

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Sherlock

Sherlock is a 4-year-old shorthair male cat who has lived with dogs and kids. He is friendly and easy-going once he's warmed up.

As you can tell from the size of his eyes, he's a bit frightened in the shelter. Sherlock has beautiful soft fur.

Sherlock is neutered, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated. He 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

LTRA allows rejiggering of public lands

By Kathryn Reed

Some of what are now publicly owned lots throughout the basin could one day be privately owned and developed.

While that is not the intent of officials with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, it is allowed under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act that was approved by Congress last fall and signed by President Barack Obama in December.

The legislation says, "Except in the case of land described in paragraphs (2) and (3), the secretary of agriculture may convey any urban lot within the Lake Tahoe Basin under the administrative jurisdiction of the Forest Service."

Convey in this sense means to transfer title of property.

"May does not mean we will or that locally we are leaning in that direction," Heather Noel, spokeswoman for the local U.S. Forest Service office, said in regards to selling the federal land. "They could direct us to look in that direction, but we have not. There would be a lot of discussion before that would happen."

However, a new administration is in charge; one that has indicated a willingness to get rid of federal land.

If the Forest Service were to sell urban lots, it is more likely to occur in Nevada because the California Tahoe Conservancy is expected to have first dibs at the California ones.

"If it goes from federal domain to a private entity, that is where TRPA codes would prevail," LTBMU Forest Supervisor Jeff Marsolais told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This means all the rules the bi-state regulatory agency has in place would become relevant.

"The lion's share of urban lots was Santini-Burton," Marsolais said. This means they could not be developed.

For ones that don't fall under Santini-Burton, they must have development rights and a building allocation. Just because someone owns a vacant lot in the basin does not mean they get to build on it.

A large section of the LTRA deals with land transfers, largely between California and the U.S. Forest Service. Some of the land is protected by the 1980 Santini-Burton Act. That act allowed the acquisition of sensitive lands in the basin by the Forest Service and ensured they would not be developed.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and League to Save Lake Tahoe were integral in wordsmithing the LTRA.

"The broad intent of the language was to preserve these open space lots for the benefit of conservation and environmental protections," Julie Regan, legislative affairs guru for TRPA, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The logic behind the land transfers is for each entity to own contiguous property and therefore be managed more efficiently. The thinking is that the California Tahoe Conservancy is better equipped to manage urban lots. The Forest Service wants to get out of owning these parcels that are in neighborhoods. Because there is no similar agency in Nevada, the Forest Service intends to keep its urban lots in the Silver State. In California there are 2,174 or about 3,133 acres' worth of urban lots, and Nevada there are 1,113 or 1,638 acres.

LTRA identifies 1,936 acres of CTC land and 183 acres of State Parks to be transferred to the USFS. There would be 1,995 acres of USFS land given to those state agencies.

“The public process is important to me in how I approach being a steward of public lands here,” Marsolais said. “I would not move forward without a robust public engagement strategy.”

Still, he said it is not for the Forest Service to say if any aspect of LTRA is good or bad, but instead the agency is to remain neutral and carry out orders from Washington.

While acreage for transfer has been identified, all the LTRA did was give the OK to move forward. The LTBMU, CTC and State Parks need to go through their respective processes before it's a done deal.

The LTRA says this exchange will “not result in any significant changes in the uses of the land; and (will) be subject to the condition that the applicable deed include such terms, restrictions, covenants, conditions, and reservations as the secretary determines necessary.”

In other words, if the land couldn't be developed before, it can't be in the future either. However, if there are development rights associated with that property, they go with the property.

“We will be meeting with the USFS soon to discuss options for moving forward. At this point, however, there is no funding or staff dedicated to process thousands of changes of ownership, or for the Conservancy to manage additional lands. LTRA authorizes \$2 million to help facilitate the transfer, but those funds have not been appropriated,” Patrick Wright, CTC executive director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “As to the urban lots we would receive, virtually all are deed restricted for environmental purposes, and LTRA clearly states that the transfers are subject to those restrictions, that no changes in uses can be allowed – so they could not be developed, and

that their development rights, if any, cannot be used to facilitate development elsewhere.”

