

Tahoe-Truckee digs out before next big dump



Lake Tahoe has a couple days to recover before the next storms arrive. Photo/Denise Haerr

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

Brian Santos felt conflicting currents of emotion Saturday after historic winter storms dumped a bounty of snow on the northern Sierra Nevada – a region dependent on winter tourism and also vulnerable to the heartache such storms can bring.

At the Truckee Donner Lodge, where Santos was working as day manager, the heat was back on. The massive frosty mound that had covered the parking lot was cleared. The place was filled with guests as Interstate 80 jammed with skiers flocking to

mountain resorts for the three-day Martin Luther King Day weekend.

Yet Santos had just emerged from a few hellish days. His family was snowed in from Tuesday until Friday in their nearby Pla Vada Woodlands home. They went without electricity for four days, and trees throughout the neighborhood had toppled under the snowfall.

Now the Tahoe region is bracing for – and cautiously celebrating – more snow to come. A second significant storm system, called an “atmospheric river,” is expected to hit late Tuesday. It stands to blanket the upper Sierra and Truckee-Lake Tahoe resorts under another 2 feet of snow while also creating new perils for residents and motorists.

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