

EDC man going to prison for assault on ranger

An El Dorado County man was sentenced Jan. 24 to 27 months in prison for assaulting a federal park ranger.

Nicholas Martin Coberley, 45, of Pollock Pines, on June 20, 2016, attacked a Lassen Volcanic National Park ranger who had been called out to investigate reports of a man walking and yelling in the middle of the road at 9 that night.

According to court records, when the ranger approached, Coberley jumped into the back of the ranger's truck, grabbed a firefighting tool, and began hitting the truck's passenger compartment with the tool, causing more than \$2,000 in damage to the roof and windshield. Coberley then smashed out the rear window with an axe, climbed into the passenger compartment, and put the ranger in a chokehold.

Then Coberley swung an axe at the ranger's head from behind while the truck was in motion.

Once out of prison Coberley faces three years of supervised release.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

USFS withholding name of

suspect

The U.S. Forest Service still refuses to release the name of the man who drove his SUV into the meadow near Angora Lakes last month.

No reason has been given why his name has not been released.

He was cited for operating a vehicle off designated routes.

Without a name, though, it is impossible for the public to know what actually happens to the suspect.

“The federal government did not pay the fee for removing the vehicle, the tow company will get reimbursed from the gentleman when he wants his vehicle back I assume,” Heather Noel, spokeswoman for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, told *Lake Tahoe News* in an email. “As the damage was in the meadow when it was wet, it would have caused additional damage to repair it at the time. The hope is the area naturally repairs itself however we will reassess when it is appropriate to ensure that is the case.”

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

January snowfall in Lake Tahoe not a record



People are having a hard time finding places to put snow. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

It seems to depend on how long one has lived in the Tahoe-Truckee area whether the snow brings a smile or a grimace.

For those who have been in the area for decades, the January storms trigger memories of winters gone by – about how this feels normal. For those who are more recent transplants, they are used to the drought years being normal.

With only one week left in the month and based on the current forecast, it's doubtful any records will be set in the Lake Tahoe Basin for moisture – at least for January.

Records have not been kept that long for South Lake Tahoe, so meteorologists look to numbers in Tahoe City as their gauge.

This January is the second wettest on record for Tahoe City. As of Jan. 23 Tahoe City had received 21.29 inches of liquid precipitation. This is a combination of rain and snowmelt. The record of 22.82 inches was set in 1969.

Tahoe City this year has received 135.5 inches of snow (11.29 feet). That's good enough for fifth place in the record book for a January. The record is 238 inches, set in 1916. Fourth place is 162 inches. Forecasters don't believe that number will be touched this month.

Ski resorts will have even higher totals. For example, Sierra-at-Tahoe is boasting about 24 feet of snow in the first 24 days of 2017.

Sierra Snow Totals

Valid January 17th-23rd, 2017 7am



	24 Hour	7 Day
Camino	9"	
Dodge Ridge	36"	108"
Heavenly	30"	88"
Homewood	30"	106"
Kingvale	20"	82"
Kirkwood	36"	97"
Kyburz	22"	
Northstar	29"	94"
Pacific House	22"	
Sierra-at-Tahoe	36"	99"
S Lake Tahoe 5SW	20"	55"
Squaw/Alpine	31"	94"
Sugarbowl	24"	101"

Source: *National
Weather Service Sacramento*

The last wave of storms was more typical of Sierra winter storms, while earlier this month it was a strong atmospheric river that engulfed much of the West.

"Right now there are no big systems on the horizon for the end of the month," Dawn Johnson, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There are some weak ones, so maybe we'll get a couple more inches."

A few snow showers will be found throughout the region on

Tuesday, with a weak system touching the area on Wednesday, according to Johnson. Sunshine should dominate the weekend. An inversion could make the valley areas colder than at higher elevations.

“The really long range forecast is probably the first week of February we are going to get wet again,” Johnson said.

It’s too early to know where that storm will land and what amount of moisture it might bring.

For the immediate future, temperatures will not be increasing to the point where flooding is a concern. But wet roadways are likely to become icy each night with the melt-freeze ritual. Expect black ice. The daytime highs through the weekend are not expected to be much above freezing, while overnight lows could be in single digits in various parts of the Tahoe-Truckee area.

Impassable roads keep LTUSD closed again

Narrow roads throughout Lake Tahoe Unified School District’s area making it impossible for buses to pick up kids today. This means Jan. 24 is another snow day.

Donner Trail Elementary in Tahoe Truckee Unified is closed because the power is out. All other TTUSD schools are open.

Douglas County students at the lake will be picked up at main bus routes.

Snowplow crews will continue to widen roads today, and will keep at it until are passable.

Water conservation hard with snow in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

It's hard to want to conserve water when it keeps raining and snowing.

That was part of the message delivered to the South Tahoe Public Utility District board last week by Donielle Morse. She is the district's water conservation specialist.

"The sense of urgency is no longer there," Morse told the board.

Participation in the turf buyback program dropped significantly last year and water conservation dropped dramatically from 2015.

