

\$70 mil. grant for biofuels plant near Reno

By AP

SPARKS – A California-based biofuel company building a plant east of Reno has been awarded a \$70 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to help speed delivery of its high-tech process that converts household garbage into jet fuel.

Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., said the grant announced Friday is in addition to a \$105 million loan guarantee U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack confirmed Sept. 4 for Fulcrum Sierra BioFuels.

Company CEO E. James Macias said construction will begin by the end of the year at the same Tahoe-Reno Industrial Park where Tesla Motors has broken ground for its Gigafactory to manufacture electric car batteries just south of Interstate 80 about 15 miles east of Sparks.

The biofuels plant is expected to produce more than 10 million gallons per year of advanced biofuels while diverting over 200,000 tons of garbage from landfills by 2016. Biofuels contain energy, or biomass, that is produced through plants and related material.

Macias said the new fuel is domestic, renewable and competitively priced. He said Sierra BioFuels will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 80 percent compared to traditional petroleum.

The Nevada plant will be the first of more than a dozen that the Pleasanton, Calif.-based Fulcrum has under development throughout North America that will produce hundreds of millions of gallons of advanced biofuels annually, Macias said.

“We are very pleased to be part of this very important Department of Defense program,” Macias said in a statement Friday.

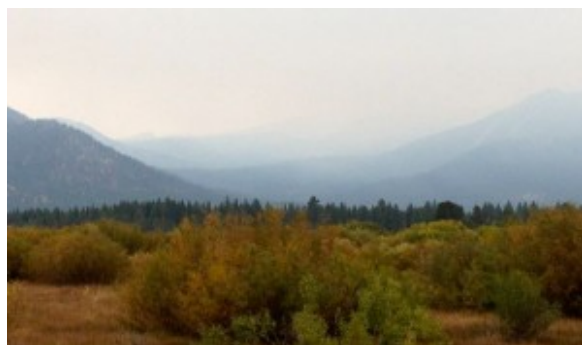
Reid said the project will create hundreds of engineering, construction and operation jobs in Nevada.

“Clean energy must be a component of our national security strategy and this investment in Nevada will help to reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign sources of energy,” the Senate majority leader said. “This investment will help put America on the leading edge of clean biofuels production, and it’s great for Nevada’s economy.”

Reid said the Obama administration first announced in 2011 that the U.S. Departments of Defense, Agriculture, and Energy would partner with the private sector to produce advanced drop-in aviation and marine biofuels to power military and commercial transportation.

Company officials estimated earlier the \$120 million plant will create more than 50 full-time and 450 temporary jobs.

17% containment of King Fire



Smoke obscures the mountains
in Lake Tahoe on Sept. 21.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

Updated 8:45pm:

The massive King Fire that destroyed 10 single family residences and 22 other structures, mostly in the White Meadows area, is now 17 percent contained.

However, there are 12,000 single residences and 9,000 other minor structures that remain threatened by the blaze burning east of Pollock Pines. Nearly 3,000 people are still displaced.

With the spread of the 82,018-acre fire into Placer County in the Tahoe National Forest, crews have closed off roads in the Foresthill area. Brush on Sunday was cleared from Soda Springs Road so it could serve as a containment line if need be.

Predictions are the southwest section near Swansboro could be contained Sunday night. Higher humidity levels overnight are expected to keep the forward movement to a minimum.

The main arm of the fire is largely burning north along the ridge between French Meadows and Hell Hole Reservoir. This is near the 2001 Star Fire.

More than 5,000 people are fighting the fire, including Lake Tahoe crews. Four people have been injured since the fire started Sept. 13. How the fire started has not been released, but Wayne Allen Huntsman of Pollock Pines has been charged with arson. He pleaded not guilty.

Smoke from the King Fire canceled the second annual Ironman Lake Tahoe on Sept. 21. Athletes were to have begun the swim at Kings Beach in the morning, with the bike ride in the Northstar-Martis Valley-Truckee areas and the run involving Squaw Valley. Organizers waited until the last-minute – so much so that the pros were in the water.

