

Tahoe City rafters waiting for more water

By Emerson Marcus, Reno Gazette-Journal

TAHOE CITY – The serenity of river life brought Jack Simon, 22, back to Tahoe City this summer.

Simon, then an English major at DePauw University in Indiana, worked last summer as an intern for a Lake Tahoe entertainment guide. To earn extra money, he also worked as a river guide, taking rafters through the stem of the Truckee River.

“It’s the greatest job in the world,” Simon said of river rafting. “People spend a lot of money to do what I do every day.”

Simon graduated in May and two weeks later was back in Tahoe City. But since his return, the Truckee River Raft Co. has not sent one rafter down the river because of low water levels.

Simon has had to take a job at a local 7-Eleven. The lack of rafting also has hurt the economy in Tahoe City and forced many people to ask, “When are water levels going to increase?”

“I talk to the river raft people nearly every day,” said Bric Haley, manager at the River Ranch Lodge in Tahoe City. “We are always talking. We are always discussing when they are going to open the dam.”

Haley said 15 percent of reservations have canceled, primarily because of the absence of rafting.

“I have to admit, as tough as it is on the local economy here, the water master has no choice,” Haley said. “He has to do his job.”

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