Biting cold to sweep through Tahoe region

By Kathryn Reed

While no records are expected to be broken in the next week, it's going to get even colder in the Tahoe-Truckee area in the coming days.

Wednesday morning is expected to be the coldest, according to the National Weather Service in Reno. Most lows will be in the teens, though Truckee may hit 5 degrees.

Record lows for this area are below zero, which isn't expected to occur with the series of storms that are lined up to the west.

The initial system will bring more cold than moisture.

"The snow level is going to be tough to predict with this one. We are still working out numbers on that," Zach Tolby, meteorologist with the Weather Service, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's going to start cold, warm up and then cool down so the snow level will fluctuate a lot as the storm comes in this weekend."

Not only are the snow levels unknown right now, but the amount of white stuff also isn't being predicted.

The bulk of rain and snow is expected to reach Tahoe on Thursday and Friday. The weekend system is not expected to be as strong.

With the cold temps it means area ski resorts have been able to make snow. Add that to what Mother Nature will be dropping, and it means more terrain will be opening.

Law requires USFS to increase use of volunteers

By Kathryn Reed

President Obama last week signed the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.

“The act places increased focus on the need for maintenance of the more than 158,000 miles of trails managed by the Forest Service. Specific details of how various requirements of the act will be implemented will be determined as the agency begins to explore and consider the most effective methods for addressing each component and requirement,” Babete Anderson, national press officer with the U.S. Forest Service, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

She said at this time it is too soon to know specifically how it will affect Lake Tahoe and the surrounding forests.

A main component of the legislation is for the Forest Service to partner with more organizations and volunteers when it comes to trail maintenance.

The Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit has been doing that very thing in recent years. Work with TAMBA to build bike trails is a primary example.

According to the American Hiking Society, “In 2013, the Government Accountability Office conducted a study of U.S. Forest Service trails that revealed a $314 million backlog in trail maintenance and that only one-fourth of all Forest Service trails met the agency’s standards for trail maintenance. Having more miles of trails (158,000) than any

other federal agency, the U.S. Forest Service trail maintenance backlog has been a significant concern to American Hiking Society and our members. This new law will help address the backlog, restore trails that are either closed or on the cusp of closing, and connect more Americans with their public lands."

This was a bipartisan bill in the Senate and House.

USFS to upgrade Taylor Creek area

By Kathryn Reed

Improvements to the ecosystem near Taylor Creek as well as the physical structures is expected to begin in May.

The work will be done in phases across multiple years, and all work is dependent on funding.

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Forest Supervisor Jeff Marsolais signed off on the decision last month.

Changes from the original proposal include eliminating work on the Fallen Leaf Dam and old Lucky Baldwin Dam. This is because of their complexity. Work on the dams will be looked at in the future as separate projects.

"… the selected alternative will begin restoring ecological processes and functions in Taylor and Tallac creeks and the greater wetland-marsh area by eradicating or controlling aquatic invasive species, improving hydrological connectivity of the swales and creeks, and upgrading infrastructure to guide public use and protect natural resources. The project

will also enhance existing recreational facilities and infrastructure, and enhance opportunities for universally accessible, non-motorized access," the decision says.

This area of the South Shore encompasses about 2,600 acres. Taylor Creek Visitors Center and Baldwin Beach are part of the project area.

The Forest Service acknowledges that this area has become neglected, has thousands of dollars of deferred maintenance that needs addressed, and that the habitat is degraded from overuse. The Rainbow Trail often floods.

Restoration efforts at Taylor Creek Visitor Center would include upgrading the stream profile chamber to meet contemporary building codes and reconfiguring the Rainbow Trail to reduce impacts to the stream environment zone, such as raising sections of trail or replacing them with boardwalks.

The current center was designed in 1960s. Bats and mice infested the upstairs. While that problem was taken care of long ago, the area cannot be used.

A price tag on all of the work has not been calculated. A previous estimate of just replacing the visitor center was seven figures.

Tahoe bear activity slows as hibernation begins

By Paul Nelson, KTVN-TV

Anyone living in the Sierra knows there are precautions to

take in order to keep bears away from their homes, cars and garbage dumpsters. Now that the temperature is colder and the snow has started falling, it’s time for bears to take their long, winter nap.

“Bears should be either denning up and actually in the den, hibernating, or preparing to do so,” Chris Healy, Nevada Department of Wildlife spokesman, said.

Bears normally begin hibernating between Thanksgiving and Christmas, and this year does not appear to be any different. NDOW collects data from 18 collared bears in the Lake Tahoe Basin and the Sierra Front, which shows their activity is slowing down.

Read the whole story

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3 U.S. women in top 15 in Lake Louise downhill

By USSA

LAKE LOUISE, Canada – The American women stacked three in the top 15 on the second day of downhill in Lake Louise, led by Laurenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) in seventh place. Friday’s top American Stacey Cook (Mammoth Lakes) was 11th and Mikaela Shiffrin (Eagle-Vail, Colo.), in only her second Audi FIS Ski World Cup downhill, was 13th.

Ilka Stuhec of Slovenia wore a red bib marking her as the World Cup leader in downhill after a surprise win on Friday, and showed that the win wasn’t a fluke. She skied to victory again, ahead of Switzerland’s Lara Gut in second and Edit

Miklos of Hungary in third.

Ross was happy with her result, pointing out the conditions that hindered racers starting behind her. “There was a lot of sun at the very beginning of the race and I think for every person, the sun was less and less,” said Ross. “But that’s ski racing. I got lucky … I’m happy with the result.”

