

THE BASS LAKE BULLETIN

The Voice of the Bass Lake Community
<http://basslakeaction.org>

THE BASS LAKE ACTION COMMITTEE

The Bass Lake Action Committee was formed by a group of concerned property owners in the Bass Lake Area and incorporated in 2003 as Non-profit organization, a 501(C)(4) corporation.

Our Mission Statement:

To provide a voice for Bass Lake homeowners in dealing with the county and other community agencies.
To keep homeowners informed about issues and meetings.



image credit - El Dorado County BOS Meeting Recording

COUNTY REVENUE DIRE, SUPERVISORS EYE SIGNIFICANT SPENDING CUTS

By John Davey

El Dorado County is facing a stark financial reality, with declining revenues forcing the Board of Supervisors to consider significant spending cuts across a wide range of county services. At the April 8th board meeting, the gravity of the situation was laid bare as supervisors grappled with how to reduce millions of dollars of spending.

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Sue Hennike, presenting alongside Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

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COUNTY SPENDING CUTS *(con't)*

Laura Schwartz, attributed the need for these difficult decisions to the outcome of 12 public meetings. The proposed cuts target numerous vital community resources, including parks, senior programs, the juvenile detention center, and the Placerville Aquatic Center, drawing a large and concerned audience to the meeting.

"This has not been a fun process, but departments are really stepping up," acknowledged Hennike, highlighting the efforts made to identify potential reductions. Departments had been tasked with collectively finding \$15.25 million in net county cost reductions.

The belt-tightening measures are already underway. At a February meeting, supervisors slashed \$868,567 in discretionary funding for tourism and economic development, along with \$1.3 million in funding for tourism-related programs within the Planning & Building, and Transportation departments. Further reductions are being considered, including the complete elimination of fire tourism impact funding for fiscal year 2025-26.

El Dorado County Fire Protection District Chief Tim Cordero voiced concerns about this potential cut, stating, "This call reimbursement for these TOT (Transient Occupant Tax)

calls, tourism related calls, absent of the TOT dollars that are generated to offset our responses on those, that shifts right to our residents. We use their property tax dollars to run these calls ... that could be used for other programs, other aspects of our district besides these tourism-related calls."

Looking ahead, the financial outlook appears increasingly challenging. "In the last couple of fiscal years, you know, year before last, our property tax growth was 6.37%. It's declined to 4.69% this year and we are projecting 3.5%," explained Schwartz, underscoring the downward trend in a key revenue source.

In response to this concerning forecast, Schwartz informed the board, "We want to direct departments to work on scenarios for a 5% and a 10% budget reduction," emphasizing the need for proactive planning. "The reason we want departments to work on that now, obviously, is so that we have time to plan and make some good decisions." These potential future cuts would be brought back for board consideration in the fall.

The proposed cuts have already had an impact on planned projects. Funding for the Forebay Park improvement project, including a restroom facility, is now in jeopardy.

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COUNTY SPENDING CUTS *(con't)*

"If we took the entire \$3 million (needed for) the project, if we took that whole thing away, nothing would get done out there?" asked District 5 Supervisor Brooke Laine. Hennike confirmed this, stating, "Right. We just don't have any other funding. And, unfortunately, the little pieces of funding that we've already gotten through Prop. 68 wouldn't cover enough to really do any of it." While supervisors expressed a desire to find funding for basic restroom facilities, the overall project remains uncertain.

The El Dorado Hills community faces a particularly significant impact with the proposed changes to senior programs. The Senior Day Care Program, which operates at sites in Placerville and El Dorado Hills, has seen its General Fund cost balloon by 60% in the past four years, reaching \$800,000 annually. While pre-pandemic, each site served an average of 25 people, current attendance is down to 7.5 individuals per site.

To address these rising costs, the County Administrative Office (CAO) presented several recommendations, including a phased fee increase and the **closure of the El Dorado Hills Senior Day Care facility**, consolidating all services at the Placerville location. "It won't change the capacity of the program because the people from El

Dorado Hills could move up to the Placerville site," Principal Management Analyst Emma Owens explained.

However, this proposal has raised concerns, particularly given the significant senior population in El Dorado Hills. "El Dorado Hills has got to have the highest concentration of seniors in the county, especially with our two large age-restricted communities. But I also realize that we're not serving a lot of people from El Dorado Hills," acknowledged Supervisor Greg Ferrero, reflecting the difficult balancing act the board faces.

