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NEWS RELEASE

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NEW BOAT INSPECTION RULES AT LAKE TAHOE TAKE EFFECT SATURDAY

Lake Tahoe, Stateline, NV – A requirement that boat ramps and launching facilities at Lake Tahoe be staffed with qualified aquatic invasive species inspectors takes effect on Saturday, November 1, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency said today.

The rules, approved by the TRPA Governing Board, make all watercraft subject to inspection by qualified personnel, and also require that vessels launching at the lake be decontaminated if inspectors determine that vessels pose a risk of infesting the lake with such invasives as the quagga or zebra mussels.

Beginning Saturday and continuing through May 1, inspectors provided by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District are scheduled to be on duty daily from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., weather and water level permitting, at the Cave Rock ramp on the South Shore and the Lake Forest ramp near Tahoe City.

Up-to-date information on ramp hours, lake conditions and procedures will be available through the winter by calling 1-888-TAHO-ANS or checking the web at www.protecttahoe.org.

Other facilities with winter launch hours include Obexer's Marina near Homewood, Tahoe Keys Marina in South Lake Tahoe, Sierra Boat Company (no ramp) in Carnelian Bay, and Ski Beach in Incline Village. Check with the individual facilities for current effective hours.

The stepped up inspection and decontamination requirements were developed in the face of mounting concern that Lake Tahoe is at risk of invasion from the quagga and zebra mussel, New Zealand mud snail and other species.

While other invasive and non-native plants, invertebrates and fishes are already in the Lake, these mollusks have the potential to unleash serious environmental and economic

harm. They are carried between water bodies via watercraft that are not adequately cleaned, drained and dried.

The ordinances require that the owners and operators of boat ramps and launches close their facilities when qualified aquatic invasive species inspectors are not present. To comply, gates have been installed at public and private ramps. The ordinances further require those launching to decontaminate their vessels if instructed to by an inspector. All vessels launching at Lake Tahoe are subject to inspection.

Those wishing to launch personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes will be able to do so at any facility where conditions are safe, but should expect to encounter inspectors where facilities are open. These watercraft also should be cleaned, drained and dried thoroughly before launching at Lake Tahoe.

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 Dennis Oliver at 775-589-5235, or email doliver@trpa.org.

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