

No snow: USFS sites busier than usual

Publisher's note: *This is one of a series of blurbs about how the lack of winter is impacting the Lake Tahoe Basin. If you have an idea, please email it to info@LakeTahoeNews.net.*

U.S. Forest Service officials are noticing more people using their facilities in the Lake Tahoe Basin now compared to most winters. It all has to do with the lack of snow.

People have been asking Jean Norman at the front desk in South Lake Tahoe about hiking. That's an unusual request for January. Most areas at lake level are clear, though icy spots exist because of the freezing temps overnight.

Bob Becker's staff has been monitoring litter at popular areas like the Tallac Site and Taylor Creek Visitors Center.

"Once it's closed and there are several feet of snow, they don't go out there because the use is not that much," Lisa Herron with the USFS told *Lake Tahoe News*. That's in a normal year.

"People should get out and enjoy it while they can. For those who don't ski or snowshoe it's a good opportunity to do some hiking and not worry about a bunch of snow," Herron said.

However, the other concern Forest Service officials have is for fire. Everything is dry. And while the agency doesn't usually issue fire danger reports this time of year, it could if precipitation does not come. While other agencies have implemented winter fire restrictions, the Forest Service has yet to do so.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*