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bcc
Subject Tuesday 7/26/10 BOS meeting, agenda item #1, 10-0821,
Sierra Nevada GeoTourism Project support

Dear Supervisor Briggs;

Geo Tourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. It retains a sense of place not only for tourists, who come for authentic culture, but for the local community as well.

According to Nicole DeJonghe's presentation of July 26th, travelers want an authentic experience, places off the beaten path, and local, preserved natural, historic, and cultural sites, outstanding scenery, clean and unpolluted environment, and to learn about other cultures.

Our county is perfectly situated and offers so much to potential to geo-tourists. Our range of elevations from the low golden foothills to the mixed hardwood forest and into the pine zone and over the summit, to Lake Tahoe's meadows and wetlands offers diverse scenery, as does our river canyons, our glacially-carved valleys, and our divides and summits. Our recreation abounds, from world-famous whitewater river rafting to canoeing alpine lakes; fly-fishing, boating, boarding, camping, hiking, biking, off-road sports, and snow sports of skiing, boarding, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling. El Dorado County contains Native American culture, as well as gold rush history located in most of our communities. El Dorado County communities are linked by Highway 49, the "Golden Chain," which many visitors follow through the foothills, looking for history and authentic places that continue to exist. Agritourism is alive and well, with our many quality wineries, our Farm Trails, and Apple Hill. Many of our communities offer unique shopping and dining experiences, as well.

The Sierra Nevada GeoTourism Project is an important marketing tool in the Economic Development toolkit, offering another avenue for travelers to find El Dorado County and make the county their destination. It allows citizens in our communities the opportunity to experience positive civic engagement in nominating the places that they feel contribute to the County's overall sense of place and their own personal sense of place. It is a positive project that can only bring more tourist dollars to our communities.

I urge you to vote positively to support Supervisor Santiago's recommendation to adopt the resolution to endorse the Sierra Nevada GeoTourism Project in El Dorado County; and to approve the letter of endorsement to the Sierra Business Council.

Best regards,

Monique Wilber
Shingle Springs resident