

Volunteers needed for Truckee River Day

Truckee River at The 21st annual Truckee River Day is Oct. 16.

Volunteers have the choice of a half or full day to work on restoration projects, with different levels of difficulty. There will be 10-12 projects including restoration at Dry Creek in Russel Valley, seeding and mulching at Elizabethtown in Martis Valley, Aspen protection along Alder Creek, and tree planting in Tahoe Donner. Projects start at 9am or 11am and finish between 2 and 3pm.

The River Fair will be from 1-4pm at Granite Flat Campground, with a special event at 3pm. This community event is presented in partnership with Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships. The fair features environmental activities for kids and adults. Food will be provided free of charge by Northstar.

To participate in this year's restoration projects, go **online**. The deadline for registration is Oct. 12.

Virginia City hosting zombie run

Redrun will once again take over Virginia City by transforming the historic ghost town into the aftermath of Armageddon.

The Oct. 8 event has been named one of the best zombie events in the nation by Yahoo and one of the top quirky races in Nevada by Travel Nevada. Runners must fight off zombies who are trying to take their flags while they maneuver through the historic landmarks of Virginia City, obstacle courses, and attacks of “blood” bombs. Runners may choose to take on the 6.66-mile course or the shorter 3.33-mile course. Participants can also register to be a zombie or a member of the living insane.

Every week leading up to the event Redrun is revealing a dead zone.

The run begins with a zombie procession down the center of Virginia City, and a unique runner launch which is being kept under wraps until the day of the event. There is also a saloon crawl for participants and spectators. The festivities are capped off with a live concert.

For more information on Redrun, including to register, go **online**.

American River Basin focus of federal study

In an effort to better understand the imbalances between water supply and demand, the Bureau of Reclamation is launching a study in the American River Basin.

This comprehensive water study will help inform water management in the Central Valley Project.

The basin encompasses 2,140 square miles from its headwaters

near Lake Tahoe to Sacramento where it meets the Sacramento River. It is highly populated and the population is expected to grow 47 percent to nearly 3 million people by 2060. The basin supports salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act and provides water to support the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

The American River Basin Study will include the development of detailed hydrologic analysis and models for the basin, which will include consideration of the impacts of climate change. It will also leverage existing stakeholder groups to identify and evaluate adaptation strategies specific to the American River Basin. To complete this study, Reclamation is partnering with the Placer County Water Agency, El Dorado County Water Agency, Sacramento, Roseville, Folsom and Regional Water Authority.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

El Nino helped Nev. bears avoid urban hazards

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

El Nino is long gone for now but its legacy remains, at least when it comes to Nevada bears.

So far this year the rate at which bears are being struck by cars or otherwise handled by wildlife officials is lower than in previous years with drier winters.

According to the Nevada Department of Wildlife there have been just five bears struck by cars in 2016, compared to 19 last

year and 18 in 2014. So far this year NDOW has handled 48 bears, compared to 114 last year and 140 in 2014.

Read the whole story

USFS South Shore tree thinning to resume

Thinning of trees for fuels reduction and forest health is scheduled to resume this week between Fallen Leaf Road and Camp Richardson Corral and in the Spring Creek Homeowners Tract on the South Shore.

Whole tree and mechanical cut-to-length tree removal will take place in these areas over the next several months, weather permitting and some areas will be closed for public safety.

These types of mechanical operations require closure of the area during operations due to the hazards posed by heavy equipment and falling trees. The U.S. Forest Service will close the area across from Fallen Leaf Campground (Unit 148) to pedestrians from 7am-6pm daily for the next several months.

The forest thinning is part of the South Shore Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project, which will treat approximately 10,000 acres on the South Shore to reduce the risk of severe wildfire, improve forest health, and provide defensible space to neighboring communities.

Battle to save Sierra frogs involves fungus



Scientists are trying to save the mountain yellow-tree frog. Photo/USFWS/Rick Kuyper

By Lauren Sommer, KNPR

A deadly fungus that's been devastating frog populations is spreading across the globe – it's helped drive the extinction of 200 species so far. In California, the chytrid fungus has moved inexorably across the Sierra Nevada, leaving thousands of frogs dead.

But scientists are trying to turn the tide against the fungus with an experimental treatment, one that could matter to frogs worldwide.

They're making a last-ditch effort to save the endangered mountain yellow-legged frog by immunizing it against the fungus.

Mountain yellow-legged frogs, found only in California's alpine lakes, have been in steep decline due to the fungus while also falling prey to non-native trout. More than 90

percent of the population has disappeared.

Fast, cold storm to blow through basin

The first snow of the season in Lake Tahoe is expected to fall on Tuesday – just not at lake level.

Forecasters at the National Weather Service in Reno are calling for up to 3 inches above 10,000 feet. The snow level is not expected to drop below 9,000 feet.

