

NV Energy customers allowed to keep old-style meters

By Eli Segall, Las Vegas Sun

Facing pressure from state officials and customers, NV Energy will let ratepayers continue using old-style meters instead of switching to new digital ones.

The power company, which serves about 90 percent of Nevada's population, said Wednesday it will offer an analog meter to customers who do not want a digital "smart meter," which transmits power-usage data from a home or business directly to the utility.

Customers critical of smart meters have said they would rather keep their existing analog reader. But under NV Energy's plan, those meters will be replaced with "refurbished" ones to ensure that all company readers meet industry standards for accuracy, the utility said.

NV Energy is advising customers not to call to schedule an installation, as the company must still file more paperwork with the state Public Utilities Commission. Once approved, the company said, it will contact people who have said they do not want a smart meter and set up an appointment for the new analog one.

The PUC has estimated that 4,500 consumers in Clark County and 3,000 in Northern Nevada do not want a smart meter.

NV Energy's announcement came hours after the PUC voted 2-1 to give NV Energy more discretion in choosing an alternative meter, leaving open the possibility that customers could keep their current analog readers. In his dissent, Commissioner David Noble said the analog meters are inadequate and run slower with age.

The commission on Wednesday also OK'd lowering customers' installation costs of an alternative meter to \$52 from the previously approved \$107.

At the hearing, Commission Chairman Alaina Burtenshaw said there was a "good indication" that dissatisfied customers wanted to keep their analog readers or make the company replace the smart meters with analogs.

"This is a win for the people," Dan Jacobsen, technical staff manager for the state Bureau of Consumer Protection, said of the vote. "The commission gave them what they wanted."

Las Vegas-based NV Energy plans to replace all 1.35 million of its analog meters with digital ones. Some 1.22 million smart meters had been installed statewide as of late November.

Nevadans have complained, with little proof, that smart meters can cause hair loss, insomnia, birth defects, DNA damage, brain-wave alteration and terrorist attacks.

An Energy Department report said many companies had not done enough to protect smart meters from hackers. Also, a branch of the World Health Organization in 2011 reportedly called radio-frequency radiation from cellphones, utility meters and other devices a "possible carcinogen."

**Scientist: Consumers have
role in climate change;
forecast for Tahoe bleak**

because of less snow

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – While China was the No. 1 fossil fuel emitting country in 2011, what is missing from most conversations is who is consuming all the goods that country is producing.

A significant amount of CO₂ emissions comes from making things. And it is people in the United States who are buying those things made in China.

This was one of the points driven home Thursday by Chris Field – that consumers have a role to play and must be held accountable, just as the polluter does and should be.

Field was the keynote speaker Jan. 10 at the Operation Sierra Storm Meteorologist Conference in Stateline. The four-day conference ends Saturday.

The scientist was part of the team that won the 2007 Nobel Prize and lead author of the study on the effects of global climate change.



Scientist Chris Field
on Jan. 10 talks about

climate change.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

Field explained how it was thought when the 1997 Kyoto Protocols were adopted that developing nations had a long ways to go to catch the industrialized nations when it came to emissions. That theory was proved wrong.

In 2011, the top four emitters in the world accounted for 62 percent of global emissions: China – 28 percent; United States – 16 percent; Europe – 11 percent, and India – 7 percent.

But that is not the whole story.

“Per capita, China’s emissions are one-quarter what they are per capita compared to the United States,” Field told the group gathered at Harveys casino.

Based on data from the Mauna Loa Observatory he said there is proof atmospheric CO₂ has increased 40 percent since the 1950s.

Beyond that, ice cores extracted from Antarctica can show scientists what was going on thousands of years ago.

To simulate how small amounts of particles can change the composition of the atmosphere, Field took two 1-liter bottles of water. Into one he inserted drops of red dye to represent the amount of CO₂ released in the atmosphere during the Industrial Age.

Then he shined a red light and green light through the now pink water. The red went through, the green did not. The experiment was to show selective absorption – which is what happens in the atmosphere.

“Heat trapping gas alters climate,” Field said.

And while it has been proved fossil fuels are altering the atmosphere, which in turn changes climate, Field readily

admits, “Mostly we live in a fossil fuel powered world.”

For Lake Tahoe, a diminishing snowpack and greater threat of wildfire are two of the key factors as climate change continues to take hold.

“Snowpack is vital to the economy and ecosystem. There is a clear trend of warming in mountain ranges. Snow melts earlier each spring,” Field said.

