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NEWS RELEASE

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TRPA SETS 2012 WATERCRAFT INSPECTION FEES

Stateline, NV – The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency’s Governing Board approved a new fee structure for the Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Inspection Program in an attempt to make it more equitable and sustainable, according to Agency officials.

The TRPA Board voted to keep the same inspection fee for local “Tahoe Only” boats and to increase watercraft inspection fees for “Tahoe In & Out” vessels that come from other water bodies or have never been inspected. Another change is the addition of a new decontamination charge for those boats not clean, drained, and dry when they arrive at the Lake.

Inspection fees for all other boats range from \$35 for personal watercraft and vessels under 17 feet up to \$121 for vessels over 39 feet. As in 2011, there is an additional fee for the decontamination of all boats with ballast systems, because of the inability to verify if there is water in these systems and the additional resources required.

“A significant portion of the costs of this program are the decontaminations of boats that either come from infected water bodies or are not clean, drained, and dry when they arrive for inspection,” explained Dennis Zabaglo, TRPA’s Watercraft Program Manager.

“Previously, decontaminations were paid for as part of the annual inspection fee. We are adding a \$25 decontamination fee so that those who require this service pay for it,” he said.

According to Ted Thayer, TRPA’s Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, “The federal sources of funding for the watercraft inspection program that we have relied upon for the last several years are in decline,” he explained during the Governing Board presentation. “We want to act now to ensure that this critical program to protect Lake Tahoe from Aquatic Invasive Species is sustainable.”

The new fee structure, approved for the upcoming boating season, would allow the Watercraft Inspection Program to achieve a higher cost recovery, as well as stretch current

federal funding through 2013 as new sources of funding are sought out. Fees from the 2011 boating season covered only 29 percent of the cost of this program. The new fee schedule will cover 47 percent of the program for the 2012 season with the remainder coming from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is also intended to be more equitable by rewarding those boaters who arrive at inspection stations with their boats already clean, drained and dry.

“We want to encourage boaters to arrive at inspection stations with their boats cleaned, drained, and dried. This will save them both time and money,” Zabaglo explained. More information on the Lake Tahoe Watercraft Inspection Program can be found online at tahoeboatinspections.com

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency cooperatively leads the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region now and in the future. For additional information, call Kristi Boosman at (775) 589-5230 or send an email to kboosman@trpa.org.

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