Cycling firm spends time building trails in Truckee

Global sporting goods and bicycle product leader Shimano partnered with Gooddirtyfun, a joint trail maintenance program by the Truckee Donner Land Trust and Truckee Trails Foundation, to improve multi-use trails in Truckee as part of the company's weeklong visit to the area . Shimano has made advocacy a priority while in the Lake Tahoe area for a mountain bike-related event by harnessing the manpower from its group totaling 70 global media, professional athletes, and company staff to help improve trails along with Land Trust staff.

"We selected Lake Tahoe as our location for its incredible bike trails, and we are thrilled to be leaving local trails in better condition than we found them," Dustin Brady, of Shimano



Mountain bike journalist Richard Cunningham, left, and Shimano PR Manager Devin Walton move lumber as part of their group's June

19 trail work at Waddle Ranch in Truckee. Photo/Sterling Lorence

American Corporation, said in a press release. “Advocacy is in line with our company credo and it’s also part of the outdoor and adventure experience we wanted to create for our group in the Lake Tahoe area.”

The Shimano and Gooddirtyfun group worked on trails in Waddle Ranch Preserve, a 1,462-acre, $23.5 million acquisition that was initially slated to be residences and a golf course, but became one of the Sierra Nevada’s largest and most complicated conservation efforts in recent history. The Truckee Donner Land Trust has expanded trails and picnic sites at Waddle Ranch Preserve for hikers, bikers, and wildlife watchers.

The Gooddirtyfun and Shimano group helped bring portions of Erika’s Trail to IMBA and U.S. Forest Service standards of being constructed sustainably with full-bench construction. Erika’s Trail was developed and already “roughed in” in fall 2010 by Gooddirtyfun.

Youth hockey coaches needed on South Shore

The South Lake Tahoe Amateur Hockey Association is seeking head and assistant coaches for four levels of hockey.

Coaches are need for:

Mite developmental (ages 8 and under)

Squirt NORCAL team (ages 9 and 10)

PeeWee NORCAL team (ages 11 & 12), and

Bantam NORCAL team (ages 13 & 14).

The application is due July 8. Completed applications should be sent to STAHA Coaching Director Hunter Boldt at hunterboldt@gmail.com or mailed to STAHA, Attn: Coaching Director, 1178 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150; or left at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena in the STAHA mailbox located behind the front desk.

Meyers next up for controlled burn by USFS

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews may conduct prescribed fire operations on the south side of the intersection of Pioneer Trail and Highway 50 in Meyers early next week if weather conditions permit.

The project is approximately 30 acres and consists of piles of vegetation and woody materials remaining after fuels reduction efforts aimed at reducing wildfire risk to the community.

The Forest Service is considering staffing a prescribed fire information station during this project. If weather conditions are favorable and fuels management staff decide to proceed with the operation, additional details regarding hours and location for the station will follow. During prescribed fire operations, residents and travelers can expect to see smoke from the area. The Forest Service strives to reduce smoke

impacts to the community from prescribed fire operations, while still completing this important wildfire risk reduction work.

BMX track in South Tahoe open

South Lake Tahoe BMX track is open for the 2011 season.

The track at 1100 Lyons Ave. and is open to all ages and abilities for open practice on Tuesdays from 5:30-7:30pm.

Weekly races take place on Thursdays. Sign ups are from 5:30-6:30pm. Race fee is $10.

For more information, call (530) 542.9337.

New this season – a mountain cross series will take place every fourth Thursday, with finals in September.

Lakeview Commons' terraced setting taking shape

El Dorado Beach is always a busy location each summer in South Lake Tahoe.

The difference this year is it's full of construction workers instead of beach-goers and barbecuers.



What Lakeview Commons will look like when its done.

While the weather shut down the multi-million beautification-recreation-water quality project for two days, Clark and Sullivan Builders are not behind because hiccups like that were built into the calendar.

South Lake Tahoe City Councilman Tom Davis at a South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association meeting this month told that board the project will be completed for the most part before winter. However, he said landscaping won't be done until next spring.

"I would like to have a locals' beach party next year," Davis said.

Driving by on Highway 50 it's hard to know what is going on. Most of the work is near the beach. The dirt piled near the highway is essentially the eroding hill that was there. It is being developed into a terraced sitting area.

More tables and barbecues will be near the street like before. A structure near the boat ramp will be used to store canoes and kayaks. Restrooms are also part of the project.

Improvements are being tied into Caltrans' three-year Trout Creek to Ski Run Boulevard street improvement project so the road won't be constantly torn up.

– Kathryn Reed

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Landscaping with less water becoming the norm

By Kate Galbraith, New York Times

AUSTIN – At a botanical research center here, slender-bladed grasses that are soft on bare feet fill a round patch of lawn, which has held up despite getting trampled by hordes of visitors all spring.

