

Stateline bike path opens up another world



Users of all ages enjoy the trail at Rabe Meadow. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – It's being called a game changer. And it just might challenge the Camp Richardson trail as the go-to path for pedestrians and cyclists on the South Shore.

The 2.2-mile section of the Stateline-to-Stateline bike path that goes from Rabe Meadow to Round Hill Pines beach officially opened this week.

One day this path will link the actual state line on the South Shore to the state line on the North Shore.

Not one tree had to be removed on the Rabe Meadow section. The

route meanders through a large tract of U.S. Forest Service land. For the most part it follows trails that already existed. The difference now is there is pavement.

But there are still trails that are dirt, so it has not ruined what has always been a popular access point to Nevada Beach. It has opened up the area to other types of users and now goes farther.

Curves in the trail make it more interesting than if it were a linear path.

By the end of the month signs are expected to be in. Some are directional signs, others will be interpretive. A larger sign will be at Rabe Meadow showing the trail and the distances to different points of interest.

Without signs, as was the case last weekend, one can get slightly off course. Once at Elks Point Road there is a sign toward Nevada Beach – the correct route. Going right leads to the commercial area. (Don't stop in at the Wyndham resort, they don't know anything about the trail – even though it's been talked about for years, written about a ton and the first phase completed a year ago.)

The point to cross the road is slightly down toward Nevada Beach. Once across the street it's a clear shot to Round Hill Pines.

For those who are adverse to hills, just keep looking at the scenery. This new section of trail swerves around Round Hill. The climb isn't so noticeable until it's time to descend to Round Hill beach.

Along the way are benches that offer views and a chance to rest if need be.

Added late was the trail to that beach. It was going to drop people onto the road. This addition, which is to the right and

above where vehicles drive, is a pleasant, safe way to get to the sand.

(Any day the U.S. Forest Service will release who will be running the concession at Round Hill Pines. Local USFS officials are citing the National Defense Authorization Act of 1997 as to why they can't ever release the names of the people/businesses that bid on the proposal except for the winner.)

A short spur leads to Highway 50 just west of the Bourne Meadow.

This bike path is a collaborative project spearheaded by the Tahoe Transportation District.

A cost savings on the project of \$800,000 will allow for Laura Drive behind Lakeside Inn casino to be worked on next summer. Still to be determined is if it will be a separated bikeway or a bike lane.

"Concurrently, we are working with Edgewood on the right-of-way to do final design of the section of (Highway) 50 in front Edgewood and Lake Parkway," Alfred Knotts, planner with TTD, told *Lake Tahoe News*. Building it is a few years out.

(One day the Greenway Bike Path in California will be built and connect with what will be the true starting point of the Stateline-to-Stateline trail.)

Construction on the Incline to Sand Harbor section of the Stateline-to-Stateline trail, which is just more than 3 miles, is expected to start in 2015. It's in the environmental phase. Lakeside and mountainside routes are being studied. It goes mostly through Nevada State Parks and Nevada Department of Transportation rights-of-way.

"There is no fatal flaw with either one. It depends on how the document shakes out and the public comments we get," Knotts

said.

A feasibility study was done that came up with three possible routes for the path from Round Hill to Sand Harbor. No money is in the coffers right now to continue with designing that main link. But planners are looking at options.

Douglas County will be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the trail on the South Shore.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go east on Highway 50. Turn left on Kahle Drive in Stateline. Park immediately to the right. Bike trail starts at far end of the lot. At the first Y, stay to the right. At the T, follow the sign toward Nevada Beach. Cross Elks Point Road to continue to Round Hill Pines. Once at Round Hill Pines, cross the road and follow the path toward the beach. At the next intersection, left goes to the beach; right goes to Highway 50 where the trail ends.

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