

AAA: Fewer July 4th travelers than a year ago

Not as many people in the U.S. are expected to travel during the upcoming Fourth of July holiday compared to 2012.

AAA is projecting 40.8 million Americans will venture at least 50 miles from home during the holiday, a 0.8 percent decrease from the 41.1 million people who traveled in 2012.

Much of this has to do when the Fourth falls – on a Thursday. When it was on a Wednesday last year, more people opted to take the whole week off.

Decade-high travel volume occurred in 2007 when 42.3 million Americans traveled and the holiday also fell on a Wednesday.

The Independence Day holiday travel period is defined as July 3-7.

Highlights from the 2013 AAA Independence Day travel forecast include:

- Eighty-four percent of travelers (34.4 million) to travel by automobile, a decrease of 0.7 percent from 34.7 million last year
- Holiday air travel expected to increase slightly to 3.07 million from 3.06 million in 2012
- Independence Day holiday travel volume is expected to remain above the 13-year average of 38.9 million for this holiday
- The largest share of travelers (32 percent) will depart July 3, with July 7 the most popular date of return
- The average traveler is expected to travel a round-trip distance of 613 miles and spend \$747

This year 46 percent of intending travelers plan to begin their trip prior to the start of the holiday travel period

(July 3-7), compared to 65 percent last year. The largest share of travelers (32 percent) on a single day will depart on July 3 and the largest share will return on July 7 (38 percent).

Approximately 34.4 million people (84 percent) plan to drive to their destination, a decrease of 0.7 percent from the 34.7 million who drove last year.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report