USFS seeks second round of comments on Heavenly's plans

The U.S. Forest Service is seeking comment on an environmental assessment for proposed capital improvements at Heavenly Mountain Resort, the second round of review for this proposal.

Initial comments primarily supported the proposed improvements. There are no major changes from the proposal originally released for review.The projects, which include a new lodge, new runs and replacement of an existing lift are consistent with the improvements identified in Heavenly's accepted Master Plan Amendment. If approved, the resort would implement these projects over the next few years.

Heavenly is proposing to build a new lodge with 488 indoor seats near the top of the gondola. This would be a single-story building with a simple shed roof providing self-service dining, a small bar, open seating and restrooms. The building would cover 14,750 square feet and have a maximum height of 39 feet. The new lodge would also feature a 4,320-foot poured-in-place concrete patio for outdoor dining.

Other than a 300-foot delivery spur from the existence maintenance road, no new roads would be needed to construct or operate the lodge. The proposal calls for relocating a 300-f00t spur of an existing maintenance road.

Heavenly plans to situate the lodge in an already disturbed site, minimizing the need to remove trees for construction. To accommodate the new lodge, Heavenly would relocate the Magic Carpet ski school conveyor lift and move the "Umbrella Bar" from the top of the Gondola to Snow Beach on the California side, requiring the pouring of new concrete footings and running utilities to the site.

The resort is also proposing to replace the Galaxy fix-grip

double chairlift with a new high-speed detachable lift. The alignment and terminal locations would be the same. Replacing the lift would require widening the lift corridor to a maximum of 33 feet, which would necessitate removing some trees.

Four new runs would increase the skiable terrain served by the faster lift. The proposal includes installing below-ground snowmaking infrastructure for these new runs, as well as the two existing runs. Temporary ground disturbance would result from installation of snowmaking lines, but these areas would be promptly restabilized and revegetated. The Galaxy runs are located outside the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's boundary.

A final element of the proposal would implement the Easy Street Run Hazard Reduction prescription on a section of the California Trail. This prescription, named for the trail on which it was initially implemented, would be used to carefully and selectively reduce the height of natural obstacles such as boulders and felled trees, minimizing the amount of snow required to cover the trail. The prescription is designed to remove large obstacles while keeping ground cover intact to avoid additional runoff, sedimentation and erosion. A buffer zone would protect Tahoe draba (a sensitive plant species). This prescription would also apply to the new runs served by the Galaxy lift.

The full proposal is available for viewing on the LTBMU website by visiting Heavenly Mountain Resort 2010 Capital Projects. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted until April 12.

For more information, contact Matt Dickinson, (530) 543.2769.

Rail jam at MontBleu

Salomon Snowboards will host the Salomon Backyard Bang rail jam at Stateline’s MontBleu Casino on March 27.

The event will feature Tahoeâ€™s elite local snowboarding athletes competing for $2,000.

The Salomon Backyard Bang will be in the MontBleu parking lot under the lights by the marquee.

The event is invite-only and limited to 30 competitors. There will be a 30foot triple rail feature.

There will also be a beer garden, tent village and disc jockey.

Practice will begin at 4:30pm, with the event kicking-off at 5pm. At 6:30pm 30 competitors will be cut to 10 and awards will begin at 7:15pm.

Immediately following the event Orange County based prog-emo band Thrice will perform at the MontBleu Showroom. Opening acts include Kandi Coded, featuring Jamie Lynn, and local metal band I.Dee.Kay. A special presentation of the â€œI AM SNOWBOARDINGâ€ art project in honor of Jeff Anderson will be displayed in the showroom for viewing featuring art by Mike Parillo, Jamie Lynn, Mark â€œGonzâ€ Gonzales, RYN o, Adam Haynes, Ben Brough, Michael Jager, Jeff Curtes and more.

Doors open at 8pm and tickets are available at the MontBleu box office in advance for $28. Ticket price includes access to the after party at Blu nightclub featuring DJ Greyboy.

South Tahoe woman competes in NCAA swimming championships

By Whitworth University

MINNEAPOLIS – Rory Buck raced to the highest individual finish of the meet to date for Whitworth University, finishing third in the 100-yard breaststroke during the second day of the 2010 NCAA Division III Swimming and Diving Championships hosted by Beloit College and The College of Wooster at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center.

Rory Buck (So., Dubai, U.A.E.) raced to a time of 55.25 in the championship finals of the men's 100-yard breaststroke to finish third. His time not only shattered his own previous school mark of 57.23, he broke the Northwest Conference record of 55.70 formerly held by Paul Hughes of Puget Sound.

In the night's final event the Whitworth women finished in eighth place in the 800-yard freestyle relay with a new school and NWC record of 7:32.54. The previous record in both was 7:38.59 set in February of 2009. The Pirates' relay order was: Ashley Lecoq (Jr., Renton, Wash.), Jennifer Benson (So., Phoenix, Ariz.), Christine DeHaven (Jr., Gig Harbor, Wash.) and Natalie Turner (Sr., South Lake Tahoe, Calif.).

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, March

20

It’s the first day of spring and it will feel like it on the slopes today. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Spring weather throughout Lake Tahoe matches the calendar

It may feel like record heat considering this is just the first day of spring, but the National Weather Service says it would take another 5 to 8 degrees to hit the record high.