While the Senior Nutrition Program, which also operates out of the El Dorado Hills facility, is not currently slated for closure, the potential loss of the Senior Day Care site raises questions about the long-term availability of services for local seniors. Owens noted that the El Dorado Hills Community Services District also operates some senior services at the building. "We'd like to come up with a plan of what we do in the interim while the (day care) program is no longer in that facility," she stated, indicating that a longer-term plan for senior services is also needed.

Supervisor Lori Parlin inquired about

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COUNTY SPENDING CUTS *(con't)*

the continuation of senior meals in El Dorado Hills, and Owens confirmed they would remain at the location for now, with meals being transported from Placerville. Assistant Director of Health and Human Services Timalynn Jaynes suggested that El Dorado Transit might be able to provide transportation for seniors to the Placerville site, and mileage reimbursement for family members driving seniors is also an option.

The Board of Supervisors ultimately voted to explore combining the Senior Day Care sites, with a decision on closing the El Dorado Hills location expected at the April 22nd meeting. They also directed staff to table discussions on selling or leasing the El Dorado Hills site, with the intention of maintaining it for senior services for the time being.

The budget challenges extend beyond senior programs. The county is also exploring cost-saving and revenue-generating opportunities in Senior Nutrition, Senior Legal, and Animal Services. Additionally, significant changes are being considered for the Juvenile Treatment Center, with the potential for contracting services with other counties due to low occupancy rates at the local facility.

Even wildfire preparedness is facing potential cuts, with a proposed 47% reduction in General Fund financing for the Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience. This could lead to the elimination of programs like county-owned parcel clearing and community assessments.

The gravity of the financial situation was underscored by Joan Fuquay, chair of the Commission on Aging, who stated, "With 31% of the county's population being over age 60, the influence and concerns of the seniors holds a significant weight regarding the services by the county." She expressed the commission's commitment to collaborating with the county to find alternative funding sources.

Long-time senior center volunteer John Tomko commended the supervisors for their thoughtful approach to these difficult decisions. "Your sensitivity to the issues of the senior center are commendable," he said.

Ultimately, the Board of Supervisors took several actions aimed at addressing the budget shortfall, including directing staff to explore revenue-generating options and develop a retirement incentive plan. They also initiated the process of working with departments on

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COUNTY SPENDING CUTS *(con't)*

potential 5% and 10% budget reduction scenarios for the fiscal year 2026-27, signaling that the tough decisions facing El Dorado County are likely to continue. The coming months will be critical as the county navigates these financial headwinds and makes difficult choices that will undoubtedly impact the services and residents of El Dorado Hills and the entire county.

Sources:

[Mountain Democrat April 11, 2025 reporting](#)

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors April 8, 2025 Minutes, and Meeting recording

INCORPORATION BACKERS ADVOCATE FOR ANALYSIS TO HELP EDH ON PATH TO CITYHOOD

By John Davey

A recent presentation on the potential incorporation of El Dorado Hills sparked considerable discussion among residents, with over 100 people attending the meeting on April 3rd. The event, held at the Patra Corporation conference room, featured information from the El Dorado Hills Citizens for Cityhood and El Dorado

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Executive Officer Shiva Frentzen.

Joe Chinn and Chris Nicholson of the El Dorado Hills Citizens for Cityhood (EDHCC) presented an updated overview of the perceived benefits of cityhood. This presentation was similar to one previously given to the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) Board of Directors on March 13th, where directors voted 4-0 to take a leading role in exploring incorporation. Following this, Frentzen outlined LAFCO's role in the process and a potential timeline, with cityhood proponents aiming for a ballot measure in November 2026 – a schedule acknowledged as ambitious.

Nicholson argued that the current scope of the EDH CSD limits the community, stating, "We're not operating with a full municipal toolkit. City is a word that means local control." Proponents maintain that incorporation could lead to greater local control over development and unlock additional funding sources for crucial areas like roads and public safety.

The initial step in the incorporation process is an application to LAFCO, which the EDH CSD board was scheduled to discuss on April 10th.

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EDH PATH TO CITYHOOD

(con't)

This would be followed by thorough fiscal and environmental analyses. Cityhood advocates have stated their commitment to abandoning the effort if these analyses indicate that new taxes would be necessary for the city's financial viability. Furthermore, a revenue neutrality agreement would need to be negotiated between the county and future city representatives.

