

Bill aims to help California save water

By Anshu Siripurapu, McClatchy

After years of drought, the state of California is bracing for water. Lots of it. Maybe even a rerun of the havoc caused by the failure of the Oroville Dam this winter.

As the record snows in the Sierra Nevada mountains begin to melt, there's concern this spring and summer that the state will have more water than it can handle.

Earlier this year, heavy winter rains forced evacuations near the Oroville Dam, where repairs are now underway on the damaged flood-control spillway.

Congress is trying to help manage such drastic shifts in California's water levels. Thursday, the House plans a vote on legislation sponsored by Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Garden Valley, that aims to help the state capture more of that water to save for a future dry season. The bill is expected to pass the House. Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., is pushing a similar bill in the Senate.

[Read the whole story](#)

Data: Visitors clogging Lake Tahoe roads

By Kathryn Reed

The time it takes to get from point A to point B all depends on the time year. Construction and snow are variables, but the real impact is tourists.

There are two main reasons they are staying in their vehicles. One, there isn't reliable transit for them to use once they are in Tahoe; two, most are coming just for the day.

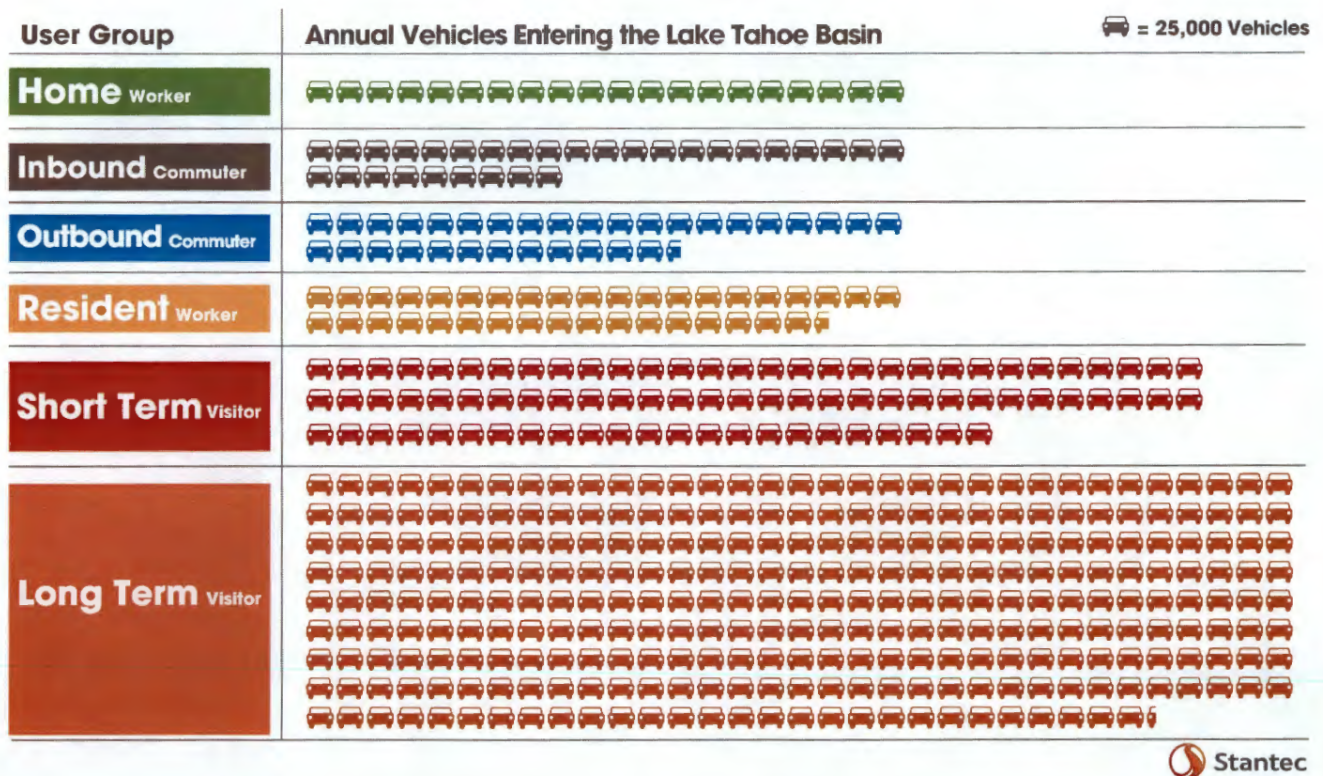
July and February are the two busiest months of the summer and winter seasons. During those respective months 42 percent of visitors to the Lake Tahoe Basin are here just for one day. About 20 percent stay for two days, less than 15 percent stay for three days, and less than 10 percent stay for four days. The percentages are about equal for July and February.

