# Adaptive sports: Making the impossible possible

**By Allison Torres Burtka, Sierra**

You might think outdoor adventure sports like skiing and kayaking are off limits to people with severe physical disabilities. But a range of adaptive gear and programs, designed to accommodate various physical challenges, can open up worlds of possibility.

People with disabilities are redefining what’s possible. For example, Dani Burt surfs on a prosthetic leg and became the U.S. adaptive surfing champion in June. Stacey Kozel, who has lupus and lost the use of her legs, is hiking the Appalachian Trail this summer with the aid of highly sophisticated leg braces.

For some people, preparing for outdoor adventure sports might be as simple as learning the best way to use a prosthetic limb. For others, equipment made specifically to accommodate certain needs allows them to get out on the trail, water, or slopes.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Mussel dogs sniff out aquatic invasive species

**By Deke Farrow, Modesto Bee**

Nemo, Noah and Popeye.

Their names may not carry quite the coolness of some of their current and former canine colleagues in local law enforcement – Cash, Volk, Samson, Zeus – but the decidedly marine monikers fit perfectly what this trio is trained to do.

They're the Mussel Dogs, and they guard reservoirs, lakes and other waterways against intruders that, while not criminals, are killers.

Quagga and zebra mussels are invasive species that cannot be eradicated once they infest a body of water, said Denair resident Debra DeShon, who founded Mussel Dogs in 2008 and has three canine-and-handler teams.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Snowmaking technology allows skiing in summer

**By Allen Best, Live Science**

In early July at Boreal Mountain Resort, temperatures reached 91 degrees, which is not uncharacteristically here. The real surprise was that the ski area near Lake Tahoe was making snow.

Boreal is the site of the first North American demonstration of a relatively new technology called Snowfactory. The process parallels that of an industrial ice maker – essentially, a large-scale version of the ice maker in the door of many household refrigerators.

An ice maker takes water chilled with a heat exchanger and sprays it onto a surface. The cubes are created by imposing

the ice onto a grid. In a unit about the size of a trailer, such as the type pulled by 18-wheeler trucks, Snowfactory uses the same process to produce flat flakes that are collected on a panel and fed into a conveyor belt. The flakes are then blown through a pipe up to 600-feet long to the desired location on the ski slope.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Disability doesn't limit Truckee surfer



Jeff Andrews, who is disabled, doesn't let that stop him from surfing. Photo/Provided

Jeff Andrews of Truckee took first place in the assisted division of the 10th annual Adaptive Surf Competition during Duke's OceanFest in Honolulu last month.

The 27-year-old in 2014 was an avid snowboarder in Tahoe. In an accident at Sugar Bowl in March of that year, Andrews suffered an injury to his spinal cord, leaving him without the use of his legs and limited dexterity in his hands and arms.

Since the injury, Andrews has spent thousands of hours concentrating on his rehabilitation. He works out daily at the CR Johnson Healing Center, a fitness and wellness facility operated by Truckee's High Fives Foundation. The nonprofit has awarded Andrews a series of grants toward his recovery goals, including personal training with world renown healer, Alejandra Monslave in Maui.

While in Hawaii in March 2016, Andrews began surfing regularly. With an injury such as his, Andrews requires the assistance of another waterman who helps push him as the wave approaches. He remains on his stomach in the prone position but can maneuver the surfboard moving along with the wave.

---

# Landmark pact to protect N. Nevada sage grouse

**By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal**

CARSON CITY – Gov. Brian Sandoval hosted state and federal officials along with executives of a global mining company this week to sign what was hailed as a landmark agreement designed to protect Nevada's sagebrush ecosystem and a chicken-size bird that depends on it.

The agreement with Newmont Mining Corp. covers roughly 1.5 million acres and implements the state's conservation credit system – the cornerstone of Nevada's plan devised in an effort to stave off a federal listing of sage grouse under the

Endangered Species Act.