This is the second time in a matter of years that a major sporting event at Lake Tahoe had to be canceled. In May 2011 the Tour of California bike ride was snowed out at Lake Tahoe.

Smoke lingered in the air on the South Shore on Sept. 21.

Highway 50 is still down to one lane headed west between Riverton and Pollock Pines.

There are no evacuations in the Lake Tahoe Basin and officials say at this time there is no threat of the fire coming into basin. However, hikers and backpackers are urged to stay out of Desolation and Granite Chief wilderness areas while the fire is active. Areas of Eldorado National Forest near the fire are off-limits.

The Silver Fork Elementary School will open for classes Monday, as the evacuation has been lifted. Otter Creek Elementary School will remain closed; those students will attend classes at Georgetown School.

On Monday at 7pm community meetings are scheduled at Golden Sierra High School in Garden Valley and at the Seventh-day Adventist Church Camino. The latter is also the evacuation center.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

The case for not driving to work

By Abby Phillip, Washington Post

Your commute is making you unhappy, and you probably didn't

need a scientific study to tell you that.

In 2000, 76 percent of Americans drove to work alone every day. In addition to the frustrations of rush-hour traffic, those commutes also tend to be longer and start earlier in the morning than, say, walking or biking to work, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Not to mention that fitting in a few minutes of activity before and after work can come with some important physical health benefits.

A new study makes an additional case for at least considering a change in your means of getting to your 9-to-5. British researchers at the University of East Anglia found that walkers and bikers reported positive psychological effects from getting a little fresh air and moderate exercise on their way to work.

The study, published in the journal *Preventive Medicine*, found that people who went from another mode of transportation to walking or cycling reported improvements in their well-being – specifically, they felt that they were able to concentrate more at work and were under less strain than when they traveled by car.

Read the whole story

USFS working on fire at Dicks Lake

An abandoned illegal campfire that flared up last week at Dicks Lake in Desolation Wilderness is expected to be extinguished Sunday.

The U.S. Forest Service authorized bucket drops and a crew hiked in with a pump.

This fire would not have been visible from the lake.

However, there were reports on Sept. 20 from people in Kings Beach that they could see flames from the King Fire.

“This was checked out by aircraft. Apparently it was a trick of the light – sunlight refraction through the heavy smoke,” Cheva Gabor, spokeswoman for the USFS, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The fire remains a considerable distance from the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit boundary. There is no immediate threat to the basin and no evacuation orders at the current time.

Smoke, though, continues to be an issue throughout the basin.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Sweeney: ‘Teach the next generation to think critically’

Publisher’s note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the two Lake Tahoe Community College District 5 candidates a series of questions. The responses are being run in the order LTN received them.*



Name: Michelle Sweeney

Profession/work experience: Please see my resume following:
Strategic Planning | Policy Development | Knowledge-building
High-integrity, energetic, listening leader building
management structure and culture for high performance and
productivity

- Organizational development
- Leadership development
- Strategic planning
- Fundraising and collaboration building
- Policy and program development
- Communication strategy development

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

TAHOE PROJECT, INC. a 501(c)3

Facilitating critical thinking about people and nature in the
twenty-first century

Executive Officer / Founder (February 2011 – present)

The objective of Tahoe Project is to steer attention and
capital to enterprises adept at creating environmental, social
and economic resilience and prosperity. Toward this end our
writers and speakers engage diverse audiences in discourse
about 21st century environmental issues. Through this
discourse we seek to contextualize claims, technologies and
policy approaches. We explain environmental science findings,
integrate social science into discourse and convene and
facilitate discussion among diverse experts, advocates and
publics.

ALLEGRO COMMUNICATION CONSULTING
Developing organizations and leaders

President and Principal Consultant (2004 – present) Projects have included:

The Clarity Challenge | Author

Authored The Clarity Challenge (2013), a policymaker's handbook of prioritized solutions to Lake Tahoe clarity decline.

Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Program | Communication Consultant (2010-2011)

Conducted institutional and policy assessment of the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species program resulting in a comprehensive suite of strategic planning recommendations including: performance indicators, a communication plan and toolbox, and policy and strategic alliance guidance.

CA Governor appointee to TRPA Governing Board | Governmental and Public Affairs Consultant (2009-2011)

Conducted institutional and policy assessment of Lake Tahoe interagency management of aquatic invasive species, land use planning, water quality and transportation. Provided strategic recommendations for streamlining operations, utilizing existing resources to better result, transforming leadership culture and building capacity.

Lake Tahoe Crediting Program | Editor, Communication Consultant, Facilitator (2008-2009)

Facilitated the inter-agency design and deployment of the bi-state program to address fine sediment—the primary cause of lake clarity decline. Edited The Lake Tahoe Crediting Program Handbook (2009), the management framework for connecting on-the-ground actions to the goal of restoring lake clarity.

Large-Cost Fire Independent Review to Congress | Editor (2008-2009)

Edited the Large-Cost Fire Independent Review to Congress

(2009) regarding the fires of fiscal year 2008 with suppression costs exceeding \$10 million. Conducted a review of fiscal diligence. Participated in the collaborative development of recommendations for managing major wildland fire.

Lake Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load | Facilitator, Communication Consultant, Editor (2006-2009)

Facilitated inter-agency and public meetings in the design of the Integrated Water Quality Management System that highlights pollutant reduction opportunities to inform the design of regional plans and management strategies. Designed the community outreach and communication process.

Edited Charting the Course to Clarity (versions 2008 and 2009).

Sierra Nevada Yard & Garden | Author and Presenter (2007-2008)

Authored Sierra Nevada Yard & Garden (2008), a homeowner's guide to property management that integrates best practices for erosion control, wildfire prevention, water quality improvement and wildlife habitat conservation. Led workshops featuring pragmatic solutions to the complex interplay of these mountain issues at the 2008 Sierra Nevada Alliance conference.

ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Nevada Tahoe Conservation District | Watershed Program Manager, Fundraiser (2001-2004)

Santa Monica Pier Aquarium/UCLA Ocean Discovery Center | Educator, Fundraiser (1999-2001)

Conservation Department, New England Aquarium | Editor, Facilitator (1998-1999)

Centre d'Echanges Culturels Internationaux, Lyon, France | Program Administrator (1996-1997)

The Berkeley Guides | Travel Writer, France (1994-1996)

EDUCATION, BOARD MEMBERSHIPS, COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

University of California Berkeley, BA English
Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee Member (2009-2012)
University of California Berkeley, Oral History Institute
Stanford University, Gould Center for Dispute Resolution,
Dispute Resolution Systems Design
Harvard / MIT Program on Negotiation, Mediation and Conflict
Management
Sierra Business Council, Sierra Leadership Institute
(2005-2006)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mediation and Meeting
Facilitation Training
Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Mediating Land Disputes,
Advanced Course
Women's Health Leadership, California Policy and Advocacy
Institute
Alliance Francaise, Diplôme de Langue

Age: 41

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: As a mother I value giving all children a strong foundation in reading, math, science and foreign language. Presently I help first- and fourth-grade students learn to read in English and Spanish at Bijou School where I am in my fifth year as a parent volunteer. In the period 2008-2011 I volunteered at Tahoe Parents Nursery School teaching preschool children how to be well rounded, composed, courageous and courteous lifelong learners. Meanwhile, I am the founder of the nonprofit Tahoe Project where I host interviews about the present and future of Lake Tahoe. In addition, I've recently entered into collaboration with Mountain Yoga where I am developing the Happy Series – a course that invites students to craft unique approaches to the “pursuit of happiness”, that core ambition of the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

