

Chemical treatment on invasive plants to start in basin

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will begin a project to eradicate, control, and contain known and future infestations of invasive weeds using chemical treatment.

Work will occur Aug. 8-11.

An environmental assessment released by the Forest Service last year identified 493 known infestations located on National Forest System lands managed by the LTBMU. Noxious weeds reproduce and spread rapidly, displacing native plants. They also reduce the amount and quality of fish and wildlife habitat, increase soil erosion and stream sedimentation, and impair recreational access.

Current project areas include the Tallac Historic Site and parking area, the corner of Al Tahoe and Pioneer Trail, Pope Beach, 64 acres and 64 acres East, Heavenly Mountain Resort and Meyers Landfill.

Invasive weeds found in these areas include Tall Whitetop (*Lepidium latifolium*), Dalmatian Toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*), Yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*).

Treatments will use herbicides similar to the commercial product Roundup. Crews will apply the product by hand and no spraying will occur. Herbicide application will follow approved Environmental Protection Agency, state, and local direction.

Caution signs will be posted in treatment areas up to 48 hours

prior to treatment and caution tape will provide a barrier around each treatment area. Treatment areas are very small, totaling less than 3 acres. Access to treatment sites will be restricted for several hours during and after the application.

For more information, contact Rena Escobedo at (530) 543.2694.

League, TRPA spar in court over Stateline project

By Kathryn Reed

A federal judge on Monday seemed a bit bewildered why the League to Save Lake Tahoe brought forward the case against the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency to stop the Sierra Colina development in Stateline from going forward.

Sierra Colina is the name of the project Steve Kenninger and Gail Jaquish are trying to develop on the 18-acre bare parcel between the Lake Village housing area and the old Nugget building on the south side of Highway 50.

TRPA approved the development on the second anniversary of the Angora Fire – June 24, 2009. This is a bit significant because the League in its arguments Aug. 1 said adding an ingress and egress to the 325-unit Lake Village complex was irrelevant. Fire officials have said otherwise.



Sierra
Colina's
future is in
judge's hands.

Right now there is only one way into that development. Sierra Colina would provide another way in and out in the case of an emergency.

What the League is suing over is the transfer of land coverage.

Douglas County agreed it would provide the land coverage for the linear public facilities in exchange for public rights-of-way. The League contends there is not enough public benefit of the trail system, that it only benefits those who will in Sierra Colina, to warrant the coverage transfer.

The League did not challenge the project permit, subdivision permit, intersection permits or environmental documents.

However, at the various hearings two years ago, League representatives spoke in opposition to developing a barren piece of land. But that is not what is being argued in court.

Rochelle Nason, executive director with the League, did not respond to an inquiry from *Lake Tahoe News* for comment. She was in court, but missed nearly the first half of the 90-minute session.

Project proponents reached out to the League before TRPA issued the permits two years ago.

In the nearly two years since the lawsuit was filed, more than 11,000 pages of documents have been given to the court.

Sierra Colina would be giving 10 acres of the project to Douglas County as open space. The project would connect paved bike trails in the Lower Kingsbury Grade area to Round Hill on the north side. That is where the coverage becomes a sticking point.

Douglas County's master plan includes this trail as a public asset. Creating trails also plays into TRPA's recreation goals and desire to have people use alternative forms of transportation.

U.S. District Court Judge Robert Jones at the end of the day Aug. 1 gave the League 10 days to prove his court has jurisdiction over the matter. The TRPA Compact says the venue could be state court, but does not address jurisdiction. However, it's federal court where TRPA lawsuits are usually resolved.

Jones will then decide if his court is the one to rule on the TRPA-League lawsuit.

"The court was very well prepared, had a very clear grasp of issues and the facts and concurred with the environmental analysis demonstrated," Lew Feldman told *Lake Tahoe News*. Feldman was hired by TRPA as outside counsel to represent the bi-state regulatory agency in court.

However, he would not comment further.

Kenninger would only say, "Sierra Colina looks forward to receiving the decision of Judge Jones."

If Jones rules with history and decides federal court does have jurisdiction, it could be anywhere from a couple weeks to 90 days for him to decide to rule for the defendant or plaintiff.

