Lake Tahoe forecast – brrrrrrrrrrr

Snowflakes. That's what the National Weather Service in Reno's graphic shows for the Lake Tahoe area for tonight through Sunday.

High winds will be associated with the storm that will start to move in this afternoon. A high wind advisory has been issued for Lake Tahoe from 2pm Thursday through 4am Friday. By Friday morning, waves could be as high as 5 feet.



Ice earlier this month near the edge of Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Temperatures will drop 15-20 degrees below normal for the weekend. The overnight low Friday in South Tahoe is expected to be 13 degrees. It won't warm up much Saturday, with the high expected to be 27 degrees.

Not a ton of snow is associated with the cold front blowing in from Alaska – just a few inches each day – but the white stuff is expected to hit the Carson Valley-Reno areas.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Summer activities at ski resorts expected to grow

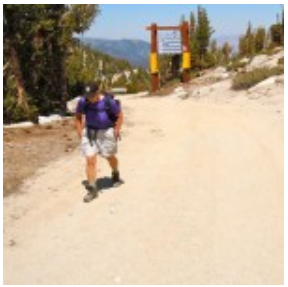
By Kathryn Reed

When the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 was adopted, the assumption was Nordic and Alpine skiing were the only activities a ski resort would ever want or need to offer its users.

Clearly, things have changed.

But for resorts that operate on U.S. Forest Service land, the act is a bit prohibitive and some activities that are going on don't truly comply with what's allowed.

That all changed this month with President Obama signing the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011. One day "ski area" may have to be removed from the act's name and that of resorts to better reflect all that they offer.



The federal law will provide the opportunity for more hiking trails

at Heavenly.
Photo/LTN file

“The 2007 master plan said what (Heavenly) could look at in the future. There were things before that they didn’t go forward with because we didn’t know if it was allowable at a ski area. This will give us a way to consider summer activities and additional winter if they request,” Cheva Heck, local USFS spokeswoman, said.

She would not elaborate on specifics so as not to violate proprietary information. A spokesman for Heavenly did not respond to questions about how the act will affect the resort.

Heavenly already offers a number of things for guests to do during the summer – hiking, tubing, a rock wall, as well as a year-round lodge.

Sierra is keeping its options open for summer fun.

“We at Sierra have no plan to expand summer activities,” Steve Hemphill, resort spokesman, told *Lake Tahoe News.* “It’s a definite possibility in the future. It opens doors.”

The new law does not allow a free-for-all. Parameters are still in place.

“The key is harmonizing with the natural environment,” Heck said. “Tennis courts, swimming pools and golf courses will not be allowed.”

Master plans must be adhered to, the Forest Service must sign off on changes and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will have a role at resorts with property in the basin.

“Trail building has come a long way recently and the industry is sensitive to disturbance and erosion concerns. Our goals and policies specifically support outdoor, non-motorized recreation,” TRPA spokesman Jeff Cowen said. “When Heavenly

began drafting their master plan, mountain biking wasn't even considered. As far as recreation allocations, there are plenty available for the use."

Kirkwood doesn't have TRPA to deal with because it is part of the Eldorado. Even so, Michael Dalzell, spokesman for Kirkwood, said the changes will not have an immediate impact at his resort.

"We already have a successful summer operation with mountain biking, hiking, disc golf, Zip Tahoe, events, etc. We are looking at potentially expanding our bike park," Dalzell said. "This new legislation may have a positive impact on how quickly any new plans will be approved by the Forest Service."

Even though much of Squaw Valley's land is privately owned, meaning the act doesn't have a substantial impact, the resort is happy to see the passage of the legislation.

"I think the act has wonderful implications for the ski industry as a whole. Offering summer activities allows resorts to remain operational year-round, meaning that families can enjoy our terrain throughout the year," Amelia Richmond, spokeswoman for Squaw, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It also means that resorts can employ more members of the local community on a year-round versus a winter seasonal basis, which benefits the local economy and employment."

In California, there are 25 ski areas on 11 national forests.

Regionally they include:

• Eldorado National Forest: Kirkwood and Sierra

• Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit: Heavenly

• Tahoe National Forest: Donner Ski Ranch, Boreal Ridge, Alpine Meadows, Squaw Valley and Sugar Bowl.

Diamond Peak, Homewood Mountain Resort and Northstar operate

mostly on private property and therefore don’t come under the umbrella of the two acts.

The Forest Service manages 193 million acres of public land, with recreational activities contributing $14.5 billion annually to the U.S. economy. But that isn’t just at ski resorts.

There are 122 ski resorts on national forest land. The Forest Service averages 27 million visits annually to ski areas, which pumps $4 billion into the economy, and provides 80,000 job.

Officials believe increasing summer recreation could add $40 million more collectively to ski towns.

Sugar Pine Point park receives donation from Hellman family

The Hellman Family of San Francisco has presented California State Parks with a $100,000 donation to support the restoration efforts of the Hellman-Ehrman Estate at Lake Tahoe. The mansion is located within Ed Z’berg Sugar Pine Point State Park on the west shore of Lake Tahoe.



