Ski report: It keeps dumping



So much snow mixed with wind is causing problems at some resorts with getting all lifts operating, while some resorts are not opening today.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Schools closed, snow not stopping in Tahoe

A long winter means a long school year for students in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Today schools in Lake Tahoe Unified and Tahoe Truckee Unified are closed. Friday was already a planned day off for schools at the lake in Douglas County School District. Washoe County schools will be on a two-hour delay this morning and winter bus stops will be activated. School in Incline is closed. Classes at UNR before 9am are canceled.



One day it might be

barbecue
season in Lake
Tahoe.
Photo/LTN

A winter storm warning remains in effect today until 11am. The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter weather advisory from 8pm Friday to 5pm Saturday.

More than a foot of snow fell in South Lake Tahoe is less than 24 hours, with the stuff still coming down lightly as of 6:30am.

The Weather Service is calling for 4-8 inches today above 7,000 feet and 4 inches below that elevation. Overnight and Saturday totals could reach 10-18 inches above 7,000 feet and 5-10 inches closer to lake level.

The Sierra Avalanche Center is calling the threat of an avalanche high. Alpine Meadows is closed today.

Interstate 80 is not expected to open until noon.

A bright spot in the forecast is on the radar for Tuesday – when the high in South Tahoe is expected to be 42 degrees, with party sunny skies.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Upper Truckee Marsh to temporarily ban dogs

By Kathryn Reed

“No dogs allowed” signs will soon be erected at the entrances of the Upper Truckee Marsh.

With 10 years of data recorded since the California Tahoe Conservancy bought the South Shore property for $10 million, the conclusion is wildlife and their habitat are not being protected.

This is because dogs are running off-leash. Only about 70 percent of people walking in the area leash their dogs, according to Dana Dapolito, CTC associate environmental planner.



Upper Truckee Marsh will be dog-free for three months starting May 1. Photo/LTN May 2010

Because this site was acquired to enhance habitat, degrading it does not meet the standards for which it was purchased.

The closure of the 311-acre marsh/meadow to dogs will be from May 1 to July 31. This map details the area. People will still be able to access the area.

“This is not routine. It’s a reflection of the extraordinary value of this habitat,” CTC Deputy Director Ray Lacey told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We saw birds chased downed and eaten. It’s a little dangerous when you are in the business of resource

protection and you let it go too far."

The decision to ban dogs was first reported by *Lake Tahoe News* in July 2010 after the board made the decision.

Letters will be mailed next week to residents bordering the marsh in South Lake Tahoe to let them know about the closure and the reasoning behind it. CTC staff knows the three-month dog ban will not be popular. But they also said it may not be permanent.

Dapolito said, "If after the closure we see a significant increase in the leashes, we could bring to the board a recommendation during breeding season to allow dogs on leash."

The time period of the ban is because this is when the birds are breeding. Dogs roaming free – which is never legally allowed – are not only attacking birds, but are also disturbing nesting areas. On top of that, some of the migratory birds going from one end of the earth to the other may not make it to their final destination if their energies are used up in Tahoe flying away from canines, CTC officials said.

This is not just any marsh. It is home to animals and plants not found elsewhere in Tahoe.

"It is the singular and most unique habitat in the Lake Tahoe Basin. That is why we singled this out of our 5,000 other properties," Lacey explained.

The willow flycatcher – a songbird – was put on the federal endangered species list in 1997.

"Habitat destruction and degradation plus overgrazing by livestock are the major causes of population decline," according to the Audubon Society.

This area of Tahoe was once grazed. It is a meadow once the water leaves via Trout Creek into Lake Tahoe.

The yellow warbler and yellow-headed blackbird are on the state list of endangered species.

Asked what would happen if dogs were left to do as they please, CTC wildlife biologist Adam Lewandowski said, “Some species would adjust, but this is unique habitat. (Others) are rare or threatened because they are not adaptive and have specific habitat area. So this is one of the only areas where they can survive.”

