

NSSHA ANNUAL MEETING
CAMP SACRAMENTO
JUNE 27, 2026
www.nssha.org

The Northern Sierra Summer Home Association annual meeting began at 10:35 a.m. President Tony Franks introduced Scoutmaster Mike Jardano; Assistant Scoutmasters Ed Cargile and Brian Weatherford; and Scouts Ethan Palmrose, Eagle Scout Vincent Weatherford, Jesse Figpin, Marcello Ziflow, and Carmela Jardano, all from Sacramento. Tony asked Ethan to open the meeting with the presentation of the Color Guard, the Pledge of Allegiance, and recitation of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Welcome: Tony Franks, NSSHA President, thanked Camp Sacramento, Chad, and the crew for their hospitality. He invited members to help themselves to coffee and treats at the back of the room.

Tony asked whether members had received the newsletter or email updates. Anyone who has not should see Paul Hugo after the meeting to be added to the list. NSSHA plans to improve its use of email blasts, notices, and periodic newsletters.

Tony said NSSHA wants members to have an opportunity to ask questions while also keeping the meeting moving. Question forms were available at the back of the room and would be addressed at the end of the meeting.

NSSHA represents a large portion of the Eldorado National Forest, covering three districts: Placerville, Pacific, and Amador along Highway 88. Tony said he would like to take the presentation to Highway 88 and hold a satellite meeting for cabin owners in the Amador District.

Members were asked to pick up an agenda and rate the topics in order of interest.

About NSSHA: NSSHA represents 38 tracts and 1,111 cabins in the Eldorado National Forest. Tony encouraged more cabin owners to pay NSSHA dues.

Introduction of Officers and Area Reps: Tony introduced the NSSHA board: Vice President Paul Hugo, Treasurer Mike Blote, Secretary Nancy Allen, and Editor Jen Huntley.

Area Representatives are Meredith Randall, Area 1; Linden Beck, Area 2; Caroline Peterson, Area 3; Lisa Long, Area 4; Dawn Johnson, Area 5; Mary Clarke ver Hoef, Area 6 (Pacific District); Stephanie Holson, Area 7 (Amador District); Nancy Allen, Area 8; and Julie Newlin, Area 9, (Sciots Tract). Tony asked each Area Rep to stand as their name was called.

Business Meeting: Vice President Paul Hugo called the meeting to order and asked whether there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none, and the minutes were approved. **Treasurer's Report:** Mike Blote explained that his report reflects banking activity for the year, not an income statement, and that the online version may differ because dues are still being collected. Mike reviewed the statement, and a member asked about the \$5,000 donation to NFH. The ending bank balance as of June 23, 2026, was \$42,933.73. The yearly change in cash was negative \$4,142.20. Mike said the NFH donation would be addressed later in the meeting.

Paul asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. A member made the motion, another member seconded it, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Paul announced that Mike will be stepping down as Treasurer in the coming year and that NSSHA is looking for a replacement. Anyone interested should contact Paul.

Introduction of Keynote Speaker David Fournier, ENF Forest Supervisor: Tony introduced David Fournier, who oversees the Eldorado National Forest, and said NSSHA was honored to have him attend. David previously served as Forest Supervisor of the Mendocino National Forest and has worked in the Eldorado National Forest, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and the Tahoe National Forest. Most recently, he served as Acting R5 Deputy Director of Ecosystem Planning and has also served as Acting Forest Supervisor for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. His background includes research, private industry, consulting as a forest economist, and

international work with the U.S. Peace Corps in Niger and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. He holds an M.S. in Forestry from the University of Maine and completed doctoral coursework in forestry at Penn State University.

ENF Forest Supervisor David Fournier: David said he previously worked on the Eldorado National Forest from 1991 to 1998 as a forester and has long-standing ties to the outdoors, including as an Eagle Scout. He said he was attending on behalf of the Forest Service, the Eldorado National Forest, District Ranger Andrew Mishler, and Linda Babcock, who oversees the recreation residence special-use program. David arrived after the Caldor Fire and said he has been impressed by the dedication of cabin owners working to rebuild. One cabin has been completed and others are in progress. He has met several times with Tony, Paul, and Meredith to discuss issues affecting both burned and unburned cabins. David said his role is to support the work of the forest, including the recreation residence program, and he expects to remain on the Eldorado for at least five years.

Forest Service Reorganization: David explained that the current Forest Service reorganization mainly affects levels above the individual forest. The Washington Office is moving from Washington, D.C., to Salt Lake City, and regional offices are being eliminated and replaced by state officers. The CA state director, based in Placerville, will supervise all the forest supervisors in California and Hawaii and liaison with the state agencies. He expects more authority and responsibility to shift to forest supervisors, which should speed up decisions by reducing the need for issues to move from the forest to the region and then to Washington. David said he trusts his staff, expects briefings when needed, and wants taxpayer dollars used effectively.

