

1 person killed in accident near Truckee

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

TRUCKEE – A 23-year-old Fair Oaks man died Thursday night from injuries suffered when the vehicle in which he was a passenger overturned northwest of Truckee.

Brayton Walters was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident on Meadow Lake Road south of Henness Pass Road by Truckee Fire Protection District personnel.

Read the whole story

Fires lead Brown to call state of emergency

By Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

Gov. Jerry Brown has called a state of emergency across the state in response to wildfires engulfing much of drought-stricken California.

This summer fire season has been particularly intense, with a series of blazes such as the Rocky Fire in Lake County and the Wragg Fire near Lake Berryessa consuming thousands of acres and leaving firefighters scrambling.

In declaring a state of emergency, Brown mobilized the California National Guard and relaxes some regulations like environmental rules or those governing trespassing on private

property.

Read the whole story

Wildland fires charring a huge chunk of Western U.S.

To date, 5.5 million acres across the Western United States have gone up in flames. This would be like having the entire state of New Jersey be charred.

Most of the acres burned – 4.7 million acres, or 85 percent of the total – have been in Alaska, where 300 fires are currently burning.

The ongoing drought, coupled with summer heat, has exacerbated the fire season in the West.

Major wildfires in the region include:

- The Reynolds Creek Fire in Montana's Glacier National Park grew from a 2-acre burn to a 2,000 acres in a matter of hours. The blaze, which has burned more than 3,100 acres and cost \$4.3 million so far, is one of the top priority fires in the nation.
- Calfire has proclaimed the Lowell Fire the most dangerous of the nine California fires that crews are battling. The wildfire has injured four firefighters, consumed more than 2,200 acres, and is still threatening 1,800 homes.
- Crews are rapidly gaining ground on the Blue Creek Fire in Washington, which has scoured more than 6,000 acres and cost \$6.25 million.

Feinstein's drought package splits from GOP strategy

By Carolyn Lochhead, San Francisco Chronicle

WASHINGTON – California Sen. Dianne Feinstein introduced a sweeping drought bill Wednesday that takes a much broader approach to the state's water shortages than her failed effort last year to work almost exclusively with House Republicans to deliver more water to San Joaquin Valley farmers.

Feinstein's new measure is important for one big reason: Feinstein introduced it. The state's senior senator has made herself an authority on California water policy, and no bill dealing with the state's drought has much chance of passage without her approval.

In contrast to a recently passed House measure that focuses mainly on getting water to valley farms – and rolling back environmental protections to do it – Feinstein included something for almost everyone.

Read the whole story

Analyst:	Calif.	pension
proposal	would	create

‘uncertainties’

By Jon Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor said this week he doesn't know what would happen if a new public pension ballot proposal becomes law.

"There is significant uncertainty as to the magnitude, timing, and direction of the fiscal effects of this measure and its effects on current and future governmental employees' compensation," Taylor wrote in a Tuesday letter to Attorney General Kamala Harris. "... The magnitude and timing of these effects would depend heavily on future decisions made by voters, governmental employers, and the courts."

The assessment, co-signed by state Finance Director Michael Cohen, will soon appear on petitions for a proposed ballot measure that aims to upend the way public pay and benefits are set by requiring voters to weigh in.

Read the whole story

Californians cut water usage by 27% in June

By Monte Morin and Rosanna Xia, Los Angeles Times

Despite record heat, drought-conscious Californians managed to slash urban water use by 27 percent in June and demonstrated once again that they were on track to meet Gov. Jerry Brown's historic 25 percent conservation order, state water officials said Thursday.

Data released by the State Water Resources Control Board showed that Californians had reduced their water consumption by 59 billion gallons compared with June 2013, indicating what officials called a fundamental change in water-use habits.

At the same time, 16 water suppliers missed their conservation targets by 15 or more percentage points and will be contacted by water officials for an explanation, as well as corrective actions, within the next two weeks, officials said.

Read the whole story

Douglas County deputies kill armed man

Updated July 31 11am:

Douglas County sheriff's deputies killed a 48-year-old Gardnerville man Thursday after he allegedly pointed weapons at multiple officers.

Mark Perkins died at his residence in the Ranchos.

On July 30 at 2pm deputies were told Perkins was armed with several weapons, was threatening his wife, and made statements to wanting to kill a neighbor and officers.

An arrest warrant was obtained.

At 5:30pm members of the SWAT team evacuated surrounding houses.

Deputies said Perkins came out of his home armed and confronted them.

“At some point during the confrontation Perkins pointed two weapons at multiple officers. The officers fired their weapons and Perkins was struck by the deputies gunfire and died at the scene,” deputies said in a press release.

It is not known how many officers discharged their weapons or how many bullets struck Perkins.

“On the amount of shots fired, that is information central to an active investigation so we will not discuss/release that at this time,” Undersheriff Paul Howell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Howell added, “Initial record checks of Perkins has not revealed any convictions, however the active investigation will conduct a more detailed search of databases.”

The six deputies involved are all on paid administrative leave. Their names are expected to be released next week.

Carson City Sheriff’s Office will conduct the criminal investigation of the officer involved shooting.

The last officer involved shooting with DCSO was in December 2011.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Study: Sierra wildfires worse with climate change

By Henry Gass, Christian Science Monitor

Wildfires in California are burning at increasingly higher

elevations, according to a study, with scientists saying the phenomenon is another signal of approaching climate change that could also have implications for how forests are restored after fires.



The Washington Fire this summer for several days threatened the town of Markleeville. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

The study, which analyzed 105 years of data, found that forest fires in the Sierra Nevada mountains rarely burned above the 8,000-foot elevation early in the 20th century. Fuel for fires were typically dryer and more abundant at lower elevations, but over the past three decades several fires each year have burned at or above the 8,000-foot elevation.

Mark Schwartz – lead author of the study and also director of the John Muir Institute of the Environment at the UC Davis – described the increase of higher-elevation forest fires as “yet another harbinger of climate change” in a statement released with the study.

Read the whole story

Bankruptcy court denies Caesars Entertainment's quick appeal

By Associated Press

A bankruptcy court that ruled lawsuits against Caesars Entertainment Corp. would not be halted as the company's debt-heavy subsidiary attempts to emerge from Chapter 11 has also denied the casino company's effort to fast-track an appeal of the decision to a higher court.

The order was denied Wednesday in Judge Benjamin Goldgar's federal courtroom in Chicago according to court records.

A Caesars Entertainment attorney has argued the fate of its bankrupt operations subsidiary and its own financial well-being are at risk if creditor lawsuits seeking billions of dollars in claims proceeds.

The creditors suing Caesars allege the company robbed its subsidiary of valuable assets and left them without a guarantee on their investments.

Caesars Entertainment Corp. has argued the litigation puts Caesars Entertainment Corp. at risk of filing bankruptcy itself.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys.

Youngster injured in Zephyr Cove crash

A South Lake Tahoe man was arrested July 28 following an accident in Zephyr Cove that injured a 9-year-old girl.

Jody Campos, 46, is accused of driving under the influence.

The head-on crash occurred Tuesday about 11:40am on Highway 50 near the Presbyterian center driveway.

Calstar airlifted the youngster to Renown Medical Center in Reno.

Further details about the accident were not immediately available.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*