Although the Conservancy is more worried about protecting the animals and their habitat, two plants in this area are also of concern. This acreage has the largest growth of Tahoe yellow cress and is home to the rare American mannagrass.

The Conservancy has enlisted the help of El Dorado County Animal Control and Sheriff’s Office to police the area. They will be enforcing South Lake Tahoe city ordinance 18A-11J.

The first offense will be a warning and removal of the animal from the property. The second and subsequent offenses will involve money, though the CTC staff didn’t know how much.

An alternative for people wanting to walk their dogs in a natural environment during the ban is across the meadow at Cove East – another CTC property.

Bahrke second in aerials in freestyle championships

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Ski Team

STRATTON MOUNTAIN, Vt. -– Defending U.S. champion Emily Cook (Belmont, MA) and Dylan Ferguson (Amesbury, MA) earned the

titles of U.S. aerials champion after their wins Thursday at the Sprint U.S. Freestyle Championships at Stratton Mountain.

On a freshly built course under partially sunny skies, the first day of competition at Stratton Mountain went smoothly.

“Nationals is always a fun event and I am really proud to be national champion again,” said Cook. “I am really happy with the progress I am making and to have the results reflect that is amazing.”

Ferguson topped the men’s podium, followed by Scotty Bahrke (Tahoe City) in second and Michael Rossi (Califon, NJ) third. The women’s top three featured Cook in first, with Ashley Caldwell (Charleston, SC) second and Alexa Devereaux (Park City) third.

Cook secured her third U.S. champion title going all out with the only back-full double-full in the women’s competition. Caldwell had the highest single jump score of the night of 83.79 with a huge back full-full.

For the men, both Ferguson and Bahrke, regular competitors on the World Cup circuit, executed the same jump package, with Ferguson earning slightly higher marks on his landing. This was Ferguson’s first national title. He was runner up at the U.S. Championships last year at Squaw Valley. Rossi had a standout performance that showcased his consistency on the NorAm circuit this year. The medal is Rossi’s first in the U.S. Championships in three tries.

Official results, Sprint U.S. Freestyle Championships Stratton Mountain, Vt., Aerials

Men

1. Dylan Ferguson, Amesbury, MA, 194.65

2. Scotty Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 183.46

3. Michael Rossi, Califon, NJ, 172.06

4. Mac Bohonnon, Madison, CT, 158.07

5. Nevin Brown, Streetsboro, OH, 157.44

6. Eric Loughran, Pelham, NH, 150.44

7. Alex Bowen, Springville, NY, 143.55

8. Hans Gardner, Orchard Park, NY, 133.64

9. Devon Savino, Canton, CT, 109.86

10. Travis O’Connor, Oxford, NH, 104.65

11. Joseph Kardamis, Chardon, OH, 103.09

12. Jack Boyczuk, Holland, NY, 102.52

13. Alec Carignan, Pelham, NH, 66.69

14. Jonathon Lillis, Pittsford, NY, DNS

Women

1. Emily Cook, Belmont, MA, 140.78

2. Ashley Caldwell, Charleston, SC, 128.01

3. Alexa Devereaux, Park City, UT, 125.50

4. Allison Lee, Manchester, CT, 121.21

5. Kiley McKinnon, Madison, CT, 104.64

6. Jeanee Crane-Mauzy, Waterville Valley, NH, 85.69

Ski report: Wind, snow, wind, snow



Mt. Rose is closed for the day. People in Squaw Valley are Tweeting it’s whiteout conditions.

Wind is likely to affect operations at resorts throughout the greater Lake Tahoe area.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Tahoe youth hockey team to compete for state title

By Ted Parkhill

The Tahoe Grizzlie Squirts are headed to the California State Hockey Championships.



Tahoe Grizzlies Ice Hockey club is creating quite the stir among Northern California’s top teams. On March 19-20 the Northern California playoffs commenced with the top four teams of the regular season competing for the title of NorCal champion. The Tahoe Grizzlies Squirts (ages 9-10) did not disappoint, and proved to all who were in attendance that grit and perseverance can, and will, take down the elite youth hockey organizations of

Northern California.