David said the reorganization is taking much of his time, especially because he currently has no deputy and is relying on district rangers to help manage the transition. Placerville will play a significant role in the new structure. Some former regional-office functions will move to a state-level model, while operational expertise will be housed in service centers. Placerville is expected to host specialists such as engineers, bridge experts, and research staff who are not normally located on individual forests.

Fee Retention, Staffing, and Roads: David said the Washington Office is currently directing local forests to use a portion of fee-retention funds for salaries, as the agency works to reduce reliance on appropriated funds for staffing. He said the forest is also considering how fees can support access needs such as roads and trails, both short term and long term. Road maintenance remains difficult because the forest has only three engineers, two equipment operators, and has lost about 30% of its staff over the last year and a half. The remaining staff are dedicated, and the forest has identified a top-priority list of positions it needs to fill.

Glyphosate and Reforestation Practices: David addressed concerns about glyphosate and herbicide use. He used the 1992 Cleveland Fire area as an example, saying many of the trees planted after that fire are now being thinned commercially and that herbicides helped prevent the area from becoming brush fields. He explained that herbicides are used in targeted applications where mechanical treatment is not practical, and that the Forest Service uses buffers, label requirements, EPA guidance, and scientific review. He noted that some additives historically used with glyphosate were more toxic than the active ingredient, and said current practices use less-toxic materials, including plant-based dye and gel-type surfactants. David emphasized that herbicide use is kept to the minimum amount needed to be effective.

Caldor Fire Recovery: David said roughly one-quarter of the Caldor Fire area will be reforested, while the remaining areas will receive other treatments such as prescribed fire and fuels work. He noted that prescribed fire is a long-standing tool used by tribes and is important to restoring healthier forest conditions.

David said the forest is working with partners on hazard trees, reforestation, burn piles, and fuel reduction across both burned and unburned areas. The work is complicated by mixed ownership, steep terrain, rocky areas, and inaccessible ground, so not every acre will be treated. The Forest Service now has NEPA coverage for long-term Caldor Fire recovery work. Partners including American Forests, the Great Basin Institute, and Sierra Pacific Industries are helping with reforestation and the creation of future fuel breaks. David said the goal is to grow a future forest that can coexist with fire by thinning, reducing fuels, and reintroducing fire where appropriate. In the Amador area, David discussed the Mokelumne Amador Calaveras project, a large NEPA project involving both the Stanislaus and Eldorado National Forests. Work is already underway along portions of Highway 88. David said his role is to help staff focus on the greatest needs and align that work with partners. He said partnerships are essential because outside funding and support from philanthropies and the State of California allow the Forest Service to accomplish far more than it could with federal funding alone.

David said Caldor recovery work is ongoing and that the Forest Service is developing better public tools, including status maps showing completed work, active projects, and upcoming work. An herbicide-application map is already available, which was important to tribes and others who wanted transparency about where spraying occurred. David acknowledged that herbicide use raises concerns, but said the Forest Service follows protections for water, wildlife, habitat, and application areas. He also noted that herbicides are sometimes needed to control invasive plants that can spread after disturbance and are difficult to remove by pulling or burning. When planning projects, the Forest Service works with tribes to identify sacred sites and gathering areas important for medicine and food. David said the forest's Heritage Program is active, and he wants to support those conversations and do the best possible work in coordination with tribal partners.

Engagement with Cabin Owners: David said he is relatively new to the Special Uses program, although during his time in the Lake Tahoe Basin he evaluated many trees around recreation residences as a forester. He said he values getting cabin owners connected with the resource and with each other.

David thanked Tony, Meredith, and Paul for encouraging continued communication. He said he appreciates the opportunity to serve in his role and wants to use his authority where it can have the greatest positive effect. He said the Eldorado has a relatively new team. Although the forest has lost some employees and added new ones, the team is coming together around a long-term vision and wants to continue the conversation with cabin owners.

Question about logging on Ice House Road: A member asked about logging on the Eldorado National Forest, specifically along Ice House Road, and whether herbicides were being used to benefit the commercial timber industry. David explained that Ice House Road is in the Pacific Ranger District and that the logging is largely in the Cleveland burn scar around Union Valley Reservoir, where stands were planted in the late 1970s. He said the purpose is to reduce overstocked forest conditions caused by roughly 120 years of fire exclusion. Historically, fire would have thinned the area naturally about every seven years. In place of fire, the Forest Service is thinning the forest. David said herbicides are not used for that logging; a fungicide is applied to the tops of freshly cut stumps over 14 inches to help prevent the spread of root rot.

Question about special-use fee retention: A member asked whether special-use fee-retention funds could be used for road maintenance. David explained that the Forest Service has lost significant contracting and grants-and-agreements capacity. To stretch remaining capacity, the agency is consolidating work and looking at longer-term agreements, blanket purchase agreements, and task-order-based contracts that can be used more efficiently over time.

