

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Truckee Community Farmers Market is slated to open for its third season on June 4 from 10am-2pm at 12047 Donner Pass Road.
- The Minden Library is showing family movies every Saturday in June at 2pm in the meeting room. The movies and fresh popcorn are free. Movies are June 3, "The Secret Life of Pets" (Rated PG), June 10, "The BFG" (Rated PG), June 17: "E.T., The Extra-Terrestrial" (Rated PG), and June 24, "Moana (Rated PG). The Minden Library is located at 1625 Library Lane.
- Reggae Sundays at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe start May 28. Must be 21. For more info, go **online**.
- The Sacramento Valley section of the American Planning Association awarded Placer County's Tahoe Basin Area Plan its award of excellence.
- Squaw Kids Adventure Camp will be offered Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, June 23-Sept. 4 from 9am-3pm. Reservations may be made **online**.

Deal allows West Slope tribal gas station to open

By Joann Eisenbrandt

The controversial gas station/convenience store complex on tribal lands of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians near Red Hawk Casino will be moving forward to completion soon.

El Dorado Council, a local nonprofit advocacy group, had filed a lawsuit against El Dorado County disputing the county's approval of the project's environmental documentation. On May 23, El Dorado Council (EDCI) and the tribe filed a settlement agreement with the court which will end the lawsuit against El Dorado County that has kept the project on hold. The agreement came just one day before El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Curt Stracener was to hear the case. The county supports the settlement agreement, but is not a party to it.

In a press release, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians' Chairman Nicholas Fonseca said, "This settlement enables our tribe to continue to do its good work to benefit the community, our tribal members and our employees."

The project is adjacent to Highway 50 on Shingle Springs Drive in a largely rural area.

County residents on surrounding rural residential parcels have been vocal about their dislike of this project and with what they see as the failure of the county Board of Supervisors to do more to protect their rural lifestyle. The construction of Red Hawk Casino and the subsequent conversion by the tribe of private parcels into trust with the Bureau of Indian Affairs upset residents because of their lack of control over how these parcels could then be used.

El Dorado Council was co-founded in 1992 by local resident Carol Louis to give voice to residents' land use concerns in the Shingle Springs area. Louis is not happy with the settlement agreement and resigned May 22 from the group she helped start because of it. She believes it did not offer enough mitigation measures for the Shingle Springs community from the impacts that this commercial complex would create. She wanted to let the court decide on the merits of the lawsuit.

"The Shingle Springs neighborhoods have been under siege for

20 years by the tribe," she told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I am disappointed that the El Dorado Council has not done its due diligence in securing a better outcome for the residents."

A resident of the area near the gas station complex who wished to remain anonymous said, "We had a lot of folks go to (El Dorado Council) meetings and contribute personal checks to finance the lawsuit. None of us wanted to settle; we wanted to wait for the judge's decision. It is my understanding that the majority of people were never notified as to the intentions of the three (board members) who signed off on it. We were left totally in the dark."

The EDCI board consists of Mike Doran, Kelly Rosco, and Lori Parlin.

Because lands held in trust for tribes are not subject to local planning and land use regulations, local jurisdictions have less control over what is built. The tribe did not need El Dorado County's approval or permits to build the gas station complex. But to get access off the property, the tribe had to obtain a county encroachment permit for construction of the driveway entrance to the gas station property and for the installation of pipeline extensions and connections for water and sewer service to the property from El Dorado Irrigation District (EID).

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors approved the tribe's encroachment permit in June of last year. EDCI filed a lawsuit alleging the county's environmental review was insufficient under requirements of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) because it did not fully analyze the environmental impacts of the entire project. In addition to the gas station and convenience store, there is also a potential second phase that could include a restaurant, retail and office space, fast-food establishments, an entertainment venue and an 80-room hotel and conference center. El Dorado Council believed a full environmental impact report needed to be prepared to

identify impacts of the much larger second phase on traffic, noise, aesthetics, water quality, and sewer capacity.

Mike Doran, CEO and chairman of the board of EDCI, believes the settlement agreement was a good choice.

"We believe that after many meetings with the tribe on this settlement agreement, it covers a variety of issues important to the community that would not have been addressed had we pursued the litigation. There was no guarantee that we would have won the litigation. The settlement agreement has environmental mitigations for storm water runoff, inspection of the underground storage tanks, tax equity issues important to stakeholders and provisions to make life easier for residents near the gun range," Doran said.

A gun range the tribe opened on trust lands across Shingle Springs Drive from the gas station complex has been a volatile issue with residents because of noise and safety issues. There are many rural residences, schools and churches in the immediate area.

The gas station complex has been completed for some time and has just been sitting empty waiting for the outcome of the lawsuit. Under the settlement agreement, EDCI will ask the court to dismiss its lawsuit against the county. AmyAnn Taylor, attorney general of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, said the tribe will try to take advantage of summer vacation when children are not in school and road traffic is lower to do the needed three to four months of outside road construction needed to complete the driveway access. Completions of the hookups with EID also have to occur before the gas station can open.

