

No charges to be filed after glider lands at Heavenly

By Kathryn Reed

National Transportation Safety Board officials have told El Dorado County sheriff's officials they will not be investigating Sunday's unplanned glider landing at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

"At this time it's just being handled as an accident," Deputy Greg Almos told *Lake Tahoe News*. No charges will be filed because no crime occurred.

The glider, which is owned by Soaring NV in Minden and operates out of the Minden Tahoe Airport, didn't have enough wind to stay on the Nevada side of the ski resort. The pilot ended up landing about 1:30pm Feb. 5 near First Ride – a beginner chairlift – just steps from the California Lodge.

"The winds were not in their favor and forced them to come down on this side of the mountain crest," Almos said.

Almos said the pilot realized he didn't have enough wind to get him to Lake Tahoe Airport, trees were a problem for landing at Bijou Golf Course, and the ski resort then seemed like his best option.

No one at the resort was injured, though skiers and boarders did scramble to get out of the way.

"We're outraged that something like this could happen. We're glad that everyone came out of this OK, but there's no excuse for this kind of irresponsible behavior," Russ Pecoraro, Heavenly spokesman, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We'll do everything in our power to make sure this doesn't happen again. We're extremely lucky no one was hurt (Sunday)."

Dan Schuler with Soaring NV told *Lake Tahoe News*, "We had one of our instructors with an experienced pilot on a flight review who got on the wrong side of the mountain and had to land."

Names of the pilots have not been released.

The glider was damaged slightly.