

Rapid snowmelt causes floods, impacts recreation



Water-covered trails are common in the Tahoe basin, which is less of a problem for four-legged hikers. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Memorial Day weekend is usually the start of summer for most of the country. For Lake Tahoe, it's really the end of winter.

This coming weekend won't be any different. While the forecast is for sunny skies and highs in the mid- to high 60s, the remnants of winter will likely be felt by people who are near any body of water and on hiking-biking trails.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a flood watch that is in effect through 11pm May 24 for South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Bridgeport, Mammoth Lakes, Stateline, Incline Village, Carson City, Reno and Gardnerville.

Unseasonably hot weather is in the forecast for this week, which will accelerate the melting of what was a record snowpack for this area of the Sierra. In South Lake Tahoe, the high today is expected to be 78, 79 on May 23, and 74 on May 24. There is also a chance of thunderstorms on Tuesday, which would convert the snow to liquid faster, as well as add to swollen waterways via rain.

According to the Weather Service, "Best estimates for flows this week coming out of unregulated Eastern Sierra creeks and streams are likely to be 2-2½ times current flows with smaller creeks likely to see three times current flows. Daily peak flows on small creeks and streams typically occur during the evening and overnight hours."

Camping near creeks, streams and rivers is not advised.

Expect the rising water to impact surrounding campgrounds, hiking-biking trails and meadows. Depending on where the water is flowing, it could also destabilize already saturated hillsides, causing mud and rock slides.



Trout Creek is creeping into South Lake Tahoe backyards.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

Water is spilling forth from hillsides, creating mini-waterfalls that even longtime locals don't remember ever seeing.

In South Lake Tahoe the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek have been beyond their banks for weeks. Trout Creek is in the back yards of people in the Al Tahoe neighborhood. The river looks like it might spill onto the runways at Lake Tahoe Airport.

The Upper Truckee River is flowing at 713 cubic feet per second, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times higher than the mean for this time of year.

For those who are thinking about venturing into any Sierra body of water should remember how cold the water is and how swift it's moving.

Parts of the bike trail from Tahoe City to Truckee are expected to continue to be under water as the Truckee River floods.

It doesn't take long to hit snow on some of the area's popular trails. And many without snow are covered with measurable water. Trees are also a hindrance in some places.

The U.S. Forest Service says to expect trails about 8,000 feet to be melted by mid-July.

Here are a few reports on trail conditions:

- According to the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit it's possible to drive to the Glen Alpine trailhead. "The hike to the springs is a mix of dry, deep water, and snow. Above the Glen Alpine Spring, expect lots of snow. Snow ranges from 2-20-plus feet depending on aspect, elevation, and shade. Lakes are all frozen, very little dry ground (isolated rock outcroppings) above 8,000 feet."

- Wrights Lake Road is snow-free to the three-mile marker from Highway 50. From there it is covered in 4 to 8 feet of snow, with some large drifts that are 12 to 15 feet deep.
 - Patchy snow remains on the Eagle Lake Trail above Emerald Bay. Eagle Lake remains partially frozen. Expect to post hole.
 - The Mount Tallac Trail is clear with patchy snow from the trail head to the first ridge, but as the trail nears Floating Island Lake there is 3 to 4 feet of snow on the trail and on the approach to Cathedral Lake, there is 6 to 7 feet of snow obscuring the trail.
 - For more info on trails managed by the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, go **online**.
 - For more info about mountain biking trails, go to **TAMBA's website**.
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Nev. lawmakers back bills to end federal pot industry impediments

By Colton Lochhead, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Two members of Nevada's congressional delegation signed onto cannabis-related legislation last week in a push to legitimize the emerging marijuana industry at the federal level.

U.S. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto and Rep. Dina Titus, both Democrats, co-sponsored bills that would remove federal restrictions that the marijuana industry says hamstring

participants from operating as normal businesses.

Twenty-eight states have legalized medical marijuana, and eight of those states – including Nevada – have also legalized recreational use. The moves have created an emerging industry that generates billions of dollars in sales and hundreds of millions in tax revenue for states.

Read the whole story

Promotion of Nev. on TV, big screen in the works

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The Nevada Commission on Tourism will collaborate with the Governor's Office of Economic Development's Nevada Film Office to promote the state through a medium that already has a sizable audience – television and the big screen.

Eric Priess, director of the office, told board members Wednesday that working with the commission should help attract tourists who want to see locations captured in movies filmed in Nevada while the commission's distribution resources should help promote Nevada locations to filmmakers.

Priess said his office has developed an interactive film tourism map to guide visitors to famous film locations across the state. At the same time, the TravelNevada website can show off the diverse locations that offer picturesque lakes, spooky ghost towns, scenic highways, majestic mountains and glittery neon.

