



**NORTHERN SIERRA SUMMER
HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2019**



What a great winter we've had – already surpassing the annual snow and rainfall totals for the whole year. And the whole state has been declared out of the drought. As good as it's been, there have been other record snowfall winters. Since surveyors began keeping measurements of winter snow amounts in 1879, a few stand out:

“The Blizzard of 1890”

This storm most impacted the Southern and Central Pacific Railroad when it tried to cross the Sierra Nevada January 2, 1890 through blinding wind-blown snow. There was already 7 feet at the summit. Then, on January 15 over 9 feet fell in three days, crippling any passage by rail or other means over that elevation.

Every type of snow removal equipment available was used to clear the lines:

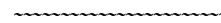
The Bucker Plow – an engine equipped with a tall wedge shaped blade mounted on the front to push the snow off the tracks to either side.

The Cyclone Plow – This engine had a huge circular “corkscrew” blade mounted on front that would bore through the snow and throw it off on either side of the tracks.

The Rotary Plow – a huge fan type blade mounted on the front of an engine, also designed to throw snow away from the tracks.

Between January 16 and the end of the month more snow fell bringing the depth up to about 30 feet. Even with 600 men working to dig the train out, progress was slow – due

to harsh conditions. The equipment became buried in avalanche driven snow drifts and broke down as a result of trying to break through ice hard snow pack.



“The Mother of All Snow Storms”

In January, 1952, and almost identical event happened along the tracks of Donner Summit. With 23 feet of snow already on the ground, it started to snow some more – crippling the Southern Pacific train bound for Reno. The usually safe snow sheds were crushed by the heavy snowfall – making passage impossible. The travelers were stranded for 3 days while 13 more feet of snow fell during that time. That same winter of 1952, Division of Highways (forerunner of Cal Trans) workers fought the elements to dig through to stranded skiers at Echo Summit – snow depth: 160 inches = 13 feet – with more falling. Snow was reported all the way down to Placerville.

The General Meeting will be held at the Sciots Tract Clubhouse on June 22nd at 10 a.m. Our guest speaker will be Josh Sjostrom, from the El Dorado National Forest, Placerville District Office. Among the topics to be discussed will be: Cabin Owner Guidelines – how to navigate the compliance process. Dues are still \$20.00 per year. Please send your check (payable to NSSHA) to: Tony Planchon, 1768 11th Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95818 or bring your dues to the meeting.