

Unsettled weather pattern for Lake Tahoe



The Upper Truckee River at Cove East in South Lake Tahoe has crested its bank. Photo/Kathryn Reed

If you are in search of spring, leave Lake Tahoe. Winter-like weather is in the forecast for much of next week.

Rain is likely to arrive late morning on Sunday, with it turning to snow overnight.

A mix of rain and snow is in the forecast for most of the week. The National Weather Service in Reno is not calling for much accumulation of rain or snow, though.

A concern will be the rising levels of creeks and rivers, especially if rain melts snow higher up.

Overnight lows will be near freezing.

Friday will be the best workday – sunny with a high near 57.

Vail Resorts CEO donates \$1.6 million to charities

Lake Tahoe-Truckee nonprofits will benefit from Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz and his wife, Elana's, \$1.6 million donation to causes where the company does business.

The South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center and Tahoe Truckee Community Collaborative will each receive \$125,000.

Through this grant, the South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center, in partnership with the Lake Tahoe Unified School District and the El Dorado Food Bank, will be able to provide a summer food program for approximately 150 children in need over the next three years.

The collaborative's grant will support the development of the wellness program, a school-based program designed to improve the health and wellness of high school students, including targeting substance abuse and mental health issues. More than 400 students across the school district will be served through this program.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- South Lake Tahoe youth ages 5-13 may participate in the Junior Giants program this summer. **Register online** between now

and June 1.

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is looking for participants in the next Leadership Lake Tahoe class. The deadline to apply is June 12. For details, go **online**.

- Your Nevada Workspace's grand opening is April 25 from 5-7pm at 195 Highway 50, Zephyr Cove. Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the workspace and learn more about services and amenities offered.

- The South Tahoe Public Utility District is having a public workshop May 4 from 6-7:30pm to discuss the 2017-18 budget, as well the 10-year financial and capital improvement plan for the district. The board is scheduled to take action on the budget May 18 at 2pm. The meeting is at 1275 Meadow Crest Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

- The Kinsey Sicks, a dragapella beauty shop quartet, will be at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe from June 19-23.

Damaged sewer line creates sink hole in Tahoe Keys



Crews on April 15 work to fix the broken sewer line in the Tahoe Keys. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

A collapsed sewer line in the Tahoe Keys has caused a sink hole that will take several days to fix.

Tahoe Keys Boulevard west of where it intersects with Venice Drive is closed, and will be for a few days as South Tahoe Public Utility District crews work to fix the break.

“We don’t know how it collapsed,” Chris Stanley, field operations manager for STPUD, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The road started to buckle on April 14. About half of the street and the median area have created a sink hole that is more than 10-feet in diameter.

No sewage has leaked, according to Stanley. The wastewater is being rerouted to the Tahoe Keys pump station via specialty pumps that bypass where the break is.

“We are keeping up with all of the flows,” Stanley said. He added it would help if customers tried to reduce their water use for the next few days.

The line serves the entire Tahoe Keys as well Fallen Leaf Lake and the beach areas off Highway 89 owned by the U.S. Forest Service. From this area the wastewater is then pumped to the South Tahoe PUD plant.

This 24-inch gravity line that has failed is several decades old. It is 16 feet below ground. Before crews start to dig plugs are being put in on both ends to prevent sewage from filling the hole.

Traffic is being rerouted to a side street off Venice that hooks up with Tahoe Keys Boulevard beyond the road closure.

Fuel reduction projects to resume in basin

If conditions are favorable, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, California State Parks and U.S. Forest Service may continue prescribed fire operations on April 17.

Operations may take place near Meeks Bay, Tahoe City, Glenbrook, Round Hill, Lower Kingsbury Grade, South Lake Tahoe, and Meyers. Weather permitting, operations may continue over the next several weeks.

Each prescribed fire operation follows a prescribed fire burn plan, which considers temperature, humidity, wind, moisture of the vegetation, and conditions for the dispersal of smoke. This information is used to decide when and where to burn. When conditions meet the prescription, state and local air pollution control districts issue a burn permit allowing operations to proceed.

Nev. prepares for potential Katrina-style spring flooding

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada could see weeks of Katrina-style flooding when warm spring and summer sunshine melts the massive snowpack blanketing the Sierra Nevada.

That's according to the Nevada National Guard and other emergency planners and responders who briefed Gov. Brian Sandoval on potential disaster scenarios.

"Typically, Nevada experiences flash flooding," Col. Cory Schulz told Sandoval, referencing hurricane flooding in 2005 that devastated New Orleans and southern Mississippi. "This will be saturation flooding, much like Katrina."