What is your educational background?: I earned a B.A. in English from the University of California at Berkeley. I

strive to learn continuously. Among the themes I have emphasized are facilitation and conflict resolution, particularly in the context of land use planning and water resources management. The following are courses and certificate programs I've completed in this domain

- Harvard / MIT Program on Negotiation, Mediation and Conflict Management
- Sierra Business Council, Sierra Leadership Institute
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mediation and Meeting Facilitation Training
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Mediating Land Disputes, Advanced Course
- Stanford University, Gould Center for Dispute Resolution, Dispute Resolution Systems Design

Additionally I have a longstanding interest in women's health and participated in the yearlong Women's Health Leadership course of the California Policy and Advocacy Institute. In support of the sound reporting I do in the context of Tahoe Project I graduated from the UC Berkeley Oral History Institute. I speak French fluently, am proficient in Spanish and enjoy maintaining basic Italian. I have been a student of parenting since my son's birth in 2005.

Why do you want to serve on the college board?: In 2011 I was asked the question, "What is the best thing that can be done for Tahoe?" Our economy was in the dumps, tourism trends were (and are) in dramatic flux, the housing market was host to bankruptcy and the outfall of instability in our families and civic institutions and we were in dire need of a new perspective on future prospects for the Lake Tahoe region. In pursuit of the answer to this question I have interviewed business, agency and academic leaders throughout the Tahoe region and elsewhere. I have read extensively on the subjects of education, current affairs, leadership, conflict resolution and environmental policy. My conclusion: Striving for a four-year institution of higher learning focused on educating

future regional and global leaders is one of the best things that I can do for Lake Tahoe. This is why I want to serve on the college board. I can make a difference at the college. The college can make a difference in the lives of students, among them our children. These students will make Tahoe in our 21st century world. The best thing that can be done for Tahoe is to nurture a classically educated, critical-thinking, thoughtful and nature-oriented generation of leaders.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidate?: As a forty-something female entrepreneur, mother of children born in 2005 and 2008, student of environmental policy and practitioner of facilitation and conflict resolution, by virtue of identity and experience I have a vision for the college and an approach to implementation distinct from that of the other candidate. I think voters in District 5 have in this election a great opportunity to choose between different futures for the college. "Exceptional energy" is a character trait others have noted in me consistently throughout my career. I'm asking voters to give me the opportunity to contribute this energy to a prosperous, globally oriented, 21st century college for Lake Tahoe.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing Lake Tahoe Community College and how will you deal with it?: The most pressing issue facing LTCC is revenue generation. The best way to generate revenue is to enroll more students. Leadership at the college is employing good strategies to address this issue. For my part I would encourage the following:

Strategic planning

- Data supported
- Stabilizing cost while increasing revenue always providing high quality educational experience
- Emphasis on success realized in the classic Core Curriculum

Community partnership

- Especially internships and work experience

- Close collaboration with LTUSD

Collaborative program development

- Articulation programs (e.g., South Bay Regional Public Training Consortium)
- Build relationships with other educational institutions outside of Tahoe where Tahoe has a unique contribution to offer

Targeted recruitment

- Targeting specific communities we would like to recruit from and building relationships there
- Building programs in coordination with communities with like interests whose students value the unique offerings of a Tahoe education.

How will you be voting for the bond the college has on the ballot and why?: I believe a “yes” vote on Measure F is a vote for higher education. Measure F will enable three things critical to the future viability of the college. Measure F will fund the technological revamp of the college – giving our faculty, students and community the technological tools essential to success in our contemporary world. Measure F will fund maintenance of existing infrastructure, ensuring maintenance of the community’s infrastructure investments to-date. New boilers, repairs to rooftops and other maintenance would compete with teaching students for college general fund dollars if Measure F funds were not secured. Finally, Measure F is the mechanism by which our community will provide matching funds to state and other monies for new educational infrastructure such as the proposed Public Safety Training Center – a place to house not only existing successful programs like the Fire Academy, but also envisioned future programs consistent with the promising partnership with the South Bay Regional Public Training Consortium. I support Measure F.

