

Lahontan seeks comments on use of pesticides in water

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board wants to allow pesticides in water on a limited basis. This requires amending the current rules.

Circumstances eligible for a prohibition exemption involve the use of aquatic pesticides for purposes of protecting public health and safety for things like vector control and drinking water protection, plus ecological integrity that include fisheries management and aquatic invasive species control.

Comments were taken on the plan amendment for 45 days ending May 13. Because of those written comments and the ones submitted at the two public hearings, one of the chapters requires more public review. The latest round of comments is open until Nov. 14 at noon.

Documents for review are available at the Lahontan Water Board's website at under the "Pesticide Basin Plan Amendment – Revised Draft Documents Provided for Public Comments" heading. For a hardcopy of the draft documents, contact Amber Wike at (530) 542.5400 or at awike@waterboards.ca.gov.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Pile burning in Angora could begin this week

U.S. Forest Service fire and fuels management crews plan to begin prescribed fire operations in the Angora Fire area this

fall, burning piles created during the fuels reduction component of the Angora Ecosystem Restoration Project.

Operations could begin this week.

Burning the piles is the last step in the fuels reduction process in these units, which have been treated by hand. Fuels reduction using mechanical equipment continues in other parts of the fire area. Fuels reduction efforts, including prescribed fire, in the Angora Fire area aim to reduce the long-term risk of high intensity wildfire.



Piles stacked this summer in the Angora area could begin to be burned this week.

Photo/LTN

The piles border the neighborhoods around Tahoe Mountain Road, Fallen Leaf Lake Road, North Upper Truckee, South Tahoe High School and Gardner Mountain. If a window of good weather conditions occurs, crews will burn as much of the approximately 440 acres of piles as they can accomplish safely and while minimizing the effects of smoke on local communities. If crews light a significant number of acres at one time, the project may produce a smoke plume resembling that of a wildland fire.

Forest Service fire and fuels management staff monitor weather

conditions closely prior to prescribed fire ignition. They are looking for conditions that will carry smoke up and out of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Crews conduct a test burn before igniting a larger area, to verify how effectively fuels are consumed and how the smoke will travel.

Other federal, state and local fire management agencies may also be conducting prescribed fire work during this period.

To directly receive prescribed fire updates, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us. Forest Service staff will post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, No. 6.

California bill aims to boost dog licensing

By Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento Bee

Got a pet pooch? Local government agencies are motivated more than ever to make sure you get him licensed, and soon may get some help from the state.

Assembly Bill 1121, on Gov. Jerry Brown's desk, seeks to give local shelters a new tool for enforcing a state licensing law that mostly has been ignored, without consequences, by dog owners.

Across California, only about 16 percent of pet dogs are licensed, said Jennifer Fearing, chief economist and California senior state director for the Humane Society of the United States.

In Sacramento County, a mere 9 percent of pooches carry

licenses that allow agencies to track their whereabouts, pay for services such as animal control, and monitor rabies vaccinations. The state does not require pet cats to be licensed.

“A lot of people don’t even realize that dog licensing is the law, and has been since the 1950s,” said Fearing. “It’s good for the animal, and it’s good for government animal shelters.”

Sponsored by Assemblyman Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, the bill would require pet stores, rescue groups and others that sell dogs to submit monthly reports to local licensing agencies.

The reports would list contact information for each person who adopted or bought a pooch, allowing the agencies to contact pet owners and make sure the animal gets licensed. Fines of up to \$100 would be imposed on those who fail to comply with the law.

Read the whole story

Southwest Gas replacing plastic pipes in Lake Tahoe

By Northern Nevada Business Weekly

New technology, federal tax breaks and lower construction costs combined to spur efforts by Southwest Gas to replace miles of vintage plastic pipe in its system at Lake Tahoe this year.

The Las Vegas-based utility is using two new technologies – “keyhole” and “split and pull” – in the Tahoe-area project.

With the keyhole technology, a 24-inch diameter piece of asphalt is cut to access the natural gas pipeline below the ground.

This eliminates the need to remove longer sections of roadway to replace older lines.

When the work is done, the keyhole of asphalt is replaced, using a durable adhesive.

The “split and pull” technology, meanwhile, splits the old pipe while pulling a new carrier pipe at the same time.

Read the whole story

Climate change takes toll on cultures

By Dylan Walsh, New York Times

There are nearly 7,000 known languages in the world today. It is predicted that half of these, in many cases vessels of indigenous cultures, will vanish over the next 50 years.

This has been much on the mind of Brigitte Baptiste, who took over this year as director of the Colombian Environment Ministry’s Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute. Although rigorous assessments of indigenous vulnerability have been few and far between, she says, climate change is known to cause shifts in the growth of flora and fauna in local ecosystems, from animal migrations to natural cycles like pollination.

In some places, the shifts in ecosystems require indigenous

cultures to rapidly adapt or perish as their traditional means of subsistence becomes harder to sustain.

For example, the Wayuu, who have lived for centuries in Colombia's arid northwest, depend on the glacially fed Rancheria River as well as two rainy seasons to support a culture rich in fishing and animal husbandry. But glacial retreat means that the river is often at lower levels than it used to be, and seasonal weather is becoming both less predictable and more violent.

Over longer arcs of time, Dr. Baptiste explained by e-mail, indigenous knowledge keeps pace with change, assuring the viability of the community. But in the case of rapid climate change, "if this adaptive capacity, already embedded in the fabric of local cultures, fails to give quick answers, the youngest members of the community may jump out of the tradition."

