

Nevada tourism gurus revamping ad campaign

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

What's the best way to lure prospective adventure-seekers to Nevada?

Is it an image of a park ranger and the mantra "when other states restrict, we allow"?

Or is it a campaign featuring a man with a beard, images of all-terrain vehicles and a message of "we go about things our own way"?

Those were the choices that were presented Wednesday to the marketing committee of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, which got its first glimpse of spring and summer ad concepts.

Read the whole story

Danger in Sierra: 50 closed until Sat., slides, floods



Flooding remains an issue throughout many parts of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Updated 10:07pm:

Power is off for thousands of people in the Lake Tahoe Basin and Carson Valley areas.

“Road closures from flooding are hampering our crews’ efforts to get to the remaining outages in the Carson/Genoa/Gardnerville area,” NV Energy says on its website.

In the Kingsbury Grade area of Stateline there are four outages affecting 2,356 customers. The weather has caused poles and wires to come down. Crews are hoping power is restored by midnight.

There are 141 Liberty Utilities customers without power in the El Dorado County portion of the basin, while 93 Placer County customers are in the dark.

Travelers trying to reach Lake Tahoe are creating problems for

law enforcement because they are blindly following what their GPS says.

“This has led to numerous parties getting stuck on roads that are closed during the winter, and in the end, tie up valuable resources rescuing them from deep snow or impassable roads,” El Dorado County sheriff’s deputies said in a statement. “In the winter, the only safe alternate route when Highway 50 is closed is to use Highway 88 to the south, or Interstate 80 to the North. If you are using any other road that you are not absolutely familiar with and you see snow on the roadway, or the road turns to dirt; stop, turn around, and go back to main roadway.”

Updated 8pm:

A mudslide has closed Highway 50 between Meyers and Placerville. It is not expected to open until Saturday.

The Carson Spur is now open.

The long route to Tahoe on Friday night is via Highway 20 to Interstate 80. Travelers tell *Lake Tahoe News* this route is extremely congested.

There was a second avalanche Friday afternoon in the Crystal Bay subdivision near east Tuscarora Road.

First responders and public safety personnel are monitoring and assessing the situation.

Residents in the Crystal Bay area should exercise caution if accessing the slopes above their homes.



South Lake Tahoe crews on Feb. 10 unclog drains in the city. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Updated 4:23pm:

Because of avalanche activity this morning in the Crystal Bay subdivision near east Tuscarora Road, residents are being asked to avoid outdoor activity and to shelter in place until further notice.

Incline Village residents woke up to more than 2 feet of snow Friday morning.

Sierra Avalanche Center said the danger level is considerable.

Interstate 80 is closed at Colfax because of a significant mudslide. Traffic is being diverted to Highway 20, though trucks are not allowed there.

"The soil is so saturated it can't take anymore water. Something has to give," Caltrans spokesman Steve Nelson told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Trees as tall as 100 feet came down in the slide.

Some have questioned whether all of Caltrans' thinning of trees last year made the slopes unstable. Nelson said that wasn't the case with this slide.

Traffic has been moving intermittently between Meyers and Placerville because of slides.

On Feb. 10 the Douglas County Board of Commissioners declared a state of emergency due to a flood and wind event that took place over the last couple of days.



It's hard to find the docks and the water with the snow and slush in the Tahoe Keys. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

A flood warning for the greater Lake Tahoe area remains in effect until 9am Friday, with the winter storm warning going through Saturday at 1am.

The Upper Truckee River crested to 12.41 feet at about 4:40am Feb. 10.

"We are firmly in second for all time crest. Only the 1997

flood was higher,” Jim Marino, South Lake Tahoe assistant public works director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. In 1997 the river reached about 13.41 feet. “It will take days for the water to recede.”

Sander plows and loaders are on the streets to deal with flooding issues. No new flooding in South Lake Tahoe has been reported overnight, with the same areas **reported on Thursday** being an issue.

Pot holes will be addressed as soon as possible, Marino said.

