

# Nevada bikeway route gets environmental green light

By Susan Wood



Rabe Meadow between Stateline and Round Hill may be a future site for the first phase of a proposed bike link. Photo/Susan Wood

INCLINE VILLAGE – A critical step in the Nevada Stateline-to-Stateline bikeway project was accepted Friday by the Tahoe Transportation District, an arm of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency tasked with such issues.

The public comment period ended for the environmental assessment. Now, the U.S. Forest Service and TRPA need to approve it.

Groundbreaking of the first phase of the \$9 million project is scheduled for May 15. Officials have about half that amount with funding sources being lined up, TTD Executive Director Carl Hasty told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The first of three phases covers two miles from Stateline to Elks Point Drive. The 30-mile trail advances on paper to Crystal Bay. Each phase is estimated to cost about \$2.5 million.

Project managers and officials are reviewing different options. One choice crosses Rabe Meadow and merges with the Watah Trail that starts at Kahle Drive in Stateline and meanders through Round Hill. The other parallels Highway 50.

Project Manager Alfred Knotts told the transportation board the "superior" alternative staff is leaning toward is the latter because of fewer environmental concerns.

The proposal calls for bike racks, signs, picnic tables and restrooms.

"I've very excited with the progress. It's an important link," said TRPA Senior Transportation Planner Karen Fink, a longtime cycling advocate.

Cycling venues are believed to contribute \$23 million in tourism revenue and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1,400 metric tons.

In other items, the transportation district:

-Approved the request for proposal to be used to secure a long-term operator for BlueGo Transit Services, which has been mired in legal wrangling and complaints. The district, which will oversee the service, wants a reliable operator on a long-term contract.