What is working well at the college and what isn’t; and how

would you go about changing what isn't working?: I am enthusiastic about running for trustee of the college in part because I have seen the college leadership take on the task of creating a new vision and updating the mission with considerable success. This vision, mission and the bylaws and procedures that govern the college form the foundation of the institution's prospects for success. I can look forward to a positive and productive working relationship with fellow trustees and with the ever-evolving leadership team at the college. As a trustee I will advocate for student success, strong core curriculum offerings, data-and-experience-driven strategy development with faculty. I will think critically about opportunities to increase enrollment and revenue. I will advocate that we focus effort on a focused, strategic set of actions. All of these approaches are consistent with what I see leadership at the college doing in 2014.

What programs are not offered that should be?: In terms of programs I would emphasize investment and growth in those areas where the college has existing strengths: the core math, science and humanities curriculum (in-person and online), the Fire Academy and public safety training, Community Connect programs and foreign language (especially the Intensive Spanish Summer Institute). I think we should invest in enhancement and expansion of the programs we already have. I do think that the college can do better at integrating existing regional assets into existing programs. In particular, there is opportunity to integrate Lake Tahoe's unique natural and socio-political environment into the higher learning experience. I believe this will not only intensify our students' learning but also make our college an attractive partner for other higher learning institutions that lack these unique real-world assets.

What classes have you taken at LTCC?:

- Accounting
- Algebra

- Ballroom dance
- Calculus for Business
- Geometry
- Italian Conversation
- P.E.
- Intensive Spanish Summer Institute
- Statistics
- Tahoe Parents Nursery School Parenting Courses
- Yoga.

What other involvement have you had with LTCC?: In addition to being a student at the college I have been on campus on a regular basis in the past decade in these capacities: My children attended the Child Development Center. I am a regular in the campus library where I often work, research and meet for community projects. In my capacity as journalist at Tahoe Project I interviewed Kindred Murillo in her first and third years as president of the college inquiring about her vision for the college and the strengths and weaknesses of the institution as she took the helm. I have also over the years interviewed faculty, staff and students at LTCC to periodically gauge enthusiasm for and criticism of the college. Some of these interviews are published, others are not. This has informed my understanding of the dynamics at the college as has attendance at events like the 40th anniversary celebration and the Taste of Gold fundraiser. I should mention I'm a fan of the drama department productions and the chorus, which also bring me to college events. Suffice to say, given all of this interaction I am so enthusiastic about the trajectory I see the college on that I would like to proactively contribute by becoming a trustee.

What should be the role of higher education in South Lake Tahoe?: The role of higher education in South Lake Tahoe should be to teach the next generation to think critically. Critical thinking is marked by the ability to choose an informed course of action based on listening, research and

application of standards based on the core disciplines of math, science, language and history. Critical thinking is necessary for performing the functions of an informed electorate and an inspired workforce.

Critical thinking is taught by:

- Teaching the core disciplines – math, science, language, writing, history, art (including dramatic art)
- Modeling standards and stamina
- And then, by demonstrating how to evaluate disciplinary evidence.

Those that excel in the 21st century will have more knowledge, ask better questions and exercise independent thinking. The college's role in developing workforce readiness is to teach our students, among them our children, to be critical thinkers and leaders. Chief among our tasks is teaching them how to discern a future course for themselves and society.

What do you believe should be the financial priorities of the college?: The financial priority of the college should be to invest in high-quality, in-person core curriculum courses in math, science and the humanities.

The college needs a technology overhaul including the modernization of labs and classrooms.

The college needs facilities better suited to collaborative learning and hosting community events. I envision bigger classrooms with more open space and technology integrated as well as meeting and small conference space.

In terms of programs I would emphasize investment in those areas where the College has existing strengths: the core math, science and humanities curriculum (in-person and online), the Fire Academy and public safety training, Community Connect programs and foreign language, especially the Intensive Spanish Summer Institute.