He said some models show the snowpack in the Sierra diminishing by 50 percent by the end of the century, while other models say it will be 90 percent.

This in turn will lead to greater wildfires because the brush will be so much drier. The threat is already there because the time between snowmelt and first storms is getting longer.

Another consequence of less snowpack is less water reaching the agricultural heartland of California. Farmers in the Central Valley grow crops with irrigated water – from reservoirs that have been filled from Sierra snow.

Field said it is going to take technology, leadership and cultural change to alter the course the world is on when it comes to climate change.

Panelists warn lawmakers about challenges of online

gambling

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

As the prospect of passage of federal legislation legalizing online poker play continues to dim, several states are looking to move independently to offer various forms of Internet gambling.

But panelists in Sunday's closing session of the National Council of Legislators from Gaming States had cautionary advice for lawmakers: Glean as much regulatory expertise as you can find, stay ahead of the technology curve and be prepared for a lot of disagreement.

The council concluded three days of meetings that brought about 100 lawmakers and regulators from 21 states, a Canadian province and Washington, D.C., to the Rio. Representatives of several American Indian tribes that operate casinos also attended.

Late last year, the council adopted a resolution on its position on federal Internet gaming legislation. Citing states' rights in the oversight of public policy within their borders, the council stated that it would oppose any federal legislation that would diminish state policymakers' authority over gaming within their states.

The organization in late November notified Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Arizona Sen. Jon Kyl, who at the time were considering a last-ditch effort to bring Internet poker legislation to a vote, and other members of Congress of its position.

Lobbyists for the gaming industry, most notably the American Gaming Association, support federal legislation so that companies that operate in multiple states can have a consistent Internet gaming policy nationwide. The bill that

Reid and Kyl have proposed would allow states to opt out of participating in iGaming.

Now that the council, which represents state lawmakers from several states that have some form of commercial or tribal gambling, has taken that position, many members are educating themselves about the industry and the issues. Sunday's panel included five Internet gaming experts, including two Las Vegas attorneys that have been on the front lines of the debate in Nevada.

Tony Cabot of the Lewis & Roca law firm, who also is an adjunct instructor in gaming law at UNLV, told lawmakers that Nevada has learned a great deal since it began issuing licenses to companies to operate intrastate Internet poker in 2012.

"Even the most experienced people are not completely ready to regulate online play," Cabot said. "You will need at least a year before a regulatory body can competently regulate it. If New Jersey thinks they can do it in three months, they're kidding themselves."

New Jersey recently became the second state to approve legislation to conduct Internet gambling.

Cabot said it took Nevada regulators six months to determine what companies and individuals needed to be investigated for licensure because it wasn't just the oversight of games that needed review but the means of communication. Many of the regulations for poker play in casino poker rooms could be used for online poker, but state officials also had to review player eligibility verification by age and geography, the prevention of collusion and security concerns.

"You can be sure that hackers, cheats and scoundrels will try to hack the system," Cabot said. "There will be persons trying to defeat the verification systems. They'll find the weakest of the jurisdictions and compromise those jurisdictions."

Toni Cowan of the Catania & Ehrlich law firm said she didn't think most government entities realize how rapidly technology is changing the industry – which is one of the reasons she has more confidence in states regulating gaming than the federal government.

Federal lawmakers approved the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to oversee aspects of tribal gaming, but she said the legislation “treats gambling and games as if they’ve been frozen in time.”

“Progressive states like Nevada and New Jersey are constantly changing their gambling legislation to try to keep up with changing technology,” Cowan said. “The federal government has done nothing, mostly due to political reasons.”

Panelists told lawmakers there are other things states must do if they are going to effectively oversee Internet gaming.

Kimberly Arnold, co-manager of the Denver-based Innovation Group, said it would be important for states to watch how social media sites affect the gaming landscape. Her company also is studying the potential of online casinos cannibalizing land-based casinos if Internet play is legalized.

Panelist Mark Hichar, a lawyer with the Hinckley, Allen & Snyder law firm in Boston, told lawmakers they'll also need to pay attention to the lottery industry.

Lottery directors from Iowa and Kentucky were among the state officials that lobbied against the Reid-Kyl online poker legislation. Some state lotteries already have moved into online lottery ticket sales, with Illinois and Georgia lotteries beginning sales last year.

And then there was panelist Michael Fagan of the St. Louis-based Center for Advanced Prosecution, who suggested that state lawmakers keep online gaming illegal.

“Public opinion polls show an overwhelming majority of

Americans don't want Internet poker casinos or other forms of Internet casino gambling legalized," Fagan said.

