Sierra extends its season to April 22

Sierra-at-Tahoe isn’t closing until April 22.



Throughout the week of April 16-22, Sierra will operate Grandview, Easy Rider and West Bowl Express.

On April 23, Sierra Resort will host its annual Customer Appreciation Day, giving guests one last chance to ski and ride before the 2012 season comes to an end.

Skiers and riders of all ages can purchase a lift ticket for $20 that day. All proceeds raised from the day’s lift ticket sales will be donated to sponsor youth recreation and education including youth baseball, soccer, swimming, and other youth activities. A limited number of lifts will spin from 10am-2pm.

All guests are invited to join John Rice, general manager, and the rest of Sierra Resort’s managing team for the official “last run of the season” from the top of Grandview Express beginning at 2m. Last call at the Sierra Pub will be at 2:45pm., in time for the ending of all winter operations at 3pm.

Freestyle competition at Alpine benefits charity

The High Fives Foundation, Alpine Meadows, VolklSkis and Marker Bindings are putting on Trains 2012 Freestyle Ski & Snowboard Contest on April 14 from 11am-4pm at Alpine Meadows.

Trains affords the opportunity for spectators to witness world-class skiing and snowboarding.

Three teams of 10 (skiers and snowboarders) will be picked by captains to compete for Best Male, Best Female and Best 540 (degree rotation) in the first half of the competition. The event's namesake Trains will be on display in the second half of the event as the team competition for Best Train ensues with each team of 10 popping off the features in succession.

This is an invitational competition with participation by top athletes including Parker White, Maude Raymond, Nick Goepper, Carson Lehoillier and Chris Logan, to name a few. A total of $5,000 cash will be donated by the winners of Best Male, Best Female, Best 540 (degree rotation) and Best Train to the winners' charity of choice.

Mother Nature bringing a few

more powder days

Spring is having a hard time sticking around the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Today’s afternoon rains have an 80 percent chance of becoming snow as the evening rolls around, according to the National Weather Service. The white stuff is expected to keep falling through at least Friday night.



Monday was good for paddleboarding, today the wind could be hazardous on Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

With snow comes a dramatic drop in temperatures as well. Today the high is forecast to be 53 degrees. Friday’s high is slated to be 30 degrees.

As ski resorts extend their seasons, it means more powder days are also in the forecast.

A wind advisory for Lake Tahoe is in effect until 8 tonight, with the largest waves expected on the North Shore – 2 to 4 feet.

– Kathryn Reed

Court decision keeps OHV traffic off roads in Eldorado National Forest

Portions of 42 off-highway-vehicle routes that cross meadows in the Eldorado National Forest may be closed to motor vehicle travel this recreation season while the U.S. Forest Service completes an environmental analysis.

The potential travel prohibitions are the result of a February court order by U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence Karlton. The order said the Forest Service failed to comply with the National Forest Management Act in 2008 when it designated "open for public motor vehicle use" portions of 42 routes that cross meadows.

A final court order with further direction to the Forest Service is pending. In the interim, Karlton ordered that the 42 routes are to remain closed to public wheeled motorized use. The final court order will identify specifically where travel will be prohibited until a new environmental decision is made.

The Rubicon Trail is not affected by this court order.

A map and a complete list of the routes affected by the court order is posted on the Eldorado National Forest website. The map will be modified to reflect the final court order once it is received.

Sawmill Road bike path weeks from breaking ground

By Kathryn Reed

If the weather cooperates, work will begin May 1 on the Sawmill Road bike trail on the South Shore.

The contract between El Dorado County and Don Garcia Excavating and Paving is signed. Permits are in hand. It's just a waiting game right now.

Besides the 8-foot-wide class 1 bike path that will be built on the south side of the road (the right side headed from Lake Tahoe Boulevard toward Meyers), parking at Sawmill Pond will be improved, a couple spaces put in near Echo View Estates, and a ton of water quality work done. Eight culverts will be replaced, channels will be lined with rock, rock bowls created to treat stormwater, the road paved and striped, and fencing put in along with some signs.

All of this comes with a price tag of $842,000.



The dirt to the right will

be a bike path on Sawmill Road by the end of summer. Photo/LTN

Much of the money comes from the Congestion for Mitigation of Air Quality funds.

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Class I – Bike Path: *A dedicated exclusive bike path meant for bike and pedestrian traffic.*					
Class II – Bike Lane: *A marked lane exclusively for bike travel on roadways.*					
Class III – Bike Route: *Sometimes marked, Bike Routes offer advantages compared to alternative routes. Bicycle riders must share the roadway with other vehicles.*					

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The Sawmill Road project is broken into two phases in large part because of funding. But right-of-way issues are a concern with the second phase, though not enough of one for planners to believe it won't be built in 2013.

The first phase will go from Lake Tahoe Boulevard to about Echo View Estates. This is all adjacent to public property owned by the California Tahoe Conservancy and California State Parks.

Phase two has more private property owners so it's taking longer to secure rights-of-way. The county cannot legally pay someone more than fair market value, no matter what the landowner believes the property is worth.

This is also why the path is being built in a non-contiguous manner. For a year the route won't tie into the network of trails that are already in the ground.

