



October 8, 1998

## LETTERS

### Bear Preservation Fund established

Dozens of people in our community have expressed sadness and alarm over the killing of a mother bear and one of her cubs in the Homewood area. Since the September 24 article that appeared in your newspaper, we've learned that other nearby areas exercise alternatives to killing "nuisance" and "depredation" bears (the Department of Fish and Game's labels for bears that are sighted but do no harm and bears that do physical damage to someone's property). For example, the state of Nevada relocates trapped bears and the Mammoth Lakes area uses trained dogs to intimidate bears who then relocate on their own.

Jim Randall, a local Department of Fish and Game warden, states that our bear problem is really a human problem. He says we "leave food smells and garbage in accessible places for bears and as a consequence, they have become dependent on us." From the Department of Fish and Game's perspective, the answer to saving the bears is prevention, prevention, prevention.

From our perspective, we must not only educate our community emphasizing prevention but we must also work on:

- Changing the policy about killing trapped bears.
- Changing the law regarding issuing permits to kill bears.

The California Black Bear is our "state animal" and we are living in its natural habitat. Just as with other wildlife in the area, man must learn to co-exist with the bear. Like the American eagle, the bear deserves its place and should be protected and preserved.

If you would like to work with us in changing the policy and law relative to trapping and/or issuing permits to kill bears, please contact one of us at P.O. Box 502, Homewood, CA 96141 or P.O. Box 780, Truckee, CA 96160. Also, donations in support of saving the bears may be made to the Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation's "Bear Preservation Fund," P.O. Box 366, Truckee, CA 96160.

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