

Rain swells Tahoe water bodies, minor flooding



Water tumbles from the granite along Echo Summit on April 7.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

No rainfall records were set in the Lake Tahoe Basin, but what fell has caused creeks and rivers to rise, with standing and running water in unusual places.

Highway 50 going up Echo Summit has water spilling from the granite so fast that it looks like substantive waterfalls have sprung forth.



Water is close to the bike trail in Meyers. Photo/Kathryn Reed

A boulder about 8-feet in diameter fell into the passing lane of the highway just west of Sierra-at-Tahoe on Saturday. Caltrans was able to clear it fairly fast.



Water under the 15th Street bridge off Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

In the 24-hour period ending at noon April 7, the National Weather Service in Reno recorded the following rain totals:

- Echo Peak – 4.4 inches

- Alpine Meadows – 3.4
- Meyers – 3.02
- Homewood – 2.93
- Tahoe City – 1.71
- Incline Village – 1.35
- Lake Tahoe Airport – 1.34
- Carson City – 0.59

Jim Marino with South Lake Tahoe public works told *LTN* there are “no significant problems.”

Low lying areas have standing water with some reports of floods.

The Upper Truckee River is well beyond its banks in many locations and is raging like the American River in some locations.

At Lake Tahoe Airport the runways are fine, but the river looks to be encroaching. Plus, the drainage basin between the runways is full, giving an impression it might be challenging for pilots to decipher where to land.

A spokesman for the airport said the only issue for pilots on Saturday was the wind. The water is normal in storms like this.

For some people all this moisture means fun.

South Lake Tahoe resident Scott Valentine put his paddleboard in the Upper Truckee River on Saturday afternoon at Elks Club and floated to the Tahoe Keys. It took him about an hour to make that 5½-mile trip.



Scott Valentine starts his trek down the Upper Truckee River on April 7. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“There are some serious river hazards out there and running the river is not recommended. I have over 20 years as a professional whitewater guide, I know the river, I was wearing a dry suit, I understand how to read water, and know the consequences,” Valentine told *Lake Tahoe News*. “People should know that there is water flowing through trees and bushes, there is water flowing over the floodplain making route-finding difficult, there are strong currents and eddy-lines, and there are downed logs, fence posts, low bridges, and barbed-wire in the channel. It makes for an exciting run if you know what you are doing.”

He said the flow was 1,800 cubic feet per second.



It's hard to know the true boundaries of the Upper Truckee River. Photo/Scott Valentine

The basin is expected to dry out for the next couple of days. Wednesday night into Thursday another system, and a cooler one, is expected to roll in.



It looks like there is more water than asphalt at Lake Tahoe Airport because the Upper Truckee River is well beyond its bank. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Mark Deutschendorf, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Reno, told *Lake Tahoe News*, "It could produce some snow at the lake."

He described this time of year as transitional, with the

potential for a little bit of everything – sun, rain and snow,
as well as temps warm enough for shorts and cold enough for
fleece.