Read the whole story

Bike safety a lesson for beyond the classroom



Charlie Baker makes his way through the obstacle course as CHP Officer Jeff Gartner times him. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

If a stop sign isn't enough to get the cyclist to stop, the tennis ball does the trick when it hits the tire. That ball represents a vehicle without the consequences of not following the rules of the road.

"The whole goal here is for kids to be safe through the summer," Officer Jeff Gartner told *Lake Tahoe News*. California

Highway Patrol officers were at Bijou Community School on May 19 for a bike rodeo and will be at the other Lake Tahoe Unified School District elementary schools before the end of the school year, with the goal of reaching all K-5 students.

This event is something officers try to do at the end of each school year as kids are more likely to be getting back on their bikes.

Using some of the painted lines on the blacktop and chalk for the course, the goal is to maneuver through without falling, colliding with others, and all the while obeying the signs.



Simone Sitchon practices staying in control. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"Something I learned is to control my bike and to go around turns slower so I'm not out of control," Simone Sitchon told *Lake Tahoe News*.

She is in Cynthia Pastore's fifth-grade class. For Pastore, she sees events like this as a real benefit for the students – especially in a practical environment where they can practice what they are being taught.

Before students get on their bikes the officers do a quick inspection to make sure the brakes are working and the steering mechanism is good. They make adjustments if they can, but no unsafe bikes are allowed in the rodeo.

For those who didn't have a bike, they share with friends. Officers even have a few helmets to hand out that the kids can keep.

At first the cyclists seem a bit wobbly and aren't inside the lines. The extremely tight angles are like going through the hairpin turns at Emerald Bay in a car. Soon, though, the youngsters are getting a handle on how to adjust their speed, keep their balance and ride in a controlled manner.

The more experienced riders were timed through the course. Go outside the lines, knock a cone over or ignore a road sign and the cyclist was disqualified.

"This teaches kids how to not ride mindlessly," Charlie Baker, who regularly rides his bike to school, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There is some (awareness) to not cut in front of cars."

Nearly 72B gallons of water added to Tahoe since April 1



Trout Creek, a South Shore tributary to Lake Tahoe, is flooding back yards; in this location it's in a front yard. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Amy Graff, San Francisco Chronicle

After a winter and early spring marked by unrelenting storms, the Sierra Nevada is piled high with snow. Now, as the storms taper off and the temperatures warm up, the snowpack is beginning to melt and runoff into rivers and lakes.

One place that's seeing a huge impact from all the runoff is Lake Tahoe.

Since April 1, the start of the snow melt season, 219,600 acre feet –that's 71,556,879,600 gallons – of water have poured into the lake, according to Chief Deputy Federal Water Master Dave Wathen.

As a result the lake is filling up fast, and about a foot away from reaching full capacity. Federal water managers say Tahoe will fill this summer for the first time in 11 years, and when it does, the total amount it will have risen across the water-

year between Oct. 1 and Sept. 30 will be record-breaking.

Read the whole story

The two (beer) sides of Lake Tahoe

By Jay R. Brooks, San Jose Mercury News

Each year, nearly 5 million people visit Lake Tahoe. You could almost say there are two Tahoes. And considering that each state has its own alcohol laws that determine what's available and where it can be sold, there are two Tahoe beer scenes, as well.

If Lake Tahoe were a clock, you'd find Tahoe Mountain Brewing at 10 o'clock. The Tahoe City brewpub sits across the street from the lake, offering picturesque views to go with your burger or pint. The brewpub taps include a wide of selection of beers available year round, as well as a fun selection of limited-release beers.

South Lake Tahoe sits at the 6 o'clock spot, with the highest concentration of breweries in the area.

Read the whole story

Tahoe wants to be part of surge in electric vehicles



This BMW, left, and two electric Teslas show a small variety in the EV market. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – Creating an electric highway in the Sierra is under way. It would encompass Highway 50 on the South Shore and Interstate 80 on the North Shore, and points around the basin.

This isn't a new concept. It has been talked about since at least 2006 when Truckee Donner Public Utility District had a three-year contract with the Electric Auto Association to provide electricity for free to three plug-ins.

But like most things in the Tahoe-Truckee area, actual implementation takes decades.

Advocates for more electric vehicles and places to charge them gathered in Kings Beach this spring for a summit.

“Transportation is the No. 2 source of greenhouse gas emissions at Lake Tahoe,” Devin Middlebrook with the Tahoe Regional Transportation District said. The benefit of electric vehicles is eliminating tailpipes spewing noxious pollutants.

These vehicles – whether a total EV or a hybrid – are no longer an anomaly. And with improved technology, it’s not unrealistic to drive one in snow country.

In 2016, U.S. consumers had the choice of 30 electric vehicles. Dealers sold 159,139 electric vehicles last year, with the top five being the Tesla Model S, Tesla Model X, Chevrolet Volt, Nissan Leaf and Ford Fusion Energi.

