



A planned gondola will stretch for more than two miles between the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski resorts.
COURTESY/SQUAW VALLEY ALPINE MEADOWS

Lift off

Gondola project

On Feb. 5, Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows announced that a lawsuit from the Granite Chief Protection League against the resort was dropped, which allowed approval for the planned Squaw Alpine base-to-base gondola.

The League had concerns over the environmental analysis of the gondola, and the lawsuit was filed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). According to a press release, Squaw Alpine agreed to conserve 27 acres of the resort's private property, which includes wetlands as well as provides funding for the study and "potential" restoration of the endangered Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog. Funding will also be provided for the conservation of land within the Granite Chief Wilderness Area. How much funding Squaw Alpine will contribute is unclear. More specifically, the resort agreed to operate the gondola only during the winter and stop operations no later than April 30.

"Squaw Alpine has made significant and greatly appreciated commitments to minimize wilderness impacts and invest in important endangered species conservation efforts," Daniel Heagerty, director of the League said in the press release. "We are very pleased with the Agreement we reached with Squaw Alpine."

The lawsuit was originally filed in September of 2019, and the agreement was reached in November. The path of the gondola has since changed from when it was originally proposed and will stretch

over two miles between the two resorts, connecting 6,000 acres of skiable terrain in a roughly 16 minute ride. The goal of the gondola is to reduce car and shuttle traffic between the two resorts and enhance guest experience.

"We are very happy to have worked collaboratively with the League to address their concerns so that resources could be directed to environmentally beneficial purposes, rather than funding an

extended lawsuit," Ron Cohen, president and chief operating officer of Squaw Alpine, said in the release.

The nonprofit Sierra Watch, well known for the movement to "Keep Squaw True" also had many concerns over the gondola, and its members are mostly happy about the outcome. However, they still worry about the gondola inducing Alterra Mountain Company and KSL Capital Partners' larger vision for Squaw Alpine and the North Lake Tahoe-Truckee region, which could be described as "maximum development," according to Chase Schweitzer, field manager at Sierra Watch.

Proposed plans from Alterra and KSL also include helping Troy Caldwell with the development of White Wolf in between Squaw and Alpine, more development at the base of Squaw Valley, an indoor water park and village expansions, which Sierra Watch is currently challenging in court.

"The issues of parking, evacuation routes in case of a fire, issues with traffic, water scarcity, water supply and issues with housing, all create a larger problem for the North Lake Tahoe Truckee region," Schweitzer said.

Many locals are not happy about the approval of the gondola, a Facebook poll specific to the "Tahoe Truckee People" group showed that over 80 people were against the project, while just over 20 approved. "People are completely justified to feel that the way that traffic and parking is going to affect Alpine because of the gondola would create issues," Schweitzer said.

If locals want to take action against these projects, a petition can be signed through SierraWatch.org to "urge the Placer County Board of Supervisors to Keep Squaw True." □

GET MORE,
SPEND LESS.



plus100
CANNABINOIDS + BOTANICALS

Now open inside **European Fitness**
2999 S. Virginia Street, Reno

INSIDE THE LOBBY

**HIGHEST QUALITY.
BEST CBD PRICES.
NO COMPROMISES.**



SLEEP • ARTHRITIS • ANXIETY • ACHES AND PAIN • INFLAMMATION

plus100cbd.com • 1-833-PLUS100

DROPS • RUBS • GUMMIES • PET • TEAS • MORE...

lab-tested • made in USA • 100% organic
Grown at our Farm in Northern Nevada

FREE SAMPLES



present this coupon for:

20% off CBD PRODUCTS
IN-STORE PURCHASES

EXPIRES 4/1/20

2999 S. Virginia St. Reno, NV
Inside European Fitness Center

plus100
CANNABINOIDS + BOTANICALS

keep out of reach of children, for use only by adults 21 years of age and older

**sierra
well**



premium cannabis & cbd

100% free, no-minimum delivery

(775) 800-WELL

mention this ad, get 10% off your next purchase



1605 e second st,
reno, nv 89502

locations in both reno and carson city
to serve you

2765 US-50e suite a
carson city, nv 89701