Ski report: Storm moving in later today



Wind hold on some lifts at Heavenly and Squaw. Call the resort or go online to know what's running.

Here is the sski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

House GOP budget aims to slash environmental regulations

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

The House spending bill passed last month wouldn't just chop $60 billion from the federal budget – it seeks to cut a broad swath through environmental regulation.

From fish protections in California to water pollution limits in Florida and regulation of greenhouse gas emissions nationwide, environmental programs were targets of the Republican budget resolution, which appears to have been as much about setting a political agenda as about deficit reduction.

Democrats have promised to block the environmental and other cuts in the Senate, where they hold a slim majority, and

President Obama has raised the threat of a veto, making it unlikely that many of the hits in the proposal will survive. Lawmakers last week passed a stopgap measure to keep the government operating while they hash out a compromise.

But few expect the recently elected and highly motivated GOP majority in the House to give up. “I think they’re going to try and use every tactic in the book,” said Nick Loris, a research associate with the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. “This is largely what they came into office saying they were going to do.”

The continuing resolution adopted by the House two weeks ago swings a much bigger ax than similar proposals that helped stall a spending measure, resulting in a government shutdown in 1995. “I’ve never seen anything remotely like this. The sheer scope of it is overwhelming,” said Sean Hecht, executive director of the UCLA Environmental Law Center.

Read the whole story

Fundraiser benefits Douglas County lake schools

Hollywood Improv takes stage April 9 at MontBleu in Stateline. It’s a night to support academics.

Event attendees can plan on comedy improv entertainment, a wine wall, silent and live auctions, drinks, hors d’oeuvres, dinner, dancing, celebrity spoofing and more. Tickets start at $60 and guests can purchase an ‘A’ list table or VIP ticket online.

The event that starts at 6pm is the Nevada Lake Schools' biggest fundraiser.

Last year's event raised almost $40,000 that was spent on laptops, athletic equipment, language software, library and audio books, printers, hard drives, engineering books, cultural arts assemblies, science fair support, art supplies, culinary supplies and more.

For more information, contact Tara Addeo at (775) 230.5872 or lv2plan@aol.com

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Washoe County on road to reduce sediment from reaching Lake Tahoe

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

The tiniest particles of dirt that pose the most dire threat to Lake Tahoe's clarity are targeted in an emerging effort by Washoe County and other local jurisdictions around the lake.

Now in the early stages of a project designed to prevent particles the width of a human hair from flowing into the lake, Washoe County officials are confident they can make a difference.

The goal is to reduce the amount of the fine sediment flowing into the lake from urbanized areas in Incline Village and Crystal Bay by 34 percent over the next 15 years.

"I believe it is realistic however it is a work in progress," said Dan St. John, Washoe County's director of public works.

Washoe’s efforts come in tandem with others under way in places like the city of South Lake Tahoe and Placer County to reduce the “total daily maximum load” of tiny particles carried into the lake by runoff.

A decade of research indicates these particles, combined with algae growth, play the largest role in clouding Tahoe’s famously blue waters. Historically, one could see more than 100 feet into Tahoe’s depths from the surface. Now, one can see only about 70 feet down.

If experts are successful with their 15-year goal, clarity could be enhanced by about 10 feet. Longer-term goals are to reduce fine particle pollution by 71 percent over 65 years, restoring historical clarity.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Saving bear cubs, while upping hunting quotas doesn’t make sense

By Jennifer Fearing

The Humane Society of the United States applauds the California Department of Fish and Game’s heroic and resource-intensive efforts to rehabilitate little Shasta, a yearling black bear cub orphaned when his mother was shot, and four other cubs in a unique partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the nonprofit Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care. Yet, at the same time the department is working to save Shasta and bears like him, it is seeking an increase in opportunities to

kill them.

Fish and Game has proposed increasing the number of bears hunted each year by nearly 20 percent – from 1,700 to 2,000. Pressures on California's black bears come from poachers seeking trophies or highly valuable bear parts for the illegal wildlife trade, marijuana farmers protecting their illicit crops, and the rest of us who neglect to bear-proof our garbage and thus draw unwanted attention from bears in search of easy food. These stresses are unlikely to abate anytime soon; in fact, they are what put cubs like Shasta in jeopardy in the first place.

Jennifer Fearing is California director for the Humane Society of the United States.

Read the whole story

Focus of lake clarity doesn't sit well with SLT council

By Kathryn Reed

A letter expressing South Lake Tahoe's displeasure with fixating on how far a scientific white plate can be seen in the middle of Lake Tahoe instead of dealing with the muck growing near the shore is being finalized today.

City Councilwomen Claire Fortier and Angela Swanson were tasked with working with staff to formulate the words for the letter to be sent to the state Water Board by the March 18 comment deadline. The letter will be on the council's March 15 agenda for approval.

The state board plans to conduct a public hearing April 18 in Sacramento regarding the total maximum daily load allocations approved by Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board in November. Officials from the regional office have been briefing state board members this week about TMDL in Lake Tahoe.



A street sweeper in South Lake Tahoe on March 9 is designed to reduce sediment. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“We need to wave the flag that says before you pass this more consideration needs to be focused on the costs and science,” Fortier told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I personally feel as if we are being railroaded with a standard that is impossible to meet.”

At a September meeting about TMDLs Bob Larsen, environmental scientist with Lahontan, estimated it will cost $100 million a year for 15 years to accomplish his agency’s clarity goal. He also said that estimate is “very rough.”

