Cousteau links world water troubles in forum at Tahoe

By Stephen Ward

INCLINE VILLAGE – Twelve years ago, the body of water that shaped the geography of the Western United States for more than 200 years stopped reaching the Sea of Cortez.

The Colorado River, still of cardinal importance to the 30 million people in its surrounding region, is facing collapse because of the harsh conditions of a climate change that's only expected to get worse. Alexandra Cousteau was quick to point out it's a frightening myth to think North America will never face a water issue similar to those in other parts of the world.



Alexandra Cousteau

This was one of several daunting issues addressed at the 2010 Siebens Binz Tahoe Forum at Sierra Nevada College's Patterson Lawn, which featured environmental conservation luminary Cousteau, granddaughter of world-famous French explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau.

Cousteau provided 10 suggestions on how to conserve water in the Lake Tahoe area, such as paving driveways with permeable material to prevent the numerous environmental issues resulting from water runoff, or choosing low-impact

recreational activities to reduce carbon footprints.

Many attendees praised the Aug. 28 event for its substance and considerations.

“I like how she shared with us the impacts, not only in other parts of the world, but in Lake Tahoe as well,” David Cummings of Incline said.

Julie Hernandez, also of Incline, said, “It forced us to see what industrialization and contamination (are) doing to our water supply.”

The forum underscored the work of Cousteau from the last few years, including her journey to India where she discovered the sacred nature of the Ganges River, and to Palestine and Jordan in the Middle East where water is scarce and is one of many crises being considered by the war-torn countries.

Cousteau discussed her childhood and the memories she had of her late grandfather. One memory involved her and her grandfather making believe they were “steward kings of the underwater world,” where they would talk to each species as a subject and honor the “biodiversity of their kingdom.” This evocative recollection reminded her of an important lesson she learned from her decorated grandfather; we don’t live this life because of how it will end, but for all the reasons we live for.

Despite the immense catalog of stories and lessons being delivered by the speaker, one broad message oscillated throughout the entire segment; the systems people rely on have a limit to growth, and opportunities are steadily reshaping themselves into obstacles.

Another delicate subject explored at the forum was the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, where Cousteau has been spending much of her time. The speaker had little good news to say in regard to the area, saying the community is broken and the environment is

ruined. She elaborated by describing the turmoil of the fishermen who have lost their pride and ability to provide for their families. When asked about the area and the spill, the fishermen soberly tell her “this isn’t our water anymore.”

Upper Truckee Marsh tree thinning project wraps up

By Kathryn Reed

Work wrapped up Monday on a two-week tree-thinning project in the Upper Truckee Marsh that involved clearing about 12,000 board feet (52 trees) and 50 tons of wood chips being hauled out.

A semi-truck early on the afternoon of Aug. 30 was full of chips being taken to the cogeneration plant in Quincy.



David Tormey adn David Mercer wrap up a thinning project Aug. 23 in the Upper Truckee Marsh.

Photos/Kathryn Reed



Slash will be turned into mulch.

Slashed remained off San Francisco Street on California Tahoe Conservancy land. A specialized machine was to be brought in to turn it into mulch.

Six acres were treated here, with another 28 in the upland side of the meadow treated earlier by Cross Check Services out of Reno.

“This is for forest health and fire hazard reduction,” David Mercer of the tree cutting firm said. “It’s not that healthy of a forest to begin with.”

He pointed to gall rust and split trees as a problem.

But he Mercer, and his partner David Tormey, said the area looks better than it did.

Although CTC owns the land, this is a project funded by South Lake Tahoe through grants.

Nevada continues to woo Chinese travelers

The Nevada Commission on Tourism is expanding its promotion in the lucrative Chinese travel market to Shanghai, while cutting office operating costs countrywide 50 percent.

The new office, which opened in Shanghai this month, is in the heart of the city's business district in the U.S. Commercial Center and shares quarters with the U.S. Commerce Department and other American tourism-oriented agencies. The 6-year-old Beijing office moves to a smaller facility. The total cost of office space in China will be cut in half while the value and strength of NCOT's representation will be multiplied.

"We wanted to aggressively expand promoting tourism to Nevada in Shanghai, China's largest city and a major hub of commerce and culture, and we found a way to accomplish this goal and cut costs at the same time," Brian Krolicki, NCOT chair, said in a statement.

NCOT was granted the first license issued by the Chinese government to a U.S. tourism agency to advertise to outbound Chinese travelers in 2004 and opened an office in Beijing. Karen Chen, NCOT's representative in China, will work with both the Beijing and Shanghai offices, each staffed with a fulltime representative for Nevada.

"The Shanghai office will give Nevada tourism a direct and affordable presence in China's largest financial center, port and retail market and provide great opportunities to work with other U.S. partners to extend our reach," NCOT Director Dann Lewis said.

NCOT has brought numerous Chinese journalists and tour operators to Nevada this decade to promote statewide attractions.

Schue pulls out of SLT council race

Clint Schue, owner of Brothers Bar on Emerald Bay Road, has pulled out of the South Lake Tahoe City Council race.

However, because of the timing his name will remain on the ballot.

