

# Letter: Traffic chaos must be addressed

To the community,

We live on Clear View Drive near Sawmill Pond. We've lived here for 40 years and have never seen a traffic jam like the one that occurred Jan. 2. GPS has led visitors to scramble onto any road that heads in the direction of Highway 50. Dave tried to go into town yesterday, got as far as Sawmill and realized that he could get to town, but wouldn't be able to get back home in any reasonable fashion. It took him 45 minutes to get from Sawmill back to Clear View – about one-half mile. He actually wound up driving in reverse in the eastbound lane from Tahoe Mountain to our street.

View Circle, which is frequently used as a short cut, was at a standstill causing folks to start streaming down Clear View only to meet the standstill on View. This after careening to a stop for the sharp right turn at the bottom of our street. It was a traffic mess of epic proportions. Tow trucks also coursed down our street trying to get to the spin outs on Upper Truckee.

Tourists are not prepared for the icy hills on Upper Truckee and spin out. Some people simply ran out of gas while trapped in the traffic. Our neighbor's daughter started out in the morning to drive out to 50 and never got there. After hours of sitting in the back up, the dog needed to get out and the snacks for the kids were gone so she gave up and came back to the house.

As **Moya Saunders' letter** pointed out, people using Upper Truckee circumvent chain control only to cause backups when they do decide to chain up or endanger other drivers if they don't. Locals who once were able to get into town in heavy

tourist traffic can no longer really do it. This impairs access for emergency vehicles and endangers locals as tourists speed through neighborhoods searching for a way to Highway 50.

I'm not sure what can be done about this. Would signage at the Y or at Sawmill get people off the icy hills, out of the neighborhoods and into proper chain control monitoring? I think Upper Truckee is a crucial route for locals to use during busy weekends. If 50, Pioneer and Upper Truckee are all impacted in this fashion, what will the eventual fallout be? There are the obvious dangers of tourists speeding down icy streets they are unfamiliar with ... no kids played in the snow yesterday in our neighborhood. God help you if you need a fire truck or ambulance or a head of lettuce. I know this occurs in many other places. GPS can be wonderful, but it can also create the situation we witnessed yesterday.

It really makes us contemplate the increased traffic that will be generated by projects proposed in the basin and adjacent to it. The concept of carrying capacity is illustrated vividly by the situation that we saw yesterday.

**Carla Ennis, Meyers**