Federal land managers not well liked in Nev.

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review Journal

STATELINE – Representatives of Nevada's diverse collection of cities and counties don't always find common ground, but the federal government's control of so much of the state's public lands struck a nerve at a summit here Friday.



Much of Nevada is owned by the federal government. Photo/LTN file

Officials representing rural counties, small cities and the biggest jurisdictions took the opportunity to vent on the federal land control issue at the Local Government Summit sponsored by the Nevada Association of Counties and the Nevada League of Cities at Lake Tahoe.

"Run the BLM out of Nevada?" asked Las Vegas City Councilman Steve Ross. "I'm in favor of that. Do I hear a second?"

He got more than a few nods and vocal signs of support from the approximately 100 attendees, a demonstration of just how unhappy many local officials are with the federal agency.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe parks receive $1 mil. donation

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

The nonprofit Sierra State Parks Foundation has received a $1 million grant from an anonymous donor.

The donor, whose gift came through the San Francisco Foundation, identified specific projects to be funded, all on Lake Tahoe's West Shore.

They include sod roof restoration at Vikingsholm, Hellman-Ehrman estate restoration, D.L. Bliss State Park interpretive signage, human-bear management projects and Olympic Heritage snow trails grooming.

Read the whole story

Festival expands beyond just Kokanee

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and the Tahoe Heritage Foundation will host the Fall Fish Festival on Oct. 5-6 at Taylor Creek.

Formerly the Kokanee Salmon Festival, the Fall Fish Festival will focus on the variety of fish species that live in Lake Tahoe and its rivers. In addition to the Kokanee, these

species include the federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout and little-known smaller fish, such as speckled dace.

The weekend events feature trail runs, children's activities, and educational and streamside programs. Proceeds from T-shirt sales and the trail runs benefit Forest Service conservation education programs in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The festival will run from 10am-4pm each day.

There will be a special appearance by Smokey Bear.

Speaking of bears, some black bears in the area have learned to feed on the spawning salmon, and visitor center staff routinely encounter unsafe situations as guests get too close to the bears.

The Fall Fish Festival and Oktoberfest at Historic Camp Richardson Resort occur the same weekend, so the parking lot at the visitor center fills quickly. The Forest Service encourages attendees to bike, walk or take public transportation to the event.

For more information and a complete schedule of activities, call (530) 543-2674 or go online.

The Taylor Creek Visitor Center is located three miles north of South Lake Tahoe on Highway 89.

Truckee River Day needs volunteers

The 18th annual Truckee River Day is Oct. 20.

Volunteers have their choice of half- or full-day restoration projects with different levels of difficulty. There will be 12 to 15 projects including trail relocation in Johnson Canyon, native plantings to help restore areas in the Coldstream Canyon floodplain, moving barriers in Martis Lake to eradicate aquatic weeds, and conducting surveys of invasive New Zealand Mud Snails in the Truckee River.

Projects start at 9am or 11am and finish between 2 and 3pm.

The River Fair will be from 1-4pm at Granite Flat Campground. This community event is presented in partnership with Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships and will feature environmental activities for kids and adults, and the annual fish release at 3pm. Food will be available for purchase from Red Truck.

Everyone is invited, not just volunteers.

To participate in this year's restoration projects, call (530) 550.8760, ext. 1 by Oct. 11.

Truckee path receives $1.5 mil. grant

Truckee has received a $1.5 million grant for the Highway 89 Mousehole Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvement Project.

Mousehole project was one of 52 transportation projects in 37 states selected to receive a total of approximately $474 million in TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) funding.

The Mousehole project is apedestrian-bicycle railroad

undercrossing that will connect trails east of the existing Highway 89 Mousehole tunnel.

To date, funding from several sources has been committed to the development and construction of this project, which is estimated to have a total project cost of almost $12 million.

The project design is underway and the town anticipates putting the project out to bid next summer, with construction starting in 2015.

Land bordering El Dorado, Amador counties protected from development

By Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

A conservation group has purchased more than 1,000 acres of Cosumnes River canyon land from a Sacramento developer, protecting the rural property from development.

The American River Conservancy completed the purchase of 1,059 acres of land from Angelo K. Tsakopoulos for $4.8 million on Aug. 29. The purchase of the land protects another 1.5 miles of river canyon from residential development on the North and Main forks of the Cosumnes River, immediately east and west of Highway 49 in El Dorado and Amador counties, according to a press release from the conservancy.

The lands are in the southern part of the 7,868-acre El Dorado Ranch, historically known as the Cook ranch. Tsakopoulos

purchased the ranch from the McCuen family in 2005.

Read the whole story

Kirkwood turns into temporary private slopestyle run

As the chairlifts at Kirkwood Mountain Resort came to a halt this past spring, the Snow Park Technologies snowcats were powering up.

For 20 days, an SPT crew of seven logged 1,200 hours building the slopestyle course of Bobby Brown's dreams. Three years ago the Denver-based professional skier was asking friends, "What's next for slopestyle skiing?" The result is Red Bull Megaslope, a 2,750-foot long course that incorporates six epic features winding across the natural terrain of the mountain.

From start to finish, the course featured:

1) A 24-foot single barrel down rail on either side of an eight-foot-wide stair positioned on a downhill angle;

2) A 65-foot table with a five-foot step down, built on the high side of the mountain utilizing the natural terrain aligned through a small opening between two groups of trees;

3) Gap to 24-foot-long up-box with a gap off to another 24-foot flat-box;

4) A cannon to wall ride feature which started with a 24-foot up-box towards the 32-foot-long perforated metal wall-ride with a transition of about six-feet in between;

5) A 100-foot step over jump with the takeoff coming out of a gully across the natural fall line with the landing ramp pushed over the edge of the gully;

6) The last feature on the course was an 80-foot hybrid table with steeper takeoff and landing angles.