He said the Reid-Kyl bill is "deceitfully titled" (the Gambling Prohibition, Poker Consumer Protection Act) and that analysts say the Internet poker business model is unsustainable.

"If Congress legalizes Internet casinos, it would put the federal government into the gambling business for the first time in modern American history," Fagan said. "Governments should protect, not exploit, their people. For those with genuine concern about the supposed ambiguity of the (federal) Wire Act, a simple legislative fix effectively broadening the scope of the Wire Act to more clearly include all forms of gambling and all types of communication facilities, including the Internet, is all that is required."

Sugar Bowl implements chairlift changes after boy's death

By Stephen Magagnini, Sacramento Bee

A year after John Henderson, an avid 7-year-old skier from Davis, fell off a chairlift to his death, Sugar Bowl has announced a comprehensive chairlift safety program inspired by the boy's parents.

The improvements recommended by John's mom and dad – UC Davis Medical Center doctors Helen Chew and Mark Henderson – include live video cameras at each lift and the lowering of the safety

bar for kids under 51 inches, who aren't allowed to ride without adults.

"John had a certain light about him, and the best way to honor his memory is to do something positive," said Henderson, associate dean of admissions at UC Davis Medical School. "For a long time, we didn't even want to get up in the morning."

John, 43 inches tall, was a second-grader at North Davis Elementary who rode the chair with two teammates on the Sugar Bowl ski team.

At 11:15am Dec. 18, 2011, John was riding the Mount Lincoln express chairlift when he fell 52 feet. Though he wore a helmet, he died of head trauma two days later.

"It's very rare for somebody to fall out of a chair," said Michael Berry, president of the National Ski Areas Association. "It's usually at the beginning or the end of the lift, not midride."

Sugar Bowl, on its website, said 13 new safety measures are being adopted this season because "ultimately our safety program was insufficient to prevent this tragedy."

The ski team coach allowed the three boys to board without supervision, and "we also believe the chairlift restraint bar was not lowered properly at the loading terminal and children of this age were unable to lower the bar themselves," the resort said.

A 10-month investigation into the youngster's death was inconclusive because of "conflicting accounts and few direct eyewitnesses," but found no evidence of horseplay by the other kids.

Sugar Bowl's risk manager, Nicole Lieberman, said the resort worked closely with John's parents to craft the new chairlift safety measures.

“They have undergone an unspeakable tragedy and they chose to deal with that by working with Sugar Bowl and the industry to see what could be done differently,” Lieberman said. “Working with them has been amazing and inspiring. We had many meetings, phone conversations and emails looking at lift safety.”

The resort, 90 minutes from Sacramento on Donner Summit, averages 230,000 visitors a year and has 13 chairlifts and a gondola, Lieberman said.

The new safety measures this season include:

- The installation of a web-based camera at chairlift loading stations to monitor the loading process, lift operators and riders.

“The camera was our suggestion, so you can diagnose a problem and use it to change procedures and give feedback to a lift operator who isn’t putting the bar down,” said Henderson, who with his wife spent months studying ski-lift safety. “Most accidents occur because of problems with loading.”

Sugar Bowl believes it’s the first resort in the country to have cameras at chairlifts, Lieberman said.

- Skiers and snowboarders will ski up to a 51-inch mascot, the “safety bear,” and those shorter than that will not be allowed to ride the chair without an adult.

Henderson said they got the idea from the height requirement for rides at Disneyland.

Sugar Bowl developed the height stations with Mammoth Mountain, Lieberman said. “These are the first height stations I’m aware of,” said Berry, who represents more than 300 resorts.

- Sugar Bowl installed bull’s-eye targets on the chair seats on three of its chairlifts so far – an idea the Hendersons

borrowed from Canyons Resort in Park City. "It's been really quite phenomenal to watch children and adults aim for those bull's-eyes to help riders sit back on the seats and be properly spaced apart," Lieberman said.

- Sugar Bowl installed a training chairlift in the base area that patrons can practice on, Lieberman said. "We plan to install another one," she said. "We're really focusing on education and outreach."

- The resort will train lift operators and ski team coaches in lifts and promote lift safety through the National Ski Areas Association.

Berry said a ski safety website, www.kidsonlifts.org, "was inspired by John Henderson."

"The legacy of this tragedy is that it's not repeated," Berry said.

Chew, professor of medicine and director of the clinical breast cancer program at the UCD Med Center, said she and her husband had no interest in filing a lawsuit against the resort.

