

Invasive Species Pose a Serious Threat to Lake Tahoe

The Lake Tahoe Basin is especially vulnerable to Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Tahoe's ecosystem has been altered in recent history, by the introduction of non-native and invasive species as both plant and animal; Curlyleaf Pondweed, Eurasian Milfoil, Smallmouth Bass Catfish and Asian Clams to name a few. In 2007, Asian Clam beds were found throughout the south end of Lake Tahoe. Research is being conducted on how to remove and control the clam population. An even bigger threat than the Asian Clam is the possible introduction of Quagga/Zebra Mussels to Lake Tahoe, which can have serious impacts on native wildlife, fisheries and the ecosystem.



Zebra Mussels can vary in size from as small as a grain of sand to 2" during their life cycle.

How do they "ride" here?
The mussels are transported on infested recreational and commercial boats. The mollusks are not visible to the human eye in the larvae state – so a boat showing no signs of infestation can harbor or transport the larvae in the bait wells, bilge tanks, ballast bladders, or on parts of the boat trailer.

Where are they now on the west coast?

Lake Mead, Lake Mohave and Lake Havasu, Nevada, areas of California; and waters along the Colorado River are infected.

How can we arrest the spread?

Do not launch any boat in Lake Tahoe or the surrounding Sierras that is wet or has been in any suspected or known area of mollusk infestation. Boaters are asked to be prepared for and cooperate with watercraft inspections at launch facilities. Attend the upcoming Source Water Protection Workshop being offered May 26, 2009.

What can boaters do to help?

When leaving the water with any watercraft:

- > Inspect all exposed surfaces – maturing Quagga mussels will feel like sandpaper to the touch.
- > Thoroughly wash the hull of each watercraft with hot water once it is out of the water, removing all plants and animal material. Dry all lifejackets, boat cushions, etc.
- > Drain any water through the vessel's hull plug, and ensure the area is *bone dry* before launching in another waterbody.
- > Ensure the vessel's lower outboard unit is drained and dry.
- > Clean and dry any live well aboard the vessel.
- > Empty and dry any buckets, on land.
- > Dispose of all bait in the trash.
- > Any vessel traveling from one freshwater water body to another should remain DRY and out of water for at least five days, in hot,



Source Water Protection Workshop on May 26, 2009

specifically tailored to residents, homeowners, and visitors

Learn How You Can Protect Lake Tahoe!

Asiatic Clams in Marla Bay
Asiatic Clam Removal Pilot
Quagga Mussel Survivability at Tahoe
Aquatic Invasive Species Boat Inspection Program
Potential Threats to Surface and Ground Water Sources
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency / Ordinances

May 26, 2009 / 9 am to 1 pm / Free
North Tahoe Conference Center
5318 North Lake Blvd.

Kings Beach, CA

RSVP / More information: 916-447-9832 ext.1029

dry, summer conditions and/or be decontaminated by a hot wash and chlorine rinse.

Mandatory boat inspections at Lake Tahoe

Mandatory inspections are being conducted at most public launch facilities in the Tahoe Region. Arrive at the launch site with your watercraft clean, drained and dry (live wells and ballast tanks drained, bilge plugs pulled). Beginning June 1, there will be a fee charged for inspections. All watercraft are subject to an inspection prior to launching into the waters of the Lake Tahoe Region to detect the presence and to prevent the introduction of an Aquatic Invasive Species.

For more information

To learn more about invasive species issues at Lake Tahoe, visit www.tahoeh2o.org; www.trpa.org or www.tahoercd.org. To learn more about inspections at the Ski Beach boat ramp, contact IVGID Parks and Recreation at (775) 832-1310.

Director's Corner

As we head into boating season it is important to touch on why the mandatory boat inspections are so key to the future of our drinking water. Zebra and Quagga Mussels have been shown to quickly attach to many surfaces, including the inside of piping. If these Mussels get into Lake Tahoe the upkeep and repair to our water system would be extensive and cause an increase to the District's preventative costs, thus effecting future rates for users. Keep this in mind as you enjoy the lake this year and for many years to come!

-Joe Pomroy, Director of Public Works

