Nevada gets more in federal land payout

By Associated Press

CARSON CITY — Nevada's getting more money than expected from a government program that pays counties based on the amount of federally managed land within their borders.

Gov. Brian Sandoval announced this week that Nevada would get $25 million this year from the U.S. Department of the Interior's Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program.

The sum is about $2 million more than Nevada expected, and Sandoval thanked Nevada's congressional representatives for their work securing the bonus.

The program compensates counties that can't collect property taxes on large swaths of land because it's managed by the federal government. Nevada especially benefits from the program because more than 80 percent of its land is federal.

Elko and Washoe counties are getting the biggest payouts, with $3.4 million apiece.

Cost of ambulance ride may go up in EDC

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors this month will consider raising the ambulance billing rates on both sides of the county.

Through a joint powers agreement Lake Valley and South Lake Tahoe fire departments operate the ambulance service on the California side of the South Shore.

A consultant who looked at what the county charges insurance companies, Medi-Cal, Medicare and private payers is recommending an increase of about 28 percent.

El Dorado County last adjusted its rates in 2010.

“We are hopeful that if the county passes the increase, that some of the additional revenue it would generate would pass through to our two JPAs,” Gareth Harris, Lake Valley fire chief, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

The county is not obligated to make this an automatic pass through to the two JPAs because there are already established contracts in place.

“I was advised that the recommended rate by the consultant still puts El Dorado County below the median rate and below the threshold private insurance companies feel is reasonable for advanced life support ambulance transportation,” Harris said.

There will be a public hearing on the matter before the Board of Supervisors on Nov. 17 at 11am in Placerville.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sierra gearing up for dodge

ball tournament

Sierra-at-Tahoe’s annual dodge ball tournament at Steamers Bar & Grill will be Nov. 12.

There will be live music, drink specials and giveaways.

Each team should consist of five to six participants. Signups are at 6pm, with the tournament starting at 7:30pm. Here is **more info** about the tournament.

Steamers is at 2236 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Opinion: Preparing for winter road conditions

By Meg Ragonese

As continuing rain and potential snow is forecast Northern Nevada, the Nevada Department of Transportation is prepared to help keep roads clear.

NDOT begins annual winter preparations in August by readying more than 80 snowplows and other pieces of snow and ice equipment for use in snow removal across northwestern Nevada. More than 32,000 thousand cubic yards of salt and sand has been stockpiled in the area, ready to be spread on winter roads for increased traction and safety. The sand is combined with salt and wetted with brine to create more dense sand that keeps roads ice-free at lower temperatures and will not as easily bounce off roadway surfaces. NDOT sand trucks calibrate the amount of salt and sand, spreading the mixture on roadways with extreme precision and efficiency.

“Drivers will also see our NDOT vehicles spraying a liquid brine on the roads prior to certain snow storms,” NDOT Assistant District Engineer for Maintenance Mike Fuess explained. “The brine is a water solution of 23 percent salt that we produce in-house at a substantial cost savings. Sprayed in certain conditions before storms, the brine helps reduce how quickly the ice forms and sticks to the road.”

NDOT has approximately 150 permanent maintenance staff in northwestern Nevada. As storms move in, maintenance personnel closely monitor professional meteorological forecasts detailing wind, rain, snow, ice and other weather on state roads. Staff also utilize more than 30 Road Weather Information System meteorological stations located along northwestern Nevada roadways to provide detailed reports of current air and pavement temperature, as well as any moisture. The updated weather readings help pinpoint precise sections of roads needing brine, salt and sand or snow removal.

During major winter storms, crews work in 12 hour shifts, rotating personnel to provide 24 hour-a-day snow removal.

NDOT has installed automatic anti-icing systems on four bridges on Interstate 580 between Reno and Carson City to help delay and prevent ice formation on bridge surfaces. When potentially freezing conditions set in, pavement sensors on each bridge activate spray disks embedded within the concrete. Each recessed disk sprays a potassium acetate anti-icing solution to help delay formation of ice.

NDOT will also use tow plows on I-580 between south Reno and north Carson and other areas. The tow plow is a second, steerable snowplow blade towed like a trailer behind a traditional snowplow. The tow plow swings out to the lane next to the lead snowplow to clear a second lane of snow.

On average, more than 2,000 crashes occur statewide every year due to unsafe driving in snow, ice and other wet conditions,

such as driving too fast for conditions, following too closely, or failing to maintain a lane and overcorrecting. In winter weather, motorists are reminded to drive slowly for conditions and leave space between their vehicle and others. Wearing a seat belt and focusing on the road are other important driving tips for any type of weather.

