Vandals have CTC rethinking Upper Truckee Marsh access

By Kathryn Reed

Walking down Lily Avenue, the couple is asked if they know the entrance they are headed to is private and they aren't supposed to use it.

They both look quizzical and say no signs are up saying as much.

They continue on, saying the trek on this late Wednesday afternoon to the Upper Truckee Marsh is the second time they've accessed the property this way.



Vandals have created an opening in the gate at the end of Lily Avenue. Photos/Kathryn Reed

If the California Tahoe Conservancy has its way, it will be the last time they do. A new gate was supposed to go up June 23. Signs are coming to explain to people on both sides of the iron fence that the public access point is two blocks down at San Francisco Street.

Though it would seem like a natural gateway to this South Lake Tahoe outdoor splendor that leads to the meadow and Lake Tahoe, the CTC has its hands tied. When it acquired the property it was deed restricted to prevent the public from accessing the parcel from Lily.

This entrance is for administrative access only – CTC crews, Clean Tahoe, law enforcement and animal control. It's the closest entrance to the beach.

Vandalism has become the big problem – to public and private property – as well as safety and trespassing concerns.

The slats of the gate keep being bent so people can crawl through. Vandals have tried to pry the posts of the resident who lives next to the CTC property. A couple years ago a house was tagged with graffiti. Users have created a visible trail through a private lot that owners and CTC try to cover over at times.

"One thing people don't really get is the right of access doesn't come without responsibility," said Dana Dapolito, CTC associate environmental planner.

Yes, it's public land on both sides – the street belonging to South Lake Tahoe and Conservancy on the other side. As with any public parcel, there are rules to abide by. Vandalism and trespassing issues will not be tolerated.



Slats on a private fence have been

marred.

Dapolito said CTC crews are regularly repairing the fence.

“In times of severe fiscal constraints, this is not the best use of money,” Dapolito said. She did not have a dollar figure for how much money the CTC has spent on fixing the problem at this area or the personnel hours involved.

The City Council on Tuesday approved another contract for the police department to patrol this area. A no tolerance policy has been established.

Parking on Lily is no longer a problem because the city put up signs a few years ago banning parking on the street. People walk in, though.

Dapolito said a sense of lawlessness can pervade the area. The calm, tranquil meadow with its myriad calls of wildlife and lapping shore give way to parties, illegal fires and loud music. It’s party central.

The CTC is conducting a study today to count how many cigarette butts litter the beach. Blue flags will be inserted into the sand to signify where a butt was plucked from.



The entrance to the Upper Truckee Marsh off San Francisco Street is

welcoming and
well marked.

One only need look at the scar on Heavenly to know what an errant cigarette can do. And one only need remember to three years ago today when an illegal campfire became the Angora Fire in 2007 and destroyed 254 homes.

The CTC is going to clamp down on smokers. It’s a form of fire and no fires are allowed on its property anywhere in the basin.

With Fourth of July weekend a week away, policies will be enforced even more. Signs are posted at legal entrance points as well as on the beach about what is not permitted.

The Conservancy wants to keep allowing the public on these public lands, but it wants the rules adhered to ensure the natural state remains protected and people are safe as well. Without cooperation from users, one day the whole Upper Truckee Marsh could be off-limits.

Concerted effort to catch boaters under the influence

Recreational boaters may want to think twice before reaching for that cold beer this weekend. Marine law enforcement officers, as part of a national coordinated effort of stepped-up enforcement known as Operation Dry Water, will be out in force looking for boat operators whose blood alcohol content exceeds the state limit of 0.08 percent.

Operation Dry Water will include increased patrols,

breathalyzer tests, as well as boater education.

Alcohol use has become the leading contributing factor in fatal recreational boating accidents, according to law enforcement. Impaired boaters caught this weekend can expect to be arrested, go to jail and face severe penalties.

According to the most recent U.S. Coast Guard statistics, boating under the influence is still the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents, with 17 percent of boating fatalities a direct result of alcohol or drug use.

Operation Dry Water is a national campaign that was created to detect and remove impaired boaters from waters across the nation. It is organized by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the U.S. Coast Guard.

More information about the June 25-27 operation is available at www.operationdrywater.org.

Lake Tahoe makes Forbes' list of lakes worth visiting

By Miriam Marcus, Forbes

Lifelong fisherman Jay Cassell, deputy editor of *Field & Stream* magazine, treasures lakeside vacations for the peace and tranquility only one can offer.

"There's nothing like sitting on a cabin deck and watching the sun set over a gorgeous lake," he says, "or getting in a canoe early in the morning and paddling off into the mist" to fish for the day's catch.



Lake Tahoe makes Forbes' list of lakes worth visiting. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Among his favorite locales: Maine’s Millinocket Lake, which he calls a canoer’s and hiker’s paradise, though he travels there to fish for large brook trout and rare landlocked salmon.

Another favorite: California’s Lake Tahoe. This 22-mile-long expanse has attracted visitors to its shores since the Washoe Indians first gathered there centuries ago. Today travelers can view the lake from surrounding ski slopes or hike trails that wind through the surrounding Sierra Nevada mountain range. The view is immaculate from any vantage point, and the lake is a popular destination for travelers year-round.

