



Donner Summit Association (DSA) Core Action Team Meeting
Thursday, July 16, 2026 4:30-5:30 PM
In-person meeting at Nancy O Gallery & Glass in Soda Springs



Nancy O Gallery & Glass (DSCN9633.JPG)

Motions and votes are given in *italics*; action items are in **red bold**. For various reasons, the minutes below do not reflect the strict chronological order of discussions during the meeting.

1. Welcome:

Pat Malberg called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Chris started a Zoom session.

Core Action Team (DSA Board) Attendees: Tom Denzler, Elissa Hambrecht, Pat Malberg, Bill Oudegeest, Chris Parker, Dick Simpson, Mike Spain, and John Svahn (by Zoom).

Others: Andrea Broaddus (Soda Springs resident), Steve Carle (liaison from Serene Lakes Property Owners Association), Meghan Lowry (Sugar Bowl employee), Don Malberg (Lake Mary resident), and Sara Schrichte (Soda Springs resident).

2. Approval of the Agenda:

Bill asked to add an item to the agenda regarding Hub operations (see 7g).

Mike moved to approve the revised agenda; Tom seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously (MSC-U).

3. Approval of Minutes from the June Meeting:

MSC-U (Tom / Mike) to approve the June meeting minutes.

4. E-Vote Confirmation

Dick reported that a letter of support was approved by the Board after the June meeting. The letter supported a Sugar Bowl Academy request for grant funding to pursue a forest fuels reduction project. A copy of the letter was appended to the agenda for this meeting. No one at this meeting contested the 9-0 affirmative e-vote.

5. Financial Report (Tom):

There was not much activity during June. Expenses included \$248 for the Summit Clean-up, a \$177 Sani-Hut invoice for portable toilets, and an invoice for \$190 from NextPixels for web support. **Tom and Mike will review an invoice from Microsoft for a software license.** There was about \$40 in revenue — mostly from a supporter seeking a DSA baseball cap in exchange for a donation.

Pat said she had not heard from Cory Caldwell, who promised a map of portable toilets on the Summit (and their sponsors) at the May DSA Board meeting; **she will follow up with Cory.** She noted that visitation on the Summit over the July 4th weekend confirmed that a second toilet is needed at the Summit; there is currently none at the PCT South trailhead.

Tom mentioned that DSA's insurance costs have doubled in recent years — from about \$2K to \$4K. He suggested that a search for a less expensive carrier be initiated before the next renewal.

6. County and Other Reports:

Nevada County: No County representative was present, and there was no news from other sources.

Truckee Convene, Champion, and Catalyze Forum: There has been no CCC Forum since the last DSA Board meeting.

Placer County: No representative from the County was present. However, Pat said that Placer County is updating its General Plan for the first time since 2013, and they are actively seeking input from the community. The GP update will be one focus of the Municipal Advisory Council meeting later this evening. Can DSA make this update process a community activity?

Questions include what makes our community unique and how does the General Plan address needs of the Summit community? Donner Summit doesn't have much Placer County space for commercial activities (except ski resorts).

DSA could host a community meeting in the next couple months; the results from such a meeting could be forwarded to the County by the end of the year. Tom thought that, if we understand the timeline, DSA should be able to provide useful input. Bill thought that an easel/whiteboard at SummitFest could be used to capture suggestions at an already-scheduled DSA event. Chris suggested that highlighting the General Plan review on our web site could be useful¹. Several wondered whether there is a parallel activity on the Nevada County side? Periodic reviews are required by California law, where "periodic" has been interpreted to be every 10-20 years. Andrea said she does not believe Nevada County has a county-wide review; instead, they have area plans — such as the Soda Springs Area Plan —

<https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/1098/Area-Plans#docaccess-bf8e67da0430553de81bd9463badf036d6d19b530aea7db6cde0a51e9a0b3d56>

which was adopted in 2016. There was general consensus that Nevada County would not be repeating the time and expense invested in the SSAP anytime in the near future. But there is an open question of what Nevada County's update process would be like. **Pat will investigate.**

7. Ongoing Projects

- a. Sugar Bowl Sustainability Partnership: Meghan said Sugar Bowl is revamping its web site and wants to include logos of "partner" organizations in environmental areas. This would not necessarily imply sponsorship or support of any specific project.

¹ Note added after the meeting: See "Summit News" section at <https://www.donnersummitca.com/latest-news>

MSC-U (Elissa/Bill) to approve use of our logo on the Sugar Bowl sustainability web page.

- b. Forestry Tour: Alisa Adriani guided four DSA Board members, two Sugar Bowl employees, and two representatives from SLPOA through some of her family's forestry projects on about six square miles near Devil's Peak. The family has received letters of support from DSA on grant requests. Though no DSA-supported project has been funded, the family has been successful in obtaining other grant money. Alisa said she doesn't want to continue in the current mode, where grant money supports work on a few acres and the family has to make up the difference; she wants more acreage in future projects. On the other hand, she has learned a lot about preparing forestry plans, implementing them, and working through the grant process.