Driving tips:

· Remove snow and ice from all vehicle windows, mirrors and lights prior to driving

· Only travel in winter weather when absolutely necessary, and leave early to provide enough time to safely reach your destination

· Slow down on winter roads; speed limits are based on road and weather conditions

· Keep a safe distance from other vehicles

· Watch carefully for snow removal equipment

· Use extra caution on bridges and ramps, as they may be icy

Check before you go:

Tires, brakes, lights, battery, wipers, defroster, heater, and vehicle fluid levels.

Carry with you:

Tire chains, flashlight, ice scraper, snow shovel, first aid supplies, extra clothes/gloves, blanket, flares, non-perishable food/water.

Meg Ragonese is the Nevada Department of Transportation public information officer.

LTCC puts men’s soccer coach on paid leave

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Community College has placed the men’s soccer coach on paid administrative leave.

Ben Wade was escorted off campus on Nov. 5 after a meeting with the director of human resources and dean of students.



Ben Wade

“There is absolutely no cause to let me go at this time in the season,” Wade told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I have never seen a coach let go unless he has stolen money from the college or something egregious. I stand by my actions. I’ve been sorely misrepresented by players I have cut or disciplined. I have not been asked for my side of the story.”

LTCC President Kindred Murillo had no comment other than to say, “Nick Arbelaez has been named as the Lake Tahoe Community College head coach.” Arbelaez had been the assistant coach for the men’s team.

Athletic Director Mike Spina would not comment on the issue and would not say if he had anything to do with the decision.

Wade has five days to respond in writing to the actions taken

on Thursday, which he told *Lake Tahoe News* he intends to do. The paid administrative leave is in effect until Nov. 30.

Besides being the coach, Wade is director of Outreach and Equity for LTCC, and teaches music and soccer. The director job has him reaching out to the Hispanic community and international students – two areas of enrollment that have increased since his hire.

Wade said he isn't worried about his future, but he is concerned about that of his players. Last year all the LTCC men's sophomore soccer players were placed at a four-year college. He is no longer in a position to help players on this team with future goals.

He said he received text messages last night from all the players showing support and saying they would be talking to the college administration.

When the South Lake Tahoe two-year college started the soccer program two years ago Wade was recruited because of his ability to put together a winning team as well as his ability to bring students into the program.

This year's team is 12-4-2 overall, and in league is 5-1-1. Two games remain – today at College of the Redwoods and Nov. 13 at home against Shasta College. Playoffs begin Nov. 21. Last year's team was ranked 16th in the nation. Wade is the second winningest coach at any college level.

The displaced coach believes this year's team is a championship team. Wade hasn't given up hope the college will allow him to return as coach and then discuss his employment after the season.

Postal Service anticipates big holiday season

The U.S. Postal Service expects to deliver approximately 15.5 billion cards, letters, flats, and packages this holiday season. In addition, they are projecting approximately 600 million packages will be delivered between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve, which is an increase of 10.5 percent from last year.

Following the success of the 2014 holiday season, the Postal Service will again deliver packages seven days a week in select major cities and high-volume areas beginning Nov. 29, for the four Sundays before Christmas. They expect to deliver on average approximately 5 million packages every Sunday during December.

The Postal Service predicts Dec. 14 will be the busiest mailing and shipping day. The busiest mailing day also is expected to be the Postal Service's busiest day online with more than 7 million customers predicted to visit usps.com.

Dec. 21 is expected to be the busiest delivery day for holiday packages, cards and letters. The Postal Service anticipates that more than 30 million packages will be delivered that day alone.

For delivery in anticipation of Christmas, the Postal Service recommends keeping the following mailing and shipping deadlines in mind:

Nov. 7 – APO/FPO/DPO Standard Post

Dec. 8 – Priority Mail Express International
Dec. 15 – Standard Post
Dec. 19 – First Class Mail
Dec. 19 – Global Express Guaranteed
Dec. 21 – Priority Mail
Dec. 23 – Priority Mail Express.

Comedian to host film screening in Incline

Actor, comedian, screenwriter, producer and director Rob Schneider will host a screening of his most recent project, “Real Rob”, at Sierra Nevada College on Nov. 9 from 5-7pm.

It is an upcoming Netflix original series slated to drop Dec. 1. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with Schneider, hosted by SNC writer in residence Chris Millis.

Schneider is a veteran of the NBC’s “Saturday Night Live”; his best known character was Richard Laymer, an officer worker whose desk was stuck beside the photocopier, who addressed each of his fellow employees with an endless stream of annoying nicknames. Schneider went on to a successful career in feature films, including starring roles in the comedy films “Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo”, “The Hot Chick”, “The Benchwarmers” and “Grown Ups”.