The young Grizzlies are a team with tremendous skill and cohesion, but more important, a group that has demonstrated over and over that determination and the ability to try harder when the chips are down is what makes champions, and this mantra would again serve the team well. With preliminary round wins over the Roseville Capital Thunder and the Santa Clara Blackhawks, the Grizzlies battled their way into the championship final to play the San Jose Jr. Sharks.

In the championship game the Grizzlies took the early lead on a goal by Lucas Demsar of South Lake Tahoe. But the Jr. Sharks quickly countered.

Forward Zach Dill of South Lake Tahoe scored late in the first period to put the Grizzlies up 2-1, but again the Jr. Sharks countered to tie the game 2-2.

With 4 seconds to go in the second period, forward Mickey Sullivan of South Lake Tahoe broke away and beat the Jr. Shark's goaltender with a hard shot to the high corner sending the Grizzlies into the third period on top 3-2. That lead, however, would quickly fade as the Jr. Sharks not only tied the game, but went ahead 4-3.

The stellar play of the Grizzlies defense Max Mueller, Leah Marino, Nathan Moffat, and Axel Sorensen, and the amazing goaltending of Nick Ilvento, all of South Lake Tahoe, and the relentless back checking of Wesley Steinkopff of Tahoe City and Nick Cruz of Incline Village and Tucker Cannon and Jaxon Kennedy, also of South Lake Tahoe, held the Jr. Sharks to just a one goal lead through intense pressure low in the Grizzlies zone.

Down but not out, the Grizzlies coaching staff pulled the goaltender with 53 seconds left in the game, and placed an extra forward on the ice. This strategy flustered the Jr. Sharks, and pressure by Grizzlies' forward Cameron Johnson of

South Lake Tahoe produced a critical turnover. Mickey Sullivan took advantage of the turnover, scooped up the loose puck, broke in on the Jr. Sharks goaltender to tie the game with 20 seconds left to force sudden death overtime.

The Grizzlies, now given a second chance at the title, were absolutely recharged. With 10:47 remaining in the first overtime, Tahoe won a critical face off in the Jr. Sharks zone, pressed the puck back to winger Kevin Lehmann of South Lake Tahoe who resisted the onslaught of two Sharks attackers. Lehmann then completed his pass to open defenseman Axel Sorensen. Sorensen, high in the zone, moved right, took two strides, and drilled a shot through several players beating the Jr. Sharks goaltender.

In the blink of an eye, the Grizzlies became the NorCal Champions and absolute pandemonium ensued as the players, fans, and coaches erupted into celebration. In doing so, the Grizzlies became the first ice hockey team in Tahoe’s history to win the North Division.

The championship win places the Grizzlies as the No. 1 ranked seed for the California State Championships to be in San Jose the weekend of April 8-10 where the Grizzlies will face the tough SoCal teams, No. 2 ranked Bakersfield Dragons, No. 3 ranked Valencia Express, and compete again against the No. 4 ranked San Jose Jr. Sharks.

The Grizzlies are coached by Head Coach Stephen Rooney and assistant coaches Jim Marino, Bailey Johnson and Scott Vogelgesang.

The Tahoe Grizzlies Pee Wees (ages 11-12) also competed in the NorCal playoffs over the past weekend. They tied their first game on Saturday 2-2 against the San Jose Jr. Shark Pee Wees. Later in the afternoon they lost to the Vacaville Jets. Getting into the final championship game was all up to the result in the Sunday morning game against the Fresno Falcons.

Unfortunately, the Pee Wee Grizzlies lost 6-2 in a hard fought battle and their season was over.

Ted Parkhill works for the South Tahoe Amateur Hockey Association.