People, particularly in South Lake Tahoe, are skeptical of land transfers after the CTC acquired what was the old drive-in from the city. It is now a mega-home whose only purpose is to be a vacation home rental. Some fear when the CTC owns the current USFS land it will become part of the state agency’s asset lands management program – which allows the state to sell the public land and to use that money to keep the agency solvent.

That is why language in the LTRA says, “If a parcel of land transferred under paragraph (2) or (3) is used in a manner that is inconsistent with the use described for the parcel of land in paragraph (2) or (3), respectively, the parcel of land, shall, at the discretion of the secretary, revert to the United States.”

Even so, there remains the real possibility some current public land could one day be privately owned.

Opinion: Despite water bonds Oroville still happens

By Aubrey Bettencourt, Modesto Bee

After six years of drought and a few months of flooding, California’s decades-long political commitment to ideology of being either for the environment or against progress has endangered the state’s water supply system and is threatening public safety, environmental health and economic stability.

Rather than upgrade California's water collection and delivery systems, for 50 years state bureaucrats, political appointees and many elected officials focused their priorities on an onslaught of environmental standards, regulations, projects and programs committed to their rose-colored-glasses vision of California.

They created a false choice for all elected officials, every "wanna-be" officeholder, career bureaucrat, water manager, scientist and engineer, advocacy group, community leader, and even California voters: either you are for the environment or you are against California.

Read the whole story

2 lost snowshoers rescued during blizzard

Two people are lucky to be alive after getting lost in the Mount Rose Wilderness in whiteout conditions.

Washoe County rescue crews went out in the blizzard Sunday after receiving a call at about 5:45pm that a couple in their 60s was lost in the wilderness area. At times visibility was less than 30 feet.

They were located above the Incline Creek drainage. Using cell phone coordinates the search teams were able to locate the two at about 8pm Feb. 26. The pair was able to walk out on their own, led by the search team. They were at the road by 9pm.

"Given the conditions up there it's a good thing we are able to get them out. This was a life-saving mission," sheriff's

spokesman Bob Harmon told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Names and hometowns of the couple have not been released.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Bill would reduce number of free school meals

By Mary Clare Jalonick, AP

WASHINGTON – House Republicans last week weighed legislation that could lower the number of students receiving free and reduced-price meals at school.

Legislation debated by the House Education and Workforce Committee aims to save money by scaling back the number of schools in which all students receive free or reduced meals. It would also help schools that say the Obama administration's healthier meal rules are too restrictive and not appealing enough to students.

A proposed Republican amendment to the bill would go even further, allowing a trial period of so-called block grants for school meals in three states. That would mean those states wouldn't receive unlimited federal dollars for students who qualify for the free and reduced-price lunches.

Hunger and nutrition advocates from the American Academy of Pediatrics to the American Heart Association have sharply criticized the legislation.

"The bill would significantly weaken access to healthy, nutritious foods for our nation's children," said Benard

Dreyer, president of the pediatrics group.

The block grant provision, included in an amendment by Rep. Todd Rokita of Indiana, even prompted opposition from the School Nutrition Association, which has called for major changes in the school meal standards put in place in recent years and championed by first lady Michelle Obama.

The group, which represents school nutrition directors and the companies that sell food to schools, called the block grant idea “reckless” and said it would be a first step toward eliminating the federal guarantee that all children have access to the nutrition they need at school.

Republicans said the changes would help save money while ensuring that those with the highest need are still guaranteed meals. The committee was scheduled to vote on the amendment and the overall bill on Wednesday.

Republicans, including Rokita and committee chairman John Kline of Minnesota, said the changes would help save money while ensuring that those with the highest need are still guaranteed meals. The bill would raise the threshold for a government program called community eligibility, in which schools in districts with high poverty rates can provide free meals to all students at the school.

Republicans said it would better target taxpayer money by scaling back free meals for some of the students that attend those high-poverty schools, but don't qualify for free or reduced meals. They noted that the bill also provides an increase in federal reimbursements for school breakfasts.

“This is hardly unreasonable and it's hardly unfair,” said Rokita.

The bill would allow a wider variety of foods to be sold in lunch lines, an attempt to provide flexibility to schools that have complained that the Obama administration's standards are

too strict.