This data was presented to the South Lake Tahoe City Council on June 20 by Carl Hasty, leader of the Tahoe Transportation District.

Most of these people are coming from Northern California and Northern Nevada.

TTD a couple years ago paid a company for data that is collected from cell phone users. Through various apps people have on their phones companies are able to track where the person entered the basin, how long they stayed and which portal they left from.

The data also shows cell phones that were at a particular airport and then in the basin on the same day. Reno is by far the preferred airport with more than 58 percent using that airport in February, 50 percent in July. Other airports: Sacramento (13 percent both months), San Francisco (11 percent February, 22 percent July), Oakland (9 percent February, 6 percent July) and San Jose (9 percent both months).



The above graphic shows the annualized vehicle trips by different groups in 2014. Visitors are making up more than twice the number of local trips. The South Shore is the No. 1 place they are traveling to.

“Visitors are pushing us over the edge when it comes to traffic,” Hasty said.

Of the 80 million person trips a year, only 1.4 percent use transit.

Hasty attributes that low number to the fact that the focus of transit is on locals or commuters, and not tourists. The exception is during the winter with the ski resort shuttles.

At the TTD meeting last week the board agreed to an aggressive plan to make transit a higher priority. This includes a high-speed cross lake ferry and more boat taxis on each end of the lake.

The goal is to get those tourists off the roads and into reliable public transit. With 20 percent of visitors using

transit, that would mean more than 7 million vehicle trips removed.

Autonomous vehicles in Nevada roll forward

By Mick Akers, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada displayed its dedication to refining autonomous vehicles, with the passage of and signing of Assembly Bill 69, industry officials said.

AB69 strengthens the state's efforts in policy, as well as the research and development of fully autonomous vehicles. Gov. Brian Sandoval signed the bill into law on Friday, after it passed the Legislature with industry support from various automotive groups including General Motors, the Self-Driving Coalition – including Waymo, Uber, Lyft, Ford and Volvo – and the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers.

The legislation allows for testing and operations of fully autonomous vehicles; simplifies and clarifies the legal authority for entities testing or operating autonomous vehicles in Nevada; authorizes commercial use of fully autonomous vehicles; authorizes testing and operations of driver-assistive platooning technologies.

Read the whole story

Historic winter still grips Calif. high country

By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle

Winter is horning in on summer in the California mountains, where a stubborn blanket of snow is preventing several high-country camps from opening just as swarms of seasonal sojourners are itching to head for the hills.

Summer officially begins Wednesday, but the historic storms that rolled through this winter deposited so much snow in the Sierra, Cascade and Siskiyou ranges that roads are still being plowed, tent sites are still being dug out and damage is still being assessed.

The lingering ice has been a particular problem in Yosemite National Park, where officials last week announced the shutdown of the famed High Sierra camps – only the third time in a century that the scenic back-country sites have been declared off-limits for the entire summer because of thick snow.

In many places, camp operators are hustling to dig out and restore access. At the city of Berkeley's Echo Lake Camp, in South Lake Tahoe, winter and spring storms damaged 37 of the 45 cabins while burying the site in 15 feet of snow. Workers could not get in to fix anything until early June, when the road leading to the camp was finally cleared.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Paradise Park changing its state designation

By Jessie Marchesseau

MEYERS – At a special meeting last week, the Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District board of directors unanimously approved a resolution to convert the resort improvement district to a recreation and park district.

One of only seven RIDs remaining in the state. The TPRID board has been discussing this move for years. With a January 2018 deadline looming, the board finally made its decision on June 15.

After confirming any and all permits, possessions, funds, etc. would transfer with the park including the water rights to continue filling Lake Baron, it was established that the change will have very little effect on the park or the district. Changes will mainly be seen in two areas: the board and the name.



