9-part webinar to focus on reforestation

The U.C. Cooperative Extension is hosting a nine-part weekly webinar series on reforestation in California starting in January.

The goal is to explore issues related to reforestation in California, including the current needs and the ecological, social and environmental benefits.

Issues in California reforestation to be addressed include the effectiveness of various practices used to re-establish trees, the large backlog of land requiring planting, wide variability in costs and limited availability of planting stock. Speakers will address techniques and case studies for replanting conifers, oaks, and riparian tree species; describe reforestation of burned areas in different regulatory and institutional situations including private land, state parks and federal land, and give information on financial and other incentives available to land owners and managers contemplating reforestation.

This program is aimed at foresters, land managers, land owners and others involved in planning and executing reforestation, afforestation and restoration projects. It will also be of interest to those working for agencies that regulate and/or fund these projects.

Registration is required ,though there is no fee to participate. Register online.

For more information, contact Susie Kocher at sdkocher@ucanr.edu.

Free backcountry demo day at Alpine

Alpenglow Sports has again partnered with Alpine Meadows Ski Resort for the 8th annual Backcountry Demo Event on Jan. 11 from 9am to 3pm.

The Tahoe City shop has worked hard to foster the largest, and most well-known backcountry demo event in North America.

The free event is for all ages and abilities.

Participating vendors will include DPS, Dynafit, G3, Scarpa, NTN from Rottefella, Salomon, K2, Scott, Marker, Volkl, La Sportiva, Voile, Moment, Fly Low, Smith Optics, Jones Snowboards and more.

In addition to the opportunity to try more than 100 styles of skis, Alpenglow and guide Rich Meyer will also provide a free, informal avalanche companion rescue class. This companion rescue clinic will include beacon searches, strategic shoveling, and probing and will begin at 1pm at the Alpenglow registration tent. Participants are encouraged to come out and try the latest beacon technology and refresh avalanche safety skills after skiing.

Participants must have a valid lift ticket or season pass purchased from Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley USA, along with a driver’s license and credit card for deposit. Registration for the event will occur onsite at the Alpenglow Sports tent.

For more info, call (530) 583.6917.

Survey: Cycling makes people happy

By Michael Roberts, Outside

Early last year, a doctoral candidate at Portland State University in Oregon made headlines when he presented findings to the national Transportation Research Board showing that riding a bike makes us happy.

According to his survey of more than 800 commuters, bikers rated higher on a well-being index than people using any other form of transportation, including walking. To the country's growing legions of everyday cyclists, the news was hardly a surprise.

A new kind of cycling lifestyle is on the rise. In cities large and small, bike lanes are being built, bike-share programs are taking off, and people who'd never considered pedaling around town are saddling up to save money on gas and get a little exercise.

Read the whole story

Creativity required to get kids exercise at school

By Maanvi Singh, NPR

Avery Stackhouse, age 7, of Lafayette, says he wishes he had more time for phys ed.

“We just have it one day a week — on Monday.” There’s always lunch and recess, he says. “We play a couple of games, like football and soccer,” he tells Shots.

But at Happy Valley Elementary, where he goes to school, recess last only 15 minutes and lunch is 45. Between eating and mingling, he says, “there’s only a few minutes left where we play games and all that.”

In a poll conducted by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, parents reported that their kids aren’t getting nearly as much time in phys ed classes as is recommended.

In a poll conducted by NPR, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, parents reported that their kids aren’t getting nearly as much time in phys ed classes as is recommended.

NPR

Fifty-six percent of parents say their elementary school kids are getting just one or two days of physical education a week, according to NPR poll conducted in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health.

Fewer than 1 in 5 parents with children in kindergarten through fifth grade said their kids were getting physical education daily.

Read the whole story

Cost of skiing making it an exclusive sport

By Rob Lovitt, NBC News

Skiers and snowboarders searching for “the steep and deep” this winter may find that the concept has taken on a much less appealing connotation: The price of the sport is getting so steep that some believe it may be becoming the exclusive domain of those whose pockets are exceedingly deep.



Those with the means can ski in and out at the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch at Beaver Creek. Photo/LTN file

“You have the haves and the have mores,” said Douglas Quinby, principal analyst at PhoCusWright, which conducts market research on the travel industry. “When you factor in the airfare of the typical ski trip, the accommodations and the length of stay, you’re talking about a pretty significant penny.”

