

MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mike Boyle, Assistant County Executive Officer

DATE: May 18, 2010

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION – Approve a Resolution endorsing the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve a Resolution endorsing the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.

BACKGROUND/COMMUNITY BENEFITS:

Geotourism seeks to promote tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. This project intends to highlight the unique assets of the Sierra Nevada while educating travelers, preserving traditions, protecting sensitive environments and stimulating financial growth in local economies.

The final products, an interactive website and printed MapGuide published by National Geographic, will direct travelers to sites of historic, environmental and social significance. The content of the map will be generated by locals who know the area best and are vested in its future. Placer County is in support of this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

ATTACHMENTS:

- Letter to Board of Supervisors
- Geotourism Project Fact Sheets

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

In the matter of a Resolution endorsing the
Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.

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 on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Kirk Uhler
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest:
Clerk of said Board

Ann Holman

WHEREAS, Placer County has been requested to endorse the Geotourism Project by the Sierra Business Council; and

WHEREAS, Geotourism is a concept that supports tourism to sustain and enhance the geographic character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well being of its residents; and

WHEREAS, Geotourism encompasses a range of niches including adventure and nature based travel, eco- and agri-tourism, cultural and heritage travel; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Business Council, Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the National Geographic Society have partnered together to promote a more sustainable form of tourism in the Sierra Nevada; that partnership is called the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project members have partnered with the local residents and are currently working to create a National Geographic WebMap and printed map that features geotouristic assets throughout the Sierra Nevada to attract sustainable tourism; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Nevada is a vast 400-mile long region with thousands of unique assets. In order to accurately cover the region, the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project is being implemented in four phases and Placer County is included in the 2nd phase. Those phases are:

- Phase 1: Yosemite Gateways and Scenic Byways
- Phase 2: Tahoe Emigrant Corridor
- Phase 3: Northern Region
- Phase 4: Southern Region

WHEREAS, the National Geographic Society has successfully developed geotourism projects in other communities, including the Northern California Coast, the Central Cascades, the Glacier National Park region known as the Crown of the Continent, and the Greater Yellowstone region; and

WHEREAS, this approach has proven successful through community involvement and encouraging a sense of connection and identity amongst residents and visitors by stressing the unique and authentic features in an area that entice the sense of excitement to experience and preserve the natural wonders for that area; and

WHEREAS, the Geotourism Project seeks to celebrate the Sierra Nevada as a world-class destination, while contributing to its economic health and promoting long-term stewardship of the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer, does hereby endorse the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project to sustain and enhance the geographic character of the Sierra Nevada and to encourage tourism to the region.



www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org

April 22, 2010

Placer County Board of Supervisors
175 Fulweiler Ave., Auburn, CA 95603

Re: Proposed Board Agenda Item, Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project

Dear Placer County Representatives,

In order to promote a more sustainable form of tourism in the Sierra Nevada region the Sierra Business Council, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and the National Geographic Society have partnered to manage the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.

About the project

Geotourism seeks to promote tourism that "sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetic, heritage, and the well-being of its residents." This project intends to responsibly highlight the unique assets of the Sierra Nevada while educating travelers, preserving traditions, protecting sensitive environments, and stimulating financial growth in local economies. The final products, an interactive website and printed MapGuide published by National Geographic, will direct travelers to properly managed sites of historic, environmental and social significance. The content of the map is generated by locals who know the area best and are invested in its future.

The Sierra Nevada is a vast region with thousands of unique assets. The Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project is implementing the project in four geographic phase regions. Placer County is in the second phase region, the Tahoe Emigrant Corridor, along with all or portions of Douglas, Washoe, El Dorado, Nevada and Carson City counties. The nomination period for this phase is **June - August 2010**.

Get involved

Local involvement is critical to the success of the project. Strong community support is necessary to ensure each region is well represented and benefits from this project. The Placer County Board of Supervisors can publicly support the project by endorsement (a board resolution supporting the project) or partnership (donate time, money, or infrastructure to the project efforts). And of course, be sure to nominate assets during your region's nomination period, June-August 2010.

If possible, myself or another representative of the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project would like to do a 10 minute presentation to the Placer County Board of Supervisors and ask for the Board's support of the project. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Martini Morris
Watershed Education Assistant, Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership
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Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project FAQs

What is geotourism?

Geotourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Geotourism encompasses a range of niches including adventure and nature based travel, eco- and agri-tourism, cultural and heritage travel.

What is the Sierra Nevada Geotourism project?

Project partners and residents of the Sierra Nevada are working together to create a National Geographic map that features geotouristic assets and attracts as well as encourages sustainable tourism. The Geotourism Project seeks to celebrate the Sierra Nevada as a world-class destination, while contributing to its economic health and promoting long-term stewardship of the region.

What are examples of geotouristic destinations that might be featured on the map?

