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Pine Glades nearly finished with tunnel

By Noah Brenner, Jackson Hole, Wyo. October 16, 2008

Developers installed the final piece of a tunnel under the slopes of Snow King Mountain on Tuesday and will begin replacing dirt around the new structure today.

Despite rumors to the contrary and the obvious gash on the side of Snow King Mountain, a tunnel linking the new Pine Glades development to the streets of Jackson is on schedule, the project's developer said Wednesday.

Developer Dave Taylor's crews began bringing in prefabricated tunnel sections in mid-September. In all, crews linked 150 pieces weighing more than 50,000 pounds each to create the 600-foot-long link between Taylor's high-end condo development and South Cache Street.

Unanimously approved by the Jackson Town Council in January, Taylor's plan calls for 27 freemarket townhome units and 12 affordable-housing units on a roughly 17-acre parcel.

Backfill of the site will begin today and extend through Friday. Taylor had some extra dirt and donated 3,000 cubic yards to help level county property at Adams Canyon and another 3,000 cubic yards to help level a new parking lot being built in Teton Village.

On Monday crews will begin reclaiming the hillside. The project was completed essentially on schedule, said Jenny Mayfield, who handles community relations for Pine Glades.

"Before long, no one will even know that it's there," she said. "It is important to thank our neighbors, particularly Manuel Lopez [one of Snow King's owners] and members of the community for their support and patience during the construction. I know everyone will be happy to look up and see Snow King the way it was."

In addition to Taylor's work on the site, Snow King Resort took advantage of the disturbance to have some of Taylor's crew and equipment fill in a depression on the hill to make it a more even slope.

"There is an area to the east of the [tunnel] project that was like a swale that we had to fill with snow every year," Lopez said. "They had some extra dirt and we asked them to put it there so we would have to make less snow."