"That was never our intention," Chew said. "If we could actually get the resort to make some lasting changes and lead the industry in chairlift safety, that would be the best outcome and could affect generations of kids."

Henderson and his wife and son Paul, 17, still ski Sugar Bowl. "The anniversary of John's death was Dec. 20, and it's been a very difficult couple of weeks around Christmas without him," Henderson said. "But I think these are wonderful changes."

Proposal would revamp standardized tests in California

By Theresa Harrington, Contra Costa Times

SACRAMENTO – California's schools chief on Tuesday called for sweeping changes in the standardized tests that measure student achievement, dispensing for the most part with multiple choice questions in favor of more rigorous, thought-provoking exams.

As part of an overhaul of the state's curriculum standards, the STAR tests familiar to every parent and student would be transformed in two years with requirements for in-depth essays and projects that students will complete on computers. The changes proposed by state Superintendent Tom Torlakson go far beyond the tests themselves, impacting how teachers teach and how students learn.

While Torlakson's proposal must be approved by the governor and Legislature, it is almost certain to be adopted in some form. It aligns the state's instruction and testing with a recently-adopted set of Common Core State Standards for curriculum that are being phased in now by some school districts, with required implementation by 2014-15. Those standards seek to deepen learning by, for example, requiring students to read informational texts as well as fiction and dig deeper into mathematical concepts as well as memorizing tables.

"Multiple-choice, fill-in-the-bubble tests alone simply cannot do the job anymore, and it's time for California to move forward with assessments that measure the real-world skills our students need to be ready for a career and for college," said Torlakson, a former teacher in East Bay schools. "As a

teacher, what's most exciting is that these new tests will serve as models for the kind of high-quality teaching and learning we want in every classroom every day."

California's Standardized Testing and Reporting, or STAR, tests are administered to every public school student beginning in the second grade. The test results are used to rank the state's schools, determining which ones need to bolster their instruction and, in some cases, which ones will get extra money or need different leadership to perform better. But the multiple-choice-only tests have long been criticized for forcing teachers to focus on dull lesson plans heavy on rote memorization.

Torlakson's other recommendations include:

Assess college readiness using English language arts and math tests taken by all high school juniors.

Develop science tests based on new curriculum standards to be adopted next fall.

Create or use other new tests for students with severe cognitive disabilities.

Determine whether it will still be necessary to administer tests in alternate languages, since new assessments are expected to include language supports and accommodations.

Discontinue required tests for second grade and create a state-approved list of tests in math and English language arts for second-graders to be used voluntarily by schools.

Consider alternatives to the California High School Exit Exam.

\$235 million Yosemite Valley renovation plan unveiled

By Mark Grossi, Fresno Bee

The National Park Service is calling for a \$235 million renovation of world-renowned Yosemite Valley – featuring a pedestrian underpass near Yosemite Falls and a limit on visitors during crowded times.

The changes are part of the embattled Merced River Plan, a draft of which was released Tuesday. Yosemite Lodge, listed for removal in an earlier option, will be retained. There will be more campsites, too.

But popular Curry Village Ice Rink will be torn out. Bicycle and raft rentals also will go away, though visitors still can bring their bikes and rafts, said Kathleen Morse, Yosemite chief of planning.

“There’s a limited amount of space in Yosemite Valley,” she said. “People are more interested in day-use parking and more campsites.”

The \$235 million would come from several Yosemite National Park income sources, including entrance and concessions franchise fees, leaders said. No additional money is needed from Congress, they said. The projects will be spread out over 15 to 20 years, Morse added.

This is the third time the park service has written the Merced River Plan. The previous two were stopped by a lawsuit, which succeeded in forcing the park service to specify a visitor limit.

The activist group Friends of Yosemite Valley led the legal protests. Representatives spoke with park officials throughout

the planning process. However, activists declined immediate comment because they had not yet seen the 2,500-page draft environmental document.

In the last decade or so, more than 10,000 people have commented on the park's proposals for protecting the Merced River, the main stream through the 7-square-mile valley.

About 4 million people visit Yosemite each year, and up to 70 percent pass through the valley to see iconic landmarks such as El Capitan, Half Dome and Yosemite Falls.

The public will have until April 18 to comment on the draft environmental document for the plan. By court order, Yosemite must have a final plan in place by late July.

Officials say they are optimistic that the plan will pass muster this time, but there is no guarantee that another lawsuit will not be filed.

Morse said that in creating the plan over the last three years, federal leaders had dozens of public meetings in many cities and paid more than \$1 million for further research.