Being on the board requires working with four others. Give readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: I served as the at-large representative of the South Shore on the Lake Tahoe Federal Advisory Committee in the years 2008-2012. It was a privilege to serve. I learned a great deal and am proud of the contributions I was able to make. In particular I was able to build a coalition around the proposal to double the funding amount allocated toward the prevention and control of aquatic invasive species. The monies allocated during those negotiations are still the mainstay of the important work happening on this front today. I am a facilitator by training, having studied facilitation at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy at the Harvard Program on Negotiation and at the Stanford Gould Center for Conflict Resolution. During my second term on the LTFAC I offered criticism of the decision-making structure and operating procedures of the federal advisory process at Tahoe. While I was not successful in creating change in these aspects of the SNPLMA process I earned the respect of many in the group who appreciated the courage I demonstrated in advocating for procedural change they agreed was needed. I learned a great deal about advocacy and coalition building from both my successes and my failures on the LTFAC. One of my peers on the LTFAC approached me in 2010 to ask me to consider becoming a Trustee of the Community College lauding the ability I had demonstrated to articulate independent and strategic thought.

How much time can you commit to carry out trustee duties?: In addition to preparing for and participating in semi-monthly trustee meetings and the regular business and extracurricular activities (fundraisers, community events, professional development) of the board I would like to work collaboratively with college leadership and the foundation in the pursuit of targeted grants and strategic partnerships with other educational institutions and communities (from which we aim to recruit new student populations). I anticipate this will

amount to approximately 200-250 hours a year for the duration of my term.

What do you think is the most important mission of LTCC?: The mission of LTCC is to maximize college accessibility; to facilitate students' learning, support success and the timely completion of their educational goals; to support the development of a sustainable and prosperous community; and finally to ensure college financial, human, technology and facilities resources are sufficient to meet the evolving educational needs of the community.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: I am a community leader insofar as I am an entrepreneur, a professional, a wife, a mother, a community organizer and a friend. To these roles I would now like to add the role of trustee of Lake Tahoe Community College.

I would like to underscore what I believe are the most important leadership actions I have taken in my 13 years at Lake Tahoe. First, I established Allegro Communication Consulting, the sole proprietorship in which I as a communication consultant have played a role in facilitating the development of Lake Tahoe environmental policy while demonstrating to my peers that one can have a professional, entrepreneurial career while being a parent and partner in Lake Tahoe. Second, I helped my husband at the completion of his Stanford MBA start his company at Lake Tahoe. Environmental Incentives LLC now employs 10 professionals at its headquarters in Lake Tahoe and eight in Washington D.C. Finally, I founded the nonprofit Tahoe Project in 2011 as a means to research and host dialogue about the future of Lake Tahoe. Thanks to the work I have undertaken at Tahoe Project including interviews with a wide array of professionals and business leaders I have come to the conclusion that I can be an instrumental contributor to a positive future for Lake Tahoe by becoming a trustee of the college. The future of the Lake Tahoe region is in the foundation this generation creates

in our institutions – none more than our families and our educational institutions. As a trustee my energy will be committed to helping our students and Lake Tahoe's public institution of higher learning realize their considerable potential in a 21st century paradigm.

Visibility hampers King Fire, weather helps



Mount Tallac at 5pm Sept. 20 is not visible from South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Susan Wood

Updated 10:10pm:

Visibility grounded air resources fighting the King Fire that continues to burn out of control east of Pollock Pines. However, a low pressure system passed south of the incident Saturday, bringing clouds and increased humidity to moderate fire activity.

For the night of Sept. 20 officials anticipate the spread to be minimal. The higher humidity should moderate the fire

behavior. The wild card are thunderstorms could impact the area by bringing outflow winds.

All helicopters left the French Meadows area Saturday afternoon when pilots could not see more than two mile. The air tankers had to stop flying before that.

The smell of smoke inundated the Y area of South Lake late Sept. 20, but was dissipating as the night went on. Smoke is billowing over Mount Tallac to the point it could not longer be seen.