The state has already endured two flood situations that triggered federal disaster declarations in February and March for western and northern parts of the state.

Three counties, Churchill, Lyon and Douglas, have declared emergencies in advance of the coming snowmelt and more could join that group, Sandoval said.

Read the whole story

Roulette makes a comeback in Nevada

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Roulette, the iconic casino game featured in numerous Hollywood movies, is making a bit of a comeback in Nevada casinos, showing marked increases this year and through most of 2016, according to the Nevada Gaming Control Board.

The win from roulette was up 58.87 percent in Nevada in February compared to the same month last year, the most recent gaming revenue report said. The only other game that saw a similar year-over-year increase for February was bingo.

Roulette was also up 7.97 percent for three months ending Feb. 28, compared to the same period a year ago, and up 13.27 percent for 12 months ending Feb. 28, compared to the previous 12-month period.

[Read the whole story](#)

Nev. looks to recognize iconic Native American woman

By Yvonne Gonzalez, Las Vegas Sun

A flower in one hand and a book in the other, Sarah Winnemucca's sculpted presence in Washington, D.C., and Nevada pays tribute to a legacy that state lawmakers are looking to enhance.

Winnemucca is the first Native American woman to write a book, titled "Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims" and published in 1883. In it, she describes seeing Western settlement in the 1800s.

"I was a very small child when the first white people came into our country," she wrote. "They came like a lion, yes, like a roaring lion, and have continued so ever since, and I have never forgotten their first coming. My people were scattered at that time over nearly all the territory now known as Nevada."

In the 125 years since her death, Nevada has marked her legacy with statues of her in Carson City, Las Vegas and Washington. The most recent effort is a bill that seeks to designate Oct. 16 as the state's Sarah Winnemucca Day.

Read the whole story

STPUD, SLT officials embracing renewable energy

Updated April 17:

By Kathryn Reed

South Tahoe Public Utility District's hydroelectric plant in Alpine County is expected to be online this fall, with power being sold to Liberty Utilities.

The South Lake Tahoe-based water-sewer district had hoped to have the plant operational a few years ago, but money and construction delays pushed the date back. The project is slated to be completed this summer.

Federal law mandates that all wastewater in the Lake Tahoe Basin must be discharged outside the basin. South Tahoe PUD's treated wastewater goes through a series of pipes over Luther Pass to Harvey Place Reservoir. Then much of the water is distributed to ranchers in the area.



The South Shore's wastewater ends up in the Harvey Place Reservoir in the Diamond Valley. Photo/LTN file

The utility district bought the old Heise Ranch 12 years ago after farmers started to divvy up their land. Laws require the treated water be sprayed on 100-acre parcels or larger.

The district entered into an agreement this month with Liberty to sell the company some of the electricity that will be generated. The plant is expected to start operating Oct. 1.

"Power will be generated whenever recycled water is not being sprayed through the center pivot rigs onto the Diamond Valley Ranch property (the district owns), so, at least all winter and whenever the alfalfa crops don't need to be irrigated with recycled water," Richard Solbrig, general manager of South Tahoe PUD, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The district also produces

significantly more recycled water than our contracts with all the ranchers guarantee that we will supply to them. Since we have very good working relationships with all the ranchers, there will be active discussions on an annual basis in order to decide the exact amounts and timing for the delivery of recycled water to the six ranchers.”

STPUD estimates that between \$25,000 and \$30,000 in gross revenues will be generated from the hydroelectric plant.



This marker is at the end of South Tahoe PUD's export line. Photo/LTN file

“With this estimated level of revenue, all costs attributed to the hydropower facilities will be paid for in just over eight years. Life expectancy of the pump and generator are 25 years, while the pressure pipeline itself is expected to last a minimum of 50 years,” Solbrig explained. “The pricing portion of the contract is 10 years, at a unit price established by the CPUC. Buyback price after the first 10 years will be

adjusted based upon CPUC review of the value of power at that time.”

In 2015, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a bill mandating that by 2030 state-regulated utilities must get at least 50 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, and hydro.

This deal will help Liberty achieve that goal.

“This facility is unique because it takes advantage of capturing energy that would have been wasted otherwise,” Travis Johnson, vice president of operations for Liberty, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The city of South Lake Tahoe is contemplating putting even more stringent regulations on Liberty. On the April 18 City Council agenda is a resolution for the city to be using 100 percent renewable energy by 2032. The idea was first brought forward earlier this year by members of the public as the council was working on its strategic goals.

The city is in the process of negotiating its franchise agreement with Liberty. If the council on Tuesday supports the renewable energy initiative, it could then be part of a future contract between the city and Liberty.