In its press release, El Dorado Council pointed out what it believes were key components of the agreement. "As part of the settlement," it states, "the tribe agrees to study and perform feasible mitigations to bring the gun range within the bounds

of the county's noise ordinance. Mitigations could include enclosing the gun range to create an indoor range or installing a sound wall around the outdoor gun range."

Another issue is what some called the tribe's unfair tax advantage. EDCI's press release notes the tribe has agreed to charge non-Indian customers approximately the same tax rate that other non-Indian businesses in the county charge for gasoline and for the goods and services at the new complex. Tax equity was included in the 2006 memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the tribe and El Dorado County. This MOU was part of the settlement of the lawsuit against the initial construction of Red Hawk Casino. This provision has not yet been put into effect by the county.

Doran told *Lake Tahoe News* that, "We are taking the tribe at their word at this point that they will in good faith accomplish these things that are part of the settlement agreement."

One of the stipulations of the settlement agreement is that Judge Stracener retain jurisdiction over the settlement agreement. Either party could then return to the court to request action if the other party failed to live up to the terms of the agreement. The court has not yet issued the minute order outlining the terms of the settlement, including whether or not it agrees to retain jurisdiction.

The settlement agreement also indicates the tribe will perform an environmental review before any further development takes place on the parcel, but it is not entirely clear at this point precisely what form that review would take.

Carol Louis is not ready to take the Tribe at their word. She told *Lake Tahoe News* that the tribe has been given too much "wiggle room" regarding compliance with the provisions of the settlement.

El Dorado Council will also be dismissing its lawsuit opposing

the tribe's request to put 25 additional acres of land contiguous to Red Hawk Casino into trust. The tribe indicated in its application to the BIA that the land would be for tribal housing. Housing was originally the stated purpose for the 32-acre parcel where the gas station complex now stands. Changing uses is allowed after lands are put in trust as long as the new use still meets federal guidelines. Louis believes the tribe intends to now build their hotel on the 25-acre parcel next to the casino.

AmyAnn Taylor said this is not true. She told *Lake Tahoe News* that the Tribe had already mapped out this land into 5-acre residential parcels and that there were 90 tribal members on a waiting list to live there. She added that the tribe would "rather spend its money for the community instead of fighting lawsuits."

With regard to one of the community's biggest concerns, Taylor noted the tribe will be doing an economic analysis in the next few months to see if it would be financially feasible to convert the existing outdoor gun range into an indoor range.

Right now, neither of the parties has released a copy of the final settlement agreement. Doran said it will most likely be made public by EDCI once the court has published its final order.

Opinion: Skiers need to take action on national level

To the community,

I am proud to share that Squaw Valley-Alpine Meadows recently

received the *Ski* magazine Golden Eagle Award in the large resort category for our multifaceted approach to sustainability and utilization of our network to promote climate change solutions. This is a tremendous honor bestowed by the National Ski Area Association. Our work in the environmental domain will continue for as long as we ski and ride these beautiful mountains, which is why I am reaching out for your support:



Andy Wirth

Together, we are a community of outdoor enthusiasts that is based on a love of our mountains, and I feel it is our duty to speak up and advocate for the continuous protection of our environment. President Trump and other leaders of our country are considering the exit from a commitment we made to the globe in the Paris Climate Agreement.

Mr. Trump, who vowed during his campaign to eradicate President Barack Obama's policies related to climate change, plans to sign an executive order directing Scott Pruitt, the new EPA administrator, to begin the legal process of undoing Mr. Obama's regulations surrounding the reduction of greenhouse pollution generated from coal-fired power plants. These regulations are the cornerstone of the Obama administration's program that supports our nation's compliance with the obligations we have in our commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement.

With undeniable evidence that global temperatures are currently on the rise, we have a duty to the environment to

participate in positive climate action. As skiers and riders, we rely on Mother Nature to provide us with snow, and we must protect our outdoors for the use of future generations of enthusiasts.

We stand with our partner Protect our Winters in imploring the EPA to maintain and even increase the critical regulations that combat climate change. I encourage you to do the same: Speak up, use your voice and help us advocate for the environment and stand by the commitment we, as a nation, made to the globe by participating in the Paris Climate Agreement. To act, use the **Protect Our Winters Climate Activist's Roadmap** to submit your comments to the EPA.

Andy Wirth, president and CEO Squaw Valley Ski Holdings

U.S. workers gave up half of their vacation days last year

By Julia Horowitz, CNN Money

Are you dreaming of a summer vacation you know you won't take?

It's not just you.

Most U.S. employees don't use all of their vacation days, and those who do take a break are increasingly likely to work while doing so, according to a report by job site Glassdoor.

Only 23 percent of workers surveyed said they used all of their paid time off in the last 12 months. The average U.S. worker leaves almost half of his or her vacation days on the table.

Read the whole story

Federal budget proposes to eliminate Brand USA

By Bart Jansen, USA Today

WASHINGTON – As President Trump aims to eliminate the deficit over the next decade while shifting funding to border security, one of the programs slated for elimination in his budget Tuesday is Brand USA, a federally funded organization that promotes the country overseas as a tourist destination.

