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Arizona Daily Star

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RICK WILEY, ARIZONA DAILY STAR

This used to be the all-grass ninth fairway on the 202-acre Golf Club at Vistoso in Oro Valley. A group hopes to purchase the former golf course and make it a nature preserve.

Change of course planned for Oro Valley golf links

HENRY BREAN
 Arizona Daily Star

After several years spent stuck in the rough, an abandoned Oro Valley golf course could soon find new life as a nature preserve.

First, though, a group of community conservationists must raise \$1.8 million in two months to buy the former Golf Club at Vistoso.

"It's heavy lifting, but we're focused on that like a laser beam," said Craig MacKay, one of the founding members of Preserve Vistoso.

The neighborhood nonprofit has partnered with a national organization called The Conservation Fund to purchase the

property and turn it into a desert park and community trail.

The Tom Weiskopf-designed golf course opened in 1995, but rising water prices and a decline in play doomed the operation. The 18-hole desert course closed for good in 2018, three years after Canada-based investment firm Romspen bought it out of bankruptcy.

Residents along the links launched Preserve Vistoso in early 2019 in hopes of saving the golf course or at least having a say in what happened to it next.

"What was really scary was the uncertainty," said MacKay, who moved into his home on

Want to help?

To make a donation or learn more about Preserve Vistoso's effort to establish a nature park at the Golf Club at Vistoso, go to the group's website: www.preservevistoso.org.

"We don't need any more of the desert gone," said Patricia Sturmon, communications chair for Preserve Vistoso. "The first choice would have been keeping it as a golf course, but that just wasn't feasible."

Out of the sand

Mike Ford is Nevada and Southwest director for The Conservation Fund, which has completed 26 land acquisitions in Arizona since 1999, including a roughly 1,600-acre addition to Saguaro National Park and a 30,000-acre expansion of Petrified Forest National Park.

the second fairway not long before the course shut down.

The group's efforts took on new urgency in March 2020, when Romspen floated plans to rezone the property and sell it off to a residential or nursing-home developer.

Please see **COURSE**, Page A2

Biden, senators huddle, but no budget resolution

HOPE YEN
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Deadline driven, President Joe Biden brought two pivotal senators — Joe Manchin and Chuck Schumer — to his Delaware home Sunday for talks aimed at resolving the disputes that have stymied the Democrats' wide-ranging social safety net and environmental measure.

The White House said the breakfast meeting with New York's Schumer, the majority leader, and West Virginia's Manchin at Biden's home in Wilmington was a "productive discussion" about the president's agenda. The talks appeared to last for hours, but no decisions were announced. The Democrats "continued to make progress," the White House said in its post-meeting statement.

The sweeping package, at the core of Biden's domestic agenda, is now being scaled back to about \$2 trillion to win over Manchin, perhaps the party's most conservative senator, and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz.

The president is pressing for progress toward an agreed upon framework, so he can spotlight his administration's achievements to world leaders at two overseas summits on the economy and climate change that get underway this week.

Earlier Sunday, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., reiterated that about 90% is wrapped up and said she expected an agreement by week's end, paving the way for a House vote on a separate \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill before next Sunday, when a series of transportation programs will lapse.

"That's the plan," she said.

Please see **BUDGET**, Page A4

Huge storm socks drought-stricken California

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — A powerful storm barreled toward Southern California after flooding highways, toppling trees and causing mud flows in areas burned bare by recent fires across the northern part of the state.

Drenching showers and strong winds accompanied the weekend's arrival of an atmospheric river — a long and wide plume of moisture pulled in from the Pacific Ocean. The National Weather Service's Sacramento office warned of "potentially historic rain."

Flooding was reported across the San Francisco Bay Area, closing streets in Berkeley, inundating Oakland's Bay Bridge toll plaza and overflowing rivers in Napa and Sonoma counties.

Power poles were downed and tens of thousands of people in the North Bay were without electricity.

By Sunday morning, Mount Tamalpais just north of San Francisco had recorded a half-foot of rainfall during the previous 12 hours, the weather service said.

"Some of our higher elevation locations could see 6, 7, 8 inches of rain before we're all said and done," weather service meteorologist Sean Miller said.

About 150 miles to the north, the California Highway Patrol closed a stretch of State Route 70 in Butte and Plumas counties because of multiple landslides within the massive Dixie Fire burn scar.

"We have already had sev-

eral collisions this morning for vehicles hydroplaning, numerous trees falling, and several roadways that are experiencing flooding," the highway patrol's office in Oroville tweeted on Sunday. "If you can stay home and off the roads today, please do. If you are out on the roads, please use extreme caution."

In nearby Colusa and Yolo counties, state highways 16 and 20 were shut for several miles due to mudslides, the state Department of Transportation said.

Burn areas remain a concern, as land devoid of vegetation can't soak up heavy rainfall as quickly, increasing the likelihood of flash flooding.

Please see **STORMS**, Page A4



ETHAN SWOPE, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A car drives on Highway 101, which is partially flooded, Sunday in Corte Madera, Calif.

It's back

Tucson's All Souls Procession returns with new guidelines and deeper meaning. **Thursday in Caliente**



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