While snow is generally better than rain in the Sierra, the temps are still on the high side so much of the snow is melting as it hits the ground. This is making roads slushy and means drains are clogging. This in turn leads to more flooding.

In El Dorado County:

- Arapahoe Street is closed between San Diego Street and Country Club Drive due to a sink hole caused by a failed culvert.
- Elks Club Drive is closed between Highway 50 and Waverly Drive. A culvert has failed.
- Most of Waverly Drive is closed due to the condition of the road.

Snow levels are expected to drop this afternoon and evening. According to the National Weather Service in Reno, there could be 2 to 5 inches of snow by Friday night at lake level.

Truckee Tahoe Unified and Carson City schools are closed for Feb. 10. All Washoe County are on a two-hour delay Friday. Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village is starting classes at 10am.

A flood warning continues for the Carson River near Carson City, from Friday morning to Saturday afternoon. The highest

risk of flooding is in urban areas and along creeks and streams leading out of the Carson Range. The river is expected to hit the major flood stage late tonight or early Saturday.

Water is moving onto Highway 395 with the Cradlebaugh bridge expected to close. An alternate route to northbound Highway 395 is Fairview to Foothill to Jacks Valley Road.

Voluntary evacuations of the Aspen Mobile Home Park and Kingslane Mobile Home Park occurred late Thursday evening and Friday morning. The Community and Senior Center has been set up as a shelter and is taking evacuees and their pets.

Flooding and downed power lines have Mottsville, Centerville, Muller and Genoa Lanes in Gardnerville closed.

There is no estimated time when Highway 89 around Emerald Bay or Highway 50 near Logan Creek will open to allow traffic between the South Shore and Carson City via Spooner Summit.

Other highways leading into and out of the Tahoe basin are open, some with restrictions. Current highway information may be found by clicking on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

This is a warning from the Weather Service: "Each year, more deaths occur due to flooding than from any other hazard. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that over half of all flood-related drownings occur when a vehicle is driven into hazardous flood water. The next highest percentage of flood-related deaths is due to walking into or near flood waters."

Unity at the Lake looking for new home

Unity at the Lake's days are numbered at the South Lake Tahoe owned building on Rufus Allen Boulevard.

The lease goes through Jan. 31, 2018. The city wants the building back to be able to use it on a temporary basis for recreation while the new permanent facility is built.

When the church signed the first contract in fall 2011 it was for five years. The City Council at the time didn't learn about the deal until **July 2012**. Since that time the city has created rules for long term leases that get the elected involved early on.

"The whole experience was not good. It was not put out to bid. It was not a good process," City Manager Nancy Kerry said.

The department head who signed the lease is no longer with the city.

At this week's council meeting the five agreed to waive the monthly rent increase and to have the lease expire Jan. 31. Some flexibility will be granted if need be, according to staff.

No one from Unity was at the Feb. 7 meeting.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Bill would open primaries in Nevada

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – State Sen. James Settelmeyer introduced a bill Tuesday seeking to open Nevada primaries to all candidates and voters, not just those registered as Republican or Democrat.

Senate Bill 103 is a do-over of sorts of a bill the Minden Republican brought in 2015 to create open primaries. But the final version of that bill had a way different outcome: Instead of allowing more voters to cast a vote, it denied tens of thousands an opportunity to vote for some races in the general election if the outcome was decided in the primary.

The bill would create a modified blanket primary system for partisan offices, where all candidates – not just those affiliated with a major political party – are on the ballot. The two candidates who receive the most votes would advance to the general election, regardless of party.

Read the whole story

Donner Lake nonprofit sues state agency

The land where private docks have been built at Donner Lake is the subject of a lawsuit.

The nonprofit Save Our Shores Donner Lake is suing the California State Lands Commission. The issue is who owns the

land where the docks are.

The nonprofit is a group of Donner Lake lakefront property owners

The state owns the lake, but even that is questioned in the lawsuit. The nonprofit claims the state is trying to claim more ownership than it rightfully has. The two sides are debating where the high water mark is.