Tahoe Paradise Park visitors should not notice any difference with not being a resort improvement district. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

Jose Henriquez, executive officer for El Dorado Local Agency Formation Commission, who will be assisting the district with the conversion, advised the board upon Judy Clot's inquiry, the park's name can remain the same and the name of the entity will change from Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District to Tahoe Paradise Recreation and Park District. As for the board, under the RID legislation of 1961, the district 5 supervisor, currently Sue Novasel, was to be one of the board members. The newer legislation which governs RPDs considers that an incompatible office. As a result, Novasel must step down from the board once the conversion is complete, and the fifth seat will be filled by another member of the community.

Other than that, it is expected to be business as usual for Tahoe Paradise Park once the conversion is made.

"The day to day operations of the park and district will not

change," Hernandez said.

So why bother switching?

Henriquez explained that the legislation allowing RIDs was created in 1961 and done away with in 1965. Therefore, they are operating under an antiquated set of rules and regulations which never get updated; they are basically stuck in the '60s. By changing, they can take advantage of newer laws.

"You're operating under a new, more modern statute which has ties to major pieces of legislation passed by voters and by the legislature," he said.

Hernandez used a car analogy to describe the benefits of the change:

"It's like driving an old Soviet-style car: it might still get you to where you need to go, from place to place, but no one's making any parts for it; it's badly in need of repairs and it's completely unreliable," he said. "So you're basically switching from a 1980s Yugo to a Toyota Camry. It's a good reliable car with modern features."

Now that LAFCo has been given the go-ahead to start the conversion to this newer, more modern type of public district, the conversion process will still take several months. Once the final analysis is complete and approved by the commission, there will be a public hearing on the issue. Henriquez estimates this will happen sometime around October.

January 2018 is the deadline set forth by Senate Bill 1023 for RIDs to take advantage of an expedited and reduced cost conversion. The bill, passed in 2010, was designed to encourage the remaining RIDs to convert to more modern community services districts. In TPRID's case, because it is so small in size and purpose (its sole purpose is to operate Tahoe Paradise Park), it was approved to convert to a recreation and park district.

The topic has been discussed at several recent TPRID meetings, as well as numerous meetings over the last seven years. Only five people in addition to the board were in attendance at Thursday's meeting for the final vote, including Henriquez and this reporter.

Before the meeting adjourned, board members also mentioned they are starting to look for a part time park aide, the new fees for tennis and pickle ball will go into effect soon, and they are still waiting on a report from TRPA regarding the beach.

The next board meeting for TPRID will be June 22 at 6pm.

Calif. rents expected to keep climbing

By Angela Hart, Sacramento Bee

If you're a renter in California concerned about the high cost of living here, or looking to purchase your first home, your prospects aren't looking up.

Projections show rents will continue to surge, especially for low- and middle-income people in places like San Francisco, Los Angeles and Sacramento, and home prices will become increasingly expensive, according to an economic analysis in the Anderson Forecast from UCLA released this month.

"It was already bad before, but it's getting worse," said David Shulman, a senior economist for the Anderson Forecast. "California is still attracting high-income people, who are creating an enormous amount of wealth, but low and middle-

income people like teachers are leaving because housing has extraordinarily expensive.”

Read the whole story

Dangerous PCT keeping rescue crews busy

By Dan White, Outside

The Pacific Crest Trail doles out hazards in cruel ways. Thousands of hikers on the 2,650-mile trek face perils including rattlesnakes, exposure, corneal flash burns from snow glare, and heatstroke. But 2017 is shaping up to be one of the most frightening years in the national scenic trail’s history, thanks to the massive snowpack in the Sierra Nevada combined with the trail’s unprecedented popularity.

Just a couple of months into hiking season, thru-hikers are posting stories of near-death experiences.

Jack Haskel, spokesman for the Pacific Crest Trail Association, is fielding calls and hearing stories “every week, if not every day” involving avalanches, falls on slippery slopes, exposure, and dunkings in chin-high creeks. “There was a pretty serious incident in which a hiker fell and punctured a lung,” he says.

Read the whole story

Toxic runoff continues to percolate in EDC

By Joann Eisenbrandt

Another wet season has ended, but concerns about toxic storm water runoff from properties near a popular walking and biking trail just west of Placerville on the county's West Slope remain. Testing done last winter confirms that the same high pH levels that first prompted concerns about public safety in the area in early 2016 remain.

