

USFS to begin Christmas Tree permit program

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will begin selling Christmas tree permits Nov. 7.

Permits cost \$10 each (cash or check preferred on South Shore, cash or check only on North Shore and in Tahoe City), with a limit of two permits per family. Permits must be purchased in person, are not transferable and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Permit holders may choose from a variety of pine, fir or cedar in designated cutting areas in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Permits will be sold at:

- Forest Supervisor's office, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe. This office is open Monday through Friday from 8am-4:30pm.
- Incline Village Forest Service office, 855 Alder Ave., Incline Village beginning Nov. 9. This office is open Wednesday through Friday from 8am-4:30pm.
- North Lake Tahoe Visitor Center, 100 North Lake Blvd., Tahoe City. This office is open from 9am-5pm daily.

Designated cutting area maps are provided at the time of permit purchase. Permit holders should follow permit guidelines for responsible collection, including not trespassing on private property when entering or leaving National Forest cutting areas. Observe seasonal road closures and be prepared to hike to the cutting area to find a tree. No off-road travel is allowed. Park in legal areas and do not block gates.

In support of the Every Kid in a Park program, the LTBMU will offer one free Christmas tree permit to fourth-grade students who present a valid paper voucher or durable Every Kid in a Park pass. To obtain the free Christmas tree permit, fourth-grade students must obtain the paper voucher online, present the printed voucher in person along with their parent or guardian to a participating Forest Service office and participate in the cutting of the Christmas tree. To obtain the paper voucher and to learn more about the Every Kid in a Park program, go **online**.

Specialized Tahoe plates come with lift tickets

The Plates for Powder program is back. Individuals who purchase a new Lake Tahoe license plate in either California or Nevada receive two free lift tickets to one of 10 Tahoe resorts participating in the program.

Plate sales and renewal fees generate proceeds that go directly to the California Tahoe Conservancy and Nevada Division of State Lands to fund hiking and biking trails and watershed restoration projects. The Tahoe Fund, a nonprofit dedicated to raising money for environmental improvement projects that support lake clarity, recreation and stewardship in the Tahoe Basin, is organizing the program on behalf of the public agencies.

Participating resorts include Diamond Peak, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Homewood Mountain Resort, Kirkwood Mountain Resort, Mt. Rose Ski Tahoe, Northstar, Sierra-at-Tahoe, Squaw Valley|Alpine Meadows, Tahoe Cross Country, and Tahoe City

Winter Sports Park.

Information on how to purchase a plate and redeem free tickets is available **online**.

Letter: Reilly understands how LTUSD works

To the community,

I am urging all voting members of Area 1 to support Larry Reilly in his bid to represent them on the LTUSD board of education.

He has a unique knowledge and insight into the needs of the students of LTUSD, having been an educator in Lake Tahoe for 35- of his 39-year career. His experience as a teacher, parent, coach, and athletic director gives him more insight as to how a district is run than any other candidate. He has prepared budgets, prepared course curriculums, counseled students, and arranged athletic and academic field trips.

As a coach, Larry was on numerous championship teams and knows what it is like to work as a team. Communicating and working with other members on the board as well with community and staff members is his particular strength. I have watched Larry interact with compassion and understanding with students, teachers, parents and administration. Larry Reilly is the most qualified candidate.

Please vote for Larry Reilly for the LTUSD board of education.

Don Borges, retired educator, South Lake Tahoe

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- South Lake Tahoe is putting on a public workshop about vacation home rentals on Nov. 16 from 6-8pm at the senior center.
- South Lake Tahoe Friends of the Library is having a gathering on Nov. 15 at 6pm. Help elect officers for 2016-17. Help is always needed on committees, too, and there will be a sign-up sheet with descriptions to encourage those who want to be part of the volunteer corps. Following the brief election, the program features all you ever wanted to know about the library through panels, games, quizzes and a tour.
- Clear Conscience and Dollar \$hort will play at Whiskey Dick's in South Lake Tahoe for free on Nov. 5. Doors open at 9pm.
- Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows officially launched its new mobile application. Download it **here**.
- Roger Niello has been appointed interim director of the Community Development Agency in El Dorado County.