The crux of the lawsuit involves the docks themselves.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Upper Truckee River creates new path, flooding



Tahoe Keys Boulevard has several inches of water on it on

Feb. 9. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

The Upper Truckee River in South Lake Tahoe has reached flood stage, is expected to be higher than it was in January and could reach 1997 levels.

“The Upper Truckee River changed course. It took the easiest way through the snow,” Jim Marino, South Lake Tahoe assistant public works director, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

It has done so at multiple locations through Meyers and South Lake Tahoe.

It is beyond its banks near the mouth of Lake Tahoe. Flood stage is 10.5 feet. On Thursday morning it was at 11.63 feet.

Adding to the flow of the river is that the dam at Echo Lake is removed each winter. Water is pouring down from there, reaching the Upper Truckee River in the Christmas Valley area.

Meyers is contending with a slew of water issues, with the wet stuff reaching garages and homes.

In South Lake Tahoe water is flowing onto Venice Drive, which city officials closed off early this afternoon. Snow was moved into the parking lot of the commercial complex at Venice and Tahoe Keys Boulevard as a dam of sorts.

For the first time in at least 20 years the weir on Venice Drive has been opened, though not fully, to ease the buildup of water in that lagoon.

Tahoe Keys Boulevard has standing water near the entrance to the housing area. The neighboring state streets like Michael Drive, Dover Court, Colorado Street and Montezuma Avenue are all experiencing significant flooding.

“I just looked at the radar. I don’t see a break for another

six or seven hours. It's going to get heavier," Marino said at 1:40pm Feb. 9.



The Upper Truckee River near Cove East on Feb. 9 is swollen beyond its banks. Photo/Kathryn Reed

There is a flood watch until 4am Feb. 10 and a winter storm watch until 1am Feb. 11. Snow levels are supposed to drop to between 7,500 and 8,000 Thursday afternoon, falling to lake level by Friday afternoon. And now there is thunder.

No mandatory evacuations have been declared in the city, though some people have voluntarily left their houses. Douglas County has set up a shelter at the Community and Senior Center (pets welcome), 1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville.

Crews throughout the region are out in full force addressing issues as they arise.

The city is keeping an eye out on the mobile home park on Blackwood Avenue. Homes on Woodbine Road are another concern. Bill and Shirley streets behind the Knights Inn have been flooding since the 1940s, and continue to today.

What has crews scrambling is that water is showing up in places where it usually doesn't. Part of this is because it is going through snow and making its own path, and part because

there is no place left for it to go.

On Highway 50 at Bridal Veil Falls the eastbound No. 2 lane is blocked by a boulder the size of an SUV. Caltrans crews will need to blast it to move it.

Boulders and an unstable hillside on Highway 50 at Logan Creek on the South Shore is preventing through traffic to Carson City. Crews are still working in the area, putting in a gravel berm. But there is no word when it will reopen. Don't expect it to as the rain keeps coming.

Kingsbury Grade is open, but there are delays. Traffic is periodically being held in both directions as crews clear the road of debris. Compounding the backup on the Carson Valley side is that Muller Street and Genoa Lane are closed.

For current highway conditions, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

The Emergency Operations Center in Carson Valley is now open. It is staffed with more than 24 mission critical positions, mostly supported by Douglas County staff, East Fork Fire Protection District, Douglas County Sheriff's Office as well as volunteers, Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Authority, Carson Valley Conservation District personnel, the Douglas County CERT Team. The Douglas County flood hotline is 775.783.6404.

Officials are encouraging residents to be prepared for the possibility of road closures and power outages. This is true no matter where one lives in the Tahoe-Truckee area.

Calif. may be overdue for mega flood

By Paul Deanno, KPIX-TV

It appears California has come out of the drought, with a fury.

Atmospheric rivers, more commonly known as Pineapple Express storms, fueled by Hawaiian tropical waters, have pounded the Bay Area, and the state, with rain.