Today the Secchi disc can be seen to a depth of 70 feet. The goal is add seven to 10 feet to that number.

To reach that goal the city, five counties and two state transportation departments in the Lake Tahoe Basin have

mandates put on them by Lahontan to reduce the fine sediment from their jurisdictions that reach Lake Tahoe.

At the council meeting last week, Swanson called it an unfunded mandate.

Lauri Kemper, assistant executive officer with Lahontan, told *Lake Tahoe News* the municipal stormwater permits the agency is working on that should be before her board in October will focus on maintenance of what is in place – which in turn will allow the local governments to meet the state's initial goals.

"We think with the first five-year targets some will have met them. We are comparing it to the 2004 baseline year," Kemper explained. "They will get credit for anything they have done in that time."

This includes using high-end street sweepers and putting in stormwater facilities, sometimes known as an erosion control project.

Fortier at the meeting and afterward questioned why the near shore – the depth people wade into – isn't being addressed.

"Milfoil is a problem, but it's more of a habitat problem than water quality," Doug Smith with Lahontan told the council.

He admitted there are a lot of unknowns regarding the near shore.

Kemper said Lahontan is working with other entities that are addressing invasive species issues. Another thing her agency is looking at is allowing aquatic pesticides to be used for the first time in Lake Tahoe. A hearing on the subject will be conducted this spring, with possible adoption in the fall.

"The good news is everything we are doing is for lake clarity," Kemper said.

She also pointed out how the city has a number of drainages

that contribute to the near shore being less than pristine. Some of those will be cleaned up as Lakeview Commons comes on board and Caltrans does its Highway 50 projects starting this year.

In regards to the TMDL time line, after the state board has its hearing next month, which could be pushed back to one of its May meetings depending on the number of comments received, the Office of Administrative Law has 60 days to make a decision. Then it goes to the Environmental Protection Agency for approval. The Nevada Division of Environment Protection also has to approve the plan.

If all the agencies approve the TMDL for Lake Tahoe, it would become the law of the land once the EPA signs off on it.

For more information about the Tahoe TMDL or how to comment, go to the state website.

K-9 unit to search for drugs on LTUSD campuses

K-9s will be allowed to search for contraband at South Tahoe middle and high schools as well as Mount Tallac High.

STHS will be the first school to have the dog on campus. Random walkthroughs will be conducted in parking lots, near lockers, hallways, classrooms and playing fields.

The idea was brought to the board March 8 by Police Chief Brian Uhler after he discovered there have been 14 drug issues at STHS and 21 cases at STMS – just this school year.

The board, with Judy Cefalu absent, approved the use of the

police dog 4-0.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

LPGA Legends Tour

Patty Sheehan, World Golf and LPGA Hall of Famer, in partnership with The Legends Tour, the official senior tour of the LPGA, are bringing The Legends Tour to Hidden Valley Country Club in Reno June 3–6.

The official three-day tournament, Patty Sheehan & Friends, boasts a field of 40 LPGA Legends competing in a two-day, stroke play tournament for a $225,000 purse. In addition to Sheehan, LPGA Hall of Famer Betsy King, LPGA Hall of Famer Pat Bradley and 2011 U.S. Solheim Cup Captain Rosie Jones have confirmed that they will be teeing it up in Reno this June.

Tournament week begins June 2 with a junior clinic for girls of The First Tee as well as professional practice rounds and an evening pairings party for sponsors and guests. The Patty Sheehan & Friends Pro-Am is set for June 3. The first round kicks off tournament play on Saturday with the final round Sunday. A Monday Pro-Am has been added due to demand.

Tickets for Patty Sheehan & Friends are $10 per day and are available online. Admission for ages 17 and under and military personnel is free.

Tournament proceeds benefit the newly-formed Patty Sheehan Foundation designed to support local charities and the Reno community.

Anderson snags TTR World Tour title

Jamie Anderson of South Lake Tahoe made history today by clinching her second Swatch TTR World Tour Champion title at the 6Star Burton US Open. She is the first woman to win two TTR World Tour titles.

Anderson qualified first in today's slopestyle semi-finals and will move on to the slopestyle finals as a favorite to win on March 11. Anderson was in contention for the TTR Tour title with fellow American, Kelly Clark, who has dominated every halfpipe competition she entered this season, but Clark did not compete in slopestyle today and no longer has the opportunity to take the World No. 1 position from Anderson.

Anderson will be awarded the TTR World Tour Champion trophy and $50,000 USD at the close of the Burton US Open on March 12 following halfpipe finals.

Clark still has the opportunity to finish in the TTR top 3 if she places well in Saturday's halfpipe finals, in which case, she will be awarded with a sizable portion of the $200,000 USD TTR prize purse.

Rail jam benefits Heavenly

Ski Foundation

The Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation will host the Shredtacular Rail Jam event at the American Legion on Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe on March 11 from 4:30-10pm.

pen to skiers and snowboarders of all ages, the Shredtacular will be on a feature built by Rob Giustina of On Course Events.

Entry is $20 and includes a goodie bag and a raffle ticket for a chance to win tons of prizes.

The Shredtacular Rail Jam is a fundraiser for the Heavenly Snowboard Team’s trip to USASA Nationals in Copper Mountain, Colo., in April. The team expects to send 15 athletes to compete in the national event.

Registration will be at the American Legion beginning at 4:30pm. Practice begins at 5pm. Divisions include female, male skier and snowboarder, 12 and under, 13 to 17, and 18 and over. There will also be a Money Jam open to all participants for an additional $10; winner takes half the pot.