World on track for 3rd hottest year on record

By Tom Randall, Bloomberg

If you live in California, Australia or Scandinavia, 2014 may feel like the hottest year on record. Not quite; on a global scale, it's "only" third-hottest.

The global average surface temperature for January through July was 1.2 degrees Fahrenheit (0.66 degrees Celsius) above the 20th century average, tying with 2002 as the third warmest in records going back to 1880, according to National Climatic Data Center data released today.
Hottest Years on Record

The greatest share of global warming in recent years has been absorbed by the oceans. The beginnings of an El Nino warming pattern in the Pacific Ocean earlier this year threatened to stir up some of the heat. That hasn't happened yet, and the forecast has been reduced to a 65 percent chance of a mild to moderate El Nino developing later this year. The last strong El Nino event was in 1998, the hottest year on record.

Thirteen of the 14 hottest years on record have all occurred in the 21st century. The recent clustering of heat records are one of many signs of the warming climate (click here for more). To put the last 135 years of global temps into perspective, the chart below stacks each year onto the same timeline. The five hottest years are in red: 2010, 2005, 1998, 2013 and 2003. This year, to date, is highlighted in green.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Will California ban plastic bags?

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

When Capitol insiders talk about a “bag bill,” it refers to something for which an interest group is willing to spend big money – legally, it’s presumed – to see done.

Senate Bill 270, one might say, is a double bag bill.



Dan Walters

It would phase out, beginning in 2015, the single-use plastic bags that grocery stores commonly use to send purchases home. It also involves big money and big interest groups.

Banning plastic bags is a burning cause for some environmentalists, contending that they squander energy, add to solid-waste-disposal problems, and often pollute waterways and the ocean, where they pose dangers to wildlife.

Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Los Angeles, the author of SB270, says the billions of bags used annually in California “cost state and local governments at least $25 million,” and dozens of the state’s more liberal cities have already banned them.

Previous efforts to enact a statewide ban failed, but this year the powerful grocery industry signed on, saying that a statewide policy makes more sense than a patchwork and enticed by new authority for grocers to charge 10 cents (or more) for

every bag – paper or reusable plastic – they provide.

Read the whole story

Food Bank setting up farmers' market

Food Bank of El Dorado County is having a free farmers' market Aug. 27 in South Lake Tahoe for people in need.

Families are entitled to one box of food. The distribution will be at the American Legion parking lot from 10-11am.

For more information, call 530.621.9950 or email info@foodbankedc.org.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Charles Goldman will be speaking at 2pm Aug. 21 to the South Tahoe Public Utility District board of directors.
• *Parade* magazine picked Placerville as one of the U.S. cities with the best Main Street.
• El Dorado County Board of Supervisors will discuss the Meyers Area Plan on Oct. 28 during the annual South Shore meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport. The meeting starts at 9am.

• Sept. 27 from 9am-1pm is prescription drug take back day at Gateway Shopping Center on Donner Pass Road in Truckee and at the old fire station on North Lake Boulevard in Tahoe City.
• Tahoe Prosperity Center wants people to take a test and survey regarding high speed internet service to the Lake Tahoe Basin, Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley.

Geotourism expo to have native music component

The Tahoe Expo has put together a show to celebrate Lake Tahoe's native culture and vibrant music.

The concert will be Aug. 30 from 3-sunset on the Shakespeare Stage at Sand Harbor. Proceeds will go toward creating of the Washoe Cultural Center at Taylor Creek on the South Shore.

Music acts include: Mary Youngblood with Sana Christian, Larry Aynesmith, Anna Helwing, Michael Cutt, Tin Splendor Band, Julian Forest , Diana Woodbury, Annie Bryant, Ben Rupert, Jeff Brownell and Washoe Story Theater led by Kristin Burtt.

Tickets are $10 for children, $20 for adults, or $30 for special front row VIP tickets. They may be purchased online.

The Tahoe Expo will be on Labor Day weekend with selected GeoTracks on Saturday and Sunday. For more info about the Aug. 30-31 event, go online or contact Jacquie Chandler at 775.287.3982 or jchandler@sustaintahoe.org.