TRPA wins court challenge over Regional Plan

Updated Nov.2 3pm:

By Kathryn Reed

A court decision today upheld the validity of Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's 2012 Regional Plan update.

The Sierra Club and Friends of the West Shore, represented by Earthjustice, filed a lawsuit saying the environmental impact statement for the RPU failed to analyze how the document will have negative impacts on soil conservation, water quality and air quality. Their contention is the plan promotes more growth, including in areas not already developed.

The environmental groups lost the initial case in April 2014 and then appealed the U.S. District Court's ruling.

"We find it hard to believe, and extremely paradoxical, that problems caused by the overurbanization of Lake Tahoe can be solved with more urbanization," Laurel Ames, conservation chair of the Tahoe Area Sierra Club, said in a statement. "The Regional Plan Update means more buildings, more asphalt, and more traffic – the very things that have caused Tahoe's degradation. The public will have to be even more vigilant about conserving our beautiful natural areas. We are disappointed but we continue to believe that Tahoe can be protected."

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco's Nov. 2 ruling said, "The panel held that TRPA's environmental impact statement and Regional Plan update adequately addressed the localized effects of the runoff created by the amount of development permitted under the update."

The 29-page decision was unanimous.

"Today's ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals is yet another strong affirmation of the widely supported 2012 Regional Plan," Joanne Marchetta, executive director of TRPA, said in a statement. "The plan is based on sound science, planning, and analysis and represents the best path forward

for TRPA and its many partners to restore Lake Tahoe's treasured environment and revitalize our communities."

The Regional Plan had not been updated since 1997. There was much consternation to get the 2012 document passed, with threats from both states to pull out of the bi-state Compact. Ultimately consensus was found and the document was approved.

A change to the 2012 plan compared to the previous one is that there are constant updates – known as adaptive planning – so it reflects evolving times, new science and other issues.

Today's decision further states, "The draft EIS drew criticisms that necessitated substantial revisions, but the final EIS for the RPU adequately addressed localized impacts on soil conservation and water quality. Notably, while California had strenuously objected to certain aspects of the draft EIS, particularly with respect to the localized impacts of runoff, both California and Nevada now urge approval of the plan, as evaluated in the final EIS. We also hold that TRPA reasonably concluded that, in light of anticipated improvements in BMP maintenance, the development permitted in the RPU would have less than a significant effect on water quality."

Letter: Reasons to vote for Davidson

To the community,

I am writing this letter in support of Annie Davidson for the LTUSD board. She is mother to two LTUSD students and knows firsthand the challenges that our school district, educators,

and students face. She has no political ties that might sway her in one direction or another in regards to what is best for our community.

Annie has worked in the field as a researcher, teacher, and leader in education and policy. She has taught at the elementary level, at the university level and has worked most recently, as a research manager conducting studies for diverse educational projects. She tells me that their main goal was to contribute to education for all students by teaching educators how to tap diverse student potential. I love that.

We need someone who has fresh ideas and who is committed to the joint vision for a future based on input from all of the South Lake Tahoe community, not just those who speak loudest or have been around the longest. Annie is knowledgeable, she is qualified, and most of all, she is willing and able to take on this very important position to make sure that her daughters and mine grow up in a community that cares and acts, instead of just talks, to make LTUSD work for all of us.

My vote is for Annie Davidson.

Kim Demus, LTUSD parent, South Lake Tahoe

Santiago, Briggs lose case against El Dorado County

By Kathryn Reed

Two former El Dorado County supervisors do not have the right to back pay, according to a tentative ruling that came out last week.



Norma Santiago

Norma Santiago and Ron Briggs filed their original petition for writ of mandate on Sept. 25, 2015, in El Dorado County Superior Court. Because all the local judges recused themselves, the matter was moved to Placer County.

