

Wedding industry in Tahoe takes hit with fewer marriages

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Live by Cupid's arrow, die by Cupid's arrow.

El Dorado County has traditionally issued more marriage licenses per capita than the California average, but now its numbers are declining far faster than average.



Lake Tahoe is the main reason El Dorado County's per capita rate is nearly four times that of the state.

People want to get married in one of the world's most beautiful places.

"We've had people fly in from Australia just to get married in South Lake Tahoe, just to say they'd done that," said Bill Schultz, El Dorado County's recorder/clerk.

Couples have skydiving weddings, beachfront weddings, state park weddings and even Gunbarrel (not shotgun) weddings at the top of the Gunbarrel ski run at Heavenly Ski Resort.

It makes for a multimillion-dollar industry.

In recent years, however, marriage has taken a dive at the lake.

The county issued almost 25 percent fewer licenses in 2010 than it did in 2006.

California licenses dropped only 5 percent during the same period.

The reasons are economic and social.

The social factor is that people just don't get married like they used to.

Women don't need a breadwinner, and couples don't see a stigma to cohabitation.

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