The El Dorado Trail winds through lush vegetation and is crossed by tributaries that lead to Weber Creek and eventually to the American River. The trail is below and to the west of the former Diamond Lime Plant. The plant processed limestone from area quarries for industrial and agricultural uses from the 1920s until the late 1970s. It was located between what is now Missouri Flat Road and Highway 49. It has been gone for decades, but its legacy lives on.

The piles of crushed lime rocks, lime kilns and limestone settling ponds that dotted the site were never totally cleaned up when the plant ceased operation. The site was simply covered over and repurposed for other industrial and commercial operations. Parcels now owned by Michael Lindeman, Laurence Abel and the material recovery facility (MRF) owned by Waste Connections are all part of the Diamond Lime Plant's original footprint.

It is clear the high pH runoff still occurring along the El Dorado Trail is coming from the former lime plant site.

Citizens speak out

Local resident George Turnboo saw milky storm water runoff bubbling up along the El Dorado Trail in January 2016, and

concerns over what remained of the long-abandoned Diamond Lime Plant came under a public spotlight. Turnboo tested the runoff, and along with local land use advocacy group Save Our County, publicly called for El Dorado County to deal immediately with the potential hazards to those using the trail, and to the wildlife and aquatic species in the area.

In a report to county then Environmental Management Director Greg Stanton, he noted that his hands had burned while doing the testing and that he'd gotten a pH reading of 13.5.

The pH scale ranges from 0 to 14. It indicates how acidic or alkaline a solution is. A reading of 7 is neutral. More than 7 is alkaline and less than 7 is acidic. Subsequent tests by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and El Dorado County Environmental Management staff also showed pH readings of 12 and above.

Aerial view of area surrounding the former Diamond Lime Plant



Another rainy season

Following the high pH testing in winter 2015-16, the county put up warning signs along the El Dorado Trail. They also put up temporary mesh fencing to keep people from going down the sides of the trail into the seasonal tributaries. A hundred and twenty feet of permanent fencing was later installed. A series of three press releases were put on the county website advising residents to "... avoid contact with storm water in the vicinity of the El Dorado Trail." That signage and fencing remain in place today.

Asked how the situation along the El Dorado Trail has changed following the exceptionally wet 2016-17 rain season, Stanton, now interim director of the Environmental Management Department, told *Lake Tahoe News*, "El Dorado County has taken proactive measures to ensure the (El Dorado) trail is safe. There really is no change to the status. Storm water staff has monitored the discharge points. The results have been as anticipated. We will continue to monitor it in the next wet weather season."

Monthly samples collected by county staff ranged from pH levels of 8.17 to 13.52.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board conducted testing along the trail beginning in October 2016 with similar results.

Walter Floyd, engineering geologist for the Water Board, confirmed, "The hot spots that existed last year are present this year also." The Water Board manages water quality issues in California for the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Not a new problem

Local, regional, and state agencies have been aware of the issues on the former lime plant site for years. A number of citizen complaints have been received; citations and orders for remediation have been issued and site investigations and testing undertaken.

Until recently, concerns focused on the property owned by Michael Lindeman. An environmental site assessment (ESA) done as far back as 2008 in preparation for eventual commercial construction on the property found that the surface and groundwater on the property might be "compromised" by lime-based pollutants.

The 2013-14 El Dorado County Grand Jury reviewed Lindeman's actions in response to multiple orders to clean up the lime waste on his property. It concluded, "Toxic limestone waste continues to flow into adjacent waterways. Nobody is doing anything to stop it. Not the owner, not the county and not the state."

The Grand Jury recommended that the Diamond Dorado Retail Center that Lindeman and his partners planned on constructing on the site not be allowed to go forward without significant additional environmental review. The county had approved the large commercial center in 2012.



El Dorado County's Solid Waste Advisory board member George Turnboo in 2016 tests the toxicity of storm water runoff in Placerville; not much has changed since then. Photo/Provided

The Board of Supervisors is updated

On June 8, 2017, the county Community Development Services Environmental Management Department sent a memo to the Board of Supervisors updating the five on the environmental concerns associated with the former Diamond Lime Plant. It pointed to the Lindeman property as the source of the high pH runoff on the El Dorado Trail.

"Elevated pH lime deposits have been confirmed to be present on the south side of the trail on the Lindeman property.... It is hypothesized that the lime deposits on the south side of the trail are coming into contact with groundwater and flowing under the trail."