The former elected officials contend they are owed back pay to the tune of about \$90,000. Each was termed out in January 2015. At no time during their tenure did they say they should be paid more money.

The judge said they aren't owed anything. The state Constitution says the supervisors' salaries are set by ordinance, which the court pointed out.

The county had to hire outside counsel to defend the case. As of August, this case had cost taxpayers \$62,000, with bills still outstanding.

The decision will be final 10 days after the Oct. 27 ruling.

Santiago is gearing up to run for supervisor again in 2018, even if it means challenging current supervisor, Sue Novasel.

SLT to host 2 legs of women's

Amgen bike race

By Kathryn Reed

Half of the women's 2017 Amgen bike race will be in South Lake Tahoe.

Officials announced today that the women will be returning to the area May 11-12.

Day 1 the cyclists will ride the 72 miles around the lake, finishing at Heavenly Mountain Resort. This will be the third year the women **have ridden this route**.

Officially called Amgen Breakaway from Heart Disease Women's Race Empowered with SRAM, this race is one of the most prestigious in the United States.

““The Amgen Tour of California's women's race will return to Lake Tahoe for the third time in as many years and we like to think that these elite athletes have come to call this home. The women's event is such a good fit for this destination and we enjoy being part of the effort to elevate the status of cycling here, particularly for the women, who are so engaged with the community,” Carol Chaplin, executive director of Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Women cyclists will return to Lake Tahoe in May 2017. Photo Copyright 2016 Lisa J. Tolda

Day 2's route won't be disclosed until early next year. All officials will say is that "riders will face summits in excess of 7,300 feet." That eliminates the 7,146-foot Spooner Summit. Plus, the women will have climbed it the day before.

Luther Pass is 7,740 feet. The men pedaled up it when they finished stage 5 this year. Kingsbury Grade, aka Daggett Summit, is 7,344 feet and Echo Summit is 7,382.

A common circuit for serious local roadies is to go up, over, and down Kingsbury and Luther passes. This would make for a challenging loop no matter which pass they would do first.

Lake Tahoe has always provided Tour of California riders with interesting weather. Even though it didn't snow this year, high winds were a concern at the start of the women's race.

While it's too soon to know the exact teams and rosters, 2016 winner Megan Guarnier has committed to race here next year.

The women's third stage will be in Elk Grove on May 13, with the final leg in Sacramento on May 14.

The men start their 600-mile race on May 14 in Sacramento, finishing May 20 in Pasadena. The 2017 race will mark the first year the men's race has been elevated to Union Cycliste Internationale World Tour status, making it the only stage race in North America to receive this classification.

Keys pressing forward with weed removal

By Kathryn Reed

Twenty years ago it was recommended that herbicides be used in the Tahoe Keys to rid the canals of invasive weeds. That reality is inching closer, but is still two years off at the earliest.

No longer is it just Eurasian milfoil choking the waterways of this South Lake Tahoe neighborhood. Curlyleaf pondweed is becoming just as prolific. Both are spreading into Lake Tahoe.

It's an environmental issue affecting the ecosystem, as well as a recreation-economic issue.

The Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association has been fighting the weeds for years, with a more concerted effort starting in 2011. Research and field tests have been taking place since then. In the 2017-19 time period non-herbicide demonstrations are scheduled, with the goal of herbicide demos in 2018-20.

In 2020, TKPOA would like to be embarking on a large scale, long-term implementation plan to bring the invasives under

control.

“We want to take the level back to 1980 to have the weed mass be less than 10 percent,” John Larson, TKPOA board member, said. “We believe once we get to that point level, we can manage it without herbicides.”

Larson was speaking Nov. 1 at a meeting attended by about 40 people. They were there to get an update on the weed removal situation and learn what the plans are for the future.



In the 1960s the Tahoe Keys was built on the most sensitive marsh in the Tahoe basin. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Today, invasive weeds cover 90 percent of the canals.

