

FOCUS ON: OUTDOORS

# Tahoe to Pyramid,



slowly,  
but  
surely

This view of the Truckee River is from the 102 Ranch located along the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway east of Sparks. This portion of the bikeway should open in the fall.

## Fundraising continues for 116-mile bikeway

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Janet Phillips, 57, wants nothing more than a 116-mile bike trail from Tahoe Lake to Pyramid Lake along the Truckee River to be complete.

Currently, about 60 miles comprising three sections of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway are done, but it's a portion east of Sparks that is targeted for completion soon.

"It will be built this fall," said Phillips, president of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway Association. "If all goes well, all (nine miles of this) will be done this year."

The new portion will run through private land, ranch land and industrial-use areas. The Nature Conservancy has been key to restoration of river habitats along this section, including at the McCarran Ranch and 102 Ranch. The access trails they built will be used by bikers on the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway.

"I am really very grateful to the Nature Conservancy, which has done so much," Phillips said.

The Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway is a nonprofit organization. The group has estimated it will cost \$5 to \$10 million to complete the trail. Since some of the path near Lake Tahoe is on pre-existing trail, the group does not have the entire length to build.

Key to the bike path is its travels along the Truckee River, which is 106 miles in length and flows from Lake Tahoe, on the northwest shore of Lake Tahoe, to Pyramid Lake.

"The river is what it's all about," Phillips said.

The new 9-mile portion of the bikeway will run from Waltham



DETAILS

■ For more on the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway, visit [www.tahoe-pyramidbikeway.org](http://www.tahoe-pyramidbikeway.org).

■ Portions of the trail also are available for adoption.

■ To help with the current \$60,000 fundraising campaign, send checks to Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway, 4790 Caughlin Parkway, No. 138, Reno, NV 89519.



Janet Phillips stands near a future access point to the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway east of Sparks.

SEE BIKEWAY ON 3C

## Bikeway/Organizers need monetary help for trail

From 1C  
Way to USA Parkway in Sparks. The land there is one of river, brush and cottonwood trees. There is little trash, and the area is pristine. Close to the portion are two brotels, Old Bridge Ranch and Wild Horse Saloon.  
"(This) will be the only known bike trail in the world with two brotels along the way," Phillips said.

### Fundraising for \$60,000

Organizers are currently seeking \$60,000 to help with completion of the nine miles of bikeway and with another portion of the trail in California that runs east from Boca to Verdi.

"There is really no endpoint" to fundraising, Phillips said.

"Most people in Reno are

really excited to be able to ride to Truckee along the river," Phillips said. "And we are applying for some construction grants, but every grant requires matching money."

The group has applied for two grants to build from Boca to Verdi during the past few weeks.

"If we get either or both of them, we will need up to \$400,000 in matching funds by local fundraising," Phillips said.

The three complete sections of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway, moving east, include: Tahoe City to Truckee; Verdi to Vista Boulevard in Sparks; and Wadsworth to Pyramid Lake.

When construction of the nine miles is complete, approximately five miles from Sparks to Mustang and 18 miles from USA Parkway to Wadsworth will remain for



A shot along a stretch an open portion of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway. The trail features wide-open vistas and solitude.

completion in Nevada. One of those portions could be completed next.

"My feeling is that you build a section of trail whenever and wherever you get permission to do it," said Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway board member Bill von Phul, who helps maintain the trail close to Pyramid.

"As originally conceived,

they didn't think (the entire trail) was going to take so long to build. The real difficult part is getting permission from landowners and that kind of thing."

But the true push will be for the California segment. "The California side is in a narrow canyon and is going to take some fairly elaborate engineering in some parts,"

Phillips said.

### Used often

On average, 200 people a day use the section of bike path in the Verdi area, according to Phillips. Members of the Procrastinating Pedalers, a group of approximately 250 area cyclists, also cycle that.

"We're on that (path) almost every week," president Terry McAfee said. "I think Reno's favorite ride is from Roy Gomm school out to Verdi and back. It used to be, what seems like eons ago, we would ride on the freeway. That was frequently a heart-pounding kind of experience. Now, we ride on that separate bike path. It's really increased the numbers of riders that go out to Verdi."

Not many bike paths offer a trail of such a long distance, except, perhaps, former railways converted to trails. The closest one of those that McAfee is familiar with is the Biz Johnson trail in Susanville. But that trail is only 25 miles in length.

"I think (the Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway) will be beneficial for tourism," McAfee said. "It's hard to say what it will be like when it's done. The whole idea is to open the pleasure of being along the river in more space than is available now."

The project began in 2003. Initially, Phillips envisioned it as a five-year project. "It will probably be another 20 years to get it done," she said. "The goal is to get it done before I'm too old to ride a bike."