

I-80 work to involve delays, road closures

Caltrans will soon begin some unusual work to raise the vertical clearance of nine structures in Placer County that cross Interstate 80.

The overcrossings include eight vehicle bridges and one railroad trestles from the Brace Road overcrossing in Loomis to the Magra Road overcrossing east of Colfax.

The vertical clearance of these structures is being raised to 16-feet 6-inches to meet current standards that improve access on I-80 through the Sierra for interstate commerce and national security.

Six structures will be raised using a complex system of jacks and reconstruction, while the roadway under the remaining three structures will be dug down to create the required clearance.

Work will begin this spring and continue through fall 2015.

Each of the six raised structures will require I-80 to be completely closed overnight for two nights, and the overcrossings will be closed for two months. Structures requiring the highway to be dug lower will require multiple long-term lane and ramp closures.

Traffic detours will be in effect during the construction work in the communities of Loomis, Penryn, Newcastle, Weimar and Colfax.

Updates may be found online.

Google wants email mining data to be secret

By Joel Rosenblatt, Bloomberg

Google Inc., the world's largest Internet-search provider, is seeking to black out portions of a transcript from a public court hearing that includes information on how it mines data from personal emails.

Google, fighting a lawsuit claiming its interception of emails amounts to illegal wiretapping, asked U.S. District Judge Lucy H. Koh in a filing last week to redact "confidential" information from the transcript, without being more specific. The main revelation at the Feb. 27 hearing was the existence of "Content Onebox," used by Google to intercept emails for targeted advertising and to build user profiles, Sean Rommel, a lawyer for plaintiffs, told the judge at the time.

Google's latest move to keep records in the case out of public view comes as Koh is weighing a request by companies including National Public Radio, New York Times Co. and Washington Post Co. to unseal other key documents filed earlier that the company contended were too sensitive to be revealed.

Read the whole story

Kings Beach residents want Tahoe Conservancy, State Parks to leave them alone

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – If State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy and North Tahoe Public Utility District officials cannot find a way to work together in a manner that residents can live with, it's possible state legislation will resolve the issue.

State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, said in the next week he wants all parties to come together and figure it out. The *it* is what to do with Kings Beach State Recreation Area.

State Parks has owned the beachfront area since 1978, but it has always been run by NTPUD. Suddenly, State Parks wants to change how business is done. But neither State Parks nor CTC publicly has said a bad word about what NTPUD has been doing.

More than 150 people attended a meeting March 20 at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach. This building used to be a bowling alley, but is now the town's main gathering place. It is owned by NTPUD, while the parking lot and beach are owned by State Parks.



Parking could become an issue at North Tahoe Event

Center. Photo/LTN

All of the 24 people who spoke want NTPUD to remain the operator of the recreation area.

Gaines and Assemblyman Brian Dahle, R-Bieber, hosted the meeting. They are behind Senate Bill 832, which would transfer ownership to NTPUD and keep it as the operator. A decision by the Legislature is likely to come by July.

Last week State Parks said it would close the area during the winter. On Thursday Jess Cooper, northern division chief for the agency, said it will remain open year-round.

But residents are not convinced. One after another commented on how state budget matters could change the policy.

It was pointed out how Van Sickle Bi-state Park on the South Shore is still gated even though there is no snow on the ground. Van Sickle closed for the season Oct. 31. Gates are set to open May 1.

Van Sickle was supposed to be operated by Nevada and California state parks. Instead it is a Nevada, CTC and Tahoe Rim Trail Association operation. State Parks continues to be a missing partner and the recreation area continues to be open seasonally. State Parks last week said it wants to revisit the possibility of being involved with Nevada.

Cooper, at the meeting, said his agency has the money and manpower to operate the Kings Beach facility. But he did not say why the state has not been investing in the property. There is \$600,000 worth of improvements needed to bring the site into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, plus there are more than three-quarters of a million dollars in deferred maintenance that needs to be dealt with.

Paul Schultz, NTPUD general manager, explained that Placer County would not allow the district to go after grants for

projects without a 25-year lease in place. He said the district would go bankrupt without assistance to fund improvements.

The contract NTPUD had with State Parks expired in 2008. Since then a month-to-month agreement has been in place.

State Parks has long talked about extending the pier from 140 feet to 545 feet. This would accommodate waterborne transportation. The Tahoe Transportation District is exploring the possibility of bringing a ferry to the lake that would at this time service South Lake Tahoe and the North Shore. It's said to be more of a commuter vessel than a tourist attraction.

