Placer County attracting slew of film crews

Placer County isn’t just a place to visit, it’s an area film crews like to shoot.

In the last 15 years, millions of dollars have been generated from film companies.

The vistas, abundant recreational activities and diverse terrain have been used in feature films, television commercials and photography for national companies.

Beverly Lewis, director of the Placer-Lake Tahoe Film Office, recently hosted a Tahoe Film Conference for government officials who may be involved in some aspect of a production company’s work in the county. The conference highlighted the needs of production companies and the local economic benefit that is derived from this work.



“Cinema Verite” scenes were shot in a variety of homes in Placer County. Photo/Provided

Placer County said of the film industry, “It brings Placer County to the world.”

The Placer-Lake Tahoe Film Office publicizes the many

available locations and assists production companies in finding the right “look” for what they’re trying to achieve. The film office also expedites the permitting process and ensures all the needs of the production companies are met, from lodging and meals to materials used to construct sets.

Keynote presenter Amy Lemisch, executive director of the California Film Commission, pointed out the huge economic effect the film industry has on the state.

“The film industry brings millions of tourists to California,” she said. “People do want to visit the places they see on TV and in the movies.”

Although Placer County is distant from most Southern California-based studios, the close proximity of varied terrain within the county makes it a popular place to shoot. While there have been numerous feature films shot in whole or in part in locations throughout Placer County, production work primarily comes from commercials and photography shoots.

Commercial film director Tim Damon has produced 14 commercials in the county in the last 10 years. This year also marks the ninth time in five years that the Orvis Company chose Placer County to shoot still photography for its seasonal catalogs.

California, which at one time was the state where almost all movies and commercials were shot, is now facing competition from other states that offer financial incentives to production companies. To sweeten the pot for filming in California, the state Legislature recently enacted a film tax incentive, giving production companies tax breaks for production shoots in the state.

Placer County has already played host to four such productions including The Muppets, an HBO movie and an upcoming Spike Jonz film starring Joaquin Phoenix. The California Film Commission estimates that, depending on the complexity of the shoot; a production company will spend between $100,000 and $250,000 a

day.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report