For three days during a seven-day weather window in April, Matchstick Productions filmed Brown's domination of the course. The video was released this week.

A hiker's paradise at Homewood ski resort



Quail Lake at Homewood Mountain Lake is inviting to those who can tolerate chilly water. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

HOMEWOOD – Straight up. That's one way to define what a black diamond hiking trail is.

Ski resort hiking is nothing like being in the forest or a state or national park. The routes don't follow the contour of the mountain. Switchbacks are unheard of. Instead, many of the trails are straight up or straight down – the better for when snow covers the dirt and skiers are making tracks.

But we didn't let the uphill climb deter us even though we whined a bit. AJ didn't seem to mind the vertical ascent as she ran in front of us.

This is the first season the owners of Homewood Mountain Resort have opened the trails to hiking. While the legend on the map rates the trails at "less difficult", "more difficult" and "most difficult", the majority falls into the latter. And one trail we came down was a double black diamond because of the steepness.

We parked at the main parking lot, walked through the neighborhood and started on the Homeward Connector trail.

It doesn't take long for a view of Lake Tahoe to come into view. That's the thing about Homewood – the views of the lake are the best of any ski resort. You are so close. When skiing the face it's like you are going to land in the water.

And while the hiking is free, various signs caution people that the trails are not patrolled. Trail markers are signs attached to a round of wood. This just adds to the funkiness.

Based on being at Homewood on Labor Day weekend it is obvious this West Shore oasis is still not on the radar for many people. We saw only handful of hikers.

More people were at the top of Quail lift where employees were setting up for that night's Farm to Peak dinner. While we

don’t know how the food was for the five-course dinner, we can attest to the view being outstanding.

Before we reached the top of the lift we had taken the Sunnyside Loop that took us to Quail Lake. Barely a ripple could be seen. The calmness and warm surface temperature lured us to take a dip.

AJ had beaten us to the water. She took a shortcut through the thicket.

Lily pads cover much of the lake. Dragonflies and minnows are the only wildlife we see.

Above us is a wall of ski runs – Main Cirque, 55 Chutes, Wally’s Folly and The Shoulder. While patches of color dot the mountain, winter seems so far away as we bask in the sun. The snowmaking machines at various locations, though, remind us opening day is coming soon.

A log is perfectly placed by the lake as a great rest spot to have a bite to eat.

We return to our climb. At times Rubicon Peak stands out above all others.

Most of the trails are soft dirt, wood chips or loose rocks.

We hook up with Homeward Bound trail that then leads to Cedar Ridge trail. Finally we are walking on level ground – not uphill. And this is where those picture postcard views of Tahoe come into view. It’s like you are able to see the entire lake – all shores. To the north we see the boats at Sunnyside, to the south we can see the hut on the pier at Chambers Landing. And the smoke has lifted so we can see across to the East Shore.

It’s amazing looking down at civilization – the bustling arts and crafts fair in the Homewood parking lot and all the boats on the lake – that we essentially have the mountain to

ourselves. We will be back.

But first we must ease down the double black diamond Ore Car trail. This is when those with bad knees would need poles.

The perfect cap to the hike was a cocktail at our favorite bar in Tahoe – West Shore Café.

—-

Notes:

• Here is the Homewood hiking map.

• To get there from South Lake Tahoe, go north on Highway 89. The ski resort is on the left in Homewood. Plenty of parking. Trails start from the north and south lodges. The north is the main area. The south is at the end of Tahoe Ski Bowl Way, which is off Highway 89.

ngg_shortcode_0_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Boomers finding new ways to stay fit

By Shan Li, Los Angeles Times

Greta Goplen stood in position with a cane at the ready, like a ninja warding off invisible foes.

As an instructor yelled out directions to the class – “left, left, jab, jab, nose! right, right, jab, jab, nose!” – the 59-year-old raised her walking stick and nimbly thrust it out

kung-fu style, swinging it to either side before jabbing it backward.

Half an hour later, the class ended. A dozen women quickly sat down to rest artificial hips and arthritic knees.

“But I’m not done killing yet,” Goplen said, bashing an imaginary mugger on the ground. “We got ’em! Yeah! Yahoo!”

Exercise for baby boomers has gone trendy.

As the oldest baby boomers turn 67 this year, the same generation that sent crib sales zooming in the 1950s and ’60s and snapped up cars in the 1980s is now changing the fitness market in the same way it influenced music, fashion and politics.

Gone are the days when seniors could only stroll around the park or do low-impact aerobics. Now, a slew of new gyms and exercise programs are catering exclusively to the gray-haired set.

Read the whole story

3-day mountain bike fest at Squaw

Mountain bikers are about to descend upon Squaw Valley for the return of the Tahoe Fat Tire Festival.

Formerly one of the largest mountain bike events on the West Coast, the festival is being brought back Sept. 13-15 by the Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association in an effort to promote recreational trails in the Tahoe area and to raise money for

trail projects.

The festival will include cross country and downhill mountain bike racing, skill clinics, the Tour de Squaw fun ride, free kids races, and a BMX jump show. Squaw Valley will be opening its bike park and trail network for the three days.

The festival kicks off Sept. 13 with live music from Decoy and a outdoor film festival featuring the U.S. premiere of the mountain bike film “Arrival”.

Saturday morning is the cross country race, which is the final race of the 2013 Sierra Cup Series.

All proceeds from the festival will go to TAMBA and the Truckee Bike Park Project to improve local mountain biking opportunities and trail networks.

For more information and to register, go online.