"The biggest thing is we felt we would be in a better position to make improvements if we were in charge of operations," Patrick Wright, CTC executive director, told the crowd.

CTC owns Kings Beach Plaza, which is adjacent to the Kings Beach SRA. It also owns Coon Street, North Tahoe Beach, Moon Dunes Beach, Secline Beach and Sandy Beach.

It was announced last week that CTC and State Parks would be partnering on the management and operations of Kings Beach State Recreation Area. CTC does not manage entities like parks, that is why it would be State Parks doing the day-to-day grind in Kings Beach.

But the outcry from locals was they don't trust the state and they don't believe NTPUD needs to be replaced.

"I like local control. There is more accountability," Gaines said.

Wright said, "Parks and the Conservancy felt we were in a better position to make investments if we managed the parks."

But what no one from the two state agencies explained is why improvements cannot be made if NTPUD were to continue to run

the facility. It was also not disclosed how taxpayers may benefit or be hurt by operational changes.

Wright and Cooper from the state agencies said there will be a transition team put in place by the time State Parks takes over in November. Neither one said anything after the state senator told the three parties to figure out a compromise.

Placer County would like to have lodging on the beach in Kings Beach. With the Tahoe Expedition Academy in Kings Beach going forward on the lakefront property where Ferrari Crown Motel, Falcon Lodge and Goldcrest Resort properties are, the prime lodging spot is eliminated. That leaves the event center location.

This adds to the distrust locals have when it comes to the state taking over operations. They don't know that State Parks won't make it impossible for the event center to operate, especially if access is limited because the state owns the parking lot. This could then open up the opportunity for new development.

U.S. gives up some controls of Internet

By Nextgov

Facing international pressure, the U.S. government has agreed to give up control over important technical aspects of the Internet.

The Commerce Department will no longer oversee the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers, a nonprofit group

that manages the Internet's address system.

Larry Strickling, the assistant secretary of Commerce for communications and information, said the "global Internet community" will have the final say over the database of names and addresses that allows computers around the world to communicate with each other.

The Internet was invented in the United States, and the country has long maintained a central role. But as the Internet has grown, other countries have demanded a greater voice in its governance.

Edward Snowden's leaks about the National Security Agency's mass-surveillance programs have exacerbated resentment over the central role of the United States in managing the Internet.

Read the whole story

Nev. man accused of attempted murder in Pollock Pines

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

A Nevada man is in El Dorado County jail, accused of attempted murder after he allegedly held a gun to a teenager's head and threatened to kill him.

Sheriff's deputies responded to the 2900 block of Spruce Street in Pollock Pines on Wednesday evening regarding a report of shots fired and people arguing about a gun.

Read the whole story

Douglas County lining up interim manager

Douglas County is looking to have Larry Werner be the interim county manager when Steve Mokrohisky leaves in April.

The commissioners on March 20 directed staff to work out a contract with Werner. Werner retired last year as manager of Carson City. He is also a former public works director for Douglas County.

Peckham & McKenney has been hired as the recruiting firm. The process is expected to take four to six months.

The salary range for the next county manager will be between \$135,000 and \$185,000. The low end is more than Mokrohisky is currently making.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Rabid skunks in El Dorado County increasing

More rabid skunks have turned up in El Dorado County. The number is at seven.

“While it isn’t unusual to find animals that test positive for rabies in California, the reporting seems early and the activity higher compared to previous years for our county. We

aren't sure if more skunks are active due to the dry winter or we are simply seeing increased reporting by the public," Alicia Paris-Pombo, El Dorado County health officer, said in a statement.

Since the beginning of the year, two rabid skunks were found in Pollock Pines, one in Shingle Springs, three in Garden Valley and one in the Pleasant Valley area. Animal Services is not aware of any human contact with any of the skunks.

Rabies activity has varied from year to year in El Dorado County. Confirmed reports of rabid animals have included:

- 2013, one bat and one skunk
- 2012, one bat and five skunks
- 2011, three bats and three skunks
- 2010, two bats and five skunks
- 2009, two bats, two skunks and two foxes.

Historically, most of the rabid animals have been on the West Slope, with smaller numbers reported in the South Lake Tahoe area.

