

Zeroing in on future of Kings Beach park, pier

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – California State Parks wants to turn the centerpiece of Kings Beach into a masterpiece.

Overhauling the master plan from 1980 for the Kings Beach State Recreation Area and replacing the pier that boats can't reach are closer to being a reality. Creating a more welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, environmentally sensitive destination that links the land to the water are the goals.

On Thursday night the preferred alternative for the master plan was unveiled. Instead of picking one of the three alternatives, what are deemed the best aspects of the project were selected and incorporated into essentially what is a new alternative.

The preferred placement for the pier is on the eastern edge. (All three alternatives will be studied in the environmental documents.) It would be part fixed and part floating. While the pier would be able to accommodate boat shuttles, it is not being designed as a port for a cross lake ferry.



Marilyn Linkem, superintendent of the

Sierra District for State Parks, talks
Feb. 2 about the future of Kings Beach.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

“What goes away is the motorized boat launch,” explained Lisa O’Daly of the California Tahoe Conservancy. The ramp has been unusable since 2012 because of the drought, and since 2008 it has been off-limits 75 percent of the time.

O’Daly’s agency is integral to the process because it owns some of the land in the area and has been involved with planning grants for part of the project.

Non-motorized watercraft will be encouraged to use the area even more. A building to keep kayaks-canoes-paddleboards is part of the plans.

Specifically what the pier will look like was a concern of one man who attended the Feb. 2 presentation. While the agencies tend to like structures to blend in with the natural environmental, he was a proponent of making it architecturally appealing, as well as functional. That level of design is still a ways off.

All of the environmental documents – CEQA, environmental impact report for the general plan, and EIR/EIS for the pier – need to be completed. The goal is to have them finalized about a year from now.

State Parks engineers will then plot out what it will cost. The Legislature and state Department of Finance must give their OK, and will help with financing.

“Then we decide the implementation; if we do phases,” Marilyn Linkem, superintendent of the Sierra District for State Parks, told *Lake Tahoe News*. Once the other state agencies weigh in it will be a few more years before any work is done.

Build out? No speculation for that date.

A promenade on the edge of the beach will go from the event center to Koon Street. From there it will be up to Placer County what happens. Lookouts will be built in so people can take in the scenery without blocking pedestrians or bicyclists.

Retaining walls and vegetation are part of the plan. Those two items are key to keeping sand out of the parking lot.

Today whenever sand reaches the asphalt it has to be hauled away. Per Tahoe Regional Planning Agency rules the parking lot sand cannot be returned to the beach.

The parking lot will be reconfigured a bit so when driving in vehicles are not the main focus. There will be a 12 percent or 22-car space reduction.

“This is a state recreation area, not a state parking area,” Steve Musillami with State Parks said.

An automated pay system is expected to be implemented this spring.

The basketball court will be relocated. Near it will be a grassy area with a stage. Bands or the like could also bring in a portable stage. It’s possible the audience could be on the beach or the lawn.

Current restrooms will be upgraded and another one added.

For now dogs on leashes will still be allowed in a section of the park, but dogs are not part of the general plan overview. That level of detail will be up to State Parks in the future.

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Notes:

- More information is available **online**.
- Comments are being accepted until Feb. 15. They may be

emailed to plan.general@parks.ca.gov.