Frentzen indicated that the potential city boundaries would initially mirror those of the EDH CSD, with the possibility of including the Rolling Hills CSD and the Marble Mountain Homeowners CSD. She also noted that LAFCO has the authority to modify these boundaries and other aspects of the proposal as the process progresses. This point raised concern for EDH CSD Director Noelle Mattock, who questioned LAFCO's ability to make changes without the EDH CSD's consent. Frentzen confirmed this possibility, drawing an analogy to how governing boards can amend projects before final approval.

Resident feedback at the meeting showcased a range of perspectives. Pamela Blyth, a three-year resident, expressed strong positive impressions of the community's residents but less enthusiasm for the current level of local decision-making. Ben Glickman,

while not fully decided on cityhood, echoed this sentiment, suggesting that El Dorado Hills' concerns are not adequately addressed at the county level, given its limited representation.

Conversely, Mike West, a long-term resident, voiced strong opposition, pointing to the two previous failed cityhood attempts. He expressed doubts about the completeness of the latest feasibility study and predicted inevitable tax increases. Other opponents voiced concerns about potential increases in crime and the loss of resources currently provided by the county.

Charles "Buzz" Nunn, a longtime resident who honored the memory of Norm Rowett and John Hidahl, key figures in the 2005 cityhood effort, believes that the current movement has stronger support. He characterized incorporation as an investment in the community's future and expressed his personal aspiration to contribute to shaping that future.

Following the presentation, EDH CSD directors thanked the presenters and the public for their participation. While the EDH CSD board was scheduled to consider the formal resolution of application to LAFCO on Thursday, April 10th, a decision was postponed.

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EDH PATH TO CITYHOOD

(con't)

Due to the late provision of additional materials to the directors on Wednesday, April 9th, EDH CSD staff requested more time for review. The directors, after hearing public comment, indicated that the decision on the formal resolution will be considered at a future EDH CSD Board of Directors Meeting.

As this process unfolds, the Bass Lake Action Committee, recalling its past support for the 2005 EDH cityhood measure, recognizes the critical importance of a thorough and impartial analysis. The upcoming fiscal and environmental studies will be essential in providing the data needed to understand the potential impacts of incorporation and to inform the community's decision-making process.

Sources:

[Village Life April 7, 2025 reporting](#)

FINISH LINE EYED FOR REOPENING OF EDH FIRE STATION 86 ON BASS LAKE ROAD

By John Davey

El Dorado Hills Fire Station 86 on Bass Lake Road is currently undergoing a significant transformation, a necessary step

towards ensuring a healthy and improved environment for our firefighters. While the interior may look stark at the moment, stripped back to its essential structure, this is a clear sign of progress in the ongoing mold remediation project.

Interim Fire Chief Michael Lilienthal, who made the decisive move to temporarily close the 24-year-old station in early January following the discovery of recurring mold, emphasizes that the remediation is proceeding smoothly. "The project continues to move forward with no surprises," Chief Lilienthal stated, offering reassurance to the community.

The need for this extensive work stems from a history of water intrusion at the hilltop station. As Chief Lilienthal explained, "This station, sitting here on top of the hill, just gets pounded by the rain. The water was coming in through the windows and going down into the sheetrock." Compounding the issue was the use of thick, vinyl wallpaper, which unfortunately concealed the developing problem.

However, these challenges are being met head-on with thoughtful and lasting solutions. Chief Lilienthal assures that the design flaw of wallpaper will not be repeated.

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REOPENING OF EDH FIRE STATION 86 *(con't)*

Instead, the walls will be finished with a textured paint, allowing for better breathability and easier detection of any future moisture issues.

The improvements extend beyond mold remediation. Station 86 is also slated to receive new carpet, cabinets, and ceiling tiles, creating a more comfortable and functional living and working space for the fire crews. Recognizing the root cause of the water intrusion, the station will also benefit from a new roof moisture barrier and larger awnings over the windows, ten of which will be replaced to further prevent water from entering.

Chief Lilienthal estimates the total cost of these crucial repairs, along with the expense of temporarily housing the fire crews in a nearby rental home, to be between \$500,000 and \$600,000. The department is actively exploring potential insurance coverage to offset some of these costs.

Importantly, the temporary relocation of Station 86's crew has had no impact on public safety or emergency response times. Our firefighters continue to serve the community with the same unwavering dedication from their temporary base.