"It's the most extensive outreach and research I've seen," said Morse, a 25-year veteran of public service.

The visitor limit is 19,900 visitors per day, just shy of the 20,900 peak estimated in 2011, Morse said. To keep an eye on crowding, park rangers will monitor the traffic and parking while communicating with park service employees about incoming visitors at the gates.

When the valley becomes too congested, cars will be diverted to a new parking area on the west end of the valley, Morse said. Or visitors can go to other parts of Yosemite, including Glacier Point or Tuolumne Meadows.

Gate closures and day-use permits are not among the features in the preferred alternative of the draft environmental

document.

Morse said day-use parking will increase from 2,337 spaces to 2,448, and campsites would go from 466 to 640. About 200 acres of meadows and riverside areas will be restored, she said.

The pedestrian underpass at Northside Drive will eliminate a bottleneck that backs up traffic as people cross the street from Yosemite Lodge to view Yosemite Falls.

“The concern is not that there is too much traffic,” Morse said. “It’s a bad intersection because a lot of vehicles leaving the valley must pass through.”

Missing snowboarder spent the night at a hotel

Updated Jan. 10 11:45am

A missing snowboarder from Gardnerville said he spent the night at the Horizon hotel-casino with an acquaintance.

He called his dad about 9am Thursday to say he was fine. According to deputies who spoke with Corey Hoffman, he was unaware a search had started the previous evening at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

“After a lengthy interview with Corey and his brother who had reported him missing, we are unable to determine exactly what transpired,” Douglas County Undersheriff Paul Howell said in a statement. “The details are conflicting due to the consumption of alcohol.”

Hoffman claims he and his brother became separated at a bar in

the Heavenly Village. The brother believes they became separated on the mountain.

The sheriff's department reports the search involved 75 people from several jurisdictions and volunteer organizations, and two helicopters at an estimated to cost \$40,000.

"More importantly in needlessly risked the safety of search and rescue personnel who conducted this search in bad weather and hazardous terrain," Howell said.

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Updated: Jan. 10 10:25am

Missing snowboarder Corey Hoffman has been found alive. More details to come.

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Weather and avalanche conditions are hampering efforts to locate a Gardnerville man on Heavenly Mountain Resort.

Corey Hoffman, 24, was snowboarding with his brother Jan. 9 when they got separated. Hoffman has not been seen since Wednesday afternoon.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies believe he is still on the mountain because Hoffman's vehicle was located in the parking lot of the resort. The man's cell phone was found in the vehicle.

Rescue teams plan to concentrate on the Mott Canyon and Daggett Creek drainages on the east slope and the in-bound ski areas near Stagecoach Lodge. Because Hoffman was boarding in and out of bounds Wednesday search efforts will include both in and out of bound areas.

Hoffman was wearing black snow pants, black sweat shirt, and brown hat with fur trim and black boots. He has an orange

Camelback pack and has a red snowboard.

Douglas County Search and Rescue, El Dorado County SAR and Heavenly ski patrol searched throughout the night. Their efforts have been hampered by snow, wind, and avalanche danger.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office and Tahoe Nordic will join the effort today. It's possible a Navy search helicopter from NAS Fallon will be part of the search.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

DCSD wins decision to negotiate step increases

By Anne Knowles

MINDEN – Some Douglas County School District support staff have to wait another month to receive pay increases due them since July 2012.

The county's school district board of trustees was scheduled this week to vote on ratification of a long-negotiated contract agreement with the Douglas County Support Staff Organization, which is the bargaining unit representing 240 secretaries, food service, custodial personnel and other support staff.



The yearlong negotiations ended up in arbitration when the two parties could not agree on employees so-called step increases, or salary increases, which in the past were automatically triggered when employees met certain time-related milestones.

"Since 1996, they've been given to us and have never before been part of the negotiations," Nancy Hamlett, the organization's president, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Contract discussions dragged on last year, says Hamlett, over whether the step increases could be negotiated in every contract.

"If I were to rate the negotiations, I would give them an F," said Hamlett.

After the parties could not come to an agreement at a July 9, 2012, meeting, the issue went to an arbitrator, who decided in the district's favor. The decision is final and cannot be appealed. Arbitrator William E. Riker issued his decision Dec. 20.

The employee organization, though, has not had a chance to meet and vote on the contract since finding out the arbitration decision after the holiday break. The board of trustees always votes on contracts after the employees' groups approve them. During the Jan. 8 board meeting, Neil Freitas and other board members said they were worried ratifying the contract first would set a bad precedent and could be misconstrued as trying to force employees into an agreement.

