

## Narrative of Activities Eagle Lake Guardians

New start up January 2011

See 1023 Explanations Part 1(5).

Eagle Lake Guardians began our State filing process near the end of 2010.

### EAGLE LAKE GUARDIANS OBJECTIVE

To enhance and protect Eagle Lake water level, water quality, heritage trout fishery and avian habitat. We may seek legal advice or legal action if exhausting all other options. We intend to work with Lassen National Forest, CA Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management. Some of these projects may cross paths in the future with US Fish and Wildlife, CA Department of Transportation (culvert pipes on seasonal tributaries along State Highway 139) and Lassen County Fish and Game Commission and Eagle Lake Interagency Board. No written agreements in place with other agencies because we just started out, however we have discussed projects and concerns verbally with both CA Dept of Fish and Game and Lassen National Forest as noted in enclosed meeting minutes 11-1-11. Priority projects pertain to water levels and seasonal tributaries. State Highway 139 borders approximately 5 miles of the shoreline of the north basin of Eagle Lake. There are approximately 6 small seasonal tributaries in which the trout can navigate upstream along highway 139. Over the years erosion has washed out gravel below some of these culverts where the fish get trapped and are out of reach of nets for rescues during the spring spawn. These have not posed a problem in the last few years as they have not flowed, however in years of good water several thousand fish can perish. This is a future concern. We have not discussed this with BLM or CA DOT at an administrative level at this time. But we don't believe either will deny assistance if needed to protect Eagle Lake.

We will pursue joint projects with CDFG, USFS Lassen National Forest & BLM while preserving historical aspects and architecture. For example, in the 1990's high water in Papoose Creek washed out a beautiful historic rock work channel no one knew existed. It was a little damaged and was easily repaired. It has since been washed out again but all the parts remain. A future project may be restoring and upgrading/modernizing the rock work weir which functions as the **first fish barrier** preventing 1000+ trout from entering the creek just to perish when the water stops flowing. Cold temperatures can stop or reduce flow overnight in any and all tributaries at any time thru April. Once above the first weir, the 2 to 4 pound trout perish due to lack of water, dissolved oxygen and are susceptible to many predators.

Lassen National Forest and CDFG scientists worked with Susanville Indian Rancheria (in 2011) with heritage and native spawn projects however funding has been limited. We don't foresee direct grants to the Nation directly from Eagle Lake Guardians even though some small projects may involve their heritage, the **government agencies shall make all arrangements when dealing with the Nation**. When it comes to the fish, we are all working towards the same goal. Valerie Aubrey has worked with Lassen National Forest Archaeologist Christine Hill on local Heritage sites; specifically Passport in Time, Pine Creek 2004. Pine Creek and the Pine Creek Slough estuary have numerous documented heritage sites, some on the national listing. Native American Heritage is a proud part of Eagle Lake's history.

Many projects involve Pine Creek and establishing a native spawn of the unique Eagle Lake trout. This generally involves CDFG, LNF and UC Davis scientists. **SEE ENCLOSED RESEARCH PAPER Long-term captive breeding does not necessarily prevent reestablishment: lessons learned from Eagle Lake rainbow trout Gerard Carmona-Catot, Peter B. Moyle, Rachel E. Simmons which goes into great detail as to the problems and fixes needed to preserve Eagle Lake and Eagle Lake trout habitat. The research paper was sent to Eagle Lake Guardians from the author.** The "team" is getting closer to achieving the goal of a truly native spawn of Eagle Lake trout but funding holds back progress as much as Mother Nature.

There is a possibility in the future of a bonus trout program. This entails feeding and keeping a select number of fish in the hatchery for an additional year and are planted at between 2 and 3 pounds. Costs covering the feed and resources is the main expense. We have a verbal commitment from Kokanee Power's Gary Coe for any help we may need in this endeavor.

