

NDOT to start Centerville-Hwy. 88 roundabout

Daytime single lane closures, followed by a 10-day intersection closure, will begin April 23 on Highway 88 at Centerville Lane in Douglas County as the Nevada Department of Transportation installs a traffic roundabout.

Daytime single lane closures will take place on Highway 88 at Centerville Lane April 23-27 from 7am-6pm with a pilot car alternating directions of traffic through the intersection.

An approximately 10-day closure of the Highway 88 and Centerville Lane intersection will then begin April 30 at 10am, with nearby detour available via Mottsville Lane and Foothill Road. Following the full intersection closure, drivers will again see weekday daytime single lane closures until major construction wraps up directly before the Memorial Day weekend. Travel delays of up to 30 minutes are to be anticipated.

Minor finishing elements of construction such as light pole installation will take place in future months.

A compact traffic roundabout will be installed at the intersection of Highway 88 and Centerville Lane west of Gardnerville.

When complete, the posted speed limits on Highway 88 will be reduced to 45 mph approaching the roundabout, with an advisory speed of 20 mph through the roundabout.

In coming years, NDOT will evaluate the potential of purchasing neighboring land to expand the size of the roundabout.

Wrong-way driver arrest in El Dorado County

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The suspected driver of a stolen pickup was taken into custody Thursday afternoon after traveling the wrong way on Highway 50 in El Dorado County in an apparent effort to evade law enforcement officers.

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office and California Highway Patrol received a report about 11:20am April 19 that a stolen silver 2017 Chevrolet pickup had been seen heading west on Highway 50 from Myers in the South Lake Tahoe area.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tourists ignore signs not to drive in neighborhoods



Signs are not enough to keep tourists from trying to find a short cut through residential areas. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

By Jessie Marchesseau

MEYERS – Tourists are not paying attention to the signs designed to keep them on Highway 50 and out of South Shore neighborhoods.

El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel said the signs were largely ineffective in diverting tourists from residential roads. She said the signs may be too hard to see or people are just following their GPS directions and not even paying attention to them.

Rafael Martinez, director of transportation for the county, explained that nonetheless, the presence of the signs enables law enforcement to cite drivers who end up stuck or run off the road in those areas. California Highway Patrol officers and El Dorado County sheriff's deputies ticketed such drivers this winter. Martinez said the hope is that those drivers will spread the message to other drivers which will, in turn, start to deter nonlocals from choosing to use those routes.

On April 18, the county hosted a community meeting at the Lake Tahoe Environmental Science Magnet School to discuss traffic issues in the Lake Tahoe Basin, particularly on Sundays and holidays.

Representatives from El Dorado County Department of Transportation, Board of Supervisors and county counsel as well as the California Highway Patrol shared the results of the two pilot programs put into place this winter and discussed other options being considered for the future.

One of the pilot programs involved putting up 25 signs on residential roads warning drivers of traction control requirements.

In response to a suggestion of using "chains required" instead of "traction control" signs, Novasel explained that actual chain control signs require the presence of a chain installation area which the county does not have, nor could they be installed in multiple residential areas. It would also require hiring someone to turn or open/close the signs as conditions changed.

A suggestion was posed for adding flashing solar lights to the signs to make them more visible, something the county already explored, but at \$800 per sign, Martinez explained they were not sure it would be the most effective use of their limited budget.

The second pilot program put into place this winter was what Martinez referred to as "the nudge." It was an effort in behavioral modification of drivers attempting to use North Upper Truckee to leave town on Sundays. Signs were placed on Lake Tahoe Boulevard directing drivers to use Sawmill Road to get back to Highway 50 in order to leave town. "The nudge" was first implemented on March 4 and again on three more Sundays.

Much more effective than the traction control signs, Martinez said an unofficial study by the transportation department

indicated that 60-70 percent of traffic was abiding by the signage and using Sawmill to get back to Highway 50 instead of North Upper Truckee. Considering that a large portion of the cars not obeying the signs was likely local traffic, he estimated the compliance rate could have been as high as 90 percent by tourists.

The nudge will be implemented again four times this summer and then reevaluated as a feasible and effective mid-range, though likely not long-term, solution. Expect to see signs diverting drivers down Sawmill on Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July, celebrity golf week, and Labor Day weekend.

The cost of the program was about \$800 for the signs and \$300 to install and take down the setup each time. Should the project continue, it would need to be accounted for in future transportation budgets.

The panel proceeded to review status of the **21 suggestions** gathered at the Feb. 28 community meeting.

The suggestion which received the most discussion and perhaps holds the most hope is putting the focus on the agriculture inspection station in Meyers. Part 1 involves installing signs notifying drivers that they are required by law to pass through the inspection station.

Part 2, and perhaps more important, EDC is drafting a letter to road mapping app companies alerting them to the state statute requiring motorists to pass through the station when entering California. The hope is that companies, in an effort to abide by state laws, will only direct drivers to leave the basin via Highway 50 through the inspection station.