The second phase will connect with the bridge that crosses the Upper Truckee River and is the path that extends to Meyers. The design for that section is 90 percent finished. Environmental clearance is complete. When the rights-of-way issues are put to rest, permits will be sought and the Board of Supervisors will be asked to bid the project.

“We are very hopeful it will be next season. We don’t see anything stopping it,” Brendan Ferry, senior planner with El Dorado County, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “It should be a nice trail for all kinds of user groups. That was the goal.”

Changes in Meyers

As people continue out to Meyers on the existing trail they will notice changes along Highway 50 in 2013-14 when Caltrans begins water quality projects in the area.

County Supervisor Norma Santiago, last week when she addressed the Meyers Roundtable, said Caltrans expects to put a pedestrian button in at the intersection of Highway 50 and Pioneer Trail so people can cross there more safely.

This piece of news was met with applause by those at the meeting.

With how the flow of traffic is now and how the lights are set, neither cyclists nor pedestrians can safely cross at that intersection.

Caltrans also plans to create a safety section for people crossing Highway 50 right in Meyers. The wide area of asphalt near the bug station will be a landing spot of sorts as people break the crossing into segments instead of dashing across all the lanes of traffic at once.

Meyers will also have class 1 and 2 bike trails when Caltrans is done with its work.

Lake Tahoe Boulevard

Changes to Lake Tahoe Boulevard will probably come in 2014, though they could start a year earlier. These two miles of work will also likely be broken into two phases.

A class 1 trail is slated to go in on the west side of the road from Sawmill Road to Viking Way. (That's the same side as South Tahoe High School.)

"It will be a fully separated path kind of in the forest on an existing forest road," Ferry said. "That is entirely on public land. We are working with the Forest Service to get that done. Permitting shouldn't be too tough because it's an existing disturbance."

This will tie into the class 2 trail that comes from Y area of South Lake Tahoe.

A crosswalk will be put in so people can more safely get across Lake Tahoe Boulevard from one bike trail to the other.

Headed in the other direction, toward the Upper Truckee neighborhood, Lake Tahoe Boulevard for about four-tenths of a mile will go from two lanes in each direction to one. Part of the current pavement will be used for the bike path.

"It goes to two lanes after you get through the curve. We don't see it as an impediment to timing," Ferry said. "And it's a cost effective, environmentally friendly way to get the bike path."

Plus, the bike path there will be 6-feet-wide instead of the minimum 4-foot requirement.

Walking fitness challenge to begin in May

During the month of May, Tahoe Forest Health System is offering a free monthlong walking fitness challenge – 10,000 Steps a Day for the Month of May.

All Truckee-North Lake Tahoe residents are welcome to join as individuals or as a team.



Call the Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance at (530) 587.3769 to register. Participants may purchase pedometers at the center.

Participants receive weekly health and fitness tips; entry into a weekly raffle for turning in step totals, and a grand prize is awarded to the most improved, and other prizes.

The benefits of walking 10,000 steps a day are significant. They include weight and body fat loss; a decrease in hip circumference; an increase in HDL (good) cholesterol and a lower body mass index (BMI). The 10,000 steps don’t have to be performed on a track or trail. They can include shuffling back and forth from your desk to the copier or the coffee machine as well as a hurried sprint to catch the bus or even your toddler.

For more information, email tchsp@tfhd.com or call (530) 587.3769.

Wilderness medical courses offered by TRTA

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association is partnering with the American Red Cross, Wilderness Medicine Institute, Lake Tahoe School and Crested Butte Outdoors for a series of Wilderness Medicine Courses.

These are for crew leaders, wilderness guides, outdoor enthusiasts and people who work in a remote environment.

American Red Cross Courses

Location: 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

May 4: Adult CPR & AED

May 5–6: Wilderness and Remote First Aid

May 4–6: Wilderness and Remote First Aid & Adult CPR/AED.

Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS Courses

Location: 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

May 16–17: Wilderness First Aid.

For program fees, online registration and other details about these courses, go online and search under “Medical Trainings”.

Star gazing event in Hope Valley

Join astronomers Adrienne Cool and Ron Marzke of San Francisco State University for a nighttime event and slide show, peering through telescopes to spy planets, stars, and nebulae.

All ages are welcome to the May 12 event that will start about 8pm at Sorensen’s Resort in Hope Valley.

Cost is $10 adults/$5 kids, all proceeds (which will be matched by Sorensen’s) will go to support school science programs in Alpine County.

National Trails Day on South Shore involves trail building, guided hikes

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association is participating in the 20th annual American Hiking Society National Trails Day event on June 2.

Help the TRTA build trail at Van Sickle Bi-State Park near Stateline. Volunteers of all skill levels and physical abilities are welcome and encouraged to participate. No prior experience necessary.

The workday is from 9am-4pm

Volunteers will free lunch and are invited to the post-workday celebration at Explore Tahoe.

Click here to register.

For those who want a different trail experience, guided hikes will be offered separate from the trail building at 10am and 1pm. Contact Jaime Souza at jaimes@tahoerimtrail.org for details.

Summer track camp registration under way

Lake Tahoe Summer Track & Field Camp is July 16-20 at South Tahoe Middle School.

It’s open to ages 8-14 or third- to eighth-graders.

For more information or to register, go online.