The memo noted that the Water Board, "... is the lead agency regarding the investigation of elevated pH soil and impact to surface and groundwater in the affected area."

Floyd agrees with the county's assessment of the source of the high pH runoff along the trail. "At this time there is no indication that the water emanating from the Waste Connections site is impacting water near the El Dorado Trail."

While the Water Board is at the top of the water quality food chain, a number of other public agencies, including a variety of county departments and divisions also are involved. Coordinating these efforts has proved to be difficult.

The investigation widens

The Lindeman property is not the only remnant of the old Diamond Lime Plant now coming under close scrutiny. Community activists have been calling for some time for a deeper investigation of the Waste Connections site and the MRF. The federal Clean Water Act requires businesses like the MRF that discharge pollutants off-site to have a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) showing how they are controlling pollutants in storm water runoff on their property. The Water Board is in charge of monitoring their compliance.

Critics have alleged that the MRF was basically built on top of the polluted remnants of the Diamond Lime Plant with no real remediation, and that there have been deficiencies with its storm water discharge system and issues with overflow from the three retention ponds that catch storm water runoff. The Lindeman property that directly adjoins it has been the subject of multiple investigations related to its lime processing history; the MRF has not.

In March 2016, the Water Board conducted an inspection at the MRF that found discrepancies with their SWPPP and a notice of

violation (NOV) was prepared. Floyd indicated to *Lake Tahoe News* at that time that the Water Board did not plan to look more closely into the possibility of high pH runoff coming from the MRF and impacting the El Dorado Trail. In June 2016, Floyd visited the Lindeman property and took soil samples of the area where the Lindeman property and the MRF adjoin. The soil in a trench excavated on an exposed hillside adjoining the MRF was found to have elevated soil pH.

Subsequently, Waste Connections hired Youngdahl Consulting to conduct soil testing to determine pH levels on the site. The western portion of the site was found to have elevated pH. The Water Board approved the work plan for additional investigation of soil and groundwater on the property. It included installation of 12 monitoring wells with water samples to be collected for laboratory analysis. They also did a subsurface exploratory program that evaluated the extent of residual lime material on the site and the pH levels of soil and shallow groundwater. Their final report was received by the Water Board in May 2017.

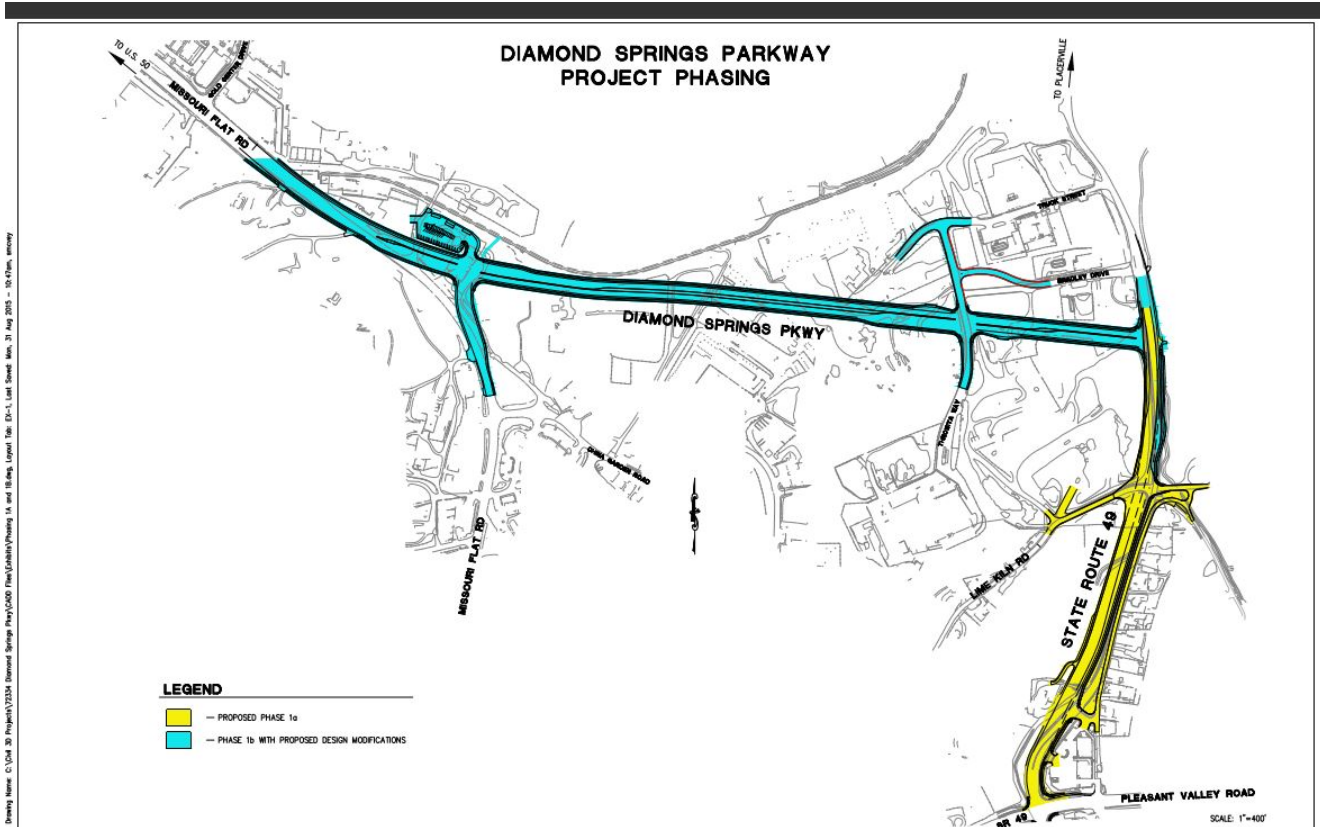
This additional testing confirmed the existence of elevated pH values greater than 12 in the soil and in the water in the trough in the western portion of the site.