This leaves 10 people vying for three seats. No incumbents are running.

TACCD fundraiser at Coyote Grill

Join Tahoe Area Coordinating Council for the Disabled at

Coyote Grill in the Round Hill Mall at Elks Point Road on Sept. 2 from 5pm-closing for a fundraiser.

Proceeds from the all you can eat chili will help TACCD.

For more information, contact David Kelly at (530) 577.8012.

Record cold Tahoe to return to normal this week

By Kathryn Reed

Furnaces were churning and woodstoves smoking as the highs in the region over the weekend set records for how cold it was.

On Sunday in South Lake Tahoe the high was 57 degrees. This broke the record set in 1979 at 62 degrees. Normal is 77 degrees.



Calm waters and sunny skies are expected this week for Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

It was the fifth coolest high temperature on record for all Augusts dating to 1968.

South Tahoe came in with 0.16 inches of rain. About an inch of snow accumulated on Mount Rose at 9,000 feet and on other peaks around the basin.

Reno also set a record for Aug. 29. The mercury hit 64 degrees, while the previous record low maximum was 66 set in

1953.

It was 33 degrees in South Lake Tahoe at 5 this morning.

Lightning struck several places Sunday.

“We’re going back to summer here pretty quick,” Scott McGuire, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, said.

The sun has returned to the region today. The high today in Tahoe is expected to be in the 60s, the mid-70s on Tuesday and 80 by Friday. Add 10 degrees for Reno’s expected highs.

A low-pressure system from the Gulf of Alaska is to blame for the winter-like cold snap that blew through. Labor Day weekend is expected to normal weather-wise, but later next week another low pressure may come this way.

Derby Dames last home bout of season

With three home bouts under their belts, the Tahoe Derby Dames will end their home season Sept. 18 when they play the Mountain Derby Girls from Sonora.

The final home bout for the Dames will again blend full-contact athletic roller derby action with philanthropy. A portion of the bout proceeds will go to support the St. Theresa Food Pantry, which recently announced its cupboards were bare.

The Dames will also have a canned food drive at the bout, providing a free raffle ticket for every two cans donated to the cause.As always, the bout will feature a beer garden,

half-time show and a raffle, along with ample opportunity to cheer on your favorite derby girls.

Bout tickets are $10, and kids under 10 are free. Tickets can be purchased from any derby girl, at Brothers Bar & Grill, or at the event. Gates at Bijou Community Park in South Lake Tahoe open at 3pm and the roller derby bout kicks off at 4pm.

For more information, visit the Dames online.

Adult, senior water exercise classes at South Tahoe Rec Center

Make a splash or a ripple in the Adult Water Exercise & Running class at South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Pool Complex.

Classes are offered year-round, Monday-Saturday from 9-10am. A Deep Water class runs on Monday and Wednesdays, 6-7pm.

Water exercise is for all adults and seniors who want a fun and wet work out, that can increase your flexibility, circulation and energy. No swimming ability is necessary. You can deep water jog, do the class workout or your own. Bring your water toys or use some of ours: noodles, kickboards, aqua belts and bells.

The pool is 80 degrees and outdoors until the middle of October – then the bubble goes up and is on until the middle of May.

Two ways to pay: Drop-in is $4.25 for adults and $3.25 for

seniors or a discounted 10-use card is available.

South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Pool Complex is at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.

For more information, call (530) 542.6056.

Barton Auxiliary celebrating 50 years; looking for memorabilia

Barton Memorial Hospital's Auxiliary is looking for people who have had something to do with the volunteers in the past 50 years.

The auxiliary is having a fund-raising, celebration lunch on Sept. 20 at Edgewood Tahoe. Cocktails are at 11am, with a sit-down lunch at 1pm. Cost is $100.

Patty Olson, 85, who is helping with the lunch and was one of the pioneers to get the hospital built, is also the person collecting memorabilia regarding the hospital and the auxiliary. The plan is to have it all displayed at the lunch.

The auxiliary is continually raising money to pay for "extras".

"We just gave $300,000 to the free clinic. They have raised millions over the years," Olson said of the auxiliary. "The auxiliary paid for the first payroll of the doctors."

For more information about the auxiliary anniversary lunch in Stateline, contact Olson at (530) 544.2449.

– Compiled by Kathryn Reed

In search of deals at farmers' markets

By Niesha Lofing, Sacramento Bee

Shoppers by the thousands heed the siren call of farm-fresh foods at a staggering 50 farmers markets dotting the region.

Many of these stomping grounds of sustainability have been initiating locals into healthy, locally grown food long before the word "locavore" was coined. They offer culinary inspiration in packages as tiny and wholesome as a blackberry and connect buyers eye to eye with the people growing their food.

Whatever the motivation for hitting the farmers market, underlying it all is one act: shopping. And these days, shopping is all about deals.



Farmers' markets are about freshness, not always a price break.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Yet many farmers markets have evolved into hot spots for the urban upper crust. (Those monogrammed jute bags are the giveaway.) So The Bee’s Food & Wine staff wondered: Can the average shopper find bargains at a farmers market?

Read the whole story