Looking ahead, there is a palpable sense of optimism surrounding the

station's reopening. "We're hoping to be living here again in early May," Chief Lilienthal shared, offering a tangible timeline for the return to the renovated facility.

Furthermore, the department is demonstrating its commitment to the well-being of its staff by developing a plan to support those who may have been exposed to mold. Chief Lilienthal acknowledged the seriousness of the issue, stating, "It was a health hazard, no question about it," and noted that several firefighters had previously reported allergy-like symptoms while working at the station.

Sources:

[Village Life April 2, 2025 reporting](#)

EDH GROUP INTENDS TO RECALL THREE EDH CSD DIRECTORS

By John Davey

An official recall effort has been initiated against El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDH CSD) Directors Stephen Ferry, Michael Martinelli, and Noelle Mattock. Steve Gutierrez, coordinator of the Community Action Group, announced the Notice of Intent to Recall during the public forum at the

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EDH CSD DIRECTORS RECALL *(con't)*

April 10 board meeting.

According to a press release from the group, the recall aims to "restore transparency, accountability, and responsible leadership," citing concerns that residents have been "ignored, misled, and overcharged" while district resources are "squandered or mismanaged."

The group's stated grounds for recall include:

- Alleged overpayment of \$10 million for land assessed at \$1.5 million, with a further \$10 million acquisition under scrutiny.
- Alleged refusal to implement voter-approved Measures Q, R, and S.
- Alleged misuse of public funds for litigation against the El Dorado County Auditor-Controller.
- Alleged failure to develop parks, including the \$13 million Bass Lake park obligation and the delayed Carson Creek park.
- Alleged conflict of interest violations involving the former CSD general manager and an EDH CSD contracted consultant.
- Alleged failure to perform board duties, leading to county intervention.
- Alleged Brown Act violations and misleading responses to 2024 Grand Jury reports.

In [Village Life April 14, 2025 reporting](#)

EDH CSD board President Ferry expressed surprise at the recall notice, stating it contained "glaring mistakes." He clarified that the referenced lawsuits predated his December 12, 2022, appointment. Regarding the Bass Lake Park, he stated it was "given away in 2020." He also noted that the California Fair Political Practices Commission had recused him from commenting on the Measure QRS issue. Ferry acknowledged voting for the \$10 million purchase of half of the Old Executive Golf Course, citing community support. He also pointed out his role in publicizing the investigation into former GM Kevin Loewen.

In the same Village Life article, Director Mattock, recently re-elected in November 2024, stated, "I have great respect for the democratic process. If the community determines that they no longer wish for me to serve as their representative—less than six months after my re-election—I will fully respect and accept that decision."

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EDH CSD DIRECTORS RECALL *(con't)*

The April 10 meeting revealed divided community opinions. Some residents applauded the recall announcement, while others expressed hesitation. Wayne Lowery, a longtime resident and former EDH CSD general manager and board director, acknowledged the board's current challenges but also highlighted the directors' positive attributes. Resident Ben Glickman expressed concern that the recall would be counterproductive, distracting from important issues, stating "This community can't move forward if we're only looking back," he said. "Right now, I fear we're allowing the past to dictate our future. And that's not a recipe for progress."

California's Recall Procedures require the recall proponents to publish the Notice of Intent to Recall in a local newspaper and provide proof of publication. They must then prepare the recall petition and related documents for circulation. Upon approval by elections officials, proponents have 120 days to collect signatures from 20% of registered voters within the EDH CSD's jurisdiction. With approximately 35,000 registered voters, about 7,000 signatures are required to place the recall on the ballot.

Sources:

[Village Life April 14, 2025 reporting](#)

EDH CSD April 10, 2025 Board

Meeting Recording

[RecallEDH.com](#)

BASS LAKE AREA WILDFLOWER SEASON BLOOMING!

By John Davey

As the days lengthen and the California sunshine warms our hillsides, nature puts on a spectacular show around Bass Lake: the wildflower season is in full bloom! These vibrant pops of color not only enhance the beauty of our surroundings but also play a vital role in supporting local ecosystems. For homeowners in El Dorado Hills, understanding and incorporating native wildflowers into your landscape can bring a touch of wild beauty right to your doorstep while offering numerous benefits.

