Juvenile immigration case backlog grows in Nev.

By Jessie Bekker, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada is doing better processing immigration cases involving minors than the nation as a whole, but nearly a quarter of all such cases filed in the state since 2009 are still pending, according to federal data released last week.

Much like the general backlog of deportation cases, the large load of cases involving minors continues to grow across the country, including in Nevada, the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, a data distribution arm of Syracuse University in New York, reported Thursday.

Of 1,470 immigration cases involving minors filed in the state since 2009, a quarter – 377 – are still pending, according to TRAC, which collects and analyzes data from the nation's immigration courts. Nationally, about 37 percent of all such cases – 88,069 – have yet to reach a resolution.

Read the whole story

NDOT essentially rebuilding slope above Hwy. 50



Men in climbing harnesses secure a wire mesh to the hillside above Highway 50 near Logan Shoals. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

LOGAN SHOALS – While it looks like NDOT is building a climbing wall along Highway 50 on the South Shore, the reality is workers are attempting to stop Mother Nature.

Boulders, some the size of trucks, repeatedly tumbled down last winter onto the road. No cars were hit; no one was injured. The highway – the main artery from the South Shore to Carson City as well as the fastest route to Kings Beach and Incline Village – was closed for weeks, then reduced to one-lane in each direction as it is now.

While the work will not be done this construction season, the plan is to have all the lanes open before winter. Crews are expected to complete the project next year. As long as

temperatures don’t get too cold, work will continue this month.

By the time it’s finished, the goal is the average motorist won’t know that the hillside has essentially been rebuilt. Concrete will be contoured to look like natural Sierra granite boulders. “Cracks” will be added to resemble authentic fissures. The stain will also be slightly varied to complement Mother Nature.

Touching a sample, it feels a bit like granite and not like typical concrete. It looks real as well.

The contractor had to pour 4-inch and 12-inch deep samples, as well as provide a test of the finished product for Nevada Department of Transportation officials.

“The design is considered to be a permanent fix. Drainage features let the water in if there is any,” Shawn Paterson, designer with NDOT, told *Lake Tahoe News*.



A section of the hillside with the 4-inch concrete spray and limited contouring. Photo/Kathryn Reed

There will be multiple layers of reinforcement applied to the hill.

John Angel, resident engineer with NDOT, said the only thing that could pose a problem is road salts because “that degrades concrete.” Still, the state officials are confident the materials will last essentially forever unless there is a catastrophic event like a major earthquake – then all bets are off.

It’s water that brought down the gargantuan boulders – specifically the unusual amount of rain the basin received last winter.

Geo-textile fabric has been laid on the slope from the top to the bottom. Corrugations on the inside will help push the

water away. It is designed not to freeze.

PVC pipe is attached at the bottom to let the accumulated water drain.

John Bradshaw, an NDOT designer, explained that the rain washes away the dirt that is the natural interlocking mechanism between the rocks. This makes for a precarious situation, where the stability of neighboring rocks is questionable.

With the assistance of a geotechnical engineer, NDOT studied the whole area. Soil nailing is the solution that the department settled on. This same technology has been used on Highway 28 where the bike trail in Incline Village is being built.

At the steepest, the crews go up 70 feet to the end of NDOT's right-of-way. The length is more than 1,300 feet. Above their responsibility the land is either private or owned by the U.S. Forest Service.



The drill used to bore 20-foot holes into the hillside that will be filled with concrete as a stabilizer. Photo/Kathryn Reed

To essentially rebuild the slope requires men to be in climbing harnesses eight hours a day. They dangle above the asphalt grouting the holes.

Six-inch-wide holes have been drilled 20-feet-deep into what was described as good soil, and granite so it will be stable. They are spaced 5 feet apart in height and width in a grid pattern. They are filled to become the anchors. They are encapsulated in cement grout, with triple corrosion protection.

Wire mesh is draped over the surface to help hold any loose rocks. It’s then connected to the steel rods.

Shotcrete has already been blown onto a section on the west end of the construction site. This is the 4-inch layer. Anchors protrude from this layer of concrete. On top another 12-inches of shotcrete will be sprayed on. This is similar to what took place on Cave Rock recently when NDOT contractors secured that rock structure.

By next summer NDOT hopes it will be hard to tell crews were ever out there.

EDC man killed in Las Vegas mass shooting

By KCRA-TV

A Cameron Park man died and two of his family members were wounded Sunday night when a gunman opened fire at a crowd in a Las Vegas music festival, family members told KCRA 3.



Kurt Von Tillow

Kurt Von Tillow, 55, died in the mass shooting. His sister was hit by shrapnel in the thigh and was treated at a local hospital, and his niece was shot in the ankle but had surgery today and is expected to recover. His wife and daughter, who were also with him, managed to escape unharmed.

His family members had to flee the venue and leave Kurt's body behind. A moment that was devastating for his wife, who had tried to revive him.

Read the whole story

Douglas County employees accused of theft

By Lake Tahoe News

Douglas County officials are not being very forthcoming with information about employees stealing from the public works department even though they admit they were first made aware of the thefts in March.