As Floyd explained, "The (groundwater) has an elevated pH in the western portion of the Waste Connections site, and appears to locally elevate the pH in the seasonal creek west of the Waste Connections site when groundwater levels get sufficiently high."

The western seasonal drainage referred to is the seasonal creek to the west of the Waste Connections and Lindeman properties. It flows northwest and is a tributary to Weber Creek. Floyd clarified that "groundwater" and "storm water runoff" are two different things. Storm water runoff is the water flowing above the ground over paved surfaces during storm events. "There are no data," he explained, "to support

that the water flowing over the surface of the Waste Connections Site has an elevated pH.”

The next step will be to evaluate the cost and effectiveness of remedial options at the MRF and then select one. A report must be submitted to the Water Board by Sept. 29, right before the start of the next wet season.



Diamond Springs Parkway project site's two phases. Source/2011 draft EIR

Timetable for a new MRF

As part of its Solid Waste Services Agreement with the county, Waste Connections is obligated to construct a new, modern MRF on the existing site. County Environmental Management is the contract administrator for the Waste Connections contract. Waste Connections signed a five-year contract in October 2014, with an automatic 10-year renewal dependent on completion of the new MRF by October 2019.

Stanton told LTN, "Clearly, with the environmental concerns that have been identified, that timetable has been pushed back." Waste Connections can ask for two one-year extensions of this deadline.

Susan VanDelinder, divisional vice president for the Northern California Division of Waste Connections and district manager for El Dorado Disposal told *Lake Tahoe News*, "We concur with the (Youngdahl) report conclusions."

She also noted that the water sampling over the last rainy season showed that the Waste Connections site "meets current bench marks. So we don't believe that storm water runoff from the site created or poses a hazard." VanDelinder said that the ongoing investigation required by the Water Board will most likely delay construction of the new MRF by a year. "We anticipate requesting an extension."

Asked if the county had anticipated the level of soil and water testing and remediation now needed on the MRF site, Stanton said, "The Water Board has been aware of the (Diamond Lime) plant and its impact to the surrounding properties for many years. It is not uncommon for properties to not be remediated until development or construction proceeds. It is anticipated that work will be required but we don't always know ahead of time. That is the typical process for land development."

Under the terms of the California Environmental Quality Act, Waste Connections will have to prepare an environmental document outlining any potential environmental consequences from the construction of the new MRF and identifying what measures will be taken to mitigate them. This would not be the first environmental document prepared for this site.

County roads project comes into play

A third parcel that was part of the Diamond Lime Plant is also getting a closer look from the Water Board. The Laurence Abel

property is within the footprint of both phases of the county's proposed Diamond Springs Parkway Project (DSP). This Department of Transportation roads project has two phases, Phase 1A and Phase 1B, and has been simmering on the back burner since its approval by the board in 2011.

