Experts: Climate change-wildfire link unsupported

By Paige St. John, Los Angeles Times

The ash of the Rocky Fire was still hot when Gov. Jerry Brown strode to a bank of television cameras beside a blackened ridge and, flanked by firefighters, delivered a battle cry against climate change.

The wilderness fire was “a real wake-up call” to reduce the carbon pollution “that is in many respects driving all of this,” he said.

Brown had political reasons for his declaration.

He had just challenged Republican presidential candidates to state their agendas on global warming. He was embroiled in a fight with the oil industry over legislation to slash gasoline use in California. And he is seeking to make a mark on international negotiations on climate change that culminate in Paris in December.

But scientists who study climate change and fire behavior say their work does not show a link between this year’s wildfires and global warming, or support Brown’s assertion that fires are now unpredictable and unprecedented. There is not enough evidence, they say.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



Climate change activists gather in South Lake Tahoe on Oct. 13 to put a call for change. Photo/Provided

· The South Tahoe Citizens Climate Lobby has put out an SOS on climate change. On Oct. 13 nearly 100 people (and dogs) gathered at Lakeview Commons in South Lake Tahoe with signs and megaphones to make their voices heard. For more information about the group, email southtahoeccl@gmail.com

· Tahoe Adventure Film Festival is Dec. 11 at MontBleu in Stateline at 7:30pm. Doors open at 6:30pm. Tickets are $20-$25 in advance, $25-$30 day of show. For more info, go **online**.

· Jamie Anderson and Maddie Bowman, both from Meyers and athletes from Sierra-at-Tahoe, have committed to compete in the inaugural X Games Oslo from Feb. 24-28.

· Placer County District 5 Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery be having monthly coffee meetings the fourth Thursday of every month from 9-10am in the Placer County meeting room located on the first floor of the Placer County Administrative Offices in Tahoe City (Customs House) at 775 North Lake Blvd.

Truckee putting on alcohol seminar for businesses

The Truckee Police Department is offering free educational training to businesses and organizations that have a license to sell alcohol.

The LEAD (Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs) training is Nov. 16 from 1-5pm at the Truckee Council Chambers, 10183 Truckee Airport Road.

It is a free, voluntary prevention and education program for retail licensees, their employees, and applicants. The curriculum is designed for licensees, managers, and employees.

To reserve a space, contact Detective Sara Rodriguez at srodriguez@townoftruckee.com.

Tax preparers needed on South Shore

The South Lake Tahoe Tax-Aide Program is seeking individuals interested in working in the volunteer-run tax preparation and assistance center.

Volunteers will be helping people in the South Lake Tahoe and surrounding area with free and individualized services. Volunteers who provide tax preparation services work directly with the taxpayer to fill out tax returns.

Volunteers who are greeters welcome taxpayers, help organize the client's paperwork and manage the overall flow of tax preparation services.

The Tax-Aide Program has a need for bilingual speakers.

Experience is not necessary. For more information about the program or how to become a volunteer contact Virginia at 530.544.1824 or go **online**.

Food-wine tourism expanding in Placer County

By Sonya Sorich, Sacramento Business Journal

The farm-to-fork movement is growing – just ask the founders of a tourism company.

Fork 'N Road Productions launched this month and will offer events, educational seminars and tours centered on food, wine and craft beer in Placer County.

Currently in its first phase, the company is holding upcoming events such as a brewers' roundtable and a beer and wine dinner. Early next year, owners expects to expand the offerings to include area tours with a food-and-drink focus.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Airlee

Airlee is a sweet and gentle Sheltie mixed with Dachshund. She weighs about 15 pounds. She is 7 years old, and her fur had to be shaved because she was matted; it will be typical of a Sheltie.

Airlee had terrible teeth and they all had to be removed, but she will never require any other dental work and she can eat dry food just fine. She came to Tahoe from Contra Costa County to find a better home than she's had in the past.

Airlee is spayed, microchipped, heart worm negative, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

Film about ultra running legend coming to TC

The Donner Party Mountain Runners and Alpenglow Sports are partnering to bring “Run Free – The True Story of Caballo Blanco” to the Tahoe Art Haus and Cinema in Tahoe City on Oct. 27 at 7pm.

“Run Free” chronicles the life of American ultra running legend Micah True (Caballo Blanco, or the White Horse) and his quest to create an ultra marathon in Mexico’s Copper Canyon to promote and preserve Tarahumara running tradition. True was a main character in Christopher McDougall’s best-selling book “Born to Run – A Hidden Tribe, Super Athletes and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen.”

