

# Dangerous smoke cancels South Lake Tahoe air show; health officials say stay inside



This NASA image shows smoke from the Rim Fire blowing toward Lake Tahoe.

**By Kathryn Reed**

A fire hundreds of miles from Lake Tahoe has forced the cancellation of the 24th annual Lake in the Sky Air Show.

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry said the FAA requires 1.5 to 3 miles of visibility and that as of Friday afternoon it is only at one mile.

And with the National Weather Service in Reno saying the smoky skies are expected to stay through the weekend, city officials did not want to take a chance and wait to call off of the show

on Saturday morning – the day of the show.

The Rim Fire burning out of control near Yosemite National Park is bringing the eerie color skies to the basin. As of 3pm Aug. 23 that fire was at 105,620 acres and 2 percent containment. Fire crews say the growth potential is “extreme”.

Kerry said there was talk of having a static air show – as in planes just on the ground. However, she said with El Dorado County public health issuing a warning for people to stay indoors, the city could not justify having people stand around inhaling the smoke – including employees and the public.

“By Labor Day it will blow out. I wish we could just switch the air show to then,” Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

El Dorado County has said the air quality is “unhealthy”. The smoke is prevalent in El Dorado Hills and only gets stronger coming through the American River Canyon into the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Douglas County officials are also recommending people stay indoors. Air samples taken Friday in Gardnerville put the air quality in the upper end of the “moderate” level in the Carson Valley.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a dense smoke advisory for Alpine County and the southern part of the Lake Tahoe Basin through 7pm Aug. 24. Visibility in Markleeville and along parts of Highway 50 is expected to drop to one-quarter mile.

Ash has fallen in the Carson Valley and Alpine County.

Air quality is also an issue for the North Shore and Truckee and Carson areas. The American Fire that is burning near Foresthill is also hitting those regions.

“Afternoon-evening winds are forecast to increase somewhat each day this weekend, with winds gusts 20-30 mph Saturday and

up to 35 mph Sunday. Any holdover fires from the lightning earlier this week could flare up with these gusts," Jon Mittelstadt with the Weather Service said.

The good news about the wind is that should blow the smoke out of the basin.

In addition to the air show's being canceled, the South Lake Tahoe city pool and Bijou Golf Course are closed. The decision to open them will be on a day-to-day basis, but Kerry said to expect them to be closed through the weekend.

**Other cancellations:**

- Aug. 23 Minden Concert in the Park.
- The Aug. 24-25 Lake Tahoe Outrigger Challenge Race at Lakeview Commons.
- The Strawberry Music Festival at Camp Mather on Labor Day weekend.