Wildfire threat dominates enviro summit talks



Sens. Harry Reid and Dianne Feinstein have been proponents of Lake Tahoe for years. Photos/Kathryn reed

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – Now in its 18th year, the Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit is the place for politicians and others to tout how much they care about the basin, what they've done to make it great and what they want to do for the future.

Since the first summit, $1.74 billion has been invested through what's called the environmental improvement program. Much of that is taxpayer money, with $323.7 million from the private sector. Those private dollars continue to grow as government at all levels has less to dole out.

But if the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act is reauthorized, it calls for $415 million from the feds. Rep. Mark Amodei, R-

Carson City, is the sponsor of the bill.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif, who hosted the event at Valhalla, said the entire investment is working. At the first summit a white dinner plate-like device could be seen to a depth of 64 feet, while today the naked eye can view it at 75 feet. She rattled off the number of road miles that have been improved, acres of forest treated for fuels reduction and wildlife habitat restoration, and the commitment to preventing more invasive species from taking hold in Lake Tahoe.



Sen. Harry Reid speaks Aug. 19 at the annual environmental summit. Also on stage are Rep. Mark Amodei, Rep. John Garamendi, Sen. Dean Heller, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Gov. Jerry Brown, Gov. Brian Sandoval, Rep. Tom McClintock, and Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The theme of the Aug. 19 event was Drought, Wildfire and Invasive Species: Confronting the Effects of Climate Change on Lake Tahoe. More than 300 people attended the event.

Wildfire dominated the talks, especially with the lawmakers signing a proclamation updating the multi-agency fuel reduction program that is led by the Lake Tahoe Fuels and Fire Team.

“This is important because fire is going to be with us and more so in the future,” Fire Chief Mike Brown with North Lake Tahoe Fire Department said.

It is designed to be a strategy to protect life and property in the basin. Fire chiefs from throughout the basin were in attendance – as they have been most years.

Fire has been a constant topic ever since the 2007 Angora Fire reduced 254 houses to ash. Many of those homes on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe have since been rebuilt and the forest has new growth, but so many burned trees remain as a visual reminder of what happened that June.

While most of the electeds talked nice and about how well the California and Nevada delegations get along, it was Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, who had some of the most impassioned words of the day. He is an outspoken critic of the U.S. Forest Service and environmentalists, especially when it comes to harvesting timber after a fire. He singled out how the wood from last year’s Rim Fire is just standing there.

“Excess marketable timber should be sold and removed from the forests, with the proceeds used to provide for forest restoration and the reduction of ladder fuels,” the congressman who represents the California side of Lake Tahoe said. “The sale of excess timber and the use of biomass generation can substantially supplement the cost of fuels reduction, making the proper management of our forests cost-effective once again.

“The escalating costs of fighting fires should be treated as other natural disasters and not funded by shorting fuel reduction budgets.”

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval spoke of having recently hiked to Snow Valley Peak and being able to see the impact of drought in the high country. That lack of moisture ties into growing concerns that fire is a real threat to the area.



Geoff Schladow (TERC), Joanne Marchetta (TRPA) and Nancy Gibson (USFS) listen to the speakers.

Geoff Schladow, executive director of Tahoe Environmental Research Center, also pointed out how wildfires inside and outside the basin impact air and water quality here.

Schladow said having data going back to the early 1960s has allowed scientists to understand how Tahoe has changed, and he added research needs to continue. But that takes money.

California Gov. Jerry Brown said, “The success to date give us a lot of encouragement. At the end of the day, nature rules.”

Changes coming to South Tahoe’s Y



The boxy building at the Y had several tenants through

the years. Photos/Bill Kingman



On Aug. 19 the structure was bulldozed.

Another old South Lake Tahoe building no longer exists.

What many people remember as the former AAA building at the Y was demolished on Aug. 19. More recently it had been home to a Laundromat, standup paddleboard store and bike shop.

In its place will be a Bev Mo store.

The bike and SUP shops are moving down Emerald Bay Road into a building that is nearing completion. This is where a Chinese restaurant once sat.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Barton gives patients access to online records

Barton Health this month launched MyChart. It allows patients to manage their health care information online.