True was a gifted athlete who ran long distances in the trails around his hometown of Boulder. He lived simply, had very few material possessions and delivered furniture in an old pickup to make ends meet. In 1994, he ran with the Tarahumara at the Leadville 100. Following this encounter, True began traveling to Mexico each winter to live and run among the Tarahumara.

Shortly after the 2012 race Micah True disappeared while trail running in the Gila Wilderness of New Mexico. Runners from around North America came to the Gila to join the search for True. Four days later, his body was found and recovered. He died of natural causes doing what he loved to do best – running alone in the wilderness.

Tickets are $5 and may be purchased **online**. The film studio donates 20 percent of all proceeds from the film to Norawas.org, a nonprofit supporting the Raramuri people of the Copper Canyons of Mexico.

K’s Kitchen: Turning zucchini into pesto

By Kathryn Reed

I remember when I lived in Sonoma County and had a prolific garden. Zucchini plants seemed to take over the area, producing so much squash some ended up in the compost pile. I couldn’t even give them away after a while.

I wish I had the recipe below back then. It’s a perfect use for this summer, and early autumn vegetable. And with being able to find zucchini in the grocery store year-round, it’s a recipe that is multi-seasonal.

Using yellow and green zucs will add a little color.

Be sure to taste the pesto before tossing it with the pasta to make sure it has enough flavor. More garlic, red pepper or salt may be needed because zucchinis are bland.

Other nuts could be used. When pine nuts weren’t so expensive that is what I made regular pesto with. Now walnuts are my go-to choice. Roasted almonds would also be good in this dish. I was being lazy and didn’t chop any walnuts as a garnish, but I would recommend doing so if serving to others. It will look better and provide more texture.



Pasta with Zucchini Pesto

1 C walnuts

Olive oil

5 garlic cloves, chopped

½ tsp crushed red pepper

3 medium zucchini (1½ pounds), half cut into matchsticks and the remainder chopped

Salt and pepper

1 lb. spaghetti

2 tsp lemon zest

1½ C Pecorino Romano, grated; plus more for serving

½ C chopped mint, plus more for garnish

In a large skillet coated with olive oil cook garlic and crushed red pepper over medium heat for about 1 minute. Add the chopped zucchini, season with salt and pepper, cook until lightly golden. Put this mixture into food processor or blender, add walnuts and blend. If needed, add olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Cook spaghetti until al dente. Reserve 1 cup of the pasta

water, then drain. Return the pasta to the hot pot (but with burner off), add pasta water, pesto, zucchini matchsticks, lemon zest, cheese and mint. Stir until mixed well.

Garnish with mint and chopped walnuts. Extra cheese may be served on the side.

Opinion: EDC survey is more government waste

By Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County executives are at it again. After the Board of Supervisors and CAO spent about $200,000 last year on a witch hunt and other diversionary tactics to cover for the many failings of the then CAO Terri Daly, such as the budget deficit, failure to follow BOS directives and the huge cost of the employee raises, Daly recommended an anonymous survey of past and present county employees by Vandermyden Maddux.

It became known as the “climate of fear.” As a result the BOS on the CAO’s recommendation hired a consultant, the Municipal Resource Group. Now the BOS has hired another consultant, Laree Kiely, founder of the Kiely group. The contract must have been signed under the authority of the CAO, as I haven’t seen anything on the BOS agenda. The good news is that the contract must be less than $64,000 which is the signing authority for a CAO. The bad news is that it is another extravagant waste of money, never mind the time cost of county employees which will substantially add to the cost.



Larry Weitzman

The “climate of fear” didn’t accomplish what the then CAO wanted, which was to destroy any opposition to her unbridled spending and power mongering. Instead it backfired as the survey clearly showed the problems all resided in her office where fear was rampant and employees were cowering. Instead it help destroy her and her cohorts as the survey showed they were the “bullies.” There are still many of Daly’s henchmen left that must be removed from EDC government.

That said, the purpose of this new Kiely study is to develop a strategic plan for EDC. Even though the county has a detailed General Plan going out decades, is the Kiely study a duplicate with underlying political motivations or perhaps a delay to solving EDC’s budget deficit?

On Oct. 2 on ***Lake Tahoe News*** there was information announcing the development of a three-year strategic plan asking for citizen engagement by taking a survey online. It is a wish list of what you, the citizen, want from the county and what you think are its most vital functions. The bias of the survey becomes clear when one of the more important questions asks the survey taker to rate 12 county functions in order of importance, 1-12 with the most important function getting a 12 and the least important getting a 1, the second least important a 2 and so on. It’s biased and slanted in that about half the functions (in my opinion) had zero importance and having to give preference of one over the other will create misleading results. The results would have been more precise and concise if each of the 12 functions were rated separately on importance on a 0-10 scale.

