



STAFF REPORT

Date: November 8, 2023

To: TRPA Governing Board

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Annual Program Update

Summary and Staff Recommendation:

TRPA staff will provide an annual update on the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program. The presentation will cover all program areas including AIS prevention, control, monitoring, and rapid response for the 2022-2023 season.

Lake Tahoe faces a constant and serious threat from the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). AIS can harm native ecosystems, negatively impact recreation opportunities, and affect Lake Tahoe's famed water quality and clarity. The Lake Tahoe AIS program's mission is to prevent, detect, and control aquatic invasive species in the region so that future generations can enjoy Lake Tahoe.

TRPA cooperatively leads the Lake Tahoe AIS program with the Tahoe Conservation Resource District (Tahoe RCD) and over 40+ public and private partners. Numerous federal, state, and regional regulations and programs are in place to limit the introduction and spread of AIS as outlined in the [Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan](#). TRPA and Tahoe RCD implement a nationally recognized watercraft inspection program, work together to reduce and control the existing invasive species in the lake, and conduct lake-wide monitoring to measure progress.

Staff will provide an overview of the watercraft inspection program including operations, funding, and performance measures. Staff will also provide an update on program priorities including permanent watercraft inspection stations, non-motorized decontamination tools such as the [CD3 machine](#), and new public campaigns for education and outreach.

Staff will also cover the recent discovery of New Zealand mudsnail in Lake Tahoe. In September, TRPA staff initiated a Rapid Response plan and formed an Incident Team comprised of staff from TRPA and the Tahoe RCD. Actions are being taken to better understand the infestation and the Incident Team has developed priorities and funding needs in response to Tahoe Science Advisory Council guidance.

For the control program, staff will provide an overview of major AIS control projects including the Taylor-Tallac Ecosystem Restoration Project, the Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weed Control Methods Test (CMT), and the weed removal project recently completed at Emerald Bay. At Taylor-Tallac, over 17 acres of bottom barriers were installed to control and eradicate invasive weeds. Project work this year included a significant amount of maintenance because of the record winter and the resulting high-water

flows through the project area. The Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association (TKPOA) recently completed the Control Methods Test (CMT) [Year 2 Interim Report](#) describing progress made to maintain the weed biovolume reductions achieved in year 1 with all non-herbicidal methods.

Lastly, staff will provide an update on lake-wide monitoring that was conducted this year and progress towards overall AIS program goals.

This item is for informational purposes and no action is required.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Dennis Zabaglo, Aquatic Invasive Species Program Manager at (775) 589-5255, or dzabaglo@trpa.gov.

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