## **Experience and History**

Having volunteered and assisted scientists and biologists for over 2 decades we are familiar with the program as well as the government employees who have been researching the lake and creek environment for as long. Decades of neglect, grazing and old timber harvesting techniques have caused erosion of the main streambed of Pine Creek and Eagle Lake trout have not had a truly native spawn since approximately 1950. In the mid 1980's a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP Pine Creek) was initiated and some repairs, fencing of the creek from grazing cattle and other meager attempts of improvements has helped the Eagle Lake trout get as far as 17.5 miles out of a 28 mile journey upstream to what is believed to be their historical spawning beds. In 2011 the first confirmed Eagle Lake trout minnow was trapped and believed hatched about 3 ½ miles upstream from the egg collection facility. Approximately 200 Eagle Lake trout minnows were trapped by CDFG biologist. This was a pleasant and unexpected surprise and the first of its kind since the beginning of the program. It is important that it continue. A single donor purchased and donated two solar tracking receivers and control panels in 2011 replacing two critical units that failed during the study. These remote solar receivers were replaced within 6 days after failure. Information on the history up to 2011 season is contained in the Research Paper Long-term captive breeding does not necessarily prevent reestablishment: lessons learned from Eagle Lake rainbow trout by Gerard Carmona-Catot, Peter B. Moyle and Rachel E. Simmons. Again, these improvements and the success of the program take funding. RAC (Resource Advisory Committee) has, at times authorized their own grants for a handful of projects but often finding that more money would have given a better opportunity to complete or do a better job. Eagle Lake Guardians intend to raise as much money in our small resort community as possible to help in these local projects and tackle the issues that need to be addressed to preserve Eagle Lake.

Water levels 2009-2012 left 95% of the tule habitat in the northern basins high and dry. This habitat is critical for western and Clark's grebes, eared grebes and many other species, not to mention habitat for many other species such as damsel and dragon flies, predatory leeches and shelter for tui chub minnows. Eagle Lake historically holds the largest breeding habitats for the grebes and is under watch by Audubon for a 5 year study which began in 2011. Other water fowl or avian species also depend on the tule habitat. Not only do the tules provide for great bird watching they also provided great fishing opportunities from a boat or shore including fly fishing/float tubing as well as waterfowl hunting in fall.

Eagle Lake is an alkaline lake with a pH regularly above 9. The pH increases in summer as water temperatures rise and at a uniform pH of 9.4 (average for all three basins of the lake) CDFG recommends NO catch and release fishing due to high pH eroding the protective mucous membranes covering the gills. Lowering lake level decreases the water quality and increases the pH and salinity. Guardians goal is to help enhance and protect Eagle Lake water levels, water quality to insure the fish and wildlife do not suffer the consequences. CDFG has determined the water quality of Eagle Lake reaches a critical level for the lake habitats at an elevation of 5099ft above sea level. In 2010 the elevation was 5095.60 ft, in 2011 5096.0ft. This is now beyond critical and it will take team work to what we can to begin to preserve Eagle Lake.

We have an egg collection facility on our main tributary Pine Creek where CDFG artificially spawns the Eagle Lake trout for the lake as well as many other lakes in the state and other states. Our Eagle Lake trout has not had a native spawn for well over 60 years but it has been artificially sustained ever since. Scientists from UC Davis, Lassen National Forest and CA Dept of Fish and Game have been studying our unique heritage trout for decades and have worked diligently with Mother Nature since the 1960's to try to re-establish the historic native spawn of the Eagle Lake trout. There are other seasonal tributaries on Eagle Lake, Pine Creek is the largest and longest but the trout do head upstream to spawn in other

tributaries. Some of those are in need of repairing the permanent weirs and general debris clean up. These all cost money and not one agency or committee can afford to do it alone but we can if we joined forces and work together. Agency programs for establishing a native spawn exist but funding for water studies, repairs, watershed diversions and needed projects have been hit hard by budget cuts and limited funding.

The survival of Eagle Lake as well as the local businesses and Lassen County economy depends on water quality, which depends on water levels as Eagle Lake is an alkaline lake with a pH normally at 9 and as high as 9.7. 2-3 decades of neglect from budget cuts, diversions from the watershed, excessive grazing damaging the streambed, and drainage of Eagle Lake water by BLM for irrigation in Willow Creek Valley cattle ranchers without water rights has attributed to the critical conditions that exist today. **Being local we understand the problems and can work well with the local branch of government agencies to address them.** Eagle Lake Guardians is growing quickly and the public responded. We are applying for this Federal Nonprofit status sooner than we had anticipated due to the heavy interest shown by our first pair of fundraisers. We respectfully request rapid assessment of our nonprofit so we can expedite doing our taxes for 2011.