To pay for future treatments the homeowners association is going to ask its members to impose a special assessment that could cost each of the 1,529 housing units \$1,600.

Other property owners are also involved. The Tahoe Keys Beach and Harbor Association is on the same page as the TKPOA. The California Tahoe Conservancy is a partner, but has its own agenda with the Truckee Marsh restoration project. The problem entity is the Tahoe Keys Marina.

The marina had said it was going to use an **ultra violet method** to get the weeds out. While that has been talked about for the entire Keys, John J. Paoluccio, president of Inventive Resources Inc., wants to test his technique in a larger area than the Keys wants to use as a demo site.

Now the Keys marina says it is coming up with its own UV plan.

A 21-page 1991 agreement between the marina, Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association, and Tahoe Keys Beach and Harbor Association dictates how the three organizations work together, who pays what to whom and for what. However, disagreements, disputes and uncooperativeness have been the norm since the Krilichs took over the marina.

It's possible the regional water board could put pressure on the marina to work on the weed problem.

TKPOA is going forward no matter what.

High powered equipment is going to augment the current harvester. This will help with milfoil removal so more of the fragments are pulled from the water.

Herbicide use would have to be OK'd by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. While that state agency has approved the use in concept, each project has to be approved on an individual basis.

Several of the questions from the public on Tuesday night centered on the safety of using herbicides. Joel Trumbo with the state Fish and Wildlife Service said the herbicides target the intended plants, and don't harm animals of any kind. Plus, the native plants also continue to live.

Rick Lind with Sierra Ecosystem Associates said diversion dams have been looked into, but would be "very costly and complex." This is because the Keys was built on a marsh – meaning there is water everywhere. Underground water would fill the drained

canal, thus requiring that water to be pumped. Even if there were the money to do so, where to put that water would be another regulatory issue.

Greg Hoover, the aquatic invasives supervisor for TKPOA, said once the problem is taken care of in the Keys, the entire lake will be fixed.

Letter: PAC spends \$60,000 on Collins, Laine

To the community,

[On Oct. 28] I attended the LTCC and South Tahoe (California) Chamber's candidate forum. This forum is designed to allow one-on-one exchanges between members of the public and the candidates.



Bruce Grego

I learned a few things from this forum. Brooke Laine openly declared that she sought the endorsement of the Nevada-based chamber, but was unaware that she would be slated with Jason Collin. She claimed to have protested to the chamber's political action committee (PAC) that she is not running with Jason Collin, but they told her that they can do what they

want and she can't stop them. Jason, on the other hand, seems to welcome all the money that the PAC is pouring into his campaign.

The PAC that is supporting these candidates is the political action committee of the Nevada-based chamber. The PAC that is trying to hijack this election for Jason and Brooke has spent nearly \$60,000 based upon the most recent financial disclosures. From the information I obtained at the forum, most of the other eight candidates will spend less than \$2,000.

Jason also disclosed that "around \$20,000" has been spent to file and pursue the lawsuit against the loop road Measure T. Jason sought to prevent this measure from being placed on the ballot and undermine the will of the people; a judge ruled against him. Jason refused to say whether he will continue to litigate this suit after the election, and refused to disclose the individuals and/or groups that paid for his lawsuit against the South Lake Tahoe voters concerning Measure T.

How can we vote for candidates that are willing to be supported by a PAC or too naïve to understand the impact of such support?

We need to elect independent candidates who will vote their conscience on behalf of the citizens of South Lake Tahoe. Equally important, we need elected officials that appreciate the full consequences of their decision-making upon our community so we can avoid such decisions that lead to Project 3, the "hole".

Let's not allow powerful well-funded PACs to take over our city. Vote for independent candidates and vote yes on Measure T.

Bruce Grego, South Lake Tahoe

Publisher's note: Below is financial documentation provided

by the letter writer:

Document 1, Document 2, Document 3, Document 4, Document 5,
Document 6, Document 7, Document 8, Document 9, Document 10,
Document 11 and Document 12.