

Upgrades coming on key South Shore bike trails

By Kathryn Reed

Thousands of dollars in bicycle trail and ball field improvements on the South Shore were approved Friday by the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority.

Money for the projects comes from Measure S/R dollars. This voter approved initiative affects the California side of the South Shore.

The 6-year-old Sawmill bridge that crosses the Upper Truckee River on Highway 50 is in need of a new top coat because the concrete is disintegrating. There are so many loose particles on the span that it is getting close to the point where riding across it on a road bike could mean an instant flat tire.

While there was a lawsuit between the builder and El Dorado County regarding the bridge, it had more to do with days worked and not the short lifespan of the work.

County officials are hoping to find a product that will last 20 years.



Sawmill bike bridge is in need of a new overcoat.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

Deterioration of the current bridge is being blamed on the sand and salt Caltrans spreads on the highway, the expansion and contraction of material from temperatures, and not having laid down materials in optimal conditions.

The board on Jan. 23 agreed to use \$87,000 to help resurface this bridge.

Doing so would create a smooth bicycle path from Meyers to South Lake Tahoe because the final phase of the path on Sawmill Road is slated for construction this summer, too.

The recommendation for this and other projects came to the JPA board from the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

The committee also suggested, and the board approved, \$70,000 to rehab the class 1 trail between Trout Creek and Edgewood Circle between Lakeview Commons and the property where the Alta Mira building used to be.

This route will be close to the highway and is not what has been long been called phase 2 of Lakeview Commons. The

continuation of the bike trail on those plans calls for a cantilever bridge that would jut out onto the lake and get people away from the road. But lack of funding is stalling that project.

The other bike related allocation was for \$10,000 to be spent on wayfinding signs along class 1 trails.

When it comes to ball fields in the area, the T-ball fields will get the most attention this coming season – in the form of new turf.

While bleachers are desired at the Little League field, there may not be the money to make that happen.

The fields committee is going to seek donations from service clubs to pay for the bleachers. If that doesn't work, there are old bleachers that could be brought in.