Geotouristic assets are authentic and distinctive to the region and sustain or enhance the geographic character of the Sierra Nevada. Examples include local restaurants and shops, historic hotels, museums, local artists, hiking trails, festivals and events, volunteer and recreational opportunities. To view assets that have been selected in the first phase region and/or to submit a nomination, go to www.sierranevadageotourism.org.



Photo Courtesy of County of Inyo, Dean Perada

Who is involved?

Locals are involved - This project is unique because local people identify and nominate the assets that are mapped through an interactive and open process within the community. Then the Geocouncil reviews and selects the nominations.

The Geocouncil is involved - To represent the broad Sierra Nevada, this project is forming a Sierra Nevada Wide Geocouncil as well as Regional Geocouncils from each of the four phase regions. The Geocouncils are comprised of members that represent the geographical and sectoral diversity (arts, public lands, government, non-profits, businesses, historians, tribes, heritage and preservation) of the region. The role of the Sierra Nevada Wide Geocouncil is to guide the overall vision of the project, sustain the project into the future, and encourage long-term stewardship of the region's natural, historic and cultural assets. Each Regional Geocouncil will encourage community participation in the nomination process, work to ensure nominations reflect the diversity of the region, and select the nominations for final review by National Geographic.

Project management is involved - The project management partners manage the project's implementation throughout region. They are the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Sierra Business Council, and the National Geographic Society.

Project partners are involved - Project partners are also pivotal in contributing to the success of the project, as they greatly aid with outreach efforts and asset mapping. Project partners include a

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www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org

variety of land management agencies, non-profits and other entities with an interest in the project. About 30 project partners worked together in the first phase area of the project. We are constantly building our project partners; organizations that are in support of the geotourism project are encouraged to become a project partner or endorser, please email sierrageotourism@sbcouncil.org.

How is the project funded?

This project has received funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the Morgan Family Foundation, as well as the Federal Highway Administration Awards for Scenic Byways. We continue to conduct fundraising efforts.



Photo Courtesy of Charles Phillips

Why is geotourism important and what are some benefits of the project?

The benefits to the geotourism project include:

- Attracts and builds travelers who are more resource conscious, concerned with local conservation and sustainability
- Highlights assets that make up the fabric of the region and that are frequently overlooked, distributing the tourism impact
- Increased reach by co-branding with National Geographic
- The ability to support and grow niche businesses in a community
- Travelers gain an authentic experience, connecting them to the land and locals, ideally instilling a desire to take care of the region
- Jobs are created

What are the phase areas and the timeline?

The Sierra Nevada is a vast 400-mile long region with thousands of unique assets. The Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project is implementing the project in four geographic phase regions. The nomination period for the four phases is as follows:

Phase 1, August - October 2009: Yosemite Gateways and Scenic Byways

-Includes all or portions of Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Alpine, Mono, Inyo, El Dorado counties

Phase 2, June - August 2010: Tahoe Emigrant Corridor

-Includes all or portions of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Washoe, Douglas, Carson City counties

Phase 3, November 2010 - January 2011: Northern Region

-Includes all or portions of Sierra, Yuba, Butte, Plumas, Tehama, Shasta, Lassen, Modoc, Siskiyou counties

Phase 4, April 2011 - June 2011: Southern Region

-Includes all or portions of Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern counties



Are there plans for a printed map as well as an online map?

In addition to the online map, National Geographic will develop and distribute a poster-sized printed MapGuide using content submitted to the website. The timeline for the development of the printed MapGuide is yet to be determined.

Go to www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org to view the current map and add your nomination!



www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org

Project Partners and Endorsers - How to Get Involved

Thank you for your interest in the Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide Project. The Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project seeks to celebrate the Sierra Nevada as a world-class destination, while contributing to its economic health and promoting long-term stewardship of the region. Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

Local involvement is critical to the success of the project. The content of the Sierra Nevada Geotourism map is generated by locals who know the area best and are invested in its future. Organizations that are in support of the geotourism project are encouraged to become a project partner or endorser. Project partners and endorsers will be highlighted on the geotourism website.

A Project Partner contributes time, money, or capital investment towards project efforts. (Example: Outreach Partner)

How do I become a Project Partner?

- **Contribute time, money, and/or capital investment.** For example, become an outreach partner and help to spread the word, explain the project, and encourage locals to nominate assets.
- **Send us a letter (on letterhead) describing your entity's role and contribution to the project.**
- **Email a high resolution logo and 1-2 sentences about your entity to be featured on the geotourism website.**

A Project Endorser publically supports the project. Support may come in the form of a board resolution or letter of endorsement.

How do I become a Project Endorser?

- **Send us a board resolution or letter (on letterhead) of endorsement**
- **Email a high resolution logo and 1-2 sentences about your entity to be featured on the geotourism website.**