“The leadership and vision of the Hellman family is a prime example of Californians taking an active role in the future of our State Parks,” Ruth Coleman, director of California State Parks said in a press release. “We thank them for their generous

donation which will significantly help with our restoration efforts."

In the late 1800s, internationally known West Coast banker Isaias W. Hellman visited the promontory location on the West Shore known as Sugar Pine Point. In 1903, he constructed his majestic estate, the mansion known as Pine Lodge, as a summer retreat for his family. After his death, his daughter Florence Ehrman enjoyed the property for many more years. In 1965, Pine Lodge and its surrounding estate were sold to the California to become Sugar Pine Point State Park. Today, about 108 years after the mansion was built, Hellman's descendants have become an instrumental factor in ensuring the legacy of the historic property continues for the people of the California.

In recent years, due to severe funding cutbacks, California State Parks has not been able to finance the critical repairs and restoration needs for the Pine Lodge Estate. These repairs include electrical system upgrades, installation of a fire alarm system, repair and plastering of deteriorating ceilings and walls, window replacements, and foundation repairs. This critical grant will allow the much needed restoration efforts to proceed and assure that the Hellman-Ehrman Estate will continue to be an important part of our California landscape for generations to come.

The Sierra State Parks Foundation, the nonprofit established to promote the interpretive, educational and restoration efforts of the California State Parks in the Tahoe/Truckee region, will be managing the grant and is looking for other private partners to join with the Hellman family in fully funding the restoration efforts.

For more information of the restoration efforts of the Hellman-Ehrman Estate and other historic properties in stewardship with California State Parks in the Lake Tahoe region, contact Heidi Doyle at (530) 583.3074 or hdoyle@parks,ca.gov or the Sierra State Parks Foundation at

(530) 583.1017 or info@sierraspf.org.

Tours of the home are offered daily from Memorial Day weekend through September.

Lake Tahoe News resumes daily ski report

It's back – *Lake Tahoe News'* morning ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong – the Guy from Tahoe.

New this year is the report having its own category on the Home page. Ski Conditions is the category to look for. It's in the tool bar at the top of the page toward the right. The current day's report should be up between 7 and 8am. It has information about resorts throughout the greater Lake Tahoe area.

It will no longer appear in the daily digest as it has in past years.

Enjoy the snow – more will becoming this weekend. Powder day?

– Kathryn Reed

Turkey Trot fun run in South

Lake Tahoe

The annual South Lake Tahoe Turkey Trot is Nov. 19.

Registration is at 10am, with the kids’ races at 11am, and adults at noon.

Kids free, while it costs adults 18 and up $2.

The event is at the South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Complex at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd.

All participants receive a hot dog or bagel lunch bag.

Winners in each age group receive a turkey and pumpkin pies to go second and third place finishers.

All participants and spectators are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items for Christmas Cheer.

For more information, call (530) 542.6056.

State Christmas tree hails from El Dorado County

The state Christmas tree will roll from downtown Placerville this morning to Sacramento.

The nearly 60-foot Douglas fir is from El Dorado County.



CalFire crews load this year's state Christmas tree. Photo/Teresa Mizuhara/CalFire

CalFire and California Highway Patrol units will help transport the tree starting at 8am.

“Over the years this event has drawn attention to both the beauty and diversity of the forested landscapes found in El Dorado County,” CalFire Amador-El Dorado Unit Chief Kelly Keenan said in a statement. “Soon families will flock to find and cut their own Christmas tree at one of the local tree farms.”

The tree will be lighted Dec. 7 at 4:45pm.

It will be decorated with 900 handcrafted ornaments created by children and adults with developmental disabilities who receive services and support from the state’s development centers and 21 nonprofit regional centers. It will be illuminated by 10,000 ultra-low wattage LED lights.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Rahlves not done contributing to the world of skiing

By Brian Nordli, Reno Gazette-Journal

When skier Daron Rahlves is asked about the legacy he will leave for future skiers, the answer is different almost every time.

Minutes before he presents to the country's top ski boot fitters at Circus Circus in Reno last week, it's to be known as someone who loved the sport and inspired others to ski.



Daron Rahlves

Rahlves, 38, recently entered the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame. He will be inducted into the inaugural class of the Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition International Sports Hall of Fame on Friday, for his accomplishments as an alpine downhill and skicross athlete. The honors invoke reflection on a completed career, from his 12 World Cup race victories, seven U.S. National titles and four Olympic selections. Yet, the answer keeps changing, because Rahlves considers his career to be anything but over.

"It's almost like, 'Oh, you're retiring from this?' No it's not retiring, it's transitioning," Rahlves said. "I'm still trying to have success in a different way in the sport. Now, it's getting more interested in the adventure side."

Jon Killoran, CEO of the Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition, said Rahlves was a near-unanimous choice of the hall's selection committee. Rahlves grew up on the mountains in Tahoe, and carved a career out of his passion for going fast. Killoran, who is working to bring the 2022 Winter Olympics to the region, said when his name is mentioned to Tahoe residents, their eyes light up.