Trump's budget, which is being delivered to Congress on Tuesday, would eliminate Brand USA and shift the revenue to Customs and Border Protection, according to summary budget documents released Monday. The proposal would raise the deficit \$510 million over the next three years, according to the summary.

Congress will spend months debating the proposals and may decide to change or ignore them. But Trump's budget sets out the administration's priorities before lawmakers decide where to actually spend money.

Read the whole story

Traffic restrictions changing for Caltrans' projects

Traffic restrictions are changing next week for Caltrans' two water-quality improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Work on the \$57 million South Lake Tahoe Y to Trout Creek Bridge project on Highway 50 and the \$70 million Highway 89 West Shore project will resume Tuesday night.

Beginning next week on the Y to Trout Creek project, the contractor will be required to keep two lanes open in each direction from 9am-8pm Monday through Thursday. To accommodate that and continue work, traffic in the westbound No. 1 lane will be shifted into the two-way left turn lane and the No. 2 westbound lane and shoulder will be closed for construction.

Eastbound and westbound left turns will be restricted within the work zone. This configuration is expected to continue through Labor Day.

These two miles of Highway 50 are getting drainage systems to collect and treat storm water runoff, new curb, gutter and sidewalks, a wider highway to provide 6-foot shoulders for bike lanes and repaving. This is the first season of what's anticipated to be a three-year project.

On the West Shore, work is focused in the Sunnyside area between Ward Creek and Spruce Street in the final year of construction. During peak season, the contractor has to be off the road by 11am on Fridays and can't have lane closures between 11am and 6pm Monday through Thursday.

Motorists can expect one-way traffic controls with up to 20-minute delays beginning at 10pm Sunday and then from 6pm-11am Monday through Friday.

This project has constructed new drainage systems on about 8 miles of Highway 89 from Tahoma to Tahoe City. The highway also has been widened to increase shoulder room and repaved. Completion is expected by the end of July.

Study: Heat a major contributor to rock falls

By Lisa M. Krieger, Bay Area News Group

When rocks get hot, they do what people do: shed a few layers.

And the hottest hours of the day – during the hottest months of the year – are prime time for unexplained rockfalls and cracking, according to a study of the granite domes and cliffs in the Sierra Nevada, which finds that hikers, tourists and wildlife are at less risk of being flattened during cooler times.

“Cliffs move in and out, and detach,” said Menlo Park-based U.S. Geological Survey scientist Brian Collins, who uses instrumentation to measure restless rocks at Twain Harte reservoir and Yosemite National Park.

“People look at landscape as static, that it will be there forever,” said Collins whose study, in essence, is explaining what turns mountains into molehills. “But it’s changing all the time.”

Read the whole story

Unleashed dogs causing problems in Truckee

The Animal Services Division of the Truckee Police Department has seen an increase in complaints related to dogs being uncontained or off leash, especially in open public areas like the Truckee River Legacy Trail.

Here are some reminders about walking dogs in public areas off leash:

- The Town Municipal Code requires all dogs be under control at all times when off the property of their owner or caretaker. This means that no dog may be off leash in any public area unless the dog is in the immediate presence and under direct control of the owner and the owner can demonstrate effective control of the dog.
- Carry a leash at all times. If your dog is off leash and attacks or bites another person or dog or causes another person to become injured, you may be subject to a violation, as well as civil legal action.
- Avoid a citation, pick up after your dogs as this is a growing problem in Truckee and will be strictly enforced. Dog waste pollutes water sources. Scoop it, bag it, and most important, toss it in the trash.
- Interfering with the lawful movement of pedestrians and bicyclists is also a citable violation. People who use the trail are entitled to an incident free experience. This includes the off leash “friendly dog” contacts. If you see someone on the trail riding their bike, running, or walking, it is the owner’s responsibility to keep that dog contained until the person passes by.

- Truckee Regional Park has a strict leash law from May through October. All dogs must be on a leash at all times while in the park.
 - All dogs are required to be vaccinated against the rabies virus and licensed.
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- Placer County residents may drop off 6 yards (1 yard = 6 bags) of yard waste for free until Oct. 31 at the materials recovery facility on Cabin Creek Road between Truckee and Squaw. It is open from 8am-4pm, closed Sundays. Bring ID for proof of residency.
 - Discover the rarely told stories about Tahoe's history with Bill Morgan's firsthand accounts in a talk on Aug. 24 from 5:30-7pm at Tahoe Environmental Research Center in Incline Village.
 - Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is taking applications until June 12 for the next Leadership Lake Tahoe class. Go **online** to apply.
 - This is the final weekend of operations for the 2016-17 winter season at Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe.
 - A mountain lion and her cubs were sighted on the El Dorado Trail at the Weber Creek Bridge (the section of the trail between Forni Road and Missouri Flat Road).
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Survey focuses on roads in South Lake Tahoe

South Lake Tahoe wants people to take **this survey** about improving the city's roads.

South Lake Tahoe's roads need significant updates to fix underlying structural conditions, potholes and cracks that present safety concerns for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. The city is exploring options for improving infrastructure to meet modern standards.

The City Council is considering placing a a measure on the November ballot that would increase the local sales tax by one-half percent to fund local road improvements.