

FEMA assessing Nevada storm damage

Nevada and federal officials began assessing storm damage on Jan. 30 to determine if FEMA funding will be made available to the state.

The counties affected include Douglas, Washoe, Carson City, Lyon and Storey. The Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation is also being considered.

After officials look at the damage it is up to Gov. Brian Sandoval to determine whether to declare a major disaster. If he does, then it goes to President Donald Trump for his approval. If that is granted, then FEMA would allocate funding to cities, counties and schools.

Up to 75 percent of damage repair costs is possible.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Immigration ban unpopular with Nev. lawmakers

By Seth A. Richardson, Reno Gazette-Journal

Republican President Donald Trump's executive order banning immigration and refugees from seven Muslim-majority countries continues to be unpopular with the public and lawmakers.

Trump first proposed banning all Muslims from entering the country during the campaign, but few believed he would

actually follow through on the plan. Even lawmakers who supported him scoffed at the idea.

While many lawmakers – especially Republicans – have remained mum on the order, Nevada’s delegation has largely condemned the move.

Read the whole story

Public use of marijuana to be debated in Nev.

By Colton Lochhead, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Marijuana is legal to possess in Nevada, but using it anywhere but inside of a private residence is a big no-no.

That is something the state’s most weed-friendly lawmaker wants to change.

State Sen. Tick Segerblom, D-Las Vegas, intends to introduce a bill this session, which begins Feb. 6, that would give governments at the city and county levels the authority to issue public marijuana-use permits for just about every possibility. Big events like the Electric Daisy Carnival, bars, hookah lounges or even designated pot-friendly streets or sidewalks would all be fair game if Segerblom’s bill were to pass.

Read the whole story

Tahoe stormwater systems survive Jan. deluge

By Kathryn Reed

Stormwater systems were put to the test this month, and seemed to handle the onslaught of water without any serious problems.

“It is somewhat of a success story. In Tahoe all the sewer agencies reported a high flow, but they kept it in their systems. With the stormwater we haven’t heard of any problems,” Lauri Kemper with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Lahontan regulates and monitors the amount of sediment reaching Lake Tahoe from the various jurisdictions in the basin on the California side, including Caltrans. The Tahoe Resource Conservation District oversees the stormwater.

On Jan. 7 when more than 5 inches of rain fell in some parts of the basin Tahoe RCD measured the highest flows ever recorded at all eight monitoring locations since monitoring began in 2013.

“During this storm event our Tahoe Valley site, located off Tahoe Keys Boulevard, measured 1.5 million-cubic-feet of flow, nearly 90 percent of the flow that was observed throughout the whole 2016 water year,” Sarah Bauwens with TRCD said in a statement.



Rich soil covers the edge of the beach at Cove East.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

In one storm this month 18 million gallons of runoff was recorded at the TRCD sites. Even more reached the lake through the other pipes.

The Bijou pump area was temporarily clogged, but South Tahoe Public Utility District and the city of South Lake Tahoe worked together to get it functioning properly.

“There were no major incidents of any kind,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* during the thick of the storms. “Many of the investments we’ve made over the last 10 years such as the Bijou erosion control project and others performed exceptionally well.”

One of the good things about strong runoff in the heart of winter when it’s so cold is that fine sediment tends to drop to the lake’s floor relatively quickly. This is what happened in the 1997 storms. Had there been this much runoff in the summer, it might be a different outcome for the effect to lake clarity. This is because when the air and water temperature is warmer that sediment stays closer to the surface, making the

water murky and creating a situation where algae can grow.

UC Davis working through the Tahoe Environmental Research Center at Sierra Nevada College regularly tests the lake's clarity in the winter and summer. The results will reveal in part how the storms this season have affected the lake.

TRCD through its monitoring system analyzes for fine sediment particles, nitrogen, and phosphorus to estimate nutrient and sediment loading from urban stormwater runoff.

Lahontan is still waiting to receive samples taken at various marinas during the storm events.

"When I look around California we are lucky in Tahoe that we made such a big deal about disapproving development in flood lands and wetlands. We have a lot less infrastructure damage because we have not put infrastructure there," Kemper said.