"They're enthralled with his championship-caliber racing and Olympic endeavors," Killoran said. "He's the kind of guy with his (Banzai Tour) and work with Sugar Bowl that gives back to the sport."

Read the whole story

Avalanche death in Utah first of the season

By Justin Keppler, Ski Channel

It is with great remorse and sadness we report Jamie Pierre was killed by an avalanche in Utah on Sunday.

The legendary skier, cliff hucker and notoriously wild spirited Pierre was taken over a cliff in an avalanche triggered while riding with a friend at Snowbird Mountain Resort in Utah.

The Salt Lake Tribune reported that Pierre triggered the avalanche while snowboarding with a friend near the South Chute area around 3:15 pm Sunday afternoon. The area they were riding would have technically been considered within the bounds of the resort had it been open. While his friend was

unharmed, Pierre’s injuries from his fall proved fatal and was dead by the time officials arrived on the scene.

The mountains around Snowbird, Utah have been getting pounded with snow this season and have accumulated 14 inches of fresh snowfall in the past 48 hours alone. The mountain is not officially open yet, which means there hasn’t been any avalanche control done on the resort slopes. Between early season conditions and the recent accumulation, the resulting snowpack became extremely dangerous.

Read the whole story

Buddy Werner league signing up skiers

Buddy Werner Youth Ski League is looking for participants.

This all-volunteer not-for-profit corporation providing slalom and giant slalom ski race training for the youngsters of South Lake Tahoe and the West Slope of El Dorado County. All practices and races are on Sundays at Sierra-At-Tahoe starting Dec. 11.

Skier registration info:

Nov. 15, 5:30–8pm, Mountain Mikes Pizza, 2650 Cameron Park Drive, Cameron Park

Nov. 16, 5:30–8pm, Round Table Pizza, 1062 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe

Nov. 17, 5:30–8pm, Round Table Pizza, 512 Main St., Placerville.

Eligibility requirements:

Skiers must be between the ages of 7-14, but shall in no event be beyond the eighth grade as of Dec 10, 2011.

Skiers must be able to stop, turn left, turn right, and be able to independently load and unload from the ski lift while on skis.

First child is $75, two are $140, three from the same family are $195. This does not include lift tickets/season pass. A Sierra Fast Pass is also required.

For more information, call Chris Peterson at (530) 642.8572.

Kirkwood expanding options for backcountry junkies

By Kathryn Reed

With more than a foot of snow on the ground before this weekend's storm arrived, Kirkwood is eager to power up the chairlifts to get people to all that powder.

"We haven't announced an early opening. We don't intend to do so until after this weekend and we see what kind of weekend it is," Michael Dalzell told *Lake Tahoe News*. With the forecast for the storm to go south, that bodes well for Kirkwood.



Skiers flocked to Kirkwood through late spring this past season. Photo/LTN file

Dalzell, spokesman for Kirkwood Mountain Resort, said Thanksgiving weekend is the targeted opening date so far. But, he added, fingers are crossed it will be top to bottom riding just like last year – which ended with 781 inches falling at the resort off Highway 88.

The bulk of the $6 million in improvements at the resort went to rebuilding the Mountain Club, which caught fire in May. It will open later this month.

Most of the units evolved from hotel-like units to two-bedroom condos. The Mountain Club includes a full workout room, spa, sauna and steam room. It is a freestanding building in the village that operates on a one-eighth ownership.

Besides the lodging, the bottom level has been overhauled as well as a result of the fire. This includes the popular Monte Wolfe's. A few food items will be changed, but for the most part it will be the same restaurant.

Guest services and the ticket office are new, too.

Across from Chair 6 is the $1 million Expedition: Kirkwood Outfitters building.

While Expedition Kirkwood has been in existence for years, it

never had a great place to operate out of. The new facility is designed to be a gathering place, somewhere to get information about avalanche conditions, hire a guide on a whim or just hang. It’s from here that cat skiing, avalanche clinics, backcountry programs and all things beyond basic school begin and end.

Meeting space allows for gatherings or classroom time. Retail, demo equipment – it will all be in this one building.

Three times as many cat tours are expected to go out this season. Improvements during the dry season to the winter road to the Martin Point terrain will allow snowcat access almost every day. Expedition Kirkwood also intends to expand nighttime cat tours and hiking tours to new areas.

Kirkwood and K2 believe the snow and terrain are so special the ski manufacturer has created the Expedition Kirkwood K2 Sidestash. It is an all-terrain shovel rocker adventure ski. And only 300 pairs exist.

The price of an all day lift ticket has not been set, but it will be just less than $80, according to Dalzell. What the resort is touting is the inaugural year of having passes that allow riders to jump between Kirkwood, Homewood and Alpine.

Many of Kirkwood’s signature events are returning, like the North American Freeskiing Championships. But new is the Freeride Snow Festival on March 23-25 – which is billed as a winter version of Wanderlust. Women’s clinics have been expanded to a weeklong shindig – March 3-11.

All events and details about Expedition Kirkwood are online.