Phase 1A includes the widening and adding of improvements to Highway 49 above the affected properties and all the way to its juncture with Pleasant Valley Road in Diamond Springs. Phase 1B is the creation of a four-lane connector road between Missouri Flat and Highway 49. This road, Diamond Springs Parkway, would run alongside the Lindeman and Abel properties. It requires irrevocable offers of dedication (IOD) for easements from both property owners. Both IODs have been submitted and signed but no change of title has yet occurred.



A sample location on the south side of El Dorado Trail. Photo/Provided

Investigation leads to delays

In November 2016, the Water Board advised Abel that, "An aerial photograph from 1962 shows lime waste on your property, and your property is uphill of the area where the high pH water is observed in the creek by Throwita Way. It therefore appears that your property may be contributing to the elevated pH in the creek." Throwita Way runs between the Lindeman and Abel properties and leads to the entrance to the MRF.

This April, the Water Board required preparation of a Site Investigation Work Plan to evaluate the extent of high pH lime waste on the property and propose plans to remediate it. This report is due July 31.

In a letter to the Water Board on behalf of the Laurence & Jacqueline Abel Trust, their representative Rich Ferriera explained, "The Abel's understood that the described parcel in the order had no conditions that would cause the high PH (sic) that the Water Board suspects. Their determination is based on a geo-technical firm's verbal discussion with Laurence Abel that took place on the described parcel in the order. Mr. Abel was told that his parcel was not part of the Lime Plant processing area and his parcel soil conditions are of native material and that he had nothing to worry about. The letter from the Water Board has come as a real surprise"

Prior to purchasing properties or easements in the DSP project footprint, the county conducted an environmental site assessment (ESA). Its purpose is to identify any existing environmental issues on the properties. The Phase 1 ESA for the first phase of the Diamond Springs Parkway project was prepared by Youngdahl Consulting in January 2009. It noted that the Lindeman property was "formerly part of the Diamond Lime Mineral Plant" and that there is "a potential for hazardous materials releases or disposal areas." For the Abel parcel, there was no mention of the former lime plant, but only commercial orchards. Property owners were asked to submit answers to a questionnaire and to note if there were any RECs (recognized environmental conditions) on their

parcels. The ESA includes a chart outlining property owners' responses. Abel's response was that there were no RECs. Lindeman's response indicated the presence of the Diamond Lime Plant, but also said there were no RECs.

In October 2016, Dustin Harrington, senior civil engineer with the Transportation Division of the county's Community Development Agency, and DSP project manager, had told LTN that, "No recognized environmental conditions or hazardous materials have been found within the footprint for the DSP's Phase 1A. It's all clean dirt."

Phase 1A of the Diamond Springs Parkway project was originally slated to begin in early spring 2017. It has now been delayed until spring 2018. When asked how the Water Board's current investigation of the Abel property might impact the timetable of the DSP, Floyd said, "The nature and extent of lime waste on Abel's property needs to be characterized before any assessment on the impacts to the Diamond Springs Parkway project can be provided."

County spokeswoman Carla Hass said, "The reason the Phase 1A construction won't begin until spring 2018 is because the utility design for the underground conversions requires coordination with four different utilities (PG&E, AT&T, Comcast and EID) and took longer than anticipated. Additionally, Caltrans has to review and approve the contract documents before we put them out to bid. Finally, the winter storm damage added to the delay." Hass added that the county had "adjusted our schedule" before the Water Board's order to Abel.

Lindeman property still under scrutiny

In addition to the testing Michael Lindeman's own consultant has done on the property, the county Department of Transportation began soil and groundwater testing as part of the Phase II ESA assessment of parkway Phase 1B—the connector

road between Missouri Flat and Highway 49. The Lindeman property is in the footprint of Phase 1B. Lindeman and several partners, including Laurence Abel, were originally going to build the 250,000 square foot Diamond Dorado Retail Center on this property once the connector road from Missouri Flat to Highway 49 was completed. The EIR for the project was approved by the board in September 2012 and rescinded in May 2016 because of what the county termed failure by the developers to move the project forward.

Beginning in late 2016, soil samples were taken and two monitoring wells were drilled on the Lindeman parcel. "Preliminary results of the investigation," the board was told in the June 2017 staff memo, "indicate lime deposits at various thicknesses throughout the area investigated. Groundwater sampling results from the two monitoring wells had elevated pH levels."