The rest of the basin should expect cold temps and rain. Thunderstorms are in the forecast starting late Monday night.

The storm is expected to clear out quickly, with the sun returning Wednesday. By Saturday the high in South Lake Tahoe is forecasted to be 78 degrees – 16 degrees higher than Tuesday.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Mountain bike program for youth in Tahoe City

The Tahoe XC Junior Mountain Riders Program is looking for riders.

The Tahoe City program provides children 7-11 with an opportunity to experience and grow in the sport of mountain biking. Weekly club rides focus on developing safe, strong, responsible riders through instruction, practice, and fun in a healthy, supportive environment.

The program runs Sept. 12-Oct. 17 and costs \$50. Rides are from 4-5:30pm. Meet at Tahoe XC Trailhead. Drop-in rate is \$10 per child.

Rides take place on dirt fire roads and single track trails within the Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area. Depending on age, ability and conditions, rides cover 5-10 miles, ascending and descending the fire roads and single tracks in the ski area.

Email andrews@tahoexc.org with questions.

TCPUD may change golf course operations

Tahoe City Public Utility District's board is considering taking over operations of the golf course and contracting out the food and beverage component.

For the past five years Duncan Golf Management has run the Tahoe City Golf Course.

TCPUD believe existing staff along with Bob Bonino, golf course manager, can run the facility.

The golf course in recent years has expanded to include a winter sports park, bocce ball and this winter an ice rink will be installed.

The board meeting is Sept. 16 at 8:30am at the district office. If the board approves the changes, they would take effect Nov. 1.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Future looks bright for Tahoe yellow cress

By Tom Lotshaw

In the late 1990s, Tahoe yellow cress, a small flowering plant that grows only on the sandy shores and creek mouths of Lake Tahoe, was teetering on the brink of extinction. Surveys done in 1996 found the plant gone from all of the beaches it had once occupied in Nevada and growing at fewer than 10 sites in California after a lengthy period of high lake levels.

In the years since, populations have rebounded, and today the plant has a much brighter future. That's due in part to a collaborative, basinwide conservation strategy that was launched in 2001 with regulatory and land management agencies, private property owners, and the public all working together to protect a species found nowhere else in the world.

The strategy is working. Last October, after a lengthy review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that Tahoe

yellow cress does not warrant listing as a federally endangered or threatened species, saving the basin and its property owners from a new level of federal regulations to protect the unique native plant.



A basinwide conservation strategy has helped Tahoe yellow cress rebound to where it is no longer considered endangered or threatened. Photo/Tom Lotshaw

The Tahoe partnership's work to protect Tahoe yellow cress has "truly exemplified the most basic function of the Endangered Species Act—to protect and conserve ecosystems and the species that depend upon them," the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said. "They have continued to raise the standards for the next generation of conservation and convinced us that Tahoe yellow cress has a bright future on the beautiful shores of Lake Tahoe."

The plant has always had a precarious existence, growing only at the margins of a single lake where it became geographically isolated at some point during Lake Tahoe's 2-million-year history. To grow and reproduce, populations must shift up and down the beach each year with ever-changing water levels. The plant also faces continual threats from beach trampling and beach raking at Tahoe's heavily-visited shoreline.

Public agencies have worked to protect the sandy beaches and the creek mouths where Tahoe yellow cress grows and have also repopulated sites with plantings. But with half of Tahoe's 75 miles of shoreline privately owned, private property owners are also playing a key role in protecting the plant.

The Tahoe Lakefront Owners Association has worked with its many members for 20 years to help provide sanctuary for the plant, and to get people to recognize that it's a positive thing, not a negative thing, to have it growing on their private property, Director Jan Brisco said.

"I think we're getting closer to having that safe harbor. We've had many people step up wanting to become Tahoe yellow cress stewards and offering their property for surveys or plantings so we can keep the plant alive and thriving along the shores," Brisco said. "Every spring I go out to my members with information to remind them when they are cleaning up to be careful about the plants. We are really excited how well we've done to be where we are today."

Tahoe yellow cress is part of Tahoe's unique natural environment, and a shining conservation success story for one of the many rare and unique plants struggling to survive in California and Nevada.

"It's such a great group of resource managers, scientists, and private property owners who have come together to protect this plant," said Alison Stanton, an independent botanist who has helped guide the Tahoe yellow cress conservation strategy and restoration work since 2002.

Despite the success of the conservation strategy and the more than a dozen partners in the Tahoe Yellow Cress Adaptive Management Working Group, the hardy little yellow plant that calls Lake Tahoe home will always require protection and awareness due to its extremely limited range and habitat.

"It's a unique plant growing at a single lake so the stakes

are high for it. Our work is not done. We have to continue to implement the conservation strategy and the stewardship program or we'll find ourselves right back in the same place," Stanton said.

*Tom Lotshaw is the public information officer for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. This story first appeared in **Tahoe In Depth**.*