"There is no concern of the King Fire coming into the basin and (smoke) is a direct result of wind shift only. There is no reason for concern or to contact the local fire department," South Lake Tahoe officials said.

The fire has burned 81,944 acres, with much of it in the Eldorado National Forest. However, it has moved into the Tahoe National Forest in Placer County. It remains at 10 percent containment.

The damage assessment team continued to work in the White Meadows area to assess the extent of damage to structures. That assessment should be completed Sunday. A handful of homes have been destroyed, possibly more.

The fire started Sept. 13 by an arsonist, according to officials. Wayne Allen Huntsman is in custody, having pleaded not guilty to arson charges.

Four firefighters have been injured, but the extent and severity has not been released.

More than 4,900 people are fighting the fire, with some coming from as far away as Florida.

Evacuation orders are still in effect for nearly 3,000 people, as 12,000 single residences and 9,000 other minor structures are threatened. The Sacramento Region Community Foundation is

collecting monetary donations to assist people affected by the fire. Checks may be sent to 955 University Ave., Suite A, Sacramento, CA 95825. For more info, email tina@sacregcf.org.

Highway 50 is open, though westbound traffic is down to one lane. Click on the state icon on *Lake Tahoe News*' home page for real time road information.

It is costing \$5 million a day to fight the fire.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

King Fire cuts into Apple Hill traffic

By Richard Chang, Sacramento Bee

Business was slow at Apple Hill's famed orchards Saturday, as smoke from the King fire in El Dorado County discouraged people from visiting, owners said.

Apple farmers, bakers and craft vendors said foot traffic had dropped by at least 50 percent, marking a gloomy start to the high season that began Labor Day and ends in December. Thousands of tourists traditionally make the trip from across Northern California to the area for a chance to pick their own apples or indulge in apple pie.

"Let's put it this way: It's not good," said Paul Dozier, owner of Pine-0-Mine ranch in Placerville, when asked about the fire's impact on sales.

Dozier said conditions on Friday were "like walking through the fog."

On Saturday, however, only a slight tinge of smoke was in the air, but not far off, a heavy haze hovered over the rolling hills. Dozier's 13-acre property was practically deserted, save for the occasional customer.

[Read the whole story](#)

King Fire uses record amount of retardant

By Raquel Maria Dillion and Gillian Flaccus, AP

Firefighters are dropping record-breaking amounts of retardants on the King Fire that is burning explosively because of the prolonged drought.

California firefighters and the U.S. Forest Service together had bombarded the conflagration with more than a half-million gallons of retardant, fire spokeswoman Lynne Tolmachoff said Friday. That included more than 203,000 gallons in a single day.

Retardant – a water-and-fertilizer mix colored with red dye – are used as an initial attack tool on wildfires to buy time for crews to get to the scene and dig fire lines.



A tanker drops a load of fire retardant on the King Fire. Photo/Rich Pedroncelli/AP

But the fire activity is so extreme it's pushing through their lines.

"They can slow it down a little bit. But they're not able to hold it long enough to get ground units in there to extinguish it before it burns through and continues its path," Tolmachoff said.

The King Fire, which authorities said was deliberately set, has chewed through nearly 120 square miles of timber and vegetation east of Pollock Pines.

The blaze in steep terrain forced the evacuation of 2,800 people and burned multiple structures in the White Meadows area of Pollock Pines. One resident who has been helping carve fire lines with his bulldozer told the *Sacramento Bee* he lost his home on White Meadows Road when he went to check on it Friday.

"My house got burned. My house is gone. My outbuildings are gone," Tom Boscow said. "I just wish I'd been here."

The fire is threatening a key UC Berkeley research station that is home to scores of experiments on trees, plants and other wildlife. It is also threatening hydroelectric facilities and power lines that deliver water and electricity

to the Sacramento region and some treasured Sierra Nevada recreations areas, the *Bee* reported. Some power stations and lines either burned or were shut down as a precaution, cutting off energy from three utility agencies' hydroelectric reservoirs.

