

State panel to reconsider Washoe Meadows decision

By Kathryn Reed

Second thoughts are what the California State Park and Recreation commissioners are having regarding the October decision to approve the final EIR for the Upper Truckee River restoration project, and to swap land between Washoe Meadows State Park and Lake Valley Recreation Area to allow Lake Tahoe Golf Course to be reconfigured.

Commissioners at their Jan. 27 meeting in the Bay Area are having another public hearing on the state park in Meyers.

The agenda item says: Reconsideration of, and upon reconsideration, action on approval and findings for the Environmental Impact Report, General Plan Amendment & Classification Adjustment related to the Upper Truckee River Restoration & Golf Course Reconfiguration Project.



Without snow,
Washoe Meadows
is still good
for mountain
biking --
though if the
decision is
not
overturned,

this section
will become a
golf course.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

No one from State Parks or the commission was available for comment Tuesday night. So it's not known who asked for the issue to be heard again or how often this happens by the state commission.

At the Lake Tahoe meeting two months ago the decision was unanimous to accept staff's recommendations.

The decision by the commissioners came as Ruth Coleman, director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, sat to their left. She is now in jeopardy of losing the job she was appointed to in 2002 by then-Gov. Gray Davis.

The State Parks Peace Officer Management Association sent a letter Dec. 14 to Gov. Jerry Brown that said 93 percent of the 56 percent of the members polled want a new director.

Whether her tenuous situation played a roll in rehearing the Washoe project is not known.

Before the public items are addressed next month the commission will go into closed session to discuss the lawsuit filed by the Washoe Meadows Community. This group filed a lawsuit Nov. 23 in Alameda County Superior Court on various grounds in an attempt to halt the project as approved.

Both sides have agreed to push back some of the deadlines regarding filing of papers in the case.

Washoe Meadows Community supports Alternative 3 – which would take the 18-hole course down to nine holes or convert it to an 18-hole executive course.

The reason the golf course would be altered is to accommodate restoration of the river – an ongoing project by all parties who own property where the river runs through it. It's all about reducing sediment that reaches Lake Tahoe and restoring the ecosystem.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board still needs to vote on the Washoe Meadows section, but that has been pulled indefinitely at the request of State Parks.

Lynne Paulson, a member of the Washoe Meadows Community, said her group would be present at the January public hearing.

She had not been given a heads up about the issue being on the January agenda; learning about it when notification of the meeting was sent via mass email Dec. 27.

“I hope this leads to a better alternative,” Paulson told *Lake Tahoe News* of the Jan. 27 meeting.

Regarding the lawsuit, Paulson does not expect a settlement conference to be scheduled before the commission meets.

Meeting info:

- Jan. 27 at 9am in the Community Room of the Brentwood Community Center, 35 Oak St., Brentwood.
- To comment on agenda items, write to State Park and Recreation Commission, Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001, or email LNastro@parks.ca.gov, or call (916) 653.0524.
- The meeting agenda is online.