

Van Sickle provides beauty steps from casinos



Mount Tallac from the vista point at Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Immersed in a kaleidoscope of blues and greens, the landscape is mesmerizing. Perched on a slab of granite, its an unobstructed view of the hues of Lake Tahoe that complement the pale blue sky. Wispy clouds dance in the sky. Pines hover overhead, with branches dangling down as though to hug all those who enter the forest.

While Van Sickle Bi-state Park is always beautiful, it is even more so without many people accessing it. A few people were out Sunday – mostly walkers, plus a dude on a fat mountain bike.



The waterfall at Van Sickle.

Signs of winter and spring dotted the trail April 26 with remnants of the previous day's snowstorm and wildflowers starting to bloom.

It was the long dream of rancher Jack Van Sickle, who donated more than two-thirds of the land for the 725-acre park to the state of Nevada, to have his property be enjoyed by the masses. His old barn still sits on the land underneath the Heavenly Mountain Resort gondola line.

The park opened in summer 2011.



The path hooks up
with the Tahoe Rim
Trail.

With how fast the waterfall is flowing, it would be hard to know this is year four of a drought. Now there are symbols on the signposts directing people to the falls, which are about 1.5 miles from the trailhead.

The gates open today. Vehicle access is from California near the intersection of Montreal Avenue and Heavenly Village Way. A footpath is accessible from there or it's possible to park at Harrah's and walk out the back entrance and get onto a trail on the other side of the road.