Coupled with lift tickets that can top $100 per day and clothing and equipment that can cost thousands, it’s not surprising that both the industry and its fans are concerned about the sports’ long-term viability for those of more modest means.

Skiing, of course, has never been considered an inexpensive activity, but the sport has seen a significant upward shift in visitor demographics in recent years.

Last year, 54 percent of skier visits, defined as one skier or snowboarder riding for one day, came from households earning more than $100,000, according to the National Ski Areas Association. That's up from 48 percent five years ago, a 12.5 percent increase.

In contrast, visits from households earning less than $100,000 during the same period slipped from 52 percent to 46 percent – an 11.5 percent decrease.

Read the whole story

Squaw athlete captures his first downhill win

By USSA

COPPER MOUNTAIN, Colo. -– Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore.) and Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) claimed the U.S. Alpine Championships downhill titles during a chilly Tuesday at U.S. Ski Team Speed Center.

It was the second straight U.S. downhill gold for Wiles, who nearly scored Audi FIS Alpine World Cup points last weekend in both Lake Louise downhill races, the second and third World Cup starts of her young career.

Bennett also harnessed momentum from his first World Cup start – also in Lake Louise – to capture his first U.S. title with the men's downhill crown. consecutive U.S. Alpine

Championships downhill title.

Katie Hartman (Breckenridge, Colo.) was second, followed by Katie Ryan (Aspen), who was also the top junior woman.

2013 men’s downhill champion Jared Goldeberg (Holladay, Utah) took second in the men’s race, followed by Artem Borodaykin of Russia, who was also the top junior.

National Winter Trails Day hikes in SLT, Truckee

Tahoe Rim Trail Association will celebrate National Winter Trails Day in Truckee and South Lake Tahoe.

TRTA is partnering with REI on Jan. 11 from 11am-3pm for a family friendly event at Tahoe Donner XC Ski Center, 15275 Alder Creek Road, Truckee.

Register online.

There will be hike on the South Shore with Explore Tahoe through Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

Register online.

USFS to set controlled burn near Luther Pass

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will begin prescribed fire operations off Highway 89 near Luther Pass on Dec. 10.

Crews will begin burning a 29-acre unit across the highway from the Luther Pass overflow campground and will burn as much as weather and conditions allow. Operations may continue through the week.

Smoke from this prescribed fire project area can be expected, is normal, and may continue for several days after the initial ignition. Smoke may be visible on Highway 89.

All prescribed fires are monitored regularly for burning and smoke dispersal and action is taken to mitigate concerns as they arise.

Forest Service staff will post road signs around the areas affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

USFS to pile burn at two locations

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews will begin prescribed fire operations south of Homewood on Dec. 9.

Crews will burn approximately 5 to 10 acres per day on the south side of Meeks Meadow near Meeks Bay Avenue. Weather and conditions permitting, operations will continue through the week and possibly the weekend.

In addition, operations will continue on Lower Kingsbury Grade near Meadow Lane. Crews have completed 5 acres and will continue to burn until they complete the 19-acre unit.

Smoke from these prescribed fire project areas can be expected, is normal, and may continue for several days after the initial ignition. All prescribed fires are monitored regularly for burning and smoke dispersal and action is taken to mitigate concerns as they arise.

Forest Service staff will post road signs around the areas affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, ext6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

U.S. women turn it around in super G

By USSA

LAKE LOUISE, Alberta -– Four-time World Cup champion Lindsey Vonn (Vail) skied confidently into the top five in the Lake Louise super G Sunday, showing her strength and ability to mount a podium challenge for the first time since her return to the World Cup circuit Friday.

“This is exactly what I wanted to take away from this weekend

-– to know that I could ski for the win. I’m happy with today,” Vonn said. “I scrubbed some speed in a few spots, but it still showed me that I can ski for the podium. I’m going to be selective in my races this season, and I’ll take a few days home, talk to the coaches and determine a plan.”

Leanne Smith (North Conway, N.H.) finished just behind Vonn in sixth, finding the familiar form that exemplifies the U.S. Ski Team’s speed squad.

Swiss skier Lara Gut won the race, her third victory on the season.

Olympic gold medalist Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) finished 17th while veteran Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) finished 18th, her best World Cup super G result since 2008.