Alisa identified (illegal) campfires in the North Fork gorge as a possible danger to Donner Summit since the prevailing winds blow from those campsites toward the northeast. She suggested working with other stakeholders in posting "No Fires" signs near those campsites (signs exist at trailheads, but not in the inner canyon). The same crew could also break up campfire rings and remove trash. Meghan thought that Sugar Bowl might be able to mobilize a few employees to contribute to this work if done in the cooler autumn months (but before snow). **Pat will contact Jim Ricker of the North Fork American River Alliance about possible collaboration. Dick will contact the Truckee Ranger District about signage requirements and possible material support.**

- c. Gould Park: Dick received permission from Marc Henry of Placer County Parks to proceed with another volunteer trail day at Gould Park. It is scheduled for July 18 9-11 AM and will follow the successful format used last October. He has also enlisted the support of Cynthia Cutler, who is organizing the annual Cisco Grove picnic on the same day, and Tom Jones, who leads the Firewise Community there. Work will include "refreshing" the trails through the ruins that were cleared last year, then extend the trail system to (but probably not through) the alders to the Artists Corner.
- d. Graffiti Abatement: Pat contacted Jenna Prescott, and Sugar Bowl has agreed to do graffiti abatement on the old railroad tunnels on September 10 starting at 9 AM. Others will be invited to join. Sugar Bowl will have sprayers and other power tools that can remove graffiti faster than handwork. Pat said John should be prepared for a request for "a lot of paint" — in the range of 50 gallons, since the 25 gallons ordered last year was exhausted quickly.

- e. Economic Development: Nevada County's Board of Supervisors postponed its cannabis dispensary discussion to October 6 when they will next be meeting in Truckee. Letters announcing the postponement were received by Sara and Dick (among others), indicating that the County has made significant steps forward in communicating with community members interested in this topic.

Sara said that Friends of Truckee Library had told her that grants are available for community projects once a dispensary has been approved and opens — this based on the fact that Truckee has a delivery-only dispensary and is eligible for such grants. Questions were raised about the size of the grants and what projects might be supported. **Sara will investigate.** Andrea asked whether we know what people in outlying areas — such as Plavada — think about having a dispensary in Soda Springs. Dick said he has been trying to contact representatives from those communities; but finding them has been difficult and getting responses is more so. Chris said DSA should not be viewed as an advocate; but we have been successful in airing this issue.

- f. SummitFest 2026: Elissa said Beth has been doing most of the work; but she (Elissa) has been following progress. There has been a beer donation and at least two resorts have offered season ski passes for the auction. Mike said that he doesn't believe Powdr Corp was asked about donating a season pass at either Boreal or Soda Springs. John said he doesn't remember seeing a donation request from Truckee Donner Land Trust. Elissa e-mailed the request letter to Board members during the meeting.



Rail carts at The Hub with weathered platforms and weeds (DSCN9637.JPG).

- g. The Hub: Bill said we have \$100K for Hub maintenance in the Lamson-Cashion bequest; we have used little or none of it so far. As he has had trouble getting to The Hub for regular caretaking, he suggested that we hire a “gardening” service. Tops of carts will need to be replaced in a future year; but keeping the weeds under control is the current need. Attendees made suggestions about possible service providers — Rock & Rose Nursery and Landscaping (<https://rocknrose.com/garden-center/lawn-and-garden-center/>) is in Truckee, LaVerde has done work at Sugar Bowl, and Grateful Gardens (<https://www.gratefulgardens.biz>) is another local possibility. Since the work is narrowly focused and perhaps needed only once per month, John suggested that contracting with an individual might be more satisfactory than trying to work with a larger operator. **Bill will investigate, seek bids, and report to a future meeting.**

8. Internal Matters

Web Site: There have been several recent improvements such as swapping the banner photo at the top of the DSA News page from snow-covered Crows Nest to Castle Peak with flowers and addition of the “cannabis” project page. Most of the big improvements are now in the rearview mirror and we can concentrate on maintaining content.

Admin: Helen has submitted her resignation — DSA was not a lot of work, but it was easy to shed given that other demands on her time have increased. There was consensus that Helen brought a lot of community connection to DSA, which is now lost. Pat noted that Sara was Admin for DSAA; Board members should keep their ears open in case they hear of possible replacements. **Dick will post the job description on the web site.**

Annual Meeting: DSA is supposed to elect its officers and consider new Board members at its June meeting. Dick forgot to include this in the June agenda, so we need to do it now.

MSC-U (Dick/Chris) to reappoint Tom Denzler, Elissa Hambrecht, Pat Malberg, Dick Simpson, and Beth Tanhoff to new two-year terms (2027-28).

Several names were proposed as possible new Board members. Of those present, only Andrea indicated interest in joining the Board. Others were non-committal. **Dick will circulate the procedure for considering new members to Board members.** Several members had forgotten that we have a procedure.

No one suggested changing the DSA officers.

MSC-U (Dick/Chris) to re-elect the current officers.

Pat Malberg (President)
Bill Oudegeest (Vice President)
Dick Simpson (Secretary)
Tom Denzler (CFO), and
Beth Tanhoff (unofficial but *de facto* Community Liaison Officer).

Future Meetings: Bill offered to host the August 20 meeting at the Nancy O Gallery again.

9. Announcements:

Mike noted that the Point Mariah Trail Marathon will be August 1. It starts and ends at Soda Springs Mountain Resort; but expect to see runners on many Royal Gorge/Sugar Bowl trails.

Responding to a question, someone said that part of a television series starring Donald Glover is being shot on the Summit. One sequence apparently includes a motorcycle stunt ride through the railroad tunnels.

10. Adjournment:

There being no other business, Pat adjourned the meeting at 5:27 PM.

Minutes approved by the DSA Board of Directors at its meeting on August 20, 2026.

signed by DSA Secretary, Richard Simpson _____



Basin (left) and Castle Peaks from Royal Gorge's Castle Peak Trail (DSCN9583.JPG).