

Storms good for Tahoe tourism

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Bing Crosby should come to Lake Tahoe. With a fresh heap of snow blanketing the landscape, the classic "White Christmas" crooner couldn't have dreamed it any better.

Nor could the area's tourist industry.

An abundance of snow and a temporary pause in the inclement weather are promising for ski resorts.

"This is the second year in a row the West Coast has been blessed by the snow gods," said Ralf Garrison, a ski resort industry consultant.

West Coast ski lodging reservations are up 3 percent through Nov. 30 compared with the same period last year, Garrison said. Additionally, the pace of reservations is quickening, up 7.5 percent in the month of November over last year.

While the improvement may be "nothing to brag about," the trend is moving in the right direction, Garrison said. The great ski conditions can only help, as skiers share their experiences through word of mouth and social networking.

Dawn Fishler, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, said the recorded snowfall for Tahoe City in November totaled 70.5 inches, just 3.5 inches shy of the record set in 1994. That compares with 8.5 inches for November 2009. So far this month, the area has received 30.5 inches, compared with 47.5 inches for the entire month of December 2009.

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