This is a demonstration plot showcasing a mix of native grass species, and it is part of researchers' efforts to find a lawn that will require less water, and less mowing than conventional Texas lawns.

"Our perspective was – let's investigate alternatives," said Mark Simmons, director of the ecosystem design group at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

Lawn management is "counterintuitive," he said, because it requires too many resources, like water and fertilizer.

The research in Texas, which is financed by the retail giant Wal-Mart Stores, is an effort to address an increasingly pressing problem: How to manage lawns when local water supplies are badly stretched.

Texas is in the throes of a serious drought, as are much of southern Europe, Britain and other parts of the world. And lawns take up vast amounts of water – in the United States, more than half of the water use in some cities goes toward

watering the landscape, though this varies considerably, depending on climate and other factors.

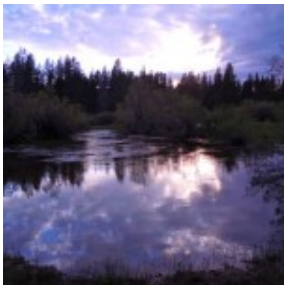
Lawn management is “a huge industry,” Mr. Simmons said. “It’s not a sustainable industry as it stands.”

Read the whole story

Trout Creek extends well beyond its banks

Trout Creek in South Lake Tahoe is expected to rise Friday morning to 8.5 feet, near the channel’s capacity.

The National Weather Service in Reno said it was at 8.3 feet at 1pm Thursday. *Lake Tahoe News* saw the marker in the creek at Martin Avenue at 7:50pm June 16 at 8.1 feet.



Trout Creek in South Lake Tahoe on June 16 is near flood stage. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Even though the weather service is not expecting any flooding

by their definition, water is in the back yards in this area. The trail to the creek on O'Malley Drive at Bertha Avenue is flooded. The creek has busted its bank all along its route – including on Black Bart Avenue headed to Meadow Crest Drive. It's also visible on Highway 50 where it goes under the road. Looking south at that bridge it's all water.

It's possible the freezing overnight temps Thursday slowed the snowmelt a bit.

A low pressure system moved through the Lake Tahoe Basin Thursday afternoon and into the evening, bringing a few showers and cold temperatures. Warm weather is in the forecast going forward, with no more threat to outdoor plants.

– Kathryn Reed

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Trout Creek may breach banks; rivers running high

The National Weather Service in Reno is predicting Trout Creek in South Lake Tahoe to hit flood level today, with possible minimal flooding in the Martin Avenue area.

At 4pm Wednesday the creek was at 8 feet, with flood stage being 8.5 feet.



Kayakers at Sand Harbor on Monday enjoy the summer weather. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The East Fork of the Carson River below Markleeville on Wednesday afternoon was at 5.5 feet, with flood stage at 7 feet. The river near Gardnerville was at 6.1 feet June 15. Flood stage is 9.5 feet at that location.

The West Fork of the Carson River near Woodfords on Wednesday was at 12.8 feet, with flood stage being 14 feet.

These river forecasts are based on forecast rainfall, temperature, and current and planned reservoir releases.

The National Weather Service warns people camping near rivers to stay back from the banks because flooding can occur during the night.

High flows on regional rivers and creeks are expected for the rest of June. The current and temperature can make for a lethal combination for people swimming, paddling, or trying to cross the water in four-wheel drive vehicles.

High temperatures throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin will be in the 60s for the rest of the week, with most locations hitting the 70s on Monday.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tioga Pass into Yosemite will open Saturday

Tioga Pass will open June 18 at 8am, according to the Yosemite National Park website.

Also known as Highway 120, this stretch of pavement is the main link between the Eastern Sierra and Yosemite. It's the preferred route for people from the Tahoe-Reno area to get to the national park.

The abundance of snow this year has made it slow-going for Caltrans crews to remove the mass of white stuff.

Here is a history of opening and closing dates for Tioga Pass.

Even though the road will be open, services will be limited. An opening date for campgrounds in that area has not been set. Tuolumne Meadows still has 3 feet of snow.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

TRPA wants opinions about BMP handbook

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is seeking input as it updates the Handbook of Best Management Practices. It last updated in 1988.

The BMP Handbook provides guidance to consultants, engineers, contractors, homeowners, agencies, and others who are proposing projects in the Lake Tahoe region which may affect water quality. Stormwater is an evolving science and new research provides information that improves BMP effectiveness and design.

Topics addressed in the proposed BMP Handbook update include urban hydrology, site analysis, temporary and permanent BMPs selection, shorezone protective structures, soils restoration and revegetation, approved plant lists, fertilizers, fire defensible space, inspection, maintenance, and monitoring.

Input will be accepted until Aug. 1. The 1988 BMP Handbook and the Final Draft BMP Handbook are available online.

Input may be submitted online or via email to jchoy@trpa.org.