Barton patients with Internet access can make appointments, email their physicians securely and privately, and view parts

of their medical records around the clock.

Any patient who visits the hospital or a Barton physician office will automatically get an access code. Previous Barton patients can also go to the MyChart page and follow the sign up instructions.

For more info, call 530.543.5959.

Tahoe youth shares his mindset for education

By Hayley Ringle, Phoenix Business Journal

At 14 years old, Logan LaPlante is introducing the world to "hackschooling," a term he uses as he gains hands-on skills through internships for his alternative, DIY schooling.

LaPlante calls hackschooling "a mindset, not a system," and says regardless of what type of school a child attends, they can apply this term to enhance their learning.



Logan LaPlante signs autographs. Photo/Arizona Commerce Society

“I want to be happy and healthy, exercise and have time in nature,” said LaPlante, who lives in Lake Tahoe and is home-schooled. “All of these things are important to me. Trees make you tougher.”

LaPlante spoke about his unique background as the keynote speaker last week at the Arizona Innovation Summit in Scottsdale organized by the Arizona Commerce Authority, Arizona SciTech Festival and MIT Enterprise Forum Phoenix.

He gained prominence when his TEDx talk at the University of Nevada garnered global attention when it became the second most-watched video from the event last year with almost 6 million views.

LaPlante is a published writer, an aspiring filmmaker and graphic designer, a public speaker, director, skier and mountain biker who also likes history.

When his parents realized he wasn’t connecting and doing well in public school, they started home schooling him and allowing him to do these internships for his DIY education.

Read the whole story

Flu clinic dates set in El Dorado County

El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Division will begin conducting low-cost community flu vaccination clinics starting Sept. 24, with additional clinics offered through the beginning of November. The seasonal influenza vaccine will be available in nasal mist and flu shot

forms at the clinics.

Shots are recommended for those 6 months and older. In addition to the flu vaccine, the pneumococcal vaccine (which protects against pneumonia) will also be available at the flu clinics for those who medically qualify.

The cost per vaccine is $10, but no one will be denied due to inability to pay; cash or check accepted. Parents should bring their child’s immunization records.

South Lake Tahoe:

Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Oct. 22, and Oct. 29 from 9:30am-12:30pm at the Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
Oct. 8 from 3-6pm at Bijou School, 3501 Spruce Ave., in the teachers lounge.
Oct. 15 from 3:30-6:30pm at Bijou School, 3501 Spruce Ave., in the teachers lounge.
Nov. 5 from 3-6pm at the Lake Tahoe Airport, 1901 Airport Road.

West Slope:

Sept. 30 from 1-4pm at the El Dorado Hills Fire Station 85, 1050 Wilson Blvd., El Dorado Hills.
Oct. 1 from 10am-noon at Pioneer Park, 6740 Fairplay, Somerset.
Oct. 7 from 2-4pm at the Georgetown Fire Station 61, 6281 Main St., Georgetown.
Oct. 8 from 1:30-4:30pm at the county fairgrounds, 100 Placerville Drive, in the Organ Room, Placerville.
Oct. 14 from 2-4:30pm at the Community Church, 6361 Pony Express Trail, in the Evergreen Room, Pollock Pines.
Oct. 16 from 2-4pm at the Garden Valley Fire Station 51, 4860 Marshall Road, Garden Valley.
Oct. 22 from 2-4pm at the Community Church, 5061 Sciaroni Road, Grizzly Flats.
Oct. 23 from 1-4pm at the Cameron Park Fire Station 89, 3200

Country Club Drive, Cameron Park.
Oct. 28 from 1:30-3:30pm at the Diamond Springs Fire Station 49, 501 Main St., in the conference room, Diamond Springs.
Oct. 30 from 11am-1:30pm at the County Fairgrounds, 100 Placerville Drive, in the Pavilion, Placerville. Drive through clinic; stay in your car and get vaccinated.
Nov. 1 from 10am-1pm at the Divide Wellness Center, 6065 Highway 193, Georgetown.