County Counsel Mike Ciccozzi said there is a loophole the companies may use to avoid doing so. If that happens, it could result in lengthy litigation. While he does consider that a possibility, he says he is hoping it does not end up that way and they simply agree.

He expects the letter to be ready to send out within the next week or two.

A few other suggestions were offered up by residents at the meeting, but most had little traction. One person suggested adding a “local traffic only” lane onto Highway 50 for locals trying to get to Meyers. Novasel explained that widening Highway 50 had already been explored and was out of the question.

Another resident who lives off of Sawmill requested turning the traffic around at the high school. Martinez said that location is in the city, not the county, and the city had declined to do so, not wanting to direct traffic back into its jurisdiction.

Someone else suggested making Tahoe a little less attractive on holiday weekends so there aren't quite as many people coming to town, such as a higher TOT tax. Novasel said that is unlikely as it will require legislation to do so.

So, while there is no long-term solution out there right now, Martinez said they are exploring solutions to work in the short- and mid-term while an ultimate long-term solution is decided and implemented.

20 ways legal marijuana has affected Nevada

By Chris Kudialis, Las Vegas Sun

Friday marks Nevada's first 4/20 since recreational marijuana sales were legalized last July. With more than 45 dispensaries

in the Las Vegas Valley and 62 statewide expecting increased sales for the unofficial pot holiday, here's a look at 20 ways that legal weed has affected our state:

1. More cannabis products

After waiting more than two years for recreational sales to begin, many of the state's 205 combined cultivation and production facilities have more than doubled the quantity of pot products they manufacture and distribute to meet the demand from increased dispensary sales, said Riana Durrett, executive director of the Nevada Dispensary Association.

2. Increased tax revenue.

Read the whole story

Caltrans to build retaining wall near Emerald Bay

Repair work to build a retaining wall along a section of Highway 89 in Emerald Bay is set to resume next week.

The retaining wall is being built near the Eagle Point Campground.

Work should be completed by the end of May. The northbound lane of the highway is closed and reversing one-way traffic is being controlled by automated signals.

A new concrete barrier near Eagle Falls was completed as part of the \$4.4 million project last fall.

Americans want legal pot; states disagree on regulations

By Santiago Guerra, *The Conversation*

On 4/20, many across the U.S. gather to celebrate their love and appreciation for marijuana.

Polls show that 64 percent of Americans favor legalizing marijuana. Despite the majority support, there's no clear consensus on how it should be regulated. As a researcher who has studied the impact of drugs in the U.S. and Mexico, it's been captivating to watch states adapt as they attempt to regulate this illicit and stigmatized substance.

Many states permit medical marijuana, but there's a wide variety of approaches. Today, 29 states currently permit medical marijuana and have an established system for regulating it.

Another 17 states have limited medical programs. These programs provide access to products with low levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and high levels of cannabidiol (CBD), with the goal of eliminating the "high" and maximizing medical benefits. Beyond that, the conditions doctors and patients can treat with cannabis vary from state to state.

Minnesota, New York and West Virginia don't permit marijuana smoking as part of their medical programs. West Virginia, however, allows patients to vaporize marijuana plant matter, while Minnesota only permits consumption of marijuana in liquid extract form.

Colorado, where I am based, has a much more expansive medical program. Patients can access an array of products, from extracts to strains of raw plant material. While New York caps the amount of THC that a product dose may contain, Colorado and other states have no such limit on their medical marijuana products.

Meanwhile, recreational marijuana use has been approved for adults 21 and over by nine states: Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont and Washington, as well as the District of Columbia.

However, once again, states haven't implemented their policies uniformly. Vermont, for example, does not currently have a system for commercial sale and distribution, and only allows individuals to cultivate two plants. Colorado, on the other hand, has developed a robust commercial system, allows individuals to grow up to six plants, and limits the amount of marijuana products an individual can possess.

Most states have struggled with how to navigate the public consumption of cannabis, which remains illegal. As states continue to debate and implement marijuana policies, the American public will begin to recognize what works (and what doesn't).

While these policy inconsistencies may raise concerns for some constituents, these state experiments are a valuable way to figure out how this substance works and how it affects society.

Santiago Guerra is an assistant professor of Southwest studies at Colorado College.

Democratic challenger outraises McClintock – again

By Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

For Congressman Tom McClintock, a new year hasn't changed a fundamental campaign weakness. The veteran Republican lawmaker was again outraised by his leading Democratic challenger, Jessica Morse, in the first three months of 2018, new federal fundraising reports disclose.

It marks the third quarter in a row that Morse has outraised McClintock, leaving her with more cash in the bank going into a crucial phase of the campaign.

Read the whole story

S. Tahoe VHR rules getting attention of visitors

By Kathryn Reed

The adage there is no such thing as bad publicity may be tested as South Lake Tahoe's reputation among vacation home renters spreads.

