

What's wrong with the Martis Valley West proposed project?

by Cindy Ochoa, Tahoe Area Sierra Club Group

1. This sprawling new development, together with its proposed sister project, Brockway Campground, is not near any existing infrastructure as claimed in the developer's proposal – the nearest existing development is **Northstar, which is four miles away. 1900 new population proposed on the ridge. EIR discounts population by 80% to skew impacts.**
2. The developer claims that the project will have much less impact than what “could” have been built on the original east parcel; however, **this phantom project was never proposed or applied for, so this so-called “gain” is smoke and mirrors.**
3. The alternatives to the full development listed in the proposal should have included (but didn't) a **reduced-density development of 418 units on the east parcel with a conservation easement.**
4. Although many of the project's impacts are stated as being “less than significant,” **removing 22,000 trees and disturbing 11 million square feet (253 acres) on an approximately 600-acre ridgeline bench** overlooking Lake Tahoe would certainly be significant in terms of forest and wildlife destruction. Additionally, despite the developer's claim that there would be no visual impact, a development of this size, with the attendant residents and traffic it would bring, would most certainly be visible both day and night.
5. The development of a huge gated community of single- and multi-family homes plus commercial is not compatible with **existing zoning of forest/conservation.**
6. Should the project be built as proposed, it would cause significant traffic impacts (**gridlock**) in **6 intersections in a high wildland-fire area**, as well as significantly increasing greenhouse gases. These issues will affect both the Tahoe basin and Martis Valley/Truckee.
7. The project would require **widening Highway 267 from two to four lanes** – more forest disturbance and destruction. At the summit going into Tahoe, however, it will still be two lanes – a scary bottleneck for residents who might have to get out of the basin in a hurry in case of fire.
8. Should this project be approved, **a dangerous precedent will have been set regarding development on Tahoe's ridgelines.** Most communities with scenic ridgelines also have ridgeline protections in place – as evidenced by this project Placer County clearly does not.
9. The developer states that the wildlife on the east parcel is somehow more important than the wildlife on the west parcel – another bogus justification for this project. **The west parcel is home to many protected species such as the spotted owl**, and also contains twelve contiguous miles of migratory corridors used by bear and deer.
10. This project does not meet any housing needs for the local community. Most, if not all of these houses will be 2nd homes and will not be affordable to a low or middle income family. The carbon footprint caused by taking down thousands of trees, materials, and extra greenhouse gas emissions for 2nd homes is enormous.

AND THESE POINTS ARE ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG!