

Letter: Stop Heavenly's fire break plans

To the community,

An emergency snowcat access route would be cleared at strategic locations along the (Heavenly Mountain Resort) gondola line below the gondola midstation. This access route would facilitate evacuations of the gondola during emergency situations. It would allow Heavenly employees to deliver rescue supplies and personnel and transport passengers in the event of a gondola evacuation. It would be used during the winter in times of operational emergencies.

The clearing would be 25-30 feet wide to allow a standard-sized snowcat to access the gondola line in key locations. The route would begin to the southwest of the gondola midstation at the existing midstation access road and terminate near gondola line tower number 16, for a total length of approximately 6,830 feet, resulting in approximately 4.7 acres of tree removal. The entire route would be located on National Forest system lands. No permanent ground disturbance or development of a new permanent road prism or platform would be necessary for the emergency snow cat route. Tree stumps would be cut at a height of approximately 6 inches – up to 12 inches on steeper slopes – and large rocks/boulders would be reduced to a height of approximately 12 to 18 inches.

A Cat track down the Fire Break.

Please read the full plan at the TRPA's website.

1. Tell everyone. The TRPA vote is March 11 and March 24. Please act fast.

2. Let the TRPA know how you feel.

3. Let the Forest Service know how you feel.
4. Tell everyone you know no cat track down the fire break.

Sean Rutkowski, Stateline

U.S. men sweep in snowboard slopestyle

By USSA

PARK CITY – The skies were grey and the light flat, but it didn't matter, as the men threw down an unbelievable podium sweep at the Sprint U.S. Grand Prix in Park City on Feb. 27. Eric Willett (Breckenridge, Colo.) walked away with the Paul Mitchell snowboard slopestyle win, Chas Guldemon (Reno) took second and Eric Beauchemin (Grand Blanc, Mich.) was third. On the women's side, Karly Shorr (Milford, Mich.) stood on her first FIS World Cup podium, taking second place.

The U.S. qualified four to Friday's international-level World Snowboard Tour event finals, and all took podium spots.

"Today is friggin' amazing. I haven't had this feeling in so long," said Willett, who is coming back from a shoulder injury and a broken back last year that caused him to miss the Olympics. "It's insane. To be here with all my friends and to put down a run that I haven't put down before just felt so good." This was Willett's first World Cup win.

Along with his third place result, Beauchemin also walked away with the overall Sprint U.S. Grand Prix tour win, taking home \$10,000. "I've been working real hard this year and it's an amazing to win the Grand Prix overall title," said Beauchemin.

“It’s always been a dream to win an overall like that.”

In addition to the podium, Beauchemin took home the U.S. Snowboarding National Championship, along with Hailey Langland (San Clemente).

Willett, Guldemon and Beauchemin are close friends and have supported each other throughout the season; they’re even staying together this week in Park City. At the end of each run, all three voiced their excitement about the others’ results. But Willett summed it up perfectly. “To actually have all three of us on the podium – all good friends – it couldn’t be any better,” he said. “It’s so sick.”

Shorr, 20, was sixth after the qualifiers, and with only top-10 World Cup results in her career, no one expected her to podium.

“It feels amazing! I never expected that coming into it,” said Shorr breathlessly about her first World Cup podium. “It kind of set me free. I’m really, really happy.”

Shorr—the only U.S. woman to qualify for the slopestyle finals – finished behind Cheryl Maas of the Netherlands and ahead of Elena Koenz of Switzerland.

Congresswoman wants to repeal sports wagering tax

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Seeking to save as much as \$11 million in taxes paid by some

Nevada companies each year, Rep. Dina Titus today reintroduced legislation that would roll back a federal handle tax on sports wagers.

In a letter to the leaders of the House Ways and Means Committee, Titus argues that the tax was supposed to fund investigations of illegal wagering operations, but the Internal Revenue Service couldn't confirm the funds were being used as intended.

Read the whole story

Agencies expect multiple controlled burns in Tahoe

The Nevada Division of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service may continue prescribed fire operations in numerous areas around Lake Tahoe this weekend and next week.

Operations may take place southwest of Meeks Bay, on Gardner Mountain near South Tahoe High School and off Gardner Street, Christmas Valley, Luther Pass near Grass Lake, and Ski Run Boulevard near Heavenly, Lower Kingsbury Grade off Easy Street, near Logan Creek Drive, Slaughterhouse Canyon, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park north of Spooner Summit off Highway 28 and at Memorial Point near Sand Harbor. Operations may last through the next several weeks as conditions allow.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size. Agencies coordinate with state and local county air pollution control districts and monitors weather conditions closely prior to prescribed fire ignition.

Before conducting prescribed fire operations, agencies may post road signs around affected areas and make email or phone notifications. The Forest Service updates the local fire information line at 530.543.2600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Tahoe Paradise to set sail again

Sightseeing cruises on the South Shore will resume next week.

After being docked for more than a month because of the low lake level, the Tahoe Paradise will be taking on passengers starting March 5. The yacht will sail daily at 1:30pm from the Ski Run Marina.

The Tahoe Queen is still sidelined because of the water level in the channel at the marina. Aramark operates both vessels. It is Aramark's responsibility to dredge so there is access, but the company hasn't even taken out a permit.

The M.S. Dixie II, the company's other paddle-wheeler, is out of commission as it goes through a renovation. It should be back in service in late spring out of Zephyr Cove marina.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif.-Nev. may drop out of state community college tuition fee for some Tahoe residents

By Kathryn Reed

California and Nevada state senators are working to revive the good neighbor policy so students in the Lake Tahoe Basin would not have to pay out of state tuition to attend nearby community colleges.

State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, on Feb. 27 introduced the legislation – known as SB605. His counterpart in Nevada, state Sen. James Settelmeyer, R-Minden, will soon be doing the same.

“We want to make sure youth in our community have affordable options for affordable education and then the opportunity to build careers and find jobs in the basin as well,” Gaines told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We hope we’ll be successful in both legislatures and provide some relief in a basin that doesn’t know borders.”

No one in Settelmeyer’s office responded to *LTN*.

The bill would limit the number of students crossing the state line to 200.

One of the reasons the bill has failed twice before is that lawmakers were concerned about how many students would take advantage of the good neighbor policy and what fiscal impact that could have.

The bills mirror each other, which has not happened before. The laws would benefit Lake Tahoe Basin students in specific ZIP codes, and involve Lake Tahoe Community College and

Western Nevada Community College.

This would be a six-year pilot program. Gaines said at the end of that time period officials would analyze whether the program was working, and if adjustments need to be made, including increasing or decreasing the number of students who may participate.

LTCC President Kindred Murillo has been at the forefront of trying to make this a reality. She credited the two lawmakers for being “champions” of the cause. The men represent Lake Tahoe in their respective legislatures.

The good neighbor policy has been in place before, but Nevada dropped it a few years ago. This means students going to Whittell High School cannot drive the three miles to LTCC, but instead must go over a mountain pass to the nearest community college in Nevada – at least if they don’t want to pay the exorbitant out of state tuition fee.

Gaines said his office has been speaking with the Association of California Community Colleges and has gotten support for the legislation.

Big 5 tops 4Q profit forecasts

By Associated Press

Big 5 Sporting Goods Corp. on Tuesday reported fourth-quarter earnings of \$2.8 million.

The El Segundo-based company said it had profit of 13 cents per share. Earnings, adjusted for non-recurring costs and

asset impairment costs, were 19 cents per share.

The results topped Wall Street expectations. The average estimate of analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of 16 cents per share.

The sporting goods retailer posted revenue of \$250.3 million in the period, which matched Street forecasts.

For the year, the company reported profit of \$14.9 million, or 67 cents per share. Revenue was reported as \$977.9 million.

Big 5 shares have declined 16 percent since the beginning of the year. In the final minutes of trading on Tuesday, shares hit \$12.35, a fall of 28 percent in the last 12 months.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- An article about Tahoe will be published in the May issue of *Bike* magazine.

- Drew Sainte Marie is opening Tahoe Amore, a Venetian gondola business, in the Tahoe Keys on May 1.

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce's Tech Tuesday on March 10 is about how to better communicate with hearing and speech disabled customers with a free relay service that allows business owners to connect to individuals hard of hearing, deaf or with a speech disability. It is from 5-7pm at the chamber's office in Stateline. Cost is \$15 for non-members, free for members. More info is online.

- Sammy Hagar and the Circle will be at Harveys in Stateline on Sept. 5.
 - The annual Spring Wings Festival is May 16 from 10am-3:30pm. Celebrate the migration of the shorebird and waterfowl through the Lahontan Valley. Go on guided tours, visit interactive exhibits, see exclusive demonstrations and learn more about wildlife. The free event is in Fallon; meet at the Churchill County multipurpose building.
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T.J. Maxx hiking wages to minimum \$9/hr

By Lindsey Rupp, Bloomberg

Wal-Mart has company.

T.J. Maxx, Marshalls and other chains owned by TJX Cos. will be increasing the pay of U.S. workers to at least \$9 an hour beginning in June. That matches the level adopted by Wal-Mart Stores Inc. earlier this month. TJX, which also runs HomeGoods and Sierra Trading Post Associates, will boost wages to \$10 by in 2016 for workers with at least six months of employment.

The move signals that the labor market is getting more competitive after a slow recovery from the recession. Pay hikes will help employers lower turnover and reduce hiring and training costs, said Brian Yarbrough, an analyst at Edward Jones in St. Louis. It's an approach Costco Wholesale Corp. and other successful retailers have already adopted.

"This is the way retailers need to go," said Yarbrough, who has a buy rating on TJX's shares. "Some of the best performers

already pay higher wages.”

TJX rose 3.3 percent to \$69.38 at the close of trading in New York, marking its biggest one-day gain in six months. Shares of the Framingham, Massachusetts-based company had climbed 7.6 percent last year.

Chief Executive Officer Carol Meyrowitz announced the move after a holiday quarter that exceeded the company’s sales growth and profit estimates.

Read the whole story

Net neutrality vote didn’t end the debate

By Jim Puzzanghera, Los Angeles Times

In approving strong net neutrality regulations, the Federal Communications Commission fulfilled a decadelong desire by public interest advocates, technology firms and Democrats to tighten government oversight of the Internet to prevent abuses by broadband service providers.

ANALYSIS But the agency’s closely watched decision on Thursday didn’t end the debate. Not even close.

The partisan divide over net neutrality – reflected in the FCC’s party-line 3-2 vote – highlighted the passions on both sides of the arcane technology policy concept and showed that final resolution of the issue still could be years away.

Here’s what’s coming next.

Only the five FCC commissioners and some agency staffers have seen the 317-page net neutrality order, which prohibits broadband providers from blocking, slowing or selling faster delivery of legal content flowing through its networks.

Read the whole story