Democrats objected to the efforts to save money on school meals and to loosen the nutrition standards. Virginia Rep. Bobby Scott, the top Democrat on the panel, said the bill would “cut budgets instead of feeding our children.”

The partisan split on the House panel was in contrast to a bipartisan Senate compromise. With the support of Democrats, the GOP-led Senate Agriculture Committee passed legislation in January that would ease requirements for whole grains in school meals and delay a deadline to cut sodium levels. The House bill goes much further.

The healthier school meal rules that have been phased in since 2012 and set fat, sugar and sodium limits on foods in the lunch line and beyond. They require more whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

Schools have long been required to follow government nutrition rules if they accept federal reimbursements for free and reduced-price meals for low-income students, but the new standards are stricter.

California sees rise in AP test scores

By Joyce Tsai, Bay Area News Group

California public high schools are seeing a rise in students taking Advanced Placement exams, as well as an overall improvement in scores on these college-placement exams, said state Superintendent Tom Torlakson on Wednesday.

About 28.5 percent of the state's graduates in 2016 scored at least a three out of five on an AP exam, the fifth-highest percentage in the nation and an increase of nearly 8 percentage points since 2006, state education officials said.

Also on the rise is the percentage of California's public high school graduates who took an AP exam. If students score a three or higher on an AP exam in a particular subject, they receive credit for college-level courses.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Kirkwood will host the Tahoe Junior Freeride Series – Big Mountain Competition on March 10-12.
- Here is the Sierra roadwork schedule from Caltrans for the week.
- Late-Nite Productions is bringing Phutureprimitive plus Love and Light at Blu Nightclub inside MontBleu at Stateline on April 1. Doors open at 9pm. Must be 21. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 that night.
- Truckee is having a meeting about affordable housing on March 1 from 6-8:30pm at the airport. More info is **online**.
- Tahoe Regional Young Professionals and Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce are teaming up for the Connect for a Cause: Mixed Up Mixer on March 8 from 6-9pm. It will be at Tahoe Beach Retreat in South Lake Tahoe. It is free for members, \$10 for others.

Why the Squaw Valley Palisades are flat



A tunnel to the right is about 8-feet high and one-quarter mile long. Photo/Squaw Valley

By Abby Stevens, Moonshine Ink

Once you get to the top of the Palisades at Squaw Valley, you might wonder why the terrain becomes a perfectly flat area, about the size of a football field – but then again, maybe you are just thinking about which epic line to take.

The top of the Palisades, or geographically Squaw Peak, is accessible after a short hike from the Siberia chair lift and widely known for access to a set of six chutes. There are a surprisingly few records on how the set of cliffs was flattened.

In 1936, the Federal Aviation Administration designed a short-range navigation system called Omni Directional Radio Range (VOR) in which radio signals from a network of fixed ground

radio beacons are transmitted to aircrafts and allow pilots to determine their location in the skies. By 1946 the system was deployed and VOR became the standard air navigational system in the world used by both commercial and general aviation, according to Hardy Bullock, director of Aviation & Community Services at the Truckee Tahoe Airport. At 9,000 feet, Squaw Peak was the perfect place to put towers to direct airplanes to Truckee, the Bay Area, down toward Southern California, or up toward the Pacific Northwest – the only issue was the peak wasn't flat enough for the infrastructure.

Read the whole story

Looking at smart city development in Nevada

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Can you define what a “smart city” means for where you live? Neither can many of your local and state officials – but they will tell you that's the kind of city they want to create.

Generally, a smart city is one that uses data, applications and technology to help people and goods move more quickly, cheaply and efficiently. Imagine a world where you can find a parking spot using an app. Or, better yet, your car will have the parking-spot-finding ability as a pre-installed feature.

The concept is relatively new in the United States. It gained traction in late 2015 with the Department of Transportation's Smart City Challenge, which asked cities across America to develop ideas for a smart transportation system.

Read the whole story

Workshop to explain how to do business in SLT

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is hosting a seminar for people to learn requirements for planning, developing and permits needed to build or grow a business on the South Shore.

South Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will be providing information.

The talk is March 15 from noon-1:30pm at Tahoe Mountain Lab in South Lake Tahoe.

Cost is \$10 for chamber members, \$15 for others.