The Nevada Division of Investigation and Douglas County District Attorney's Office have been investigating the thefts since they were first reported more than six months ago.

“The criminal investigation will be made available once the investigation is completed and the matter is reviewed for prosecution,” the county said in a press release.

The investigations involve “allegations of thefts of tires and other possible improprieties within the public works department.”

County spokeswoman Melissa Blosser would not tell *Lake Tahoe News* if anyone has been placed on leave, removed from the department or fired. She also wouldn’t say how long people had been stealing, how many people were involved, or the value of what was taken.

For the past several months the county said it has conducted an internal audit and inventory of purchased tires, strengthened internal financial controls to provide additional security, retained an accounting firm to conduct a complete inventory of tires and other supplies used in the operations and maintenance of county vehicles and to assist in determining the amount of the frauds committed against the county, which also should identify ways to prevent similar types of fraud in the future.

The county says it plans to use the IT department to better track inventory.

The county plans to change its policies when it comes to the public and staff being able to report suspected fraud. With the county only talking through press releases, it is not known what the policy was before or what it will be in the future. It is in the process of revamping the Whistleblower Protection Program.

All staff will be given ethics training as well.

Brown signs California affordable housing laws

By Angela Hart, Sacramento Bee

Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday signed a robust package of housing legislation aimed at addressing California's unprecedented affordability crisis.

"These new laws will help cut red tape and encourage more affordable housing, including shelter for the growing number of homeless in California," Brown said in a statement.

The housing bills provide new funding for low-income housing development, seek to lower the cost of construction, fast-track building, and restrict the ability of cities and counties to block new development.

Read the whole story

U.S. climate change policy: Made in California

By Hiroko Tabuchi, New York Times

SACRAMENTO — The Trump administration may appear to control climate policy in Washington, but the nation's most dynamic environmental regulator is here in California.

Mary D. Nichols, California's electric-car-driving, hoodie-wearing, 72-year-old air quality regulator, is pressing ahead with a far-reaching agenda of environmental and climate actions. She says she will not let the Trump administration stand in her way.

As chairwoman of the California Air Resources Board, or CARB, Nichols is the de facto enforcer of the single biggest step the United States has taken to combat the effects of climate change: standards adopted under the Obama administration that mandate a deep cut in emissions from the 190 million passenger cars on America's roads. Together, those vehicles regularly emit more earth-warming gases than the country's power plants.

Read the whole story

Gov't jobs sprouting as legal pot looms in Calif.

By Michael R. Blood, AP

Scientists. Tax collectors. Typists. Analysts. Lawyers. And more scientists.

Recreational marijuana use becomes legal in California in 2018, and one of the things to blossom in the emerging industry isn't green and leafy – it's government jobs.

The state is on a hiring binge to fill what eventually will be hundreds of new government positions by 2019 intended to bring order to the legal pot economy, from keeping watch on what's seeping into streams near cannabis grows to running background checks on storefront sellers who want government licenses.

Thousands of additional jobs are expected to be added by local governments.

Read the whole story

Cities facing fiscal mess plead with CalPERS

By Steven Greenhut, California Policy Center

If you ask the union-controlled California Public Employees' Retirement System about the state's looming pension crisis, you're likely to get this answer: What pension crisis?

But the story was much different at CalPERS' own Finance and Administration Committee meeting Sept. 19. City officials from across California warned CalPERS board members about the dire fiscal situation their cities face because the pension debt is consuming larger portions of local budgets. The energetic discussion included 18 speakers, many of them local officials who trekked to Sacramento.

"In Hayward, 68 percent of our unfunded pension cost is retiree benefits," said Hayward City Council member Sara Lamnin, who pointed out that "this means the promises of the past weren't paid for, frankly." Hayward's future is really troubling. She said that "over the next three fiscal years, the city of Hayward's revenue is projected to grow 1.4 percent, but our cost for PERS is going to go up 30.5 percent." Lamnin wasn't asking for someone to rescue Hayward. Officials just want to know how bad the damage will be. "We ask you for data," she said.

Read the whole story

North Tahoe roadwork to cause delays

Motorists traveling in the Truckee-Tahoe should expect traffic delays next week as paving operations on Highway 89 move toward the Interstate 80 junction and the roundabouts.

Full eastbound and westbound I-80 ramp closures at the Highway 89 south interchange will be in effect around the clock from 5am Oct. 2 through 8pm Oct. 4. One-way traffic controls will be in effect from 8pm Oct. 1 through the morning of Oct. 6 on Highway 89 from Donner Pass Road, south through the roundabouts, and extending several miles.

Delays of 20 to 60 minutes are expected.

Striping work requiring intermittent one-way traffic controls will begin Oct. 16.

Nev. pot sales hit $27 million in first month

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada took a gamble on recreational marijuana, and it’s paying off.

Dispensaries sold $27.1 million of pot in Nevada, in July alone. That’s almost double what Colorado and Oregon sold in their first months. It’s almost seven times what Washington sold.

Banking on weed, Nevada made $10.2 million off the fledgling industry during the first month of sales in July, according to the Nevada Department of Taxation. Of that, $6.5 million came from industry fees and $3.68 million came from tax revenue.

Read the whole story