

Sequestration impacts Donner, Truckee area projects

By Sara Schrichte

Donner Summit, like other areas, is seeing some trickle down effects of sequestration. In March, the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act mandated budget reductions totaling \$85 billion across the federal government for fiscal year 2013. These mandated cuts, known as sequester, impact a number of federal programs including the Secure Rural Schools legislation.

Under this legislation, counties or the National Forest receive funding in several different titles, including Title II funding which goes to support projects that benefit National Forests; and Title III is slated for fire and emergency service projects.

In order to spend the funds, a Resource Advisory Committee has been established jointly for Nevada and Placer counties. The purpose of the RAC is to recommend funding for projects that benefit National Forest according to the legislation's requirements.



The Judah Loop trailhead at Lake Mary may not get upgrades because of the

federal government.

Photo/Provided

Several Donner Summit projects were granted Title II funds by the RAC, but are now subject to a sequestration mandated 5.1 percent reduction. The Donner Summit Area Association (DSAA) was granted \$1.300 for a bear-proof trash container at the Judah Loop trailhead at Lake Mary as part of a local effort to provide restroom and trash facilities to reduce trash and waste on and near the trails.

A portion of the Serene Lakes Property Association's (SLPOA) \$15,000 Donner Summit Fuels Reduction project for 2013-14 was to be funded by Title II funds. The project aims to reduce the threat of wildfire in National Forest service areas and complements the defensible space efforts made by owners of adjacent properties.

This summer's trail maintenance and reconstruction along the Donner Lake Rim Trail and Summit Lake Trail were to be partially funded by Title II funds via the RAC. The project addresses repair of washed-out erosion control structures, reconstruction of "failing" sections of trail and improvement of drainage and sediment discharge. Included in this project are several Truckee Trail Foundation "Good Dirty Fun" volunteer maintenance projects and the replacement of a trail bridge along a portion of the Donner Lake Rim Trail.

Sugar Bowl Corporation's Van Norden and South Yuba River Headwaters Enhancement and Forest Health Project began in 2012 and was funded, in part, by Title II funds. The project is designed to enhance the forest ecosystem, restore and improve land health, and restore water quality.

Although carryover funds from previous years can be spent, RAC grantees have been asked to stop spending current Title II funds until the state clarifies what funds will be available. That clarification will likely come before the end of April.

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