2013 was the benchmark year the state of California used for basing water conservation numbers. This is how South Tahoe PUD stacked up against the base year in terms of reducing water use:

	June	July	August	September	October
2015	24.5%	27.4%	20.2%	15.7%	7.3%
2016	12.8%	7.3%	5.8%	7.9%	14.0%

Source: STPUD

Complaints about water abusers dropped from 158 residences in 2015 to 41 in 2016.

"My goal is not to fine customers. It is to work with them and

educate them," Morse said.

Fines are reserved for those who defiantly refuse to comply. Two residential customers were fined last years. Ten commercial properties were talked to.

The state is still claiming there is an emergency. Reps from STPUD were in Sacramento this month advocating the state rescind that declaration.

"There are so many agencies stressing to them that they not call it an emergency when it's not," Morse said.

The state water board will meet Feb. 2 at which time a decision on the emergency status is expected. While this area of the state is no longer in a drought, parts of Southern California still are. It is up to the governor to declare when the state is and is not officially in a drought. Gov. Jerry Brown has yet to declare the multi-year drought is over.

Despite STPUD customers returning to wanting green lawns and long showers, the district is continuing to remind people water is not an unlimited resource even if it seems like it, especially this winter.

The district has embraced the state's campaign from 2016 touting efficiency and reducing waste.

Instead of focusing on getting people to remove their grass, for the upcoming season there will be a "suite of options" wrapped into a landscape water efficiency program. The district will work with residential and commercial properties on using less water and perhaps doing less dramatic changes than eliminating all turf.

The district continues to offer rebates for people getting rid of old washers and toilets as ways to incentivize less water use.

Brown declares emergency because of Jan. storms

By Associated Press

Gov. Jerry Brown has declared a state of emergency for 50 California counties that were drenched by winter storms.

Monday's two proclamations cover counties up and down the state that were hit with flooding, mudslides, erosion and damage to roads and highways from December and January storms.

Brown says "conditions of extreme peril" exist in the counties because of damage estimated in the tens of millions of dollars.

The declarations direct Caltrans to ask for immediate assistance through the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program. Brown also directs the state Office of Emergency Services to provide assistance to local governments.

With South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County declaring local emergencies, and Placer County expected to on Jan. 24, the state declaration paves the way for the local jurisdictions to recoup expenses.

Pension costs limit local government services

By Brad Branan, Sacramento Bee

In South Lake Tahoe, roads are crumbling, and the city is struggling to find ways to repair years of damage caused by harsh weather and snowplows. Orangevale residents worry that fire crews won't arrive quickly enough in an emergency after their local fire station was closed during the recession.

Despite an economic recovery, local government leaders in California say rising pension costs have made it more difficult to restore some programs they cut during the recession.

Those plans will cost local governments an average of 42 cents for every dollar in current employee salary costs next year, a 25 percent increase over two years ago, the *Sacramento Bee* found in a review of records for 26 of the largest local governments in Sacramento, El Dorado, Placer and Yolo counties participating in CalPERS.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tahoe Keys seeks permission to use herbicides

Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association wants to use herbicides in 2018 to kill invasive weeds that are choking the canals of this South Lake Tahoe development.

TKPOA has applied for a permit for a small-scale demonstration that would take place next year. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board would be the one to issue the permit. While that board has OK'd the use of herbicides in theory, each application must be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Curly leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil have taken over more than 90 percent of the 172-acre Tahoe Keys lagoon system. They have spread into other parts of Lake Tahoe.

If permitted, the plan is to apply low levels of Endothall, Triclopyr and Penoxsulam at nine test sites that would cover 13 acres, or 8 percent of the Keys.

The process would include an impermeable barrier between the lagoons and lake, monitoring, and numerous safety measures to ensure that these substances would not reach the lake. The demonstration would also include using non-herbicide control methods in the years following the herbicides to keep the plants under control.

The herbicides are nontoxic to humans, fish and wildlife, and would be diluted to between 0.02 and 2 parts per million, or about half the maximum concentrations allowed by the EPA.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Burglary suspect caught at Truckee store

A Bay Area man was arrested Jan. 21 on burglary charges in Truckee.

Officers responded to a burglary alarm at Mountain Hardware

early Saturday morning. They found the front glass doors had been smashed in. Officers watched the suspect walk out through the broken doors carrying an ax and a chain saw, along with several other stolen items from inside of the business.

Joel Robert Shelton, 18, of Point Reyes, was immediately arrested.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Limited bus service available in Lake Tahoe

If you are looking for bus service in South Lake Tahoe, you might want to call Uber or a taxi.

Tahoe Transportation District has limited operations on Jan. 23. TTD claims the roads are bad even though the buses operate almost strictly on main roads that the city prioritizes for snow removal.

Routes 50, 53 and 23 are operating and routes 19x and 20x are operating with delays. TTD will add back routes gradually, with full service expected on Tuesday.

On Sunday buses stopped running midday. This also forced Heavenly to close early because the resort needed a way to get its guests back to where they came from via the ski shuttles.

The North Shore is also having issues.

There is still no Highway 89 service between Squaw Valley and Tahoe City because of earlier avalanches. All other main line TART routes are operating, but have delays.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*