City officials are hoping the negative regional and national media attention about its \$1,000 fines for owners and tourists turns out to be a positive. This is because going after the violators is intended to create a better experience for everyone – local and visitor.

People tend to forget when they are on vacation, staying someplace other than a hotel, that people next door are likely to live there full time. Those residents have jobs to get to that are best performed with a good night's sleep, not a party next door. Visitors don't take into consideration that even though there isn't a fence, the yard next door is private property. For some reason they think the kayak tied up at a nearby dock is something they can use.

And while these examples may be isolated, they are happening enough to have necessitated the City Council to implement stringent rules with penalties that get people's attention. A slap on the wrist wasn't working.

"I did get an email from a potential visitor after the [*Reno Gazette-Journal*] article came out indicating that Lake Tahoe had been on their family's bucket list but they would be removing it based on what they'd read," Carol Chaplin, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority executive director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I understand the visitor center has had a few folks in who have commented on the unfriendliness of the penalties. I couldn't say if it will have a long-term impact, but my opinion is that we should be able, as a community, to find balance and respect for both residents and visitors. It's not an issue unique to our destination, so I think we could look to other communities for best practices."

On April 17, the council received its first quarterly update about how the rules that were put into effect just before Christmas are working.

Of the handful of people from the public who spoke, some suggested softening the message the city is putting out by welcoming people before threatening them. One person took issue with the public information officer having boasted about the city's VHR rules being in the news outside the basin, and instead said it was more of a black eye for the city.

Here are some stats from Dec. 22-March 31 regarding the 188 VHR complaints:

- Parking – 105 complaints, 40 violations
- Noise – 34 complaints, 8 violations
- Trash – 7 complaints, 3 violations
- Occupancy – 8 complaints, 1 violation
- Hot tub – 13 complaints, 4 violations
- Camping – 1 complaint, 0 violations
- No sign – 2 complaints, 0 violations
- Unpermitted – 17 complaints, 7 violations
- Miscellaneous – 1 complaint, 0 violations.

Twenty-nine paid the citations without question. Fifty-one percent of the 72 citations have been appealed. Eighteen were dismissed, 11 were upheld with seven of those paying the full amount, the rest are still in the hearing process.

Trash complaints could become a non-issue with bear boxes being mandatory at VHRs starting July 31.

There is bad behavior by locals as well. Going after repeat bogus complainers has been brought up. Then there are the people who are unwelcoming to out-of-towners.

“We’ve heard of visitors being heckled when they arrive at a reserved VHR, which is an unfortunate statement about how we treat people in general,” Chaplin said.

The LTVA board is expected to have a discussion about vacation home rentals in the coming months.

Then there are the visitors who don’t understand why they have to comply with rules they find restrictive such as not going

into a hot tub between 10pm and 8am even without jets. That rule came into being because of the countless disruptive noisy guests who shattered the silence of an otherwise quiet neighborhood.

Helping with the enforcement is Host Compliance, which was hired by the city to find violators and take complaints. The 24/7 hot line (530.542.7474) is live. The company also monitors rental ad activity and transient occupancy tax collections.

Maureen Stuhlman, who oversees VHRs for the city, told the council Host Compliance has revolutionized how she and others are able to manage the short-term rentals. She showed a slide of the city with dots all over indicating that on April 17 1,072 VHRs with ads were compliant, while 319 were non-compliant. Staff is then able to use that data to track down the owners because Host Compliance has provided the addresses.

As of April 6, the city had 1,396 active VHR permits.

GOP lawmakers changing stance on marijuana

By Kurtis Lee, Los Angeles Times

States that have passed laws legalizing recreational marijuana in recent years appear to have found some new, unexpected supporters: Republican politicians.

Since voters began to pass recreational marijuana measures in 2012, the pro-pot movement has seen swift support from many Democrats, with Republicans often pushing back against

legalization. Those expressing concern or opposition have cited, among other things, the potential for pot to be a gateway drug, and they have regularly sided with law enforcement, which has established a unified front against recreational marijuana.

But a recent mix of public opinion, an influx in tax revenue and questions surrounding states' rights has in part led to a shift in rhetoric and legislative proposals.

Read the whole story

Nev, drivers who pull off a 'Calif. roll' can be ticketed

By Art Marroquin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

It looks like a few drivers need a reminder on what it means to stop.

Sandra said she's noticed a few motorists who roll past stop signs at four-way intersections. Randy said he received a citation for failing to stop at a red light while making a right turn. Mark said he was nearly sideswiped by a red-light runner who also was turning right.

In all of these cases, it sounds like the offending motorists were pulling a California roll. And we're not talking about the tasty sushi treat.

For those who are unfamiliar, California rolls happen when drivers slow down – rather than stop – then drive through an intersection when they think it's safe.

Read the whole story