## **CHECKING ON PROGRESS OF PROJECTS USING ANY GRANT FROM EAGLE LAKE GUARDIANS**

We will work closely with the specific government agency regarding project progress and completion of projects. Most projects are at the local level from a couple hundred yards from the lake shore to a maximum around 40 miles radius. Officers and members/volunteers will also check progress visually on site. Progress reports will be requested by Eagle Lake Guardians to any or all agencies working on a specific project in which our grant was used. We will update progress to our members on our website and via a yearly newsletter via USPS and/or email.

## **FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES**

Limited to May thru September peak of the fishing season. BBQ's, Raffles, Auctions & Donation Boxes. No other gaming.... Tickets will be sold in advance and at fundraisers, need not be present at fundraiser to win. Tickets are drawn from a tumbling/mixing device and drawn by a child/person from the crowd. If no one is available, tickets will be drawn by a person of choice by either the secretary, president or treasurer of the nonprofit. All proceeds go into the general fund. Large gifts donated may be auctioned AT specified fundraising event or by special raffle. Auctions will be performed at the fundraiser by officers of the corporation or by person(s) selected by the officers of the corporation. We have purchased fundraising t-shirts and hats with our logo on them. Sale's of shirts and hats are only May through November.

## **DONATIONS**

All funds are from public donations. The public can donate money in donation boxes on the counters of participating businesses. Anyone wishing to write a check that wasn't a member can donate to the donation boxes or directly to officers of the nonprofit. Receipts will be given upon request to non members. Returned checks will serve as their receipt unless separate receipt is requested. Non Members can donate prizes or auction items for fundraisers and if requested a receipt for the donation will be provided. The amount of goods donated from say Wal-Mart and/or Ace Hardware and other businesses/retailers/real-estate folks will depend on their stated value. Donation boxes will be locked. When retrieving the donations, the money will be counted by two people prior to taking. The officer and business owner will count the money together and sign a slip noting the amount and who counted it and present it to the treasurer for deposit.

## **MEMBERSHIPS**

Only one type of membership. No qualifications other than yearly dues & filling out contact information on application. All we can give our members is a nice membership card. Our group consists of Eagle Lake anglers and property owners, we easily communicate with our members regarding our issues. We are not an association. Members can call email or text any concerns or questions. Memberships is \$15 per person. All members are free to suggest and/or discuss any issues or opinions for discussion at any time. Each member promises to respond to officials when requested. President & Secretary respond for the group at all other meetings, but members can speak out personally and as a member, not the membership. One vote per membership on single expenditures in excess of \$10,000 if not pre-approved for a specific project grant which will be discussed at our meetings and posted online for members to review and/or make suggestions. Each member will be informed of projects and has a right to make suggestions and offer opinions for discussion. We will have a newsletter no less than one per year. Those with email addresses will receive an electronic copy unless requesting printed version, those without email will receive our printed newsletter via USPS. SEE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ATTACHED.

The touring public and locals wants to help this lake they love. We believe we can raise a gross of \$10,000 per year but will strive to do better every year. Eagle Lake Guardians was formed by local people to assist in preserving and enhancing Eagle Lake. By choice, forming officers receive no compensation for any duties performed.

Thank you,

Eagle Lake Guardians

Rebecca Walker  
503-150 Mahogany Way  
Spalding Tract, Eagle Lake  
Susanville, CA 96130  
760 395-0420 (November – May)  
530 825-2191 (May- November)

Valerie Aubrey  
686-795 Bamboo Way  
Spalding Tract, Eagle Lake  
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530 825-2115 Home  
530 249-1430 Cell

**Enclosed:**

Form 1023 Explanations to questions  
Articles of Incorporation for Eagle Lake Guardians from the State of California  
Constitution and Bylaws Eagle Lake Guardians  
Federal EIN Confirmation  
State Franchise Tax Board Application/Explanations

**RESEARCH PAPER**, Authors Copy. This paper explains in great detail what has been done and what needs to be done to preserve Eagle Lake and in specific, Eagle Lake trout: Long-term captive breeding does not necessarily prevent establishment: lessons learned from Eagle Lake rainbow trout Gerard Carmona-Catot, Peter B. Moyle and Rachel E. Simmons

Meeting Minutes 11-1-11 Regarding cooperation with CDFG and USFS LNF  
Membership Application  
January 2012 Newsletter  
Flyer for Fundraiser (our first)