



Incline Fireworks
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ski Beach Closure Scheduled for Barge Salvage and Fireworks Recovery Operations

Incline Village, NV (February 26, 2026) – Underwater salvage operations to recover the barges that sank offshore of Ski Beach on July 4, 2025, are scheduled to begin in March. To safely support this work, Ski Beach in Incline Village, Nevada, is scheduled to be closed to all public access from Friday, March 13th through Tuesday, March 31, 2026. The operation is now able to move forward following the resolution of contractual delays that had previously stalled the project. The salvage work is expected to take approximately 15 operational days, though scheduling may be adjusted based on weather and lake conditions.

The temporary closure is necessary to support the safe recovery of a sunken barge owned by Tahoe Marine and Excavation along with remaining fireworks materials and associated debris located on the Lake Tahoe lakebed offshore of Ski Beach.

Incline Fireworks appreciates the coordination and collaboration of regional agencies and stakeholders including, Parker Diving Service, Lantis Fireworks, Inc., North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD), Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID), Washoe County, and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). Incline Fireworks also acknowledges the barge owner's carrier, Aspen Insurance, for accepting responsibility for the salvage operation.

Salvage Operation Leadership and Fireworks Removal

The recovery will be led by Parker Diving Service, a commercial marine dive and salvage company based in Sausalito, California and supported by specialized marine subcontractors.

Lantis Fireworks, Inc., utilizing ATF-certified fireworks professionals, will oversee the removal, handling, and secure transport of the remaining fireworks. The 54 fireworks shells that remain in the debris field total approximately 4% of the original inventory of 1,270 shells prepped for the July 4, 2025, fireworks display. Recovered materials will be transported to Lantis Fireworks' licensed facility in Utah.

Complex Underwater Recovery Conditions

The debris field rests at an approximate depth of 140 feet in Lake Tahoe. Due to Lake Tahoe's elevation, this equates to an effective dive depth of approximately 190 feet at sea level, creating highly technical diving conditions.

These conditions require:

- Limited diver working times
- Controlled ascent and decompression procedures
- Strict operational safety protocols

A hyperbaric chamber will be onsite throughout operations to support post-dive recovery.

Phased Salvage Operations

The recovery project is being conducted in multiple phases.

PHASE I – Completed (October 2025),

- A remotely operated vehicle (ROV) survey and debris-field assessment identified materials requiring removal

PHASE II - Scheduled During Beach Closure

- Removal and transport of fireworks materials and related debris
- Recovery of steel plates that separated from the barge and settled on the lakebed

PHASE III - Scheduled During Beach Closure

- Removal and inspection of the balance of the barge structure, consisting of three separate pontoons
- Final inspection and cleanup of the debris field to confirm full material removal

While IVGID has tested the water previously and found no impact on the community's water quality, additional testing at both the recovery site area and the Burnt Cedar drinking water source area will be conducted in coordination with the scheduled salvage process. Testing will be conducted prior to operations, periodically during the recovery work, and following the completion of the project.

Public Safety and Beach Closure Requirements

The salvage operation will involve commercial dive vessels, heavy marine lifting equipment, and the controlled handling of potentially explosive materials.

For the safety of the public and recovery personnel, Ski Beach will be fully closed during the entire salvage operation.

- Absolutely no members of the public may access the beach or surrounding work area while salvage operations are underway.
- Boaters, swimmers, paddlecraft users, and shoreline visitors must remain clear of all marked exclusion zones.

Unauthorized access is not only a safety risk but may lead to further legal delays in an already extended timeline.

The public is respectfully asked not to approach or contact contractors or dive teams working onsite, allowing crews to remain focused on safe execution of this complex recovery effort.

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FAQs FOLLOW

Frequently Asked Questions: Ski Beach Salvage & Recovery

1. Why is this recovery taking place eight months after the sinking?

While the incident occurred on July 4, 2025, and the PHASE I ROV surveys were completed in October 2025, active recovery efforts were significantly delayed due to a lengthy period required for the barge owner, Tahoe Marine and Excavation, to finalize and sign the necessary salvage agreements.

2. Why was there a lack of information provided to the public?

The lack of frequent public updates since the incident was a direct result of legal constraints and threatened litigation by the barge owner, which necessitated a cautious approach to public communications to protect the recovery process and public interests.

3. What exactly is being removed from Lake Tahoe?

The recovery effort is comprehensive and includes:

- **Fireworks:** 54 remaining fireworks shells from the original 1,270-shell inventory.
- **Structural Debris:** Large steel plates that settled on the lakebed after separating from the vessel.
- **The Vessel:** Three individual pontoons from the six pontoons which comprised the entire barge structure.
- **General Debris:** Any associated materials identified during the final lakebed cleanup.

4. Who is performing the work?

The operation is being handled by a team of specialized professionals:

- **Parker Diving Services** is leading the marine salvage.
- **Lantis Fireworks, Inc.** is providing ATF-certified professionals to handle the explosives.
- Specialized marine subcontractors are providing heavy equipment and support.

5. Why does the beach need to be closed if the work is underwater?

The closure is a mandatory safety measure due to the high-risk nature of the surface operations. This includes the presence of heavy marine lifting equipment, commercial dive vessels, and the secure handling and transport of explosive fireworks shells. Public access to the beach or surrounding water could delay operations or create significant safety hazards.

6. What makes this dive so "technical"?

The debris field is located at a depth of approximately 140 feet. However, because Lake Tahoe is at a high elevation, the lower atmospheric pressure makes the physiological "effective depth" approximately 190 feet at sea level. This requires specialized decompression protocols and the presence of an onsite hyperbaric chamber for diver safety.