Truckee River Canyon trail work begins

By Tahoe Weekly - June 14, 2018

The nonprofit Tahoe-Pyramid Trail has begun work on the final section connecting Reno, Nev., through the Truckee River Canyon.

Richard May Construction of Mammoth Lakes recently began work on the final 2 miles west of Floriston, including the steep slope just below a long, winding curve on I-80. At a cost of more than $2 million, parts of this trail will require wooden boardwalks, retaining walls and switchbacks. The project is being paid for by government grants and private donations, Phillips said.

Given the complexity, the project may or may not be finished this year. But when complete, trail users will be able travel through the entire canyon. In all, Janet Phillips, president and founder of the Reno, Nev.-based group, said the trail is 80 percent completed. The remainder east of Sparks.

With the final section of trail from Lake Tahoe to Reno being built in the Truckee River Canyon, the name of the organization was recently changed to Tahoe-Pyramid Trail. This name commemorates the completion of 80 percent of the overall trail from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake.
“Many walkers, runners, fishermen and others mistakenly think the trail is only for bicycles,” said Phillips in a press release. “We are more inclusive than that.”

While most people identify a bikeway as being paved, Phillips said the Tahoe-Pyramid Trail is not paved outside urban areas. As it follows the Truckee River on its 114-mile journey, it is paved through Reno, Sparks, on the Legacy Trail east of the town of Truckee, along Highway 89 and on its own path from Olympic Valley to Tahoe City. Everywhere else, the trail is on a dirt road or path.

“After 15 years as a Bikeway, this is obviously a big change,” Phillips said. “But we think it is the right thing to do, as we want everyone to enjoy the trail.”

The Truckee River Canyon is a prime example of the multi-use of the trail. A dirt road doubles as the trail as it starts near Verdi, Nev. The utility road runs up and down rugged, steep cliffs before it ends up along the forested river bank near the Fleish Pedestrian Bridge east of Farad. Here more runners, hikers and fishermen use the trail than bicyclists.

To access the Truckee River Canyon trail, people can safely park their cars at Verdi, Farad, Truckee and...
Floriston and Hirschdale exits on Interstate 80. Check tahoepyramidtrail.org for trail conditions.

The Tahoe-Pyramid Trail is a vision of following the Truckee River by foot or by bike from its source at forested Lake Tahoe to its desert terminus at Pyramid Lake. The route will descend more than 2,000 feet in 114 miles, using a combination of existing dirt and paved roads, plus some sections of new trails and bridges. | tahoepyramidtrail.org

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