Residential burning throughout Lake Tahoe Basin prohibited

U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is suspending residential burning, also known as “dooryard” burning, effective July 18 through the remainder of fire season.

The prohibition applies to debris burning on private, state and federal lands of El Dorado and Placer counties in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Residential debris burning is already banned within the city of South Lake Tahoe, and in the Tahoe Douglas and North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection districts in Nevada.

Lake Tahoe weather conditions have generally been hot, dry and windy, leading fire protection officials to move to end residential debris burning due to increased risks. The ban is for residential burns only and does not prevent federal, state and local fire managers from conducting prescribed fire operations necessary for fuels reduction on public lands.

The ban also does not prohibit small, contained campfires on private land outside South Lake Tahoe, built by the property owner or with the written permission of the property owner.

Remember never to leave campfires unattended and always extinguish them properly – drown, stir and feel.

The residential burn ban will remain in effect until temperatures, winds and humidity allow for safer conditions.

Celebs take to Edgewood Tahoe to practice for ACC

STATELINE – While it was obvious by the levity on the course that the score didn't matter Wednesday, plenty of practicing was going one.

Hall of Fame running back Emmitt Smith spent hours on the putting green under the watchful eye of a throng of fans. He is a regular at the annual American Century Championship Tournament at Edgewood Tahoe.

Later in the afternoon he was joined by Hall of Fame running back Jerry Rice.



The driving range is popular July 18 at Edgewood Tahoe. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Hank Haney, who used to coach Tiger Woods, was on the course offering instruction.

Former quarterback Vinny Testaverde was over at the driving range about this time. Brandi Chastain, former soccer player, was nearby doing an interview.

John Elway, ex-QB, and Dan Quinn, former NHL star, took their time on hole 16 as they turned it into a private practice putting area. When Elway finally made his way toward hole 17 he was mobbed by fans.

Current QB Alex Smith of the 49ers also faced a throng of fans – who he accommodated with autographs after teeing off from the 12th hole.

Thursday is the celebrity-am event starting at 7am, with the actual tournament being Friday-Sunday. This is a list of times, including television coverage.

– Kathryn Reed

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Kids invited to Truckee Fishing Derby at Cold Springs Pond

Kids will have a chance to show off their fishing skills at the 24th Annual Truckee Fishing Derby on July 21 from 9am to 1pm at Cold Stream Pond behind Donner Memorial State Park.

The event is open to the public and admission is free for children 12 and under. Children should bring their own gear and tackle, although some may be available to borrow. For more information, go online.

To volunteer for the event, contact Dill at (530) 448.6620.

South Tahoe man wins at Crossfit Games

South Tahoe CrossFit owner Tim Anderson placed first Sunday in the 55-60 Masters Division in the Reebok Crossfit Games.

This makes him “Fittest in the World” for his age division.



Tim Anderson, right, competes July 15. Photo/Provided

U.S. Olympic team to field more women than men

By Mary Pilon, New York Times

The news that the United States will send more women than men

to compete on its Olympic team in London reflects a turnaround in women's participation in the modern Games that's evolved over the past century.

The 530-member U.S. Olympic team is comprised of 269 women and 261 men, spanning 25 different sports.

In 2008, the U.S. sent 306 men and 282 women to Beijing (588 total) and 279 men and 254 women (533 total) went to Athens, according to the International Society of Olympic Historians. In 2000, 332 men went to Sydney and 253 women for a total of 586 athletes.

Women also represent both ends of the age spectrum of the U.S. 2012 team. Karen O'Connor, a 54-year-old equestrian, will be the oldest member of the team, and swimmer Katie Ledecky, 15, is the youngest. (The average age for the team is 27, according to the U.S.O.C.) There are 54 dads and 13 moms on the team.

Read the whole story

Recreation opportunities on USFS land in Tahoe a concern

By Kathryn Reed

Playing in the outdoors is clearly what is important to people who live on the South Shore.

During two public meetings Tuesday at the U.S. Forest Service office in South Lake Tahoe the nearly 70 people at each session wanted to talk about and ask questions regarding recreation.

(There are two more meetings today in Kings Beach.)

The Forest Service is taking public comments until Aug. 30 on the draft Forest Plan that is expected to be a working document for up to 15 years. (The current plan is from 1988.) A final plan with a preferred alternative could be released in early 2013, with a record of decision expected in fall 2013.

Four alternatives are in the plan, with B being what the Forest Service is favoring. Plan A keeps the status quo, while plans C and D create new wilderness areas. It's possible the final environmental document could meld various alternatives as well as include new items based on public input.



Deputy Forest Supervisor Jeff Marsolais talks July 17 about the draft Forest Plan. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Jeff Marsolais, deputy forest supervisor for Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, told *Lake Tahoe News*, "Alternative B really reflects a balanced approach to all aspects of managing public lands in the basin."

He said this alternative is consistent with how the Forest Service currently manages its thousands of acres, but provides more flexibility and new thinking.

Between the two sessions the Sierra Club, Sierra Forest

Legacy, Sierra Nevada Alliance, California Wilderness Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife, Friends of the River-California Wilderness Project, and Snowlands Network issued a joint press release. Collectively they would like stronger protections for the forest and watersheds. The groups support additional wilderness designations.

Alternatives C and D would do just that. The former includes the Dardanelles-Meiss Meadows area and the latter would also have Freel Peak as wilderness.