Fierce storm expected Thursday afternoon

The weather forecast is so nasty for the Lake Tahoe Basin that Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Truckee unified school districts canceled classes today with only a dusting of snow on the roads this morning.

The National Weather Service says, “Travel not recommended in the Sierra with extended highway closures possible. Zero visibility with blowing and drifting snow.”



Roads in the Lake Tahoe Basin are expected to look like this Thursday afternoon. Photo/LTN file

The storm is expected to arrive this afternoon and continue into Friday morning.

Two to 4 feet of snow is forecast above 7,000 feet and 10-24 inches below 7,000 feet.

The Highway 395 corridor could receive 2-6 inches above 5,000 feet, while below 5,000 feet up to 4 inches.

Saturday's storm could bring more than a foot of snow to the Sierra.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

High water creates additional 'tributary' into Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Water races from what appears to be another tributary of Lake Tahoe.

This wouldn't be unusual right now based on the amount of snow, rain on snow and snowmelt the Lake Tahoe Basin continues experience. But this area in South Lake Tahoe isn't a normal outflow.

A barrier beach about 45 feet by 45 feet and nearly 3 feet high was breached last week, sending a torrent of water into Lake Tahoe. Because this is all coarse sand, gobs of fine sediment are not likely to have entered the lake.



South Tahoe stormwater coordinator Robert Erlich talks about the Pope Marsh breach. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Still, on March 23 a small light brown patch could be seen not far from shore. Robert Erlich, stormwater coordinator for South Lake Tahoe, said the discoloring is a result of the sand being pushed into the lake.

Pope Marsh, which is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, sits between Pope Beach and the Tahoe Keys on the South Shore. From the private gated Lighthouse Shores it would be hard to tell this flow is not normal. But it is normal and natural in high water years.

“This was a pretty big one this year,” Greg Trischler, water supervisor for the Tahoe Keys Water Department, said of the breach.

A wall of sand about 3-feet high in some sections forms a nearly 50-foot-wide exit route for the water.

Because this area is one of the biggest waterfowl nesting habitats on the South Shore, the breach is a good thing, according to the Forest Service.

“It will improve the nesting habitat for waterfowl,” explained

Sarah Muskopf, USFS aquatic biologist.

She said more plants will grow there, which in turn will hold more sediment in the marsh, meaning less will end up in the lake.

For South Lake Tahoe, this is giving officials concerned with urban runoff a chance to gauge where the water is coming from.

On March 19 when Erlich saw the breach he called in a local consultant the city uses to monitor turbidity – the official word for cloudy water. Rath Townsend recorded the turbidity at the marsh outlet at 4.72 ntu. NTU is nephelometric turbidity units.

At the Venice/Pope marsh inlet before the confluence it was 8.16 ntu and 9.64 ntu after the confluence in the Venice/Pope marsh.

This compares to 62.3 ntu at the Y along Lake Tahoe Boulevard, across from Raley's.

What is ideal is for the numbers to decrease as they hit stormwater basins. The lowest turbidity level should be as the water enters Lake Tahoe.

This in large part is what the total maximum daily load is all about – cutting back how much gunk reaches the lake.

Monitoring will go on throughout the spring, during different conditions, to see which stormwater control measures that are in place are working and what might need improving. The goal is no brown stuff would reach the lake.

"We're getting to know a little bit about our watershed," Erlich said. "We have an interest in trying to find out if the urban runoff is coming into the Pope Marsh. We want to look at the connectivity flows into Pope Marsh."

He said two-thirds of the bad stuff reaching the lake is from

urban runoff.

Erlich added that this section of South Lake Tahoe accounts for nearly one-quarter of the city's drainage issues. Water is running from Lake Tahoe Boulevard from about South Tahoe High to the Y. Water descends from Gardner Mountain.

Some of it ends up in the private Tallac Lagoon near 15th Street and Venice Drive. That lagoon acts as a filtration system, but also has an overflow system. Eventually water from the lagoon winds up in Pope Marsh.