“Could Liberty provide the city 100 percent renewable energy in that time frame? Yes, we could. Would it cost more for ratepayers? It is possible that it could be more expensive,” Johnson said. “However, two factors come into play: 1) The state already mandates 50 percent renewable by 2030 and 2) Renewable prices continue to fall each year. These two factors will help lower the incremental cost to move to 100 percent.”

He added that wind energy today less expensive than fossil fuels in some regions of the country, with solar getting close.

To prove the city was getting all renewable energy Liberty “would do it by total energy consumed in the region. For easy numbers, if the region consumes 100,000 mega-watt hours per year, we could develop a solar project that produces 100,000 MWh. It is all about putting more renewable energy into the grid.”

A related matter on the council agenda would have the city reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2040.

Opinion: Why Nevada should get hitched—to California

By Joe Mathews

Dearest Nevada,

Marry me.

And not in a chapel off the Strip. I, California, want a real grown-up marriage with you, Nevada.



Joe Mathews

Look how much we already have in common. I’m the Golden State; you’re the Silver State. More than 90 percent of your people live within an hour of my eastern border. And, 1 in 5 Nevadans

was born in California. That may not seem like many, but only 1 in 4 Nevadans was born in Nevada.

Together, the two of us are a place apart from today's America. The United States is increasingly mean, judgmental and isolationist. But you and I prefer entertaining to judging. We can't get enough foreigners and tourists. We're both tolerant of deviancy and sin (though I can get a little uptight about greenhouse gases).

All of which is why we'd both be better off as one merged state.

Right now, rich people and companies play us against each other, and we both end up poorer. Recently, you—feeling needy and desperate—gave \$750 million in taxpayer money to the owner of pro football's Oakland Raiders for a new stadium in Las Vegas. Building a football stadium is a terrible investment (a Stanford economist called it the worst stadium deal for a city he'd ever seen), and the money will come from a hotel tax that currently funds transportation and schools.

Before that, you gave billions in tax and other incentives to Tesla to locate a battery factory there. Deals like these leave both of us worse off—we lose a business, and you gain huge liabilities you can't afford.

It's similar to the problem of rich Californians avoiding income taxes by establishing nominal residence in Nevada, which doesn't have them. You don't get a cut of their income, and we lose money we need to educate our people.

Eliminating destructive economic competition between us is only part of what we could do for each other.

Look at you. Your economy has been lagging the country because it's far too reliant on tourism and real estate. But my extraordinarily diverse economy, which has been outperforming the rest of the country, could help support yours. You

desperately need a better-educated populace; if you married me, your kids could more easily go to my terrific public university systems.

In return, you'd bring me more of the young people that you've been better at attracting than me. Perhaps you could share your secret of how to build enough housing for young families. You also could inspire me to exercise the old pro-business libertarian ethos that helped me thrive, but has sagged in recent decades.

Politically, I see you as a natural ally in my biggest fight: against the president of the United States. Trump, more of an Atlantic City guy than a Vegas guy, wants to turn you into a nuclear dump by reviving the Yucca Mountain proposal for storing nuclear waste. As for California, the president has called my elections massive frauds, and threatened to defund the entire state if I don't sign onto his dumbest and most xenophobic policies.

Trump fans with ties to the Russia have encouraged the #Calexit movement to separate me from the U.S. And Trump's buddy Nigel Farage, who led the Brexit movement, is now working in California on a proposal to split me into pieces. Divide and conquer is what Trump wants. That's why you and I have to unite and fight back.

I can feel your hesitation. You may fear there'd be an imbalance in a marriage—I have 40 million people, and you have less than 3 million. But don't worry; I'll take care of you. You'll find that you have the same great deal as the rest of inland California. You'll be subsidized by all the taxes paid by California's rich coastal people, while retaining the right to make fun of those same rich people's many excesses.

Remember: we've already done great things together—Burning Man (you host, I send my people), cleaning up Lake Tahoe, reviving Britney Spears' career. Las Vegas and Los Angeles—two

entertainment capitals—are more deeply intertwined than any two American cities across state lines. Vegas is the leading source of new out-of-state residents of L.A. (It's no accident that the great L.A. movie of this era, "La La Land," turns on two Nevada-California drives—Emma Stone's return to her suburban Clark County home, and Ryan Gosling's decision to pick her up there, and drive her back to L.A. for an audition.)

And I hate to go negative, but do you really have other options? Utah is an attractive neighbor, I'm sure, but she won't marry you unless you convert.

And if our marriage doesn't work? No worries. You and I are both no-fault divorce states. So we'd just go back to being friends.

All my love,

California

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.