The event is free.

Exxon Mobil investigated for possible climate change lies

By Justin Gillis and Clifford Krauss, New York Times

The New York attorney general has begun an investigation of Exxon Mobil to determine whether the company lied to the public about the risks of climate change or to investors about how such risks might hurt the oil business.

According to people with knowledge of the investigation, Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman issued a subpoena Wednesday evening to Exxon Mobil, demanding extensive financial records, emails and other documents.

The investigation focuses on whether statements the company made to investors about climate risks as recently as this year were consistent with the company's own long-running scientific research.

The people said the inquiry would include a period of at least a decade during which Exxon Mobil funded outside groups that sought to undermine climate science, even as its in-house scientists were outlining the potential consequences — and uncertainties — to company executives.

Read the whole story

Letter: Community helps LTUSD

students

To the community,

I wish to express my deepest thanks to following: Lake Tahoe Education Foundation and the El Dorado Ag In the Classroom, among others, who helped to fund the Tahoe Farm Day for the third- and fourth-grade classes. There were over 30 stations that students were able to experience.

LTEF was also the major funder for the Wonders of Waters Educational Experience that had K-6 students rotating through three stations at each grade level to learn about water and our environment. We are so very lucky to have such an amazing foundation supporting us.

In addition, the Tahoe Fund, along with the Rotary Club helped to fund our high school students' participation in the Tahoe Basin Watershed Education Summit. This program allows students the opportunity to learn about the Lake Tahoe watershed while collecting data for real restoration projects and working alongside professionals in science related fields.

Our STEEC group (South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition), which consists of over 20 local, federal and community agencies, nonprofits and businesses, provides most of the presenters for these stations. They are an amazing group of people, along with some outstanding community volunteers. We are truly blessed to live in a community that supports the education of our youth in such powerful ways.

My heartfelt thanks for the many ways you all contribute.

Beth Quandt, science outreach coordinator for Lake Tahoe Unified School District

Opinion: SLTPD trying to curb crime spike

By Brian Uhler

The department is deeply appreciative of the support given to the family of Mark Hounsell who was killed, along with his wife, Jeanne, and her friend Laura Fisher, in a motor vehicle accident. They are survived by four children who have been the recipients of beautiful and heartfelt support from the entire community. **The fund** for the children is now approaching the goal of $130,000.

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Brian Uhler

During the latter part of September and first part of October at least five vehicles were stolen from the city. The auto theft series has subsided after our investigations and assistance from other law enforcement agencies has culminated with the arrest of several suspects. One of our newest officers (Davis Spaid) located and arrested one auto thief in the stolen vehicle while still in the city.

Amador County sheriff’s deputies located another of the stolen vehicles from South Lake Tahoe and arrested both occupants.

Our detectives have linked these suspects to other auto thefts. Adam Roland now has an active arrest warrant for auto theft.

What can you do? Many of the cars stolen in our area were left unattended with the keys inside. Keep your car locked and do not leave keys inside. We know that many community members like to pre-warm their cars. There are remote start systems which allow the doors to remain locked and any attempt to drive the car would result in the engine stopping. Consider installing one of these systems to avoid being a victim of a car thief.

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In October we had two gang-related drive-by shootings. The first resulted in an adult male being shot in the leg by a suspect identified as David Angeles. We believe he has fled from South Lake Tahoe. We are coordinating with federal authorities to locate and arrest him.

The other drive-by shooting occurred on the evening of Oct. 28 when a suspect driving in the 800 block of Emerald Bay Road fired several rounds into a vehicle parked in front of a residence. Detectives arrested 23-year-old local resident Jahem Barton the following day in connection to this case. He was arrested on charges of being an ex-felon in possession of firearm ammunition and resisting arrest.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department is committed to identifying and arresting violent criminals. If you are involved in gangs, don’t be surprised when we commit significant resources to tracking you down and arresting you.

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Issues with winter approaching:

(1) Driving: Allow extra time to drive slowly on slippery

roads. Unless you’re in the car repair business, all accidents are bad.

(2) Parking: Don’t forget we tow or cite cars which are parked on public roadways during snow removal times. Keeping cars off the roadways provides for faster snow removal. Also note that the snow removal period can last many hours or even days beyond the first pass. Sometimes people forget about the “widening phase” of snow removal which can be several days after a large snowfall event.

Brian Uhler is the police chief for South Lake Tahoe.