But this is not new. Over 100 years ago California was in the same boat, literally. The rain started to fall just before Christmas, and it didn't let up for over 40 days. The Central Valley became a lake.

It was 1862. Leland Stanford was sworn in as California's 8th governor. But he wouldn't start his term in Sacramento because California's capital city, along with much of the state, was 10 feet under water.

[Read the whole story](#)

Homes flooding in S. Lake Tahoe, Meyers

By Tom Miller, KCRA-TV

More than 60 homes in South Lake Tahoe and surrounding communities have flooded -- the result of relentless rain and melting snow.

Snow berms that have built up along the side of the road are acting like dams, steering the water down the street – and in many cases, down driveways and into homes.

Scott Bolton moved into a 104-year-old cabin on Bill Avenue in South Lake Tahoe that now has water in its kitchen, living room and bedroom.

Read the whole story

Calif. refuses to ease drought restrictions

By Kathryn Reed

In the same week that much of Northern California, including the Lake Tahoe Basin, is contending with flooding, the State Water Resources Control Board said water conservation is necessary.

South Tahoe PUD had voiced its disgust with this regulation prior to the Feb. 8 decision via a letter to the water board. General Manager Richard Solbrig told his board the district will maintain the odd-even three-day week watering days that it has imposed for 10 years. The district was way ahead of the curve in recognizing conservation is important. It's the more drastic regulations under the drought rules that STPUD has issues with.

“These regulations have helped Californians rise to the occasion and show what they can do with conservation, while providing flexibility based on differing local water supply

conditions across the state,” state water board Chair Felicia Marcus said. “We are beyond happy that water conditions continue to improve this year, but the rainy season isn’t over yet and some areas of the state continue to suffer significant drought impacts. As glorious as the first half of the season has been, we know that weather can change quickly, and vary depending on where you are, so it is most prudent to wait a bit longer until close of the rainy season to take stock of the statewide situation and decide what to do next.”

By keeping the drought measures in place it means an additional 270 days of consumption reports, “stress tests,” and water-use cuts.



Flooded Tahoe meadows make drought restrictions seem ludicrous. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“This decision is blind to the plain fact seen on every mountain, river and reservoir in the north state. We are flush

with water, and they know that, but this lays bare their 'permanent drought' plan that will let them limit and control water use forever to meet their environmentalist agenda," state Sen. Ted Gaines, R-El Dorado, said in a statement. He represents the California side of the Tahoe basin. "There has been so much talk about sanctuary cities and sanctuary states lately, all relating to immigration. But now I'm convinced that California citizens need a sanctuary from unelected bureaucrats who won't call off the drought when people are all but having to canoe to work because of the rain

Wednesday's keep the drought rules decision was on the same day the state was trying to figure out the appropriate level of flow down the damaged spillway at Oroville Dam. What is being called a cavity opened on the spillway on Feb. 7 from all of the water that has been released. The spillway is necessary to maintain reservoir operations. With rain in the forecast through Friday and upcoming spring runoff, that spillway is needed.

The dam is sound, and no imminent threat to the public exists, authorities said.

The statewide water savings numbers were also released Wednesday. In December, 20.6 percent less water was used compared to the base year of December 2013.

STPUD had its January numbers available last week, saying the district used 18 percent less water than January 2013.

Solbrig said since the peak water consumption year of 2007 STPUD has cut that figure by 33 percent.

Nev. lawmaker wants cursive writing in schools

By Meghin Delaney, Las Vegas Review-Journal

State Sen. Don Gustavson is using history as his guide as he again attempts to require Nevada students to learn cursive handwriting by the end of third grade.

Gustavson, R-Sparks, has even included the Founding Fathers in his cursive cause, which began with the 2015 legislative session and continued last week when he filed essentially the same bill draft that previously died in committee. This time around, he believes testimony from history and education experts will propel SB86 into law.

Other states – including Florida, California, Louisiana and Alabama – have re-introduced cursive through legislation or adjusting state education standards.

Read the whole story