When land is designated wilderness it means mechanical recreation is forbidden – this includes bicycles.

Several people at the evening session wore T-shirts that said "Say No to Alternative D". These people are concerned snowmobiling opportunities are going to be eliminated. And they would be with alternatives C and D. Even if the Forest Service wants a wilderness area, Congress must make that designation.

Then there were the people with stickers that read, "Protect our forests".

Water enthusiasts were represented by guys who just arrived on dry land based on being dressed in wetsuits.

In addition to the recreation group, the breakout sessions included watersheds, biological resources and forest vegetation-fuels management.

Alternative B allows for more terrain to use managed fire – meaning letting a fire that was started naturally (lightning) be allowed to burn. This technique would only be used if there would be environmental benefits and no safety issues.

For instance, when the Showers Fire occurred 10 years ago, is was suppressed based on policy that is still in effect today. If plan B were the law, that fire would have been allowed to

burn naturally – the way Mother Nature intended.

However, Randy Striplin with the Forest Service stressed that a fire would be monitored daily, so if conditions change, suppression may be the ultimate answer.

Alternative D would eliminate the wildland urban interface as an area to be treated for fuels reduction after 10 years.

Any project currently on the books will proceed no matter what alternative is chosen. This includes the South Shore fuels reduction project that just started and will take about eight years to complete, as well as restoration to the Upper Truckee River.

Assumptions were made in creating the alternatives – like money from Washington isn't going to increase, visitors to the Lake Tahoe Basin would increase 1.4 percent a year, and climate change will impact the ecosystem in the forest.

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Notes:

• Today's sessions are at the North Tahoe Conference Center, 8318 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach, from 2-4pm and 6-8pm.

• An online session will be July 19 from 1-3pm. More information on how to participate in the webinar is available at the USFS website.

• The draft EIS is online. It includes an executive summary. It is near the bottom, middle of the page.

Clarity on ball field priorities remains murky

The South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority might not have much to choose from when it comes to how to spend the $500,000 in the bank for fields – or the list could be overwhelming.

The committee responsible for making a recommendation to the JPA met July 16. The JPA is expected to make its decision at the July 27, 9am meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport. The report for the board is not done.

“I will be doing a summary of field needs, with my detail list as an informational attachment. Steve Noll will take some photos of current conditions on fields to show to the JPA,” John Upton, JPA staff member, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Steve Morales gave us a breakdown of unfunded items on a list, but we still need clarity from LTUSD whether or not they want the entire list done.”

South Tahoe High School’s softball field has been the sticking point for the committee since it started meeting earlier this year. For Lake Tahoe Unified and the city to be compliant with federal and state laws more improvements need to be made to that field.

That has to happen before any other blade of grass gets touched, let alone other infrastructure improvements on the California side of the South Shore.

At the meeting next week the bicycle committee will also make its recommendations to the JPA board.

This is also the board’s annual meeting where all things financial are discussed.

– Kathryn Reed

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16 basketball teams compete in South Shore tournament

Sixteen teams competed in the 28th annual South Tahoe Basketball Jamboree last weekend. The teams from California and Oregon each played at least five games during the July 12-14 event.

The girls of Oakridge High School from El Dorado Hills were crowned the champions, with Justin Siena of Napa placing second.

“Our South Tahoe team didn’t win it, but played well most games,” Les Wright, event organizer, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Games were played at Kahle Community Park on Thursday, and at Lake Tahoe Community College on Friday and Saturday.

“We turned away many others because we couldn’t get more than one gym a day to play,” Wright said. “With help, we hope to have all six gyms in the community next year and host 96 teams from around the country.”

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Yosemite’s Tenaya Lake area being renovated

By Julie Cart, Los Angeles Times

Yosemite National Park’s favorite beach is getting a face lift.

Tenaya Lake, the sparkling alpine oasis along the park’s busy Tioga Road, is being upgraded this summer with new parking and picnicking facilities. The trail system is being rerouted to avoid harm to the shore’s delicate wetlands.

The renovations are intended to undo decades of neglect to basic services, repairing parking lots and restrooms, and also to ease damage done by the free-range trampling by families trekking to the lake to swim and paddle in the summer and ice skate in the winter.

A portion of the new East Beach trail will include a boardwalk that guides hikers over the wetlands rather than through them and for the first time will provide easy access to the beach for visitors in wheelchairs and families with strollers.

The $1.7-million project is underwritten by the Yosemite Conservancy and expected to be completed by the end of summer.

Conservancy President Mike Tollefson, a former Yosemite superintendent, said the renovations have been much needed, especially because they add to the handful of sites in the 1,200 square-mile park that are handicapped accessible.

Read the whole story

Wooden Classic Boat show comes to Tahoe Keys Marina

The South Tahoe Wooden Boat Classic: A Vintage Boat Show for Charity takes place at the Tahoe Keys Marina on July 27 from noon to 5pm and on July 28 from 9am to 5pm.

In addition to over 20 different boat manufacturers, there will be several 1960s drag boats to see on land as well as in the water. Kris Diehl and his Dixieland band are performing and there will be tastings of Korbel California Champagnes & Pacifico beer, a BBQ lunch and the Honey Bee Ice Cream truck.

A two-day pass is $15 and are available at Raley’s or Bel Air stores. Tickets will be $20 at the gate. Kids under 12 are free.