Like Tahoe, many of the bodies of water on Forbes’ list of lovely lakes lie in a delicate space – their beauty draws admirers, but too many tourists can diminish the unspoiled quality that made the lakes so enchanting in the first place. At Lake Clark, a pristine turquoise-blue gem in southwestern Alaska, the national park service has found a way to ensure the lake doesn’t become overrun: Far from any roadway, it is accessible primarily by small aircraft.

Read the whole story

Learn to curl before league play begins

The South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena will be offering more curling events to prepare people for leagues this fall. Clinics are June 26, July 10, and July 2 from 1–3pm.

Curling is a great sport similar to shuffleboard played on ice. Although it is often played with significant strategy and skill, it can be enjoyed by all ages after a short lesson.

Prepare yourself by logging on to www.curlingbasics.com to learn the fundamentals of the game. Cost is $12 and enrollment is limited. Sign up by stopping by the arena at 1176 Rufus Allen Blvd. or calling (530) 542.6262.

Yacht club's annual Blessing of the Boats

The South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club Annual Blessing of the Boats is June 27 at Camp Richardson Marina. The Club members will organize their boats in the Home Owner's Cove of Tahoe Keys at 9:45am.

The boats will move onto the lake at about 10am and then proceed to the the Camp Richardson Marina for the "Blessing of the Boats" by club member the Ret. Rev. John Grace.

Members of the public who are interested in having their boats

blessed are invited to join at the end of the line as it passes through the mouth of the Keys.

A Yacht Club Membership Drive is planned for 1-4pm at the Yacht Clubhouse located in the old boat house next to the Beacon restaurant.

This event is open to the boating public who may be interested in learning more about the South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club and the many activities it offers to the members. Appetizers, soft drinks, coffee and tea will be provided.

The newly published recipe book created by the South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club – "Our Favorite Recipes" – will be available for a $20 donation. Proceeds benefit CASA, Boy & Girls Club, and the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center.

For more information about the activities, call Commodore Jeff Williams at (530) 542.1583.

BMX racing begins in South Tahoe

South Lake Tahoe BMX opening day race for 2010 season is June 24.

Located at 1100 Lyons Ave., all ages and abilities are welcome to participate.

Trophies awarded to the top three riders in each division.

Sign ups from 5:30-6:30pm. Racing starts at 7pm.

Race fee $10. Spectators are free.

South Lake Tahoe BMX is sanctioned by the American Bicycle Association. All riders must wear helmet, long pants and long sleeves to participate.

Call (530) 542.9355 for more information.

Incline Lake’s future tied up in federal court

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Obtained for the public in 2008, a once-picturesque Sierra lake will remain drained with its future in limbo until a complex case is resolved in federal court.

Incline Lake, long a gathering spot for Nevada’s rich and famous, was transferred to the U.S. Forest Service in July 2008 after a $46 million payment to the Incline Lake Corp.

The sellers drained the lake because of concerns over the safety of its dam and the danger it could fail during an earthquake, sending floodwaters rushing downstream into Incline Village.

Although U.S. Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., secured more than $5 million to repair the dam, which would allow the lake to be refilled, the Forest Service has no plans to do so.

Read the whole story

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2 nights of free ice skating for students

South Tahoe and Whittell high school students in the classes of 2010-14 can skate for free June 25-26 from 7-9pm at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena.

Other high school students can participate for a $3 skate rental fee.

All students must present a school ID.

The café will be open to purchase dinner or snacks.

Call (530) 542.6262 or come by the arena at 1176 Rufus Allen Blvd. if you have any questions.

Tahoe area summer camps mostly see gains

By Rob Sabo, Northern Nevada Business Weekly

Scaled-back economics of the past few years led to the closure of one longtime Lake Tahoe kids camp, but other regional summer camp organizers have seen an uptick in pre-registration for this year's camps.

Mark Heidt, president and owner of Kids Camp Lake Tahoe, started the camp when he moved to Lake Tahoe from Canada in 1992. He estimates he's served about 15,000 youths in that time – but in early May he shuttered the camp due to dwindling attendance.

Kids Camp Lake Tahoe wasn’t a typical summer camp with cabins and campfires. Instead, the camp picked kids up from Harrahs, Harveys and Embassy Suites for activities such as movies, bowling, miniature golf, swimming and hiking while parents enjoyed Lake Tahoe’s gambling and nightlife.

Read the whole story

Ohio native wins Lake Tahoe Concours d’Elegance

By Geralda Miller, Reno Gazette-Jounral

As a child, growing up in Toledo, Ohio, Jun Morris would peek at the beautiful boats over the fence and dream of one day owning one.

His 1930, 22½-foot runabout, named Miss Lucy, won best of show Sunday at the three-day 38th annual Lake Tahoe Concours d’Elegance classic boat show at Lake Tahoe’s Carnelian Bay staged by the Tahoe Yacht Club Foundation.

“I didn’t expect that,” said Morris, who now lives in Bellevue, Wash. “I’m floored.”

Although Morris was surprised, his three-cockpit boat, made of oak and Philippines mahogany, keeps winning awards. In 2008, he said it was named the international boat of the year by the Antique and Classic Boat Society.

Read the whole story