

Blue Mountain builds new homes in Rescue on extra-large lots rather than use jam them in tight trend



SCOTT LORENZO

The building that houses the U.S. Post Office has stood since 1896. The town was established in 1895, and many structures from that time period are still in the area.

BY MARK BILLINGSLEY

Blue Mountain Communities had more than 100 acres to play with and rather than build four or five homes per acre, the builder decided to form one- or two-acre lots and build just one home on each in the growing El Dorado County town of Rescue.

It's worked with Blue Mountain's Revere at Silver Springs, which has just three lots left, and now Oakhaven is coming on line with 29 homes with sales starting in the fall, said Blue Mountain Communities' Marketing Director Joe Klusnick. The Trinity, Lassen and Shasta plans will serve as the community's build-outs. Those three models range in size from 2,526 square feet (Lassen) to 3,457 square feet (Shasta). Prices start at \$939,990. The two model homes will soon be available for sale, Klusnick said.

Homes at Oakhaven will range between 3,442 and 4,208 square feet. They're all one-story plans and are on lots as big as 2.22 acres. The smallest is 1.38 acres. Prices haven't been released yet but Klusnick said prices will be in the \$1.5 million range.

“Home sites are large enough for casitas and RV storage,” Klusnick said. “Oakhaven is something unique. It’s an aspirational type of product for people looking to downsize from perhaps a 10- or 20-acre property or Bay Area folks looking to get a little bit of land. And rather than build 10 times the homes in the same area we’re offering people some room.”

Rescue remains semi-rural while still close to amenities such as shopping and recreation, Klusnick said. Rescue residents are 10-minutes from shopping and restaurants at the El Dorado Hills Town Center, and less than that to Highway 50 and business hubs in El Dorado Hills, Folsom, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento.

“Drive east on Highway 50 and you’re in the forest,” Klusnick said. “You’re above the fog and smog and there are great schools. And Folsom Lake is really close, too.”

Bass Lake Regional Park is a gem for recreational enthusiasts. The man-made lake is a leftover from the Gold Rush when the reservoir was used for mining operations. Now it’s filled with more than 1,000 bass, according to a recent fish survey. Upgrades to the park will be ongoing.

The nearly 210-acre project owned and developed by the El Dorado Hills Community Services District includes 142 acres purchased from Rescue Union School District, almost 15 acres from the El Dorado Irrigation District, 42 acres from El Dorado County and approximately 13 acres of parkland given by Parker Development Co., which owns and developed nearby Serrano.



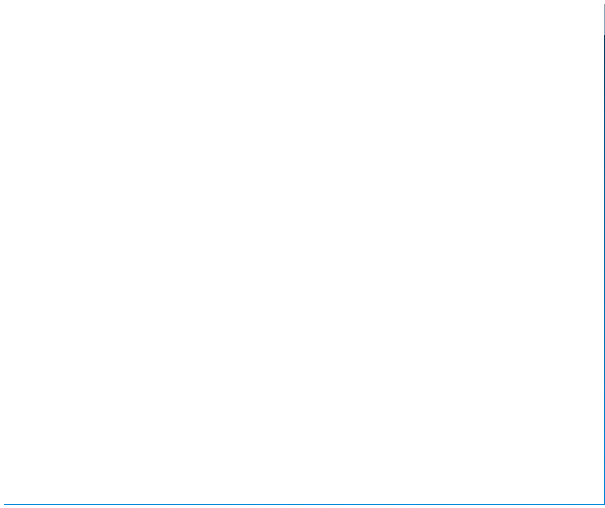
The amenities of the Bass Lake Regional Park concept include one synthetic grass and two natural-grass fields, a 2,500-square-foot museum and outdoor education center, an 8,500-square-foot event center, nature trails, playgrounds, bocce ball courts, sand volleyball courts, a small and large dog park and ample parking for the many tournaments expected to be played at the Park.

While no motorized watercraft will be allowed on the lake, there will be a dock and boat ramp for kayaks or paddle boards. Fishing is popular on the lake, but it's catch and release.

Meetings continue through July between EDHCSD staff and the consultant for the final design before those plans are submitted to El Dorado County and the necessary land use approval.

No one knows for sure why the town was named Rescue. The leading story suggests that a gold miner named Andrew Hare struck it rich one day and was "rescued" from poverty. Rescue, then known as Green Valley, was once a Pony Express stop between Placerville and Folsom.

Around that time, botanists discovered that Rescue's Pine Hill is home to some of California's rarest plants. But it wasn't until 1977 when the Pine Hill Ecological Preserve was established.



The 403-acre preserve in the heart of Rescue features eight plants, four of which that are not seen anywhere else in California, such as Stebbin's morning glory, Layne's butterweed, Pine Hill flannelbrush and El Dorado bedstraw.

Five of the eight species are listed as threatened and are protected both by state and federal endangered special acts. The Western Slope of El Dorado County contains approximately 10 percent of California's native plants. That botanical diversity makes the area, and Pine Hill specifically, nationally significant.

Elementary students attend either Green Valley or Rescue elementary school, while middle schoolers attend Pleasant Valley Middle School. High School students attend Ponderosa High School, while some students on the far western side of Rescue may be in Oak Ridge High School's attendance zone. Both schools are in the El Dorado Union High School District.

The resale market in Rescue is limited due to low inventory, which follows the regional trend.

The lowest list price for a single-family home is \$587,000 for a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home in 1,386 square feet with a 1,000-square-foot redwood deck.

The highest list price is \$1.245 million for a four-bedroom, four-bathroom home in 4,185 square feet on almost six acres. There's a permitted downstairs living space with large living room, a full bathroom and large office space that could be a fifth bedroom with separate entrance.

Part of the downstairs living space is currently used as a workshop, but could become an additional kitchen or theater room. The downstairs space is easily designed for multi-generational living.

Mark Billingsley is a Carmichael-based freelance writer. Reach him at editorwriter@att.net.

FAST FACTS

Where: 30 miles northeast of Sacramento

Size: 22 square miles

Population: approximately 6,000

County: El Dorado

Established: 1895

Government: County Board of Supervisors