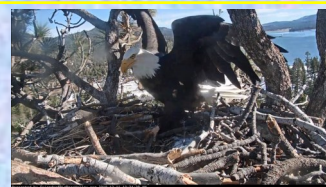




Protecting Big Bear Valley's native habitats and species through environmental education, monitoring and advocacy

URGENT SPECIAL UPDATE!!!



MAJOR THREAT TO OUR BALD EAGLES!

~~Jackie and Shadow Need Your Help~~

Their shoreline habitat and nesting neighborhood could be destroyed to the point that they abandon their nest and leave the area.



Presented by FriendsOfBigBearValley.org 2020-07-02 07:54:55 PM

A proposal for:

- 50 luxury house sites
- new roads
- huge private marina in eagle foraging area
- large marina parking area

only ½ mile from their nest could eliminate the possibility of them continuing to nest here.

The proposed development site can be seen from the nest cam! (<—yellow circle in photo of Jackie and Shadow.)

Even the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) states that the current project plan would have **SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL IMPACTS** on bald eagles (a California Endangered Species) that cannot be mitigated or

lessened. And that analysis was done before 2010—BEFORE any bald eagles stayed year-round and nested in our valley. So, the impacts now would be MUCH more significant than they are still currently reporting.

In spite of all that, San Bernardino County Planning is recommending project approval. The decision will be made by the County Board of Supervisors at a public hearing, currently set for July 28.

WHAT YOU CAN DO? (see details of how on page 3) — Every voice counts!

- Write comment letters to the Board of Supervisors immediately
- ASAP ask the County to delay this hearing until it is safer to attend a large meeting
- Speak at the public hearing on July 28
- Share the news with family, friends and social media

The much more significant impacts this project would cause, based on eagles now nesting only 1/2 mile from the site, has never been studied or analyzed. Project proponents have attempted to conceal the true impacts to bald eagles by creating what they call a 'Long Term Management Plan.' Without proper analysis, management plans have no way to be evaluated or considered.

This currently forested lakefront site (see current site photo page 3) is used by the eagles to feed themselves and their chicks. The marina, parking, roads and houses would destroy this key north shore foraging ground. In addition, many of their current perch trees would either be cut down, surrounded by a busy parking lot or become part of a very 'disturbable' private yard.

The monumental increase in disturbance in this quiet area would risk causing the eagles to abandon the nest.

This proposed project would also create many other detrimental issues for locals, visitors, wildlife, National Forest and the community—
(See pages 2-4 for details)



2018—Jackie & her newly fledged chick, Stormy, on Moon Camp site



We could lose the chance to see Jackie and Shadow—in tender moments, tending eggs, caring for chicks



Nearby roost trees and perch trees utilized by local eagles would have more local disturbance.



Fire and Evacuation Risks:

The proposed project would intensify fire danger in an area

“Which areas face the greatest risk for forest fires?”

“I’m most concerned about communities in pine forests that haven’t burned since the 19th century: **Big Bear Lake and Lake Arrowhead in the eastern San Bernardino Mountains**, and Idyllwild in the San Jacinto Mountains.”

—Richard Minnich, a fire ecologist at UC Riverside
LOS ANGELES TIMES—MAY 23, 2017 | 12:45 PM

- 1) *already plagued with high fire-risk and*
- 2) *ranked in top 1% as the most hazardous, least adequate fire/emergency evacuation routes in the state.*

This area is already rated such a high fire risk that many local homeowners have had their insurance cancelled. A housing density increase along the National Forest boundary would increase the fire risk.

A Mountain Road Capacity Study commissioned by the County in 2012 determined that based on data from 2008, Big Bear Valley would take between 15 and 32 hours to evacuate completely—Paradise, California did not have the luxury of even a few hours. When Big Bear Valley had to be evacuated in 2003, two of the evacuation routes were blocked by fire, so the only remaining way out was at a standstill for many hours.

All of that is based on a smaller valley population, estimated to have risen over 110% between 2000 and 2010. Also, these population numbers are based on full time residents, not including holiday weekend visitors when the population explodes from 10’s of 1000s to 100’s of 1000s.



California Cities With the Worst Wildfire Evacuation Routes

To evaluate exit routes for Californians living in areas at risk of a fire-related evacuation, we combined and analyzed data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Cal Fire and OpenStreetMap

By [Associated Press](#)

Published Apr 25, 2019 at 6:20 PM | Updated at 12:04 PM PDT on Apr 26, 2019

[On the list, among others...]

92314: Big Bear, Minnelusa and Sugarloaf (92386) in San Bernardino County
(NOTE: Minnelusa is the section of north shore near the proposed project site)

Increased Traffic and Traffic Hazards:

On a gorgeous, curvy section of north shore’s scenic highway, the proposed project would

- 1) *create new, significant traffic hazards*
- 2) *increase traffic and congestion*
- 3) *introduce pedestrian traffic to a dangerous “blind-spot” section of state highway*

The poor and inadequate road and traffic design placed entrances to the housing tract at the curviest section of the highway. With blind curves and residents wanting to jaunt across traffic to the marina and lake, even CalTrans considers the design dangerous.

Requires a Zone Change to High Density:

The current zoning is rural, 1 house per 40 acres. The project requires that the zoning density be increased to high density residential zoning, 1 house per 20,000 square feet.

According to the County’s own General Plan

Any Zone Change—Must be in Public Interest!

...and this one clearly is extremely detrimental in a multitude of arenas, especially since increased zoning density would further aggravate the existing and potentially dire evacuation deficiency.

Other Issues:

- noise and light pollution** (the studies used city standards, not those of a quiet, rural hamlet on a lake in the mountains)
- water and infrastructure overload** (the nearby houses already run low on water and the well for this project draws from the same aquifer)
- other endangered wildlife** (northern flying squirrels, southern rubber boas)
- sets a zone change precedent** (which makes others more likely, increasing negative impacts)

Sorry for the last minute notice!!

This is a tactic often used by agencies to minimize public scrutiny and public comment.

Please call them out on this.

County’s Squishy Answers...

- The public hearing for the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors was previously set for October 8, 2019, when many of you wrote comment letters and were planning to give comments at the hearing.
- It was suddenly postponed by County Planning less than 18 hours ahead of the meeting time.
- The County said the reason for the postponement was that a new Final Environmental Impact Report needed to be released for public review prior to the hearing.
- Now the County says no new Final EIR will be released for public review—it will be posted on their website.
- They’ve now had 9 months to do the updated Final EIR so the public could review it. But, it’s not there yet!—they “hope it will be up by July 17.” That leaves only a week for anyone to review 900 pages and comment prior to the hearing. (The County has actually had a year and 9 months since the Planning Commission hearing in Oct 2018, to get things ready to give the public a chance to review—but now we only get a week at most and no public notice.
- The project has been delayed repeatedly by the County or developer for reasons that are never made clear. Now, suddenly the public hearing **MUST URGENTLY** be scheduled during a time the County is asking everyone to stay home and absolutely not be in groups due to the Covid situation. **AND** they are requiring any testimony to be done in person at the meeting.



Proposed project site, current view from the lake and south shore—photo by Erv Nichols

Plants that Exist Only in this Valley!

The proposed project would reduce the already rare habitat available to these endangered species

- 1) in the heart of a National Forest,
- 2) in a unique, rural area on the north shore.

The project site itself contains 3 species of plants and rare habitat that do not exist anywhere else in the world! Less than 1/3 of this special habitat is planned to be conserved—and the developer is trying to mitigate the loss of the others with property that:

- a-contains almost none of the main species on this site (Ashy Gray Paintbrush) and
- b-has already been counted as mitigation for another project

(Rather than utilizing the standards defined and accepted by the US Forest Service to define this endangered habitat, the biological analysis uses non-standard criteria that portends lower mitigation requirements.)



Photos by Ed Wallace



Photos by Ed Wallace

WHAT YOU CAN DO—

-Please send your comments to the County Supervisors to arrive by July 27, asking them to deny approval of this project and citing reasons you believe it must be denied.

(to: COB@bos.sbcounty.gov or Clerk of the Board, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino, CA 92415)

(For individual Supervisor emails/addresses and a downloadable sample letter: <https://friendsofbigbearvalley.org/environmental-watch/action-needed/>)

-Please ask the County to delay this hearing until a time when it is safer to attend a large meeting. Call Clerk of the Board — 909-387-3841 ASAP

-Spread the word to family, friends and social media. Ask your friends and family to also send emails or letters.

-Attend the public hearing at the Board of Supervisors on July 28 in San Bernardino (385 N. Arrowhead Ave.) at 10 a.m. (Masks, social distancing required; temperature taken prior to entry)

-If you are willing to be more involved to help with anything, please email sandy@friendsofbigbearvalley.org For more information, please visit the “Environmental Watch/Action Needed” page of our website: friendsofbigbearvalley.org

Due to the continuously changing social engagement guidelines, especially regarding gatherings and meetings, please check our website for any updates prior to the meeting—visit the “Environmental Watch/Action Needed” page of our website: <https://friendsofbigbearvalley.org/environmental-watch/action-needed/>

Thank you thank you thank you for your support and assistance!!

URGENT Deadline—

OUR BALD EAGLES, QUALITY OF LIFE and PERSONAL SAFETY are being threatened

Please take action before July 28 when this is set to be decided

A proposed housing development in Fawnskin, on the north shore of Big Bear Lake threatens to:

- destroy key elements of our bald eagle nesting/foraging habitat
- impose high survival risk on new chicks and high risk of nesting eagles leaving the area
- increase fire and evacuation risk for all residents and visitors in the valley
- destroy the quiet, rural quality of life of the north shore
- add significantly to the already out of control airbnb issues in the area
- greatly increase traffic hazards and infrastructure overload
- ignore/skirt protective environmental laws and County general plan requirements
- eliminate the scenic north shore landscape views from the lake and south shore
- plow over endangered plants that exist only in this valley and nowhere else in the world



Project site viewed from FOBBV Bald Eagle nest camera

**Look inside
for details on all of this...
along with
HOW YOU CAN HELP**



Proposed housing project



Proposed project site only 6/10 of a mile across Grout Bay from Jackie & Shadow's nest

An email version of this special announcement will be in your email inbox, if we have your email address.
If not, please email us to a digital copy—sandy@friendsofbigbearvalley.org



Friends of Big Bear Valley
P.O. Box 422
Fawnskin, CA 92333

Address Service Requested

Time Sensitive Update
Please Open Today!