

Expect delays on Tahoe roads starting now

Publisher's note: *This is one of a few stories about construction planned for the Lake Tahoe Basin this summer.*

By Kathryn Reed

Work on Highway 89 between Tahoma and Tahoe City started Tuesday. And it won't be done until October 2016.

Caltrans will have many of the highways in the Lake Tahoe Basin torn up this construction season in what are mostly water quality projects. Besides putting in systems to keep sediment from reaching Lake Tahoe other benefits for motorists and cyclists are also part of the plans.

The work that started April 9 is Southwest Gas contractors moving the natural gas lines before Caltrans comes in to do its roadwork. The project started last year and came with a ton of complaints. Much of that had to do with the delays getting around the West Shore as well as the large metal plates in the road. Though, delays and metal plates will be seen this year, too.



Caltrans will be doing a number of projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin this season. Photo/LTN file

That contractor from Texas had not worked in the basin before and is not coming back – at least on this project.

“We hope it goes smoother than last summer,” Steve Nelson with Caltrans said.

The Southwest crews will be working from Pine Street in Tahoma to Timberland Lane near Chambers Landing.

It’s possible between the two Southwest contractors and the Caltrans gang people could face three delays on this stretch of road. Nelson said the delays should not be more than 20 minutes at any given stop. (This is for all of the Department of Transportation’s Tahoe projects.) But if someone is stopped at each section of this project, that could add an hour to the trip.

“Each project has traffic-control specifications the contractor has to follow, but in general it’s accurate to say that night work will be conducted during the peak season from July 1 through Labor Day, but there will be daytime work during the non-peak months of May, June, September and October. No weekend work starting Friday at 9am (peak) or Friday at 11am (non-peak) and no holiday work,” Nelson told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Caltrans will be putting in nine sand vaults to collect and filter stormwater runoff. They will start on the south end of Highway 89 in May. By 2016, the work will culminate in Tahoe City.

The road will be widened and repaved, curbs and gutters installed, and some left turn lanes installed. This is a \$34 million project that is federally funded.

Caltrans has a meeting set for April 18 with the West Shore Business Association to address any lingering concerns.

Tahoe City Public Utility District in 2015 will be the project

leader for a multi-use trail adjacent to Highway 89 between Trout Street and Cherry Street.

South Shore projects

Landscaping is the last thing that remains to be done for the Trout Creek to Ski Run Boulevard project that tied up traffic in South Lake Tahoe for the last two summers. An official dedication of the project will be sometime this summer.

Caltrans will be back at work on Highway 50 from 1,200 feet west of Ski Run to Wildwood Avenue. This \$7 million project will include widening the road to provide a 6-foot shoulder for cyclists.

Curbs, gutters, sidewalks and stormwater treatment systems will be installed.

Work should begin May 1 and is likely to be finished in one building season.

Starting at Lake Tahoe Airport and going to the Y is a \$12.4 million project that is expected to take two summers to complete.

Where the road is two lanes it will be widened to provide 3- to 4-foot shoulders for bikes. Curbs and gutters will be added, along with storm filtration systems.

The section of highway that is four lanes will have sidewalks installed. This is the commercial area.

Other projects

The \$21 million Meyers project is not expected to start until next year.

The same goes for the Y to Cascade Lakes work along Highway 89.

Work in Kings Beach on Highway 28 is a Placer County project,

with oversight by Caltrans. Utility crews are already working.
More info about Caltrans' Tahoe projects may be found online.