

# Tahoe to be clearer because of erosion project

By Kathryn Reed

By the time the Bijou erosion control project is completed this year, South Lake Tahoe will have put in an \$11 million investment to curtail fine sediment from reaching Lake Tahoe.

This section of town is responsible for about one-third of the sediment in the city limits that reaches the lake.

“It’s designed to handle most storms,” Ray Jarvis, city public works director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Bijou has historically been the biggest problem for discharge into the lake.”



Crews work July 15 on the Bijou erosion control project. Photo/LTN

The city per Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board’s total maximum daily load policy is mandated to reduce the amount of fine sediment entering the lake.

The 42 acres are comprised of 43 parcels, most of which are commercial.

At the July 15 City Council meeting a community facilities district was formed that includes 10 of those parcels. This

means they will pay for some of the improvements and ongoing maintenance via a tax that will be assessed to the property. This will allow property owners to receive their best management practices certificate from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

That BMP certificate is something all properties in the Lake Tahoe Basin are supposed to have by now. It demonstrates the property owner has met mandated erosion control requirements.

What no one at the city or TRPA could immediately answer is if property owners who are not in the community facilities district, will still get a certificate.

The 10 properties that are part of the CFD are paying a reduced price for their BMPs compared to if they did them on their own. The cost is about 10 cents per square foot of impervious surface through the CFD, while it is between \$1 and \$3 per square foot individually.

The remaining properties can join the CFD at a later date if so desired.

This project looks at the stormwater runoff more holistically instead of parcel-by-parcel. So instead of keeping water on each site, the water collected via gutters is diverted to larger catch basins for filtration purposes.

The problem with this area is that so much of it paved. It includes the Bijou center where CVS is located.

Storm vaults were inserted underground by Lake Shore Lodge last year. Now much of the work is concentrated on Fairway Avenue on the other side of Highway 50.

The system is designed to handle 220,000 gallons of water at once.

The water will collect in the basins for the sediment to settle, then the water will be pumped back to the meadow area

near Glenwood Avenue where it will be filtered naturally. There are still drains that are along the beaches of Lake Tahoe that carry treated water.