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SPECIAL NEWS

SANTA FE PACIFIC PIPELINE INCIDENT

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WATER SAMPLING RESULT ANALYSIS IN

Nevada County Environmental Health (NCEH) reports that water sampling information indicates there is no imminent health threat to Donner Lake from the petroleum spill. The headwaters area of Summit Creek, a tributary to Donner Lake, has been impacted and is closed to the public. Confirmed water sample test results through March 5, 1997 show that most water contamination is contained within Summit Creek. Low levels of petroleum product constituents were found at sampling points near Donner Lake, as described below.

Water sample analysis results through March 5, 1997 confirm the presence of petroleum contamination in Summit Creek. The petroleum constituents detected include benzene, toluene, xylene, ethylbenzene, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), and diesel. The contamination is for the most part limited to the upper end of Summit Creek. However, low levels of total petroleum hydrocarbon diesel (TPH-D), xylene and MTBE were detected at a sample location below Old Highway Bridge. Gasoline was detected in scum below the South Shore Bridge on the second day of testing (March 4), but has not been detected since. Contaminant levels entering Donner Lake are below levels requiring action, but will be closely monitored.

Nevada County Environmental Health continues to monitor Summit Creek and Donner Lake. An air quality monitoring program began March 5. Further toxicological analysis will be provided if conditions change. Testing results will be shared with local water agencies. All water testing for petroleum product is performed in accordance with the Tri-Regional guidelines developed for UST/AST assessment standards for fuel spills.

These findings will be presented at a community meeting scheduled for March 7, 1997, at 7 p.m., in the auditorium of the Tahoe Truckee High School. Members of the public are invited to attend and to ask questions.

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