Of the 115 EVs owned by people in the region, 45 percent are Teslas. Most owners are in South Lake Tahoe, Truckee or Incline Village.

Projections are that by 2025 between 3 and 6 percent of daily trips will be via an electric vehicle, with those percentages increasing to between 6 and 14 percent by 2040.

In addition to better vehicles with more offerings – like all-wheel drive – there needs to be places for people to get a charge when they are commuting or traveling for fun. Batteries with insufficient charges are a reason some consumers don’t want to abandon their gas-powered vehicle.

Stations have improved in regards to how long it takes to charge a vehicle. And that infrastructure is starting to spread.

What may make the Tahoe-Truckee area more conducive to creating that electric highway is the recognition by Liberty Utilities, the regulatory agencies and businesses that electric vehicles are here to stay, and that the benefits are multi-faceted.

Tourists expected to drive Nev. marijuana sales

By Associated Press

Now that Nevada has approved an early start to recreational cannabis sales, existing medical marijuana companies in the state are readying for a burst of new business that could equate to tens of millions of dollars in additional revenue this year.

The early rollout will make Nevada the fifth state with an operational recreational market and the first to launch since last November's election, when voters in four states approved adult-use programs. Nevada will also be the first new recreational state to go live under the Trump administration.

Nevada's recreational marijuana industry got the thumbs-up for an "early start" program Monday, when state tax authorities approved temporary regulations that allow licensed medical marijuana companies to begin adult-use sales July 1.

According to *Marijuana Business Daily*, Nevada's recreational market could generate \$75 million or more in sales this year and \$450 million-\$550 million annually down the road. Tourist spending is expected to account for a heavy portion of sales.

Read the whole story

What's next for historic Truckee house selling for \$1.5M?

By David Caraccio, Sacramento Bee

The historic CB Kruger Whitehouse in Truckee is for sale for \$1.5 million, and what comes next for the distinguished property could be interesting.

The Victorian house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and offers a prominent street front location on Donner Pass Road, 18 parking spaces and a variety of commercial uses, from restaurant to retail and office. Most recently, a wine bar, florist shop and hair salon occupied the property, but it was best known when it was a fine-dining restaurant, according to Andrew Smith of Oliver Luxury Real Estate, which listed the property.

Also, zoning still allows the property to return to use as a single-family home, Smith said.

There seems to be endless possibilities for the site, which is owned by Aaron Bigelow and Tanya Thayer of Tahoe City.

Read the whole story

STHS' next principal eager to

do great things

By Kathryn Reed

Passion and energy spill forth from Carline Sinkler as she talks about her next job – principal of South Tahoe High School.

“I’m excited about all the work being done, career technology education, getting students ready for college and life,” Sinkler told *Lake Tahoe News*. “What impressed me was the enthusiasm of the staff. They are student-centered and forward thinking. I feel like I’m coming into a community that is poised to do incredible work.”

She wants to build on the strengths that already exist.



Carline Sinkler will be South Tahoe High School’s principal starting in the 2017-18 school year.

Photo/Provided

“Her interpersonal skills, enthusiasm and vision will enhance and strengthen the existing programs at South Tahoe High School,” Superintendent Jim Tarwater told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We loved her mission statement: where you pursue a communitywide vision of thriving, future-ready students and schools through a collaborative, innovative learning-centered leadership.”

He said Sinkler made a great connection with both interview panels. The district interviewed five of the 29 people who applied. Sinkler's first day will be July 19 at an annual salary of \$134,040.

Today she is principal of Herbert Hoover Middle School in San Francisco; a job she has had since 2013.

Sinkler, 50, has done a lot work around college and career readiness at the middle school level, and wants to take that to the next level.

"One of the things I'm really excited about is working around the sports medicine academy. I think that is super, super neat," she said.

One of her first jobs will be to ensure everything is in place for the visit next school year from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in regards to accreditation. The school is finishing the first of two years on probationary accreditation status. Chad Houck was let go because of the accreditation issues.

Sinkler said she has looked at what the school and district have done to prepare for the next evaluation. While she knows it will be a challenge, Sinkler is confident regarding what is being done and believes the school will prevail.

While going from such an urban environment to the rural mountains might seem like 180-degree change, for Sinkler, coming to Tahoe in some ways feels like going home. She grew up in the upper peninsula in Michigan so she knows all about snow. She would cross country ski to the bus stop. Plus, she lives in Marin County near open space and not in The City.

A knee injury keeps her off the downhill slopes, but she is an avid cross country skier and snowshoer. Mountain biking is another favorite sport. She's already done the Flume Trail. Paddleboarding is something else she enjoys doing with her

husband. The two were even married at Emerald Bay.