If TRPA wins, and in effect Sierra Colina, the project could break ground next summer. The housing market would play a huge role in when the developers would proceed. Financing would be another issue – just like it is for the stalled Tahoe Beach Club at the end of Kahle Drive.

Sierra Colina would create 41 market rate dwellings and nine moderate-income deed restricted places. Forty-two units would be in 21 townhouse-style duplexes, with eight being single-family homes.

Another large aspect of the project is environmental improvements. Part of this is reducing 28 to 70 percent of the current volume of sediment from reaching Lake Tahoe. The lake is walking distance from the project. Helping improve Burke Creek is also part of the project.

Environmental improvements have started despite the lawsuit. In fact, Douglas County commissioners will be discussing Burke Creek at their Thursday meeting.

What was pointed out at the hearings two years ago is the area is zoned for a single-family residence and no environmental improvements would have to be made.

Failures in Garrido case blasted in new report



By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee □

In a blistering assessment of how badly officials bungled their oversight of rapist-kidnapper Phillip Garrido, El Dorado County prosecutors have compiled a list of dozens of instances for which his parole should have been revoked, many of them that would have saved Jaycee Lee Dugard from being abducted.

The 162-page report from El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson's office includes numerous federal and state documents that have previously surfaced since Dugard was rescued from 18 years of captivity in August 2009.

But it includes striking new details of Garrido's parole violations that should have – but did not – return him to prison, including:

- Efforts he made while working at a nursing home to get co-workers to help him buy drugs.
- Positive tests for drugs such as methamphetamine.
- Submitting watered down urine samples during drug testing.
- And wearing a fake penis and using warm Mountain Dew to fool one drug counselor during testing.

Read the whole story

Federal cuts to hit California spending plan

By Michael Doyle, Sacramento Bee

WASHINGTON — There are about 866,000 Californians who are paying for college with federal Pell grants. This week, they should count themselves lucky.

The Pell grant program was granted a rare immunity card in the wide-ranging budget austerity measure negotiated by the White House and congressional leaders. The undergraduate loans are shielded from further cuts for at least two years. Most everything else is vulnerable.

Central Valley farm subsidies are sure to change. Southern California defense contractors will feel the pinch. California might as well forget about general federal help for the state's overall budget woes.

California, overall, will take a special whack in the budget-cutting to come, if for no other reason than it currently soaks up so many federal dollars. The federal government spent \$345 billion in California in 2009, and that will shrink.

And though the 74-page bill set for House and Senate approval leaves most cuts to be decided later, it's a bleak foreshadowing for some specific projects such as California's ambitious high-speed rail project whose initial route is supposed to run from Bakersfield to near Chowchilla.

"If you were to look at this Congress, you'd have to say it will be cutting high-speed rail," noted Rep. Dan Lungren, R-Gold River.

Read the whole story

Bain Fire in Virginia City area fully contained

The Bain Fire near Geiger Grade and Toll Road was declared fully contained at 6 this morning.

The human-caused blaze burned 577 acres. While at times it threatened structures, none was lost.

Drivers having to travel on the roadways near the fire are asked to use extra caution as crews and apparatus are still actively working.

The Bain Fire started at 3:42pm July 30. Reno Fire Department investigators say the fire was human caused. The investigation is ongoing as fire investigators continue questioning witnesses and suspects. More information will be released when the investigation is complete.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Celebrity golf tourney brings millions of dollars to region

The economic impact from this year's American Century Championship on the South Shore is estimated at between \$10 million and \$20 million, according to tournament officials.

The Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority says the amount represents

total spending throughout the region on lodging, dining, activities, entertainment and gaming, combined with the media exposure.



Michael Jordan continues to be a player people want to see.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

In the coming months when hotel and sales taxes are tabulated in South Lake Tahoe and Douglas County, the direct impact will be better known.

The media exposure is something that is realized down the road when people decide they want to visit the area.

Media coverage online, in newspapers, magazines, radio and television continues to expand, providing exposure for the area, officials said.

The 22nd annual tournament at Edgewood Tahoe hit a record with more than 40,000 spectators. Plus, millions of people watched the July tournament on VERSUS and NBC Sports.