While Shiffrin still plans to focus on giant slalom and slalom, she was excited to count two solid downhill results under her belt with an 18th place finish in Friday’s race. “I’m sure I’ll do another (downhill) this year,” said Shiffrin. “I love it, so I’ll for sure be back on the downhill circuit, but I have to keep sight of my real goals this season.”

After a great result in Friday’s race, Breezy Johnson (Jackson, Wyo.) again skied into the points, taking 21st. Alice McKennis (New Castle, Colo.) and Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore.) also grabbed points, snagging 26th and 30th, respectively. Leanne Smith (North Conway, N.H.) was 34th and Anna Marno (Steamboat Springs, Colo.) did not finish.

Multiple controlled burns planned for basin

The Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, California Tahoe Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service will continue prescribed fire operations next week as conditions allow.

Operations may take place in multiple locations around Lake Tahoe including Glenbrook, Cave Rock, Round Hill, Lower Kingsbury Grade, South Lake Tahoe, Tahoe Paradise and Meyers.

To view a map with project locations and details, go **online**.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions.

U.S. men miss podium in downhill

By USSA

VAL D'ISERE, France – Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) led the American's in the first downhill of the season in 15th Saturday at the Audi FIS Ski World Cup.

Norway's Kjetil Jansrud won for the second-straight day after taking Friday's super G victory. Peter Fill of Italy was second. Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway, who was second in Friday's super G, finished third.

An early November storm dropped upwards of 10 feet of snow on the top of the course in Val d'Isere. However, rain fell on the lower slopes during the same storm. Organizers were able to make enough snow on the lower slopes to host the event, but the conditions proved challenging for the racers, with extremely aggressive snow.

"The snow is super aggressive," Nyman said. "You're going from natural snow (up top), to really grippy (snow), to dense

wet stuff and it’s hard to adapt.”

“It was just crazy,” added Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.), who finished 37th. “The snow was so much more aggressive than it has been over the past days. My skis were too sharp and I’m just happy to be down. I had a couple close calls.”

Other American finishers included Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) in 22nd, Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) in 48th and Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) in 56th.

Dirt roads in Eldorado forest closed for season

The annual seasonal closure of dirt roads in the Eldorado National Forest took effect this week.

Rainfall, soil moisture, road and trail conditions, and weather forecasts are factors that trigger a seasonal closure earlier than Jan. 1. The roads will remain closed until at least April 1.

The seasonal closure is designed to protect roadbeds and watersheds from damage and to protect water quality.

Roads subject to seasonal closure are identified on a map that is free-of-charge and available at all Eldorado National Forest offices and **online**. The seasonal closure does not affect routes in the Rock Creek Area of the Eldorado National Forest near Georgetown, which has its own route closure process.

Ganong takes 7th in first super G of season

By USSA

VAL D'ISERE, France – Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) and Ryan Cochran-Siegle (Starksboro, Vt.) brushed aside the disappointment of losing home field advantage by leading the U.S. to seventh- and 15th-place, respectively, in today's Audi FIS Ski World Cup super G.

Norway took the top two spots on the podium with Kjetil Jansrud winning his 15th career World Cup. Aksel Lund Svindal, who is back after suffering a season-ending knee injury in Kitzbuehel last season, was second. Italy's Dominik Paris was third.

The Dec. 2 race was scheduled for Beaver Creek, Colo. However, weather conditions forced the FIS to relocate the Birds of Prey events to Val d'Isere for the opening speed World Cup, where the men are racing for the first time sine 2007. Ganong's result, his sixth career top-10 World Cup result, came from the 27th start position.

"Seventh place from that start position is a really solid result and I can build off of that. It's a good way to start the season," said Ganong, who was bumped from the top 20 on the start list due to a new start order, which allows athletes with 500 overall World Cup points to be slotted in after the first seed. "I kind of got screwed (on the start order) and I was pretty bummed out last night."

Equally as impressive was Cochran-Siegle's 15th-place finish, a career-best World Cup result, which came from the 61st start

position. This was Cochran-Siegle's first World Cup super G since his injury in 2013, when he blew his ACL and MCL while racing the downhill portion of the alpine combined at the Schladming World Championships.

Other American finishers included Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) 18th; Ted Ligety (Park City) 29th; Steve Nyman (Sundance, Utah) 33rd; Brennan Rubie (Salt Lake City) 34th; Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) 50th; Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) 53rd.

South Tahoe hockey team wins regional title



Tahoe Grizzlies Pee Wee A hockey team from South Lake Tahoe won the regional tournament. Photo/Provided

Tahoe Grizzlies Pee Wee A hockey team won the 2016 Silver

Stick Regional Tournament last weekend at San Jose's Sharks Ice.

The team was undefeated (5-0) for the tournament. This is the team's second consecutive regional Silver Stick Tournament championship.

The Grizzlies downed the San Francisco Sabercats 3-2 in the championship game, getting the winning goal with just 12.7 seconds left.

With the title, Tahoe advances to the International Silver Stick Finals on Jan. 19-22 in Port Heron, Mich.

"I'm extremely proud of this team," Grizzlies coach Mike Gunderson said. "They've worked hard to get to this point and have really come together as a team – many have been teammates going on two years or more now. Everyone on the team contributed during the tournament – all were represented on score sheet."

Other Tahoe Grizzlies hockey teams played their hearts out at the tournament, however did not qualify in their respective divisions to the international tournament.

The Grizzlies Pee Wee A team is currently in first place in their regular season standings with a 4-0-1 record.

– Provided to Lake Tahoe News