Because some of that water is coming off South Tahoe streets – and carrying sediment – the city is charged with monitoring it even though it may reach the lake via Forest Service land.

Another concern of the city's and the Tahoe Keys Water District is the rising level of the lagoon can threaten to flood houses in the area.

"We usually monitor the height of the water in Tallac (Lagoon)," Trischler said. Manually breaking the beach barrier was an option to get water in the lagoon to recede.

He said the Dillingham Corp. built the lagoon and dam by the bridge on Venice Drive when the Keys was developed in the 1960s.

"They also planted the tule grass and the trees in Pope Marsh. It was supposed to pull some of the nitrogen and phosphorus out. It was designed to filter itself out so it would be 99.9 percent pure," Trischler said.

Dillingham also installed the concrete weir at Pope Marsh near Lighthouse shores.

"If this wasn't here, erosion could move back into Pope Marsh," Erlich said of that weir.

That barrier beach will form again. It does each year. The

waves from the lake bring in sand and it naturally piles up. But it will take another high water year like this one for that temporary tributary into Lake Tahoe to be created.

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Washington state considers bill to punish out-of-bounds skiers

By Andrea Castillo, Daily Evergreen

Washington skiers and snowboarders who choose to cross into clearly marked closed mountain areas could be charged with second-degree trespassing if a bill introduced in the Washington State Senate passes.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5186, sponsored by Sen. Jim Kastama, D-Puyallup, passed its third reading by the Rules Committee on March 4 with a vote of 43 to 5. ESSB 5186 is accompanied by House Bill 1484.

Kastama, who works as a ski patrol at Crystal Mountain, said his goal in creating this bill is to prevent deaths and injuries of adventurous skiers. He said in the last 10 years alone, five people have died and 520 people have been caught skiing in closed areas at Crystal Mountain.

“There’s something about skiing that makes people feel invincible,” he said. “I know really good skiers that tell me they’ll take a chance and go into these closed areas. We find people just ducking under that rope and disobeying the signs. It’s clearly indicated that you could die.”

According to the bill, skiers who choose to knowingly trespass in an area that has signs indicating its closure can be fined up to $1,000 or 90 days in jail. However, Kastama said first-time offenders would most likely be given community service hours.

Kastama said the bill got off to a rough start this session because many people did not understand the difference between closed areas and out of bounds or backcountry areas.

Read the whole story

Jumping jack record may have been broken by Boys & Girls Club

Records are made to be broken and a Guinness World Record was likely shattered thanks to the help of kids in South Lake Tahoe.

On March 22, more than 120 members of the Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe joined their peers from more than 1,000 Boys & Girls Clubs across the country to break the Guinness World Record for the most people doing “jumping jacks” – or “star jumps.”



Mercadies Gentry, foreground, and Paula Peterson help set a jumping jacks record. Photo/Provided

As part of National Boys & Girls Club Week (March 20-26), Boys & Girls Clubs of America embarked on this initiative with its clubs across the country through the organization's Triple Play program. This program, supported by founding sponsor, Coca-Cola, and the WellPoint Foundation, encourages kids to eat healthier, become more physically active and increase their ability to engage in healthy relationships.

"Young people living healthy, active lifestyles puts them on a pathway to a great future," said Kelly Garrity, program coordinator at the Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, said in a press release. "By jumping their way into history, they proved that you don't have to have fancy equipment or a gym membership to get active and be healthy. Fitness can start with something as simple as a jumping jack."

To break the current record, more than 278 kids needed to complete the attempt. While the official verdict will come from Guinness in a couple of weeks, all indications are that the record has been broken.

Nearly one-third of children and teens in the U.S. are obese or overweight, according to multiple studies. Children and adults can avoid these devastating diseases by adopting and maintaining healthy habits early on.

Jumping jacks are called star jumps in some countries, because the arms, legs and head form a five-pointed star. The record is defined as, "the most people star jumping simultaneously at

multiple venues for two consecutive minutes," according to Guinness World Records.