Since its inception in 1990, the tournament has raised more than \$4 million for national and local charities and organizations. Through its affiliation with American Century, Livestrong has been the tournament's official charity since 2007. This year's event generated some \$700,000 for Livestrong

and other charities via fundraising and a hole-in-one scored by former NHL All-Star Joe Sakic, whose final round feat triggered an insurance payout of \$500,000 to the charity.

Numerous local groups benefit through their participation with the event including Soroptomist International South Lake Tahoe, Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation and Whittell and South Tahoe high school sports programs. Funding support of at least \$100,000 for area nonprofits will be realized once again this year.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Cops increasing patrol throughout Douglas County

It took 10 deaths in seven months on Northern Nevada highways for the Nevada Highway Patrol and Douglas County Sheriff's Department to step up traffic enforcement.



A Calaveras County woman is the most recent victim, having been killed in Stateline by an alleged drunken driver on July 30.

“Key factors in many of the recent fatal highway traffic accidents have been driver inattention, failure to yield to oncoming traffic, and failure to wear safety restraints,” sheriff’s Sgt. Jim Halsey said in a press release. “While NHP troopers and DCSO deputies will continue to enforce all traffic violations on all roadways throughout the county,

these three violations in particular will be targeted and enforced on the major highway. Citations will be issued to violators.

Troopers will also be in the air to monitor traffic, and to spot unsafe vehicle operation such as excessive speed, unsafe lane changes, or following too closely.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

NV Energy's net income shorting out

NV Energy's net income dropped \$12.9 million or 65 percent compared to the second quarter for 2010.

In April-June 2010, the Las Vegas-based firm posted a profit of \$36.9 million.

The blame for the drop this year is being placed on weather, regulatory adjustments and construction costs in Southern Nevada.

NV Energy has 367,000 electricity customers in Northern Nevada, including the Lake Tahoe Basin.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

League: Pier-TRPA issue relatively new news to them

Updated: Aug. 1 9:45am

The League to Save Lake Tahoe is back pedaling when it comes to standing by Tamara Fritz, now saying it was just in the last few weeks they knew anything about the violations at her Tahoe City property.

That property is where the League's annual fundraiser is conducted.

"The League to Save Lake Tahoe views the environmental violations that took place at the site of our fundraiser as a very serious matter," League board Chairman Robert Damaschino said in a statement. "We support the efforts of TRPA and the landowner to correct them and assure they are not repeated."

Updated July 28 5:20pm

A fine of \$35,000 is too low for someone who illegally extends her pier at Lake Tahoe. That's the thinking of some Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board members.

Tamara Fritz had agreed to pay the penalty for altering her Tahoe City property without the proper paperwork in order. But it was pulled from the consent item at Wednesday's meeting. Because neither Fritz nor a representative was at the meeting in Kings Beach the issue was postponed.

Before the August board meeting the legal committee is expected to convene to discuss the possibility of making the fine larger.

While illegal pier extensions crop up as issues now and again, the twist to this particular property is the annual fashion-show fundraiser for the League to Save Lake Tahoe is conducted

there each August. (This year the event is Aug. 6.)

Also an issue for TRPA is Fritz not abiding by the cease and desist order to stop using the dirt lot next to her for storage. This presents erosion issues.

The TRPA says it has never received a permit application for the event. While the League says Steve Sweet with the TRPA said no permit would be required this year, but that one would be required in future years if the event were to be at the Fritz property and the lot used for parking.

– Kathryn Reed

S. Tahoe man arrested on drug charges involving young girls

A South Lake Tahoe man was arrested July 31 on charges of supplying marijuana to a minor, a felon in possession of a firearm and possession of obscene matter.

Officer Russell Liles said Jim Zamosky, 57, refused to cooperate when first approached last week about reportedly supplying marijuana to three girls ages 12, 13, and 16.



Jim Zamosky

A search warrant was obtained at which time Zamosky was arrested without incident. During the search marijuana, marijuana paraphernalia, two handguns, one shotgun and a World War I era rifle were seized. An obscene photograph depicting a 1- to 2-year-old child was also located, officers said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*