The following precautions should be taken to prevent the spread of rabies:

- Maintain current rabies vaccinations for dogs, cats and livestock
- Keep property free of garbage, stored bird seed and left over pet food to avoid attracting wild animals; keep pet doors closed at night to avoid entry of wild animals into the home
- Do not approach, pick up, feed or handle unfamiliar dogs, cats or wild animals
- Do not approach an animal that appears to be sick or is acting aggressively; report it to Animal Services
- Do not handle a dead animal with bare hands
- Call Animal Services if you see an animal that exhibits signs of rabies (such as staggering, confusion and/or

aggressive behavior)

- Notify Animal Services immediately of any person or domestic pet that is bitten or potentially exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal
- Report any exposure to bats; bats are one of the most frequent carriers of rabies in California.

Animal Services staff may be reached at 530.573.7925.

CTC close to closing Alta Mira deal in S. Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

It doesn't matter if one is on the street or the beach, the area near the Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe is not visually appealing.

At lake level there is a large pipe coming out of the bluff that is delivering water into Lake Tahoe.

At curbside the structure blocks the view of the lake and the bike path is less than ideal.



Water, this month, flows

from the pipe below the Alta
Mira building in South Lake
Tahoe into Lake Tahoe.
Photo/LTN

All of that is about to change.

While the California Tahoe Conservancy has been talking about acquiring that 0.55-acre parcel for years, the deal is about to close.

At the CTC's board meeting March 20 money was allocated for relocation expenses. This is expected to be no more than \$40,000, though \$120,000 was set aside just in case something goes awry.

The actual purchase could come before the board at the May or June meeting.

In March 2012 the board agreed to enter an 18-month option for the building and land at 3339 Lake Tahoe Blvd. The paperwork was finalized late that year, so the agreement expires this June. The \$10,000 was essentially a down payment so the owner – Alta Mira Partnership – did not sell to someone else.

It is going to cost about \$2.5 million.

"When we negotiated the option we had about a \$500,000 gap. Fortunately, the State Lands Commission stepped up to fill the gap," CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright told the board.

He said the Tahoe Fund, Soroptimist and other groups are focusing on fund-raising efforts so the parcel will be restored. This will likely include dealing with the pipe.

"There is tremendous interest in that we don't just buy it and let it sit there," Wright said.

This area is the end point for what started as the 56-acre project. Beautification from that parcel to El Dorado Beach

would complete the Lakeview Commons project. That will take more than \$4 million to complete. No money is in the bank to start it. (Lakeview Commons cost more than \$6 million.)

The remaining acreage in the bigger project is across the street and includes Campground by the Lake.

Mary McCall told the board she is a bit perturbed because she owns the land to the east of the Alta Mira building and no one from the Conservancy has talked to her about what is going on next door.

McCall is the daughter of Knox Johnson and part of a pioneer family in South Lake Tahoe that still has substantial land holdings. On their property is Don Cheapos ski rentals.

McCall told *Lake Tahoe News* she does not want the history of the area to be lost. After all, it was on what is now Johnson Boulevard where the railroad would come down to the lake by their property, carrying logs when timber was a big commodity in the basin.

After the item was heard by the board McCall spent a significant amount of time with Bruce Eisner, the point man on the project for CTC.

5 people hurt in 2-vehicle accident in Glenbrook



An accident on Highway 50 near Glenbrook on March 20 sends five people to the hospital. Photo/Provided

A two-car accident on Highway 50 in front of the Lakeridge development near Glenbrook sent five people to the hospital.

The March 20 collision occurred about 7:30pm. Traffic was affected for a couple hours.

Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper John Jessee told *Lake Tahoe News* that a white 4Runner driven by a 16-year-old Stateline boy “failed to yield” to approaching traffic. The teen was turning left toward Zephyr Cove.

The youth claimed the vehicle stalled. Jessee said based on how the SUV spun it was evident it was not moving when it was hit.

“Either way, it was still a failure to yield,” Jessee said. And he was cited for failing to yield.

A woman heading toward Cave Rock hit the SUV, causing the 4Runner to spin around. The boy did not seek medical attention. The female driver of the Highlander and her four passengers were taken to Barton Memorial Hospital in South Lake Tahoe. The driver is from Carson City and passengers from Gardnerville.

Jesse said he did not expect the women to be admitted to the

hospital.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Cholesterol guidelines could mean statins for more people

By Richard Knox, NPR

When sweeping new advice on preventing heart attacks and strokes came out last November, it wasn't clear how many more Americans should be taking daily statin pills to lower their risk.

A new analysis provides an answer: a whole lot. Nearly 13 million more, to be precise.

If the guidelines were followed to the letter, about half of all Americans over 40 would be on cholesterol-lowering statins – more than double the current level.

Read the whole story