Many indigenous youths are already resettling in urban areas because of tribal displacement and the allure of rising economies, a phenomenon exemplified by the Nukak-Makú people of Colombia. Climate change will only compound the problem, Dr. Baptiste said.

Read the whole story

NV Energy reducing price for electricity

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

In time for the coming cold season: Declines in electricity

and natural gas rates for NV Energy customers effective Saturday.

The utility said today it will trim electricity rates by an average of 2.43 percent for its Northern Nevada customers and natural gas rates by 10.7 percent for its Reno-Sparks customers.

For the typical residential customer using 746 kilowatt hours of electricity per month, the bill will fall from \$83.98 to \$82.16. For the typical natural gas customer using 56 therms of gas, NV Energy's charge will drop from \$50.55 to \$45.52.

Read the whole story

Wild horses posing a problem on Nevada highways

The Nevada Highway Patrol is cautioning motorists who travel on Highway 341, the Geiger Grade, about the increased presence of wild horses that have been gathering near or crossing the section of highway between the roundabout at Veterans Parkway and Virginia City.



Additionally, two horses have been struck and killed in separate accidents in the past week.

Bands of horses have been observed and reported in Lyon County on Highway 50 between Mound House and Silver Springs as well.

Motorists who observe horses near the highway can report that information to (775) 687.0400 or the Storey County Sheriff's Office at (775) 847.0950. Either agency would contact the volunteer range master for the Virginia City area, Jim Stewart, or a brand inspector from the Department of Agriculture to assist with these types of calls.

What to look for at next week's S. Tahoe council meeting

Some of the more interesting items on the Oct. 4 South Lake Tahoe City Council agenda are either on the consent agenda or closed session.

Analysis

The consent agenda is usually for slam-dunk items that require no discussion. However, that has not been the case with these five. They seem to pull about half the items each meeting – signaling either a disconnect between staff and council to what is important, or how well versed the council is on the item.

Next week's red flag consent agenda is the resolution approving salaries and benefits of non-represented management and non-represented confidential employees.

While there is nothing alarming in the staff report, in these contentious budget times that necessitated an interim budget be passed before the complete 2011-12 budget is voted on later this month, this shows a lack of transparency on the city's part by putting it on the consent agenda.

On the closed session agenda is the city manager's annual performance review. While this is the usual place for such a review, it does come later than normal. Usually is at the one-year mark, which would have been August. However, previous councils have moved that date around. *Lake Tahoe News* has been told the format of the review has been changed, which caused some of the delay. No longer is it council members writing down what they like or don't like about the person. Some structure and professionalism has reportedly been introduced to the process.

What the council exactly thinks about City Manager Tony O'Rourke will not be public information. This is the same for any employee. However, a raise, additional perks or extension of his three-year contract would be public information.

In the past, city managers who want to continue on and who the council wants to stay put have been offered an additional year to their contract. That will be the item to look for and the reasons behind the decision (if anyone will talk) if that additional year is not forthcoming.

Tuesday's meeting starts at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport. Here is the City Council agenda.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Credit card scam hitting El Dorado County residents

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies have received several calls recently regarding a credit card scam.

According to victims, this is how the transaction occurs. Your phone will ring and if you have caller ID a 1-888 number will appear. The caller will offer a low fixed rate interest on a credit card or credit card consolidation. The caller will then ask for credit card numbers, expiration dates, Social Security numbers, mother's maiden name and other verification passwords.

Once the caller has obtained the information he will tell you he needs to process the information and will call you back. In addition there will be a one time financial fee which will vary in amount. Once the suspect has gathered the victim's personal information, he has the ability to open lines of credit, make purchases and ultimately impact the victim's credit rating.

There are some simple rules to follow when it comes to protecting your money and credit:

- * Unless you initiated the phone call, never give out confidential information (account number, Social Security number, or mother's maiden name) to anyone who calls.
- * Review your statement each month for unauthorized purchases.
- * Do not send credit card numbers through emails. Emails are typically not secured.

Residents who believe they have been a victim of credit card fraud should first contact their credit card issuer to report the fraud and cancel their card, and then contact the

sheriff's office to initiate a criminal investigation.

Canadian sex offender arrested in South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

A man wanted in Canada on child molestation charges was arrested today in South Lake Tahoe.

James William Robertson, 71, has been living at Lakeland Village for the past year. Officers could not pick him up sooner because of a "series of issues which occurred on the other side of the border," Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*.



James William
Robertson

SLTPD has been working with the Royal Mounted Canadian Police, U.S. Marshals Service, and the U.S. Department of Justice in expediting the extradition process.

Even though there was a warrant out for his arrest, Robertson, who is an attorney, was not stopped at the border because he is a dual citizen. Having a U.S. passport sent him into this country without any questions asked.

Robertson served a five-year term in a Canada prison for crimes involving children that included indecent assault, common assault and sexual assault.

He was released in 2010 with specific reporting conditions. The warrant was for allegedly not meeting the conditions of his release.

Because the conviction was in another country Robertson did not have to follow the sex registry laws of California that would have allowed officers to notify people of his presence and possibly arrest him for not registering.

While surveillance of all his whereabouts was not implemented, Uhler said officers did keep tabs on Robertson.

The El Dorado County District Attorney's Office is looking into taking action to have Robertson's attorney's license revoked.

U.S. marshals took Robertson to Sacramento where he awaits extradition to Canada.