Andrew added that partners may be able to help with some road and hazard-tree work if the right partnerships can be developed. Linda described the Twin Bridges road repair completed last year and noted how long the process took because engineering review was required. The next three roads targeted are Fir, Sayles, and Strawberry Tract. Linda said there are many road issues, so they must be prioritized. Cabin owners should contact Linda, who is maintaining a list and coordinating with Andrew, the roads engineer, and David.

David closed this discussion by reflecting on his Peace Corps experience, where he learned that successful work must continue after the original organizer leaves. He gave the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team as an example of a partnership he helped start that has continued through multiple strategy updates. He said the Eldorado should use the same long-term approach: build partnerships that last beyond a single grant, project, ranger, or forest supervisor.

Question about Bull Creek road repairs: A cabin owner said Bull Creek Road still has damage, including shifting ground, landslides, access problems for the last eight to ten cabins, recurring washouts, damage from tree crews, and debris flows. The member said the condition of the road has affected fire access and could prevent cabin owners from getting out during an emergency. Cabin owners have made some repairs, but the road washes out each year. When the member has asked about repairs, he has been told the road is the cabin owners' responsibility. Meredith directed him to speak with the Forest Service during the office-hours period after the meeting.

Special-use fee transparency: Meredith asked David for more transparency about how recreation residence special-use fees are being spent. She said cabin owners would like specific information about where their money is going so NSSHA can share that information with the membership.

Question about fee retention for Wrights Lake/Dark Lake fuels reduction: A member asked whether fee-retention funds could be used for the Wrights Lake/Dark Lake fuels reduction project.

Andrew said fee retention likely could be used, but road work and fuels reduction are both very expensive. David added that partner grants often have language that limits or excludes road construction, while fuels-reduction projects are more likely to qualify for partner funding. For that reason, the Forest Service would probably rely on partner funding for fuels work rather than recreation-retention fees.

Website Quick Walk-Through: Paul Hugo asked how many members had visited the website and was pleased with the response. He highlighted the Resources section, which includes information on cabin repair, contractors, bears, fire, burn permits, and other topics of interest to cabin owners. Members who cannot find what they need should email Paul.

Dues: Members can now pay dues online. A QR code is available on the website.

Hazard Trees: Paul said hazard trees remain an ongoing topic, though most hazard-tree projects around the tracts are largely complete. The remaining work is primarily PG&E-related. The website explains tree markings, including green dots, red rings, and X marks. Members who cannot find the information they need should email Paul.

Forest Service Update — Linda Babcock: Linda said she had been away on the Lassen National Forest for four months. She thanked David for attending the meeting and sharing information, and thanked Andrew for covering for her while she was gone.

PG&E Operations: PG&E work is continuing. Linda has been working with PG&E to make sure log decks and debris are removed. If debris remains, cabin owners should contact Linda at the recreation residence email address.

New Inspection Process: Linda said the recreation residence group will begin inspecting cabins on a three-year rotation. Because Nancy Platt was working alone, inspections were not completed until the recent 20-year permit-renewal process, which left some cabin owners surprised by renewal requirements. There are still 535 standing cabins, with others being rebuilt, so about 175 cabins will be inspected each year. The goal is to send inspections in November so cabin owners have the winter to complete their O&M plans and plan spring or summer work.

Linda reminded cabin owners that Forest Service approval is required before doing exterior work on a cabin. The Forest Service wants the cabins to retain a forest setting rather than look like a neighborhood. For example, if a cabin owner wants to add a railing, Linda needs to know the proposed materials, where they will be purchased, and the paint or stain color before approving the work.

Linda encouraged tracts with upcoming cabin meetings to invite the Forest Service. One or more staff members will try to attend.

Question about inspection rotation: A member asked whether the three-year inspection rotation applies only to the Placerville District or whether the other districts will follow the same process. Linda said she did not know but would find out.

NFH Update: Tony explained that cabin owners are represented at several levels. NFH, the National Forest Homeowners Association, represents cabin owners nationally and supports a lobbyist in Washington, D.C. Meredith Randall of 33 Mile Stone is NFH's Immediate Past President and met personally last year with the Chief of the Forest Service about cabin issues. Tony said NFH does important work on behalf of cabin owners.

NSSHA is the regional organization representing cabin owners on the Eldorado National Forest, including more than 1,100 cabins. Cabin tract associations provide the next level of local representation.

Tony said NSSHA has provided financial support for several important efforts in recent years. Last winter, the board voted to contribute \$5,000 to NFH in support of the proposed Cabin Program Restoration Act, a congressional bill intended to support cabin owners.