Other areas of the survey were like having a wish list (as asking for “free” stuff from the government). Therefore, I asked for a new county loan program for $100,000 loans with zero interest with no payments for 30 years and then a 50-year repayment schedule after the first 30 years. Heck, why not $500,000? My point being is that 95 percent of EDC residents want the county to provide three basic services: public safety, land use planning, and roads and road maintenance, otherwise they never have contact with the county except for paying their property taxes (ouch) or voting. Property taxes, sales taxes, hidden development fees and even DMV car registration fees should be a reminder to everyone of the expensive cost of government and paying for services that you never use.

Before this survey was developed there were also several meetings of high ranking public officials, mostly county department heads, the Kiely people and some members of the public to create a written matrix of what constitutes good governance, public safety, infrastructure, community health and economic development and other topics. I was on the good governance committee. At the first meeting Kiely gave a Skype presentation and took questions from those present. I made this comment that to have good government there were six words that if adhered to would solve most of the problems of governance without the necessity of matrixes, meetings or the rest of the highfalutin government speak that will be created by the good governance and the other committees. These words are: Absolute Honesty, Pristine Ethics, Complete Transparency. Just those six words if followed to the full extent of their meaning, government will operate at amazing efficiency and effectiveness and without bias. Government will become selfless as it should be and only about EDC residents.

Government and some of its (higher level) employees forget that they are a fiduciary to the people, like a bank acting as a trustee to a family trust. We don’t have that in EDC. We

have people in the administration, building a power base, always wanting a higher salary (and pensions), hiring their friends, covering up mistakes and to make matters worse our Board of Supervisors are absolutely derelict and feckless. (I am not speaking of the rank and file employees who generally do a great job serving the public).

The good governance committee basically copied what other jurisdictions claim to be the model in government speak language: “Achieving the best possible process for making & implementing decisions; characterized by honesty, integrity, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, equitability, inclusion, effectiveness, efficiency and following the rule of law.” Notice how the words honesty and transparency are buried and make it feel good. There are levels of honesty and transparency and that’s why when you take an oath you are sworn to: “tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.” That is why we must demand “absolute honesty, pristine ethics and complete transparency.” Everything else in government that the public expects will fall into place. We certainly don’t have it now.

Lake Tahoe Hard Rock sues ex-management firm



Lake Tahoe Hard Rock owners are seeking damages against the former management team. Photo/LTN file

By Kathryn Reed

The Park brothers are going after the former management company of Lake Tahoe Hard Rock for damages, contending Warner Hospitality is responsible for cost overruns at the remodeled Stateline property and mismanagement.

“In particular, Warner has failed to manage the property properly, resulting in customer dissatisfaction, bad publicity, employee turnover, and revenue well below Warner’s projections,” a complaint filed Oct. 15 says. “Warner has acted with gross negligence and committed willful misconduct in connection with its management of the property.”

The complaint was filed in Washoe County District Court. Neva One is the company David and Jon Park formed to operate the Hard Rock. They had planned to spend $60 million to renovate what was the old Horizon hotel-casino, which open as the Hard Rock in late January.

The Park brothers last week **fired Warner Hospitality** and turned management over to two veteran gaming consultants. This came after **SMC Contracting** filed a lawsuit seeking millions of dollars in cost overruns that were not paid, **the pool** had to be closed because of a leak, and **employees** were either being

fired or driven off because of what they said was Warner's fault.

SMC and Neva One will be back in court Oct. 26 for a hearing. A settlement has not been reached, but talks are ongoing. Mike Springer, attorney for SMC, has not returned multiple calls. SMC claims it is owed nearly $19 million – about double the original contract.

SMC was hired to do the casino floor work.

The lawsuit goes on to say, "Warner failed to properly manage and oversee the completion of the hotel towers of the property, with floors still incomplete."

The lawsuit says Warner was to oversee the design, construction and opening. Any expenses that were more than $10,000 beyond the original price or had a cumulative total in excess of $200,000 were to be approved by Neva One, according to the lawsuit. This reportedly didn't happen, which is how SMC wound up not getting paid what it claims it is due.

"We are taking all actions that we consider appropriate to strengthen the property," David Park said in a statement. "We believe the changes at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Lake Tahoe will help us be in a better position to resolve issues that came about during the renovation project. We are eager to move forward in a positive direction for the property, our valuable employees and the community."