (15) tunnels were bored through solid granite rock from Colfax to Truckee, with the longest tunnel near Donner Summit totaling 553 yards that took five years to complete as the largest United States labor project up to that time; and

WHEREAS, work proceeded year-round through the harsh winters of the Sierras with labor crews working 24 hours a day making headway at only one foot a day using hand drills and black powder; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra phase of the Transcontinental Railroad was completed in 1868 with the entire railroad spanning from Omaha, Nebraska to Sacramento being completed on April 28, 1869, when the Central Pacific met up with the Union Pacific at Promontory Point, Utah; and

WHEREAS, designation of the Donner Summit Tunnels will preserve Tunnels #6 and #7 along with the Chinese Wall, Native American petroglyphs, and the Chinese encampment area that will be maintained and preserved by the Summit Tunnel Conservation Association in cooperation with the United States Forest Service; and

WHEREAS, a National Landmark designation of the Donner Summit Tunnels would join the regional national landmark designations, including the Donner Party Campsites in 1961; and

WHEREAS, the designation of National Landmarks is significant by demonstrating exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, technology, and culture; and

WHEREAS, the designation of the Donner Summit Tunnels aligns with County efforts to promote economic development through partnerships that support small businesses and tourism sectors.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors, County of Placer, State of California, hereby proclaims its support for the national designation of the Donner Summit Tunnels as a National Historical Landmark and its preservation thereof.