Identifying Our Local Treasures

The Bass Lake area boasts a diverse array of native wildflowers. Here are a few you might spot:

- **California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*):** Our state flower, the poppy, graces us with its cheerful orange hues. It's generally drought-tolerant once established

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WILDFLOWER SEASON BLOOMING! *(con't)*

and readily self-seeds, often creating stunning carpets of color. Minimal maintenance is required; in fact, disturbing them too much can hinder their natural spread. They are a fantastic nectar source for pollinators.

- **Lupine (*Lupinus* species):** With their elegant spikes of blue, purple, pink, or yellow flowers, lupines are a striking addition to any landscape. Many native lupine species are well-adapted to our dry summers. While some varieties self-sow, others may be less prolific. They are crucial host plants for the endangered Karner Blue butterfly and provide valuable nectar for bees.
- **Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja* species):** These unique wildflowers appear to have brightly painted tips on their bracts (modified leaves). They come in various shades of red, orange, and yellow. Many are semi-parasitic on the roots of other native plants. They are relatively drought-tolerant but may not self-generate readily in a garden setting. Their vibrant colors attract hummingbirds.
- **Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*):** This hardy plant features clusters

of small white or pink flowers and fern-like foliage. It's exceptionally drought-tolerant and often spreads through rhizomes and seeds. Yarrow is relatively low-maintenance and attracts beneficial insects like ladybugs and lacewings.

- **California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum* species):** While technically a shrub or subshrub, California buckwheat bursts into clusters of white, pink, or yellow flowers that are incredibly attractive to a wide range of pollinators, including butterflies and bees. It's remarkably drought-hardy and generally self-seeds. Different varieties offer varying sizes and flower colors.

Bringing Wildflower Beauty Home

For property owners looking to embrace the beauty and ecological benefits of native wildflowers, here are some considerations:

- **Water Hardiness and Drought Tolerance:** Many California native wildflowers are naturally adapted to our Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot, dry summers. Once established, species like California Poppy, Yarrow, and California Buckwheat require minimal

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WILDFLOWER SEASON BLOOMING! *(con't)*

supplemental watering, making them excellent choices for water-wise landscaping, especially during drought years.

- **Self-Generation:** Some wildflowers, like California Poppy and certain lupine varieties, are prolific self-seeders, meaning they will naturally spread and reappear year after year. Others may require more intentional sowing of seeds. Understanding the self-seeding habits of different species will help you plan your landscape accordingly.
- **Maintenance Needs:** Native wildflowers generally require less maintenance than many traditional garden plants. They are adapted to our local soils and don't typically need fertilizers or excessive watering. Deadheading (removing spent flowers) can sometimes encourage more blooms or prevent unwanted excessive self-seeding in some species. However, allowing seed heads to mature provides food for birds in the fall and winter.
- **Aesthetic Appeal and Wildlife Benefits:** Wildflowers bring a natural, informal beauty to landscapes, with their diverse colors, textures, and forms

creating a dynamic and ever-changing display. Beyond aesthetics, they are vital for supporting local wildlife. They provide nectar and pollen for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, which are crucial for the health of our ecosystems. Some wildflowers also serve as host plants for specific butterfly larvae and offer seeds for birds.

Creating Your Wildflower Haven

Consider these tips for incorporating native wildflowers into your property:

- **Start Small:** Begin with a designated area or border.
- **Choose Native Species:** Select wildflowers native to the Bass Lake/El Dorado Hills region for the best chance of success and to support local ecosystems. Local nurseries specializing in native plants are excellent resources.
- **Prepare the Soil:** Most native wildflowers prefer well-drained soil and don't require rich amendments.
- **Sow Seeds or Plant Seedlings:** Follow recommended planting guidelines for the specific species. Fall or late winter is often a good time to sow seeds.
- **Water Appropriately:** Water regularly until seedlings are

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WILDFLOWER SEASON BLOOMING! *(con't)*