After the Caldor Fire, NSSHA also retained Downey Brand to address concerns about debris cleanup on burned cabin lots and whether FEMA or CalOES would fund that work. After the law firm was retained, FEMA changed

course and, together with CalOES, funded the cleanup. Tony noted that cleanup of his lot alone was billed at \$73,000, and FEMA ultimately funded cleanup for all 177 lots.

Tony encouraged members to join NFH. He said the Caldor Fire showed him that some cabin issues require political or congressional action, not just requests to local Forest Service staff. In some cases, congressional direction is needed to give the Forest Service authority to act on behalf of cabin owners.

Meredith Randall — NFH Update: Meredith noted that state OES cleanup after a fire destroying recreation residences had only happened after the Caldor Fire. Other cabin communities had sought FEMA assistance, but there were complications because FEMA is a federal agency and the cabins are on Forest Service land.

Cabin Program Restoration Act: Meredith said the Cabin Program Restoration Act has been drafted but not yet introduced. Its original sponsor, Representative LaMalfa, passed away unexpectedly. NFH believes a representative from Utah may introduce the legislation.

The proposed legislation addresses permit language that has changed over time. Meredith said permit-holder rights have diminished while responsibilities and liabilities have increased and Forest Service obligations have decreased. Most cabin owners may not notice the impact unless a cabin burns or there is a payment or administrative issue, but the current permits do not provide the same appeal rights. CPRA would restore permit-holder rights, create multiple pathways for rebuilding, and help clarify Forest Service authority. Meredith said the Eldorado would like to see more cabins rebuilt and recognizes the value cabin owners bring to the community and local economy, but current policy can limit what the Forest Service is able to do.

Meredith also said the legislation would help prevent future losses by recognizing the work of Fire Safe Councils and Firewise communities. The Forest Service has been interpreting policies generously to allow defensible-space work, but Meredith said those policies need to be codified so tracts can maintain defensible space.

Meredith said NFH was instrumental in getting fee-retention regulations passed. She noted that NFH is a national organization and that the level of communication and organization on the Eldorado is unusual compared with many other areas.

NFH monitors national issues that may affect public lands, Forest Service lands, and recreation residences, including the current Forest Service reorganization. Meredith said NFH is currently reviewing a recent Federal Register notice related to recreation and data collection on public lands and will issue a call to action if appropriate.

A stewardship group is developing an emergency-planning framework, including how cabin owners can communicate during an emergency. The group is also working on defensible-space and cabin-hardening guidance. Meredith said NFH holds an annual conference. This year's conference was virtual, and Forest Service Chief Schultz spoke. Meredith said she had met with Chief Schultz a year earlier about streamlining administration of the recreation residence program and suggested 30-year permits. The Forest Service later determined it could issue 30-year permits. Eldorado cabin owners recently received 20-year permits expiring in 2044, while much of the rest of the country is expected to receive 30-year permits in 2028, expiring in 2058. Meredith hopes Eldorado permit holders will be able to receive a 10-year extension.

NFH Membership: NFH represents about 13,000 recreation residences, but fewer than half are members. Meredith encouraged more cabin owners to join, noting that membership numbers matter. She reviewed membership figures and recognized tracts with 100% membership.

Signage: Paul Hugo said NSSHA provides signs for cabin tracts. Tracts that need a sign should contact Paul.

CCORP — Caldor Cabin Owners Recovery Project: Paul showed slides summarizing the number of cabins lost, being rebuilt, and not being rebuilt after the Caldor Fire. In the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, 34 cabins were lost: 2 abandoned, 19 walking away, and 13 rebuilding. One cabin is currently under construction.

On the Eldorado National Forest, 143 cabins were lost: 2 abandoned, 10 unknown, 84 walking away, and 47 rebuilding.

Paul also compared rebuilding after the Caldor Fire with private-land rebuilding after other major California wildfires, citing Los Angeles Times reporting. At the five-year mark, approximately 66% of homes lost in the 2017

Tubbs Fire had been rebuilt; 43% after the 2018 Carr Fire; 33% after the 2018 Woolsey Fire; 20% after the 2018 Camp Fire; and 5% after the 2020 North Complex Fire.

On the Eldorado National Forest, one cabin has been completed, one is close to completion, and others are in the pipeline.

Q&A from Submitted Forms: A member asked whether tract signs survive the winter. Paul said that if a sign will be buried by snowplows, it should be covered or taken down for the winter.

A member asked whether logging south of Johnson Pass Road is part of the Huckleberry project. Linda confirmed that it is. So far, about 300 acres have been completed, with about 100 acres remaining.

A member from 41 Mile Stone asked whether debris left on the ground after the fire would be cleaned up. Linda said probably not, but she would look into it.

A member from Bull Creek asked why crews appear to be removing healthy trees while leaving fire-related deadfall on the ground. The member also said cabin owners do not know who is doing the cutting. Linda asked to speak with the member after the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12:18 p.m.

Nancy Allen, Secretary

June 30, 2026