Restoration of meadows and stream environment zones is paying off. For rivers and creeks to overflow their banks into meadows is a good thing. That means the ecosystem is working. Much of the sediment in the water is filtered out naturally.

But it's also normal for Mother Nature to wash away the top layer of soil and carry it downstream. That is why a layer of dirt has been distributed along the beach area of Cove East on the South Shore. It is what was naturally carried out via the Upper Truckee River.

Calif. bill would let candidates live outside district

By Jim Miller, Sacramento Bee

Recently introduced state legislation would relax voter registration rules, allowing California legislative candidates to live far outside the district they seek to represent.

The change would let candidates live in one place in the state and register to vote and seek office elsewhere – as long as they “hold property, whether by lease or by title” in the district.

The proposed change, if it had been in effect in 2008, could have spared the political career of former state Sen. Rod Wright, who resigned in September 2014 after a Los Angeles County judge upheld his conviction for lying about where he lived. Wright is barred from running for future political office.

[Read the whole story](#)

Calif. doing away with raised highway marker

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

California's iconic Botts Dot, the bump that warns you're drifting out of your lane, has reached the end of its road.

After more than a half century of service, the safety device created by Elbert Botts in a Sacramento lab and once described by a state official as a loyal old dog, is expected to be relieved of duty sometime this year. The classic white ceramic dot, a notable innovation in its day, appears to be a bad fit as a lane marker in the emerging new world of driverless cars that rely on cameras, radar and computers to "read" and understand lane lines.

Although automated vehicles can be taught to "see" a variety of lane markings, including dots, federal officials and the vehicle industry say they want more uniformity nationally on lane lines. Given that few states outside of California still employ the original cookie-shaped ceramic Botts Dot, the writing is on the wall.

Read the whole story

Power outage in Meyers-Christmas Valley

About 3,000 people in the Meyers-Christmas Valley area without power this afternoon.

Liberty Utilities believes a fuse blew because customers on the streets of Oglala and Mandan reported hearing a bang or boom at about 3:20pm Jan. 29.

Crews are on their way to determine the exact cause of the outage. Liberty also told *Lake Tahoe News* there may be downed

wires.

Until the exact cause is determined there is no estimated time when power will be restored.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Biggest NorCal traffic jam? Try Tahoe

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

Where's the biggest traffic jam in Northern California this weekend? Try Tahoe.

With sunny skies, clear roads and plenty of snow, tens of thousands of skiers, snowboarders, families and other recreationists are hitting mountain highways this weekend, creating hourlong traffic jams in some areas around Lake Tahoe.

"It's 'blue bird weather' up there this weekend," Caltrans spokeswoman Deanna Shoopman said. Any sunny weekend after a few weeks of heavy snowfall, "everybody has the same idea," she said.

The result this weekend, much like the recent Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend, is traffic backups at numerous crossroads and main corridors, notably in Truckee, where Highway 89 heads to Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, and on the often congested roads in the South Lake Tahoe and Stateline area.

[Read the whole story](#)

2 dogs saved from frigid Tahoe waters



Two dogs are rescued Jan. 28
in South Lake Tahoe.
Photo/Provided

Thin ice isn't just a threat to humans. Animals can break through just as easily.

South Lake Tahoe firefighters on Saturday rescued two dogs from the frigid waters at the mouth of the Upper Truckee River and Lake Tahoe.

"Crews donned our ice rescue gear and ice board and entered and retrieved the dogs who were turned over to the Humane Society so that could be checked by a vet," according to fire crews.

The animals had escaped from where they were being boarded at friends. Both had tags so they can be reunited with their owners.

The Upper Truckee River has pockets of ice on it. Cove East has a layer of snow over thin ice.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Sandoval, Legislature ready to put partisanship aside

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – As Gov. Brian Sandoval begins the job of selling his \$8.1 billion legacy budget to the Nevada Legislature, he finds himself in familiar territory.

The Republican will have to work with Democratic majorities to achieve his objectives when the 2017 session kicks off on Feb. 6, a situation he faced in both his first and second sessions as governor.

Sandoval has proved to be a governor who knows how to compromise and find a path forward for his goals of expanding economic development opportunities and improving public education. Working with supportive Republicans and Democrats who often seek the same objectives, Sandoval has won approval of most of his initiatives over the past six years.

Read the whole story