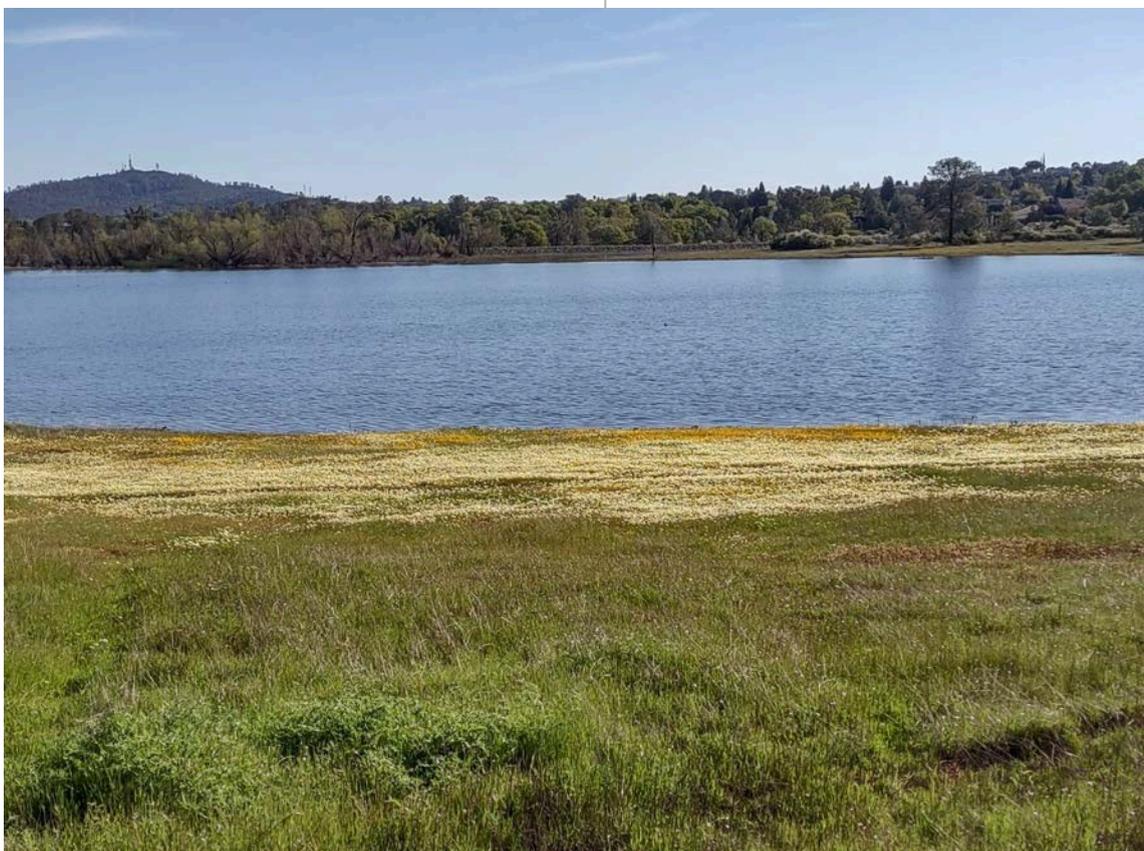
established, then reduce watering significantly for drought-tolerant species.

- **Observe and Enjoy:** Let nature take its course! Embrace the natural cycles of growth, blooming, and seed dispersal.

By embracing the beauty and resilience of native wildflowers, Bass Lake area property owners can create stunning, low-maintenance landscapes that not only enhance their property but also contribute to the health and vibrancy of our local environment. Get out there and enjoy the blooming season!



California Poppies



Wildflowers at Bass Lake

APRIL LOCAL MEETING RECORDINGS

By John Davey

Recordings of local meetings in El Dorado Hills and El Dorado County in March 2025.

El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee Meetings:

Typically the second Wednesday of each Month

April Meeting
CANCELED

El Dorado Hills Community Services District Board of Directors Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

April 3rd (special)

<https://basslakeaction.net/edhcsd-4-3-25>

April 10th

<https://basslakeaction.net/edhcsd-4-10-25>

El Dorado Irrigation District Board

EID Meetings, Agendas, Minutes -

<https://www.eid.org/about-us/board-of-directors/meetings-agendas-and-minutes>

EID Recorded Meetings on EID

YouTube Channel -

www.EID.org/YouTube



OR VISIT:

<https://basslakeaction.net/SUBSCRIBE>

BLAC BOARD MEETING



The next quarterly meeting of the Bass Lake Action Committee Board of Directors is scheduled for Monday May 12th at 7PM.

Members will receive the Agenda & Meeting location details via email invitation. All Members are encouraged to attend.

For more information about meetings and membership, please contact President John Davey at 530-676-2657, or email basslakemembers@gmail.com.

Bass Lake Area Residents can also visit our online membership form at <https://basslakeaction.net/members>