Hamlett said she could hold a vote within the week. Assuming the employees vote to approve, Sharla Hales, president of the board of trustees, said the item could be put on the consent calendar for the board's next meeting on Jan. 25. If the board approves the contract then, employees would receive their step increases in their paychecks issued Feb. 15.

Seventy-three support staff employees are due an average of a 5 percent pay increase. The term of the agreement is from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2013.

Nevada is a right-to-work state so while the organization bargains for 240 employees, it has 137 members who can vote on the contract.

During Tuesday's meeting, after a closed-door session, the board of trustees also voted to approve an agreement with three types of non-represented employees – confidential employees, classified supervisory and professional employees. The first two don't receive any pay increase, but step and longevity will be paid through 2013 retroactive to July 1, 2012. The professional agreement is from 2011-16 and any pay increases will be based on individual performance.

In other action:

- The board was told no offers were made to buy the Kingsbury Middle School so the Stateline building will remain on the market. The board may accept the highest qualified bid at or above \$4 million, the property's appraised value.
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Southwest Gas wants to increase rates

Southwest Gas bills are likely to go for people in El Dorado County.

The utility says the average residential customer's monthly bill for 73 therms would increase \$7.21 to \$73.41.

The Las Vegas-based company filed the increase request with the California Public Utility Commission on Dec. 20. The goal is to increase its 2014 authorized operating margin for natural gas service in El Dorado County by \$2,716,647 or 13.6 percent.

Southwest also wants post-test year increases for 2015 through 2018, which would become effective Jan. 1 of each year.

According to the company, it wants to "recover the reasonable costs the company will incur to own and operate the facilities used to maintain and provide safe and reliable natural gas service to its California customers."

Written comments on the proposed increase may be sent to: San Francisco Office (Headquarters), 505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102. For more info, email public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov or call 866.836.7825.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Ex-LTBMU Forest Service chief Bob Harris killed

By Kathryn Reed

Bob Harris, former forest supervisor of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, has died. He was 72.

"He was quite an environmentalist, but also a professionally knowledgeable land manager. He was able to balance environmental ethics with land and conservation knowledge," Bill Morgan said of his friend of 47 years.

Harris led the local U.S. Forest Service office from 1988-97. He arrived at a time when the Forest Service Plan was being finalized and left as the Environmental Improvement Program was being launched.

Harris was a key figure in having then President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore visit the basin in what was the inaugural Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit in 1997.



Bob Harris

"One of the legacies of that monumental visit was some funding for the first time by federal sources to invest in the future of Lake Tahoe's health," Don Lane, long-time Forest Service employee, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The EIP was the legacy of that visit. Bob was very much engaged in facilitating that."

Harris followed Morgan a bit career-wise. Both were engineers

to start with. When Morgan left the Tahoe National Forest, Harris took his engineering job.

Morgan was a supervisor of the LTBMU before Harris. During part of Harris' tenure Morgan was executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

"I think the most outstanding characteristic about him was he was a high-energy guy. He never turned down a request when someone needed something," Morgan told *Lake Tahoe News*.

They both also had a profound interest in the Tahoe-Baikal Institute; having traveled together to Russia. It was Harris who recruited Morgan to be on the board of directors.

"He would take young people from the Baikal Institute on long hikes in the mountains and tell them about forest management and the history of Lake Tahoe," Morgan said.

Harris grew up in Oakland. He graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in civil engineering.

In the last 1960s he helped design the Taylor Creek Visitors Center, including the stream profile center. He also worked on trails in Desolation and Meiss wilderness areas.

As Harris progressed up the ranks and took over the Lake Tahoe office, his love of the outdoors did not diminish.

"He liked to go in the backcountry a lot. You usually don't get people who are that physically engaged," Lane said. He remembers that time fondly – being out with the big boss, sitting around a campfire, sleeping on the hard granite, going over mountains and hiking through meadows.

Lane said it was Harris' collaborative management style that allowed him to accomplish various tasks with people of differing opinions.

Although Harris retired in 1997, he still visited the local

Forest Service office, always with a smile.

“He pushed Forest Service retirees – (saying) don’t just quit, stay involved,” Lane said. “He really pioneered a lot of education and community education programs.”

Harris died from a gunshot wound Jan. 6 at his Pollock Pines home. His 70-year-old wife, Colleen, is accused of murder.

Harris is survived by two sons and a daughter. Funeral services are pending.