Last Saturday after a fresh dump of snow overnight, Highway 89 was closed to vehicle traffic. This brought out carloads of snowshoers and walkers. It was one of those rare opportunities to walk on the highway with Cascade Lake on one side and Emerald Bay on the other.



Snowshoeing on Highway 89 near Emerald Bay on March

13.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

Today is a completely different story with the mercury expected to be in the high 50s all weekend and the road open to vehicle traffic.

It’s one of those Lake Tahoe weekends to play in the snow in the morning, then golf or bike ride in the afternoon.

But it’s Tahoe, so keep the shovel nearby.

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Anderson 3rd in slopestyle; Teter competes Saturday

By Bennington Banner

STRATTON – After a week filled with sunshine and pre-qualifying, the first set of medals were awarded at the Burton U.S. Open on Friday.

Mikkel Bang of Norway threw down a massive run to win the menâ€™s slopestyle competition, while Sina Candrian of Switzerland took the womenâ€™s event to kickstart the hardware portion of the 28th annual Open at Stratton Mountain.

Bang finished with 98 points and was followed by countryman Ulrik Badertscher (93.67). Canadian Sebastien Toutant narrowly missed the silver with a 93.33 for third place on a day when the temperatures hovered above 60 degrees.

Read the whole story

Queen of the Park competition at Squaw

Girl Powderâ€™s Third Annual Queen of the Park is coming to Squaw Valley March 20. Queen of the Park is a ripping park event open to girls of all ages.

The event gives girls a chance to show the world what they do on the slopes while establishing a greater sense of community among female park riders. The event will kick off at 3pm on Exhibition. Lift tickets are not required for competitors or spectators.

Registration will be held in the Squaw Valley Village March 20 from 9am to 3pm, while spots are available. The cost is $20 and all competitors will receive a Queen of the Park T-shirt.

Immediately following the competition will be Girl Powderâ€™s â€œToken Drag Queenâ€ competition starting at 4:30pm. Dudes who like to shred while dressed in drag should check-in at registration to sign a waiver between 9am and 4pm. Registration for the Drag Queen competition is free.

Squaw’s Holland makes podium

in snowboardercross

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

LA MOLINA, Spain – It was a great end to the season for Pat Holland (Squaw Valley, CA) who took third to mark the first World Cup podium of his career during the snowboardcross competition in Spain on Friday.

“It felt really good. I just kept working hard. All year I was riding at a really high level, I just didn’t have any results. It just clicked today,” Holland said. “I’m really happy with the way I rode. I had to fight through every round, but I fought well and made it to the podium.”

Pierre Vaultier of France won, followed in second by Australia’s Alex Pullin. According to Holland, the top two had pulled away from the start, and finishing third was a battle with Italy’s Alberto Schiavon.

“Alberto and I were behind fighting for third he pulled away from e a bit and we were going into the second of last turn and I’m determined to make the podium, so I laid it down in the last two turns and made the pass in the last bank for third,” Holland said. “I made passes where I wanted to make passes in places other guys couldn’t, so I’m pumped.”

U.S. Snowboarding Head Coach Peter Foley said that Holland was the standout all week, and for him to come through like he did was a great accomplishment.

“He really rode the best out of anyone on the team all week. He was setting examples for everyone to follow in video and to have him ride the whole race that way was awesome,” Foley said.

Holland’s previous top finish was an eighth last season. He said that this podium gives him a little extra push for the

future.

In the women’s heats, Helene Olafsen of Norway won, followed in second by Simona Meiler of Switzerland in second and Maelle Ricker of Canada in third.

Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton Mountain, VT) finished at the top for the U.S., landing sixth.

The day wrapped up the World Cup snowboardcross season. The team will return to the U.S. for summer training in preparation for the 2011 season.

La Molina, Spain, March 19, Snowboardcross

Men

1. Pierre Vaultier, France

2. Alex Pullin, Australia

3. Pat Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

4. Alberto Schiavon, Italy

5. Lukas Gruener, Austria

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6. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID

10. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

11. Ross Powers, Londonderry, VT

20. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI

22. Alex Deibold,, Manchester Center, VT

30. Jayson Hale, Sierraville, CA

40. Bobby Minghini, South Lake Tahoe, CA

45. Mick Dierdorff, Steamboat Springs, CO

Women

1. Helene Olafsen, Norway

2. Simona Meiler, Switzerland

3. Maelle Ricker, Canada

4. Alexandra Jekova, Bulgaria

5. Dominique Maltais, Canada

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6. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton Mountain, VT

9. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City

20. Callan Chythlook Sifsof, Girdwood, AK

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 19



Forecasters are saying it will be in the 50s today. Lather up with the sunscreen. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Free skiing at Sierra, Northstar

Beginning March 29, Northstar-at-Tahoe and Sierra-at-Tahoe resorts will offer free skiing for the rest of the season with the purchase of a 2010-11 season pass. This is the only dual mountain pass that allows skiers and snowboarders to experience the North Shore and the South Shore of Lake Tahoe.

Northstar and Sierra are scheduled to operate into mid-April, weather and conditions permitting.

To purchase a Double Whammy pass, click here, or call Northstar Resort at (530) 562.2267 or Sierra Resort at (530) 659.7453, ext. 208, or stop in at either resort.