The final results of this report will be available in late June or early July.

Floyd indicated the Water Board had met with representatives from the county Transportation and Environmental Management departments in late May 2017 to discuss this upcoming report and the status of the property transfer from Lindeman to the county for the easement. "Prior to accepting ownership, the county needs to determine the liabilities associated with the property."

The parties agreed that evaluating remedial options on how to clean up the property was a better use of resources at this point than doing further site investigations. Hass noted, "Without knowing the exact type and extent of remediation, at this point it is difficult to determine its impacts to project schedule and completion of right of way acquisition."

The big picture

The area around the former Diamond Lime Plant has changed

considerably in the last four decades. It is now surrounded by recreational, single- and multi-family residential, commercial and industrial uses. Area residents have expressed concerns in the past that properties in the area on well water might be contaminated by groundwater emanating from the lime plant site.

Floyd noted that “sensitive receptors” were discussed at the Water Board’s recent meeting with county staff. This refers to areas “downgradient” of the lime plant to the northwest of the MRF, basically following the path of Weber Creek. One of these is the Depot Lake area. The county indicated that there had been no well installation permits issued on the downgradient properties.

“To the best of the county’s knowledge at this time and relying on GotNet, parcel research and the EID service area for the information,” Hass told *Lake Tahoe News*, “the county is not currently aware of water wells used for drinking water supply in the area immediately downgradient from the former Diamond Lime Plant site.”

Same question, same answer

It is now June 2017, almost a year and a half since George Turnboo encountered milky storm water runoff along the El Dorado Trail and reported it to the county. It has been close to 40 years since the Diamond Lime Plant ceased its lime processing operations. It has been no secret for all of those 40 years that hazardous lime-based materials remained on the site.

The next rainy season is just a few months away. There have been years of soil testing and storm water runoff and groundwater analysis conducted by private contractors and public agencies on the impacted properties. Remedial action plans have been requested, but no actual remediation has begun. As Dustin Harrington told *Lake Tahoe News* in late 2016,

“It’s a puzzling issue out there.”

When all the puzzle pieces will finally be assembled remains uncertain.

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Note: The Water Board is attempting to locate any property owners with wells in the Depot Lake area. Contact engineering geologist Walter Floyd at walter.floyd@waterboards.ca.gov.

Mountain water may look clear, but don’t trust it

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

Last winter’s Sierra snowpack is melting fast in the summer sun, and backcountry streams are running high. Thirsty hikers may be tempted to gulp from the alpine springs, but experts say look out – the clear mountain water could be full of microscopic organisms just waiting to wreak havoc on your stomach.

Wilderness water can contain disease-causing agents such as giardia, E. coli and salmonella. The higher up and more remote the water is, the less likely it is to be contaminated by human and animal waste, but it’s always a good idea to treat natural water before drinking it, experts said.

Parasites, viruses and bacteria from feces can make their way into the watershed and lurk, invisible, until hikers slurp them up. Outdoor stores sell dozens of water filters and chemical treatments that are easy to carry and will keep you

safe from water critters. When you're shopping, look for products that block bacteria and parasites, such as giarda and cryptosporidium. If it removes viruses that's even better, said Maggie Brandenburg, outdoor and youth programs manager for the Tahoe Rim Trail Association.

Read the whole story

The new landscape of adventure



Actor-comedian Rob Riggle, right, indulges in a selfie with a fan at Tahoe's celebrity golf tournament. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Emily Harrington, Moonshine Ink

Being an “adventurer” used to mean something different. It was a solitary act; something people did to get away from normal life where they could find meaning away from the modern world of technology, money, fame, and ego. Or rather, that was the intrinsic definition we once gave to the act of “adventuring.”

It was the Stone Masters in Yosemite Valley, who climbed walls once deemed impossible to conquer, but told no one, only to have the legendary tales leak out through word-of-mouth and rumor. It was similar with big ski descents in the High Sierra. The saying goes, “There’s no such thing as a first descent in the Sierra, because someone surely did it back in the day. You just didn’t hear about it.”

Nowadays adventuring is a business. Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, etc. – every outdoor company and professional athlete are expected to promote themselves and the brands they represent in a shamelessly overt and public fashion.

Read the whole story