The man suspected of setting the fire, Wayne Allen Huntsman, 37, pleaded not guilty to an arson charge Friday in El Dorado County Superior Court. He was being held on \$10 million bail.

Authorities have not said what evidence they have linking Huntsman to the fire, by far the largest of about a dozen fires burning statewide.

The record retardant drop occurred Wednesday, and Thursday was another heavy day. Authorities reduced drops on Friday because smoke affected visibility for pilots.

Firefighters have used retardant since the 1950s to slow the advance of wildfires, but the practice is controversial because of its potential effect on wildlife. The Forest Service recently adjusted its retardant rules after two lawsuits that alleged the drops were killing fish, damaging watersheds and harming endangered species.

The agency now can't drop retardant within 300 feet of bodies of water on federal forest land and can't dump the slurry in certain exclusion zones designed to protect endangered plant species. The only exception is if people are in immediate danger from flames.

Andy Stahl, executive director of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, said the intended purpose of retardant was to attack "very remote fire" until crews could get to the blaze.

"But now we're seeing a dramatic increase in the amount of retardant being dumped because we're not just using it in those remote wilderness areas, but we're using it on every

fire, everywhere, and there are more fires," he said.

The Forest Service used 12 million gallons of retardant nationwide last year, and 60 percent of it was dumped on California fires, Stahl said.

The federal restrictions don't apply to California firefighters, and CalFire has increased the amount of retardant during the past decade.

Tolmachoff, the state fire spokeswoman, didn't know how many gallons her agency dropped on fires last year. But she said retardant use was rising because of the addition of bigger DC-10 air tankers, expanding populations in fire-prone areas and the increasing size and frequency of fires caused by drought.

"Our main goal in California is to protect lives and the property and resources, and we put every effort we can into it," she said.

Court: Tax on strip clubs constitutional

By Associated Press

CARSON CITY — The Nevada Supreme Court has decided that a 10 percent tax on strip club admission doesn't violate exotic dancers' First Amendment rights of free expression.

All seven justices on Thursday sided with a lower court's ruling that upheld the Nevada Live Entertainment Tax.

Justices ruled it was constitutional to tax the clubs and

other live entertainment because the tax is content-neutral, doesn't target a small group of people, and doesn't threaten to suppress ideas or viewpoints.

The broad-based tax applies to many events but exempts some live entertainment, including boxing, NASCAR races and minor league baseball.

The clubs had argued that the tax's exemptions favor family-oriented entertainment and scrutinize adult businesses, but the justices countered that the tax applies to many family-oriented events, including circuses and concerts.

Sullivan assumes judgeship ahead of schedule

Dylan Sullivan has started her job as El Dorado County Superior Court judge four months sooner than expected.

Presiding Judge Suzanne Kingsbury swore Sullivan in on Sept. 19.

Gov. Jerry Brown appointed her to the position this week. This is the only judicial interim appointment Brown has made.



Dylan Sullivan

Sullivan was elected in June to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Daniel Proud. The governor's appointment allows her to immediately assume the position she was elected to begin in January 2015.

Sullivan has been assigned to Department 7, the criminal pre-trial department in Placerville. She will conduct felony and misdemeanor arraignments, hear preliminary matters, traffic matters, and drug court.

Kingsbury, in a release, said Dylan would be handling these matters because of her training and experience, to assist the court in effectively implementing criminal justice realignment in El Dorado County.

The 48-year-old Sullivan has served as a commissioner at the El Dorado County Superior Court since 2011. She served in several positions at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Board of Parole Hearings from 2005 to 2011, including deputy commissioner and associate chief deputy commissioner. Sullivan was an attorney at the Law Offices of Dylan Sullivan from 2000 to 2008 and a contract attorney at the Law Offices of Patricia Lynne Nelson from 1998 to 2000.

She earned a juris doctor degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law and a bachelor of science degree from UC Davis.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report