Janice Schneider, assistant secretary for land and minerals at the U.S. Interior Department, said the mitigation credit system is “the first of its kind” in the nation and may be used as a model for other Western states as they strive to achieve protections for the bird while allowing mining, ranching and other activities crucial to rural economies.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Conservation group nabs Nev.’s iconic ‘Hilton ranch’

**By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal**

The remote desert ranch that for decades provided a scenic backdrop for flights by some of the world’s most daring aviators is under new ownership.

The Flying M Ranch, located northwest of Hawthorne, sold earlier this summer to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for $19.4 million.

The deal is part of an effort to direct more water to the Walker River so it can flow into the beleaguered Walker Lake near Hawthorne as part of an environmental recovery project.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Free fishing day in Calif. on Saturday

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife's last free fishing day of the year is Sept. 3.

A basic annual resident sport fishing license in California costs $47.01. On Saturday it will be legal to fish without one.

All fishing regulations such as bag and size limits, gear restrictions, report card requirements, fishing hours and stream closures remain in effect. Every angler must also have an appropriate report card if they are fishing for abalone, steelhead or sturgeon anywhere in the state, or salmon in the Smith and Klamath-Trinity river systems.

The fishing rules and regulations may be found **online**.

---

# What's swimming in Lake Tahoe's depths?

**By Kevin Oliver, KCRA-TV**

It had never been done before. But, a Northern California man dedicated to finding Lake Tahoe's deep-water secrets finally recorded video from the deepest points of the lake.

A particular image Chase Petley captured during one of his adventures has researchers scratching their heads.

Petley started his quest to bring back the first video from the depths of Lake Tahoe after driving by the lake and then searching online for underwater images.

When he found nothing, Petley went to work. He built a submersible casing that allows him to drop a GoPro camera a quarter-of-a mile deep to see what lies at the bottom of Lake Tahoe.

**Read the whole story**

---

# Tribe-USFS agree to thin Wrights Lake area

The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and the Eldorado National Forest have signed a five-year agreement to work cooperatively on the Wrights Lake Fuels Reduction Project.

This project will improve fire safety in a popular recreation area with heavily used trails, a developed campground, lake access for boating, and 75 privately owned cabins under special use permits on Forest Service land. It also supports a tribal job training and development program.

Under the agreement, the USFS will provide $252,000 to the tribe for 160 days of fuel reduction work. The work is located along roads and near structures. It will include cutting, piling, chipping, and decking dead down trees, understory trees, brush and existing slash.

The Wrights Lake Fuel Reduction Project is part of the cohesive wildland fire management strategy for the South Fork American River watershed. Work has begun and will continue

throughout the fall and into next spring.

---

# Protections for endangered Calif. frogs, toads

**By Ellen Kincimeyer, AP**

Two types of yellow-legged frogs, and a kind of toad found in Yosemite National Park, won extra protection Thursday when federal authorities declared nearly 3,000 square miles in California's Sierra Nevada mountains as critical habitat for the endangered animals.

The designation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service means closer controls on human activities that could threaten the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, the mountain yellow-legged frog, and the Yosemite toad. The designation mainly affects federal land.

Naturalist surveys of California's Sierra mountains from a century ago described the yellow-legged frogs as lining almost every foot of mountain lake shores, said Jeff Miller, a conservation advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity environmental group.

Over the past few decades, the frogs and toads have had to contend with a host of threats. They include the stocking of Sierra lakes with voracious trout and other non-native fish, diseases fostered by climate change and pesticides blown in from California's Central Valley farms.

About 90 percent of the yellow-legged frogs have gone, Miller said.

“These were a very common species once. They pretty much disappeared,” said Miller.

He recently helped crews reintroduce the frogs to one Sierra waterway after workers had netted and removed non-native fish that eat the amphibians, part of a yearslong effort to remove the non-native predators of frogs.

Climate change and pesticides, as well as grazing by livestock, also have eradicated more than half of the original population of the Yosemite toad.

The three species were listed as endangered in 2014.

Wildlife officials are working with the Oakland and San Francisco zoos to raise additional numbers of the amphibians for release in the wild, said Jennifer Norris, field supervisor for the agency’s Sacramento office.