



NEWS RELEASE

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BOAT INSPECTION FEES TAKE EFFECT IN JUNE AT LAKE TAHOE

Lake Tahoe, Stateline, NV – Beginning in June, boaters launching at Lake Tahoe will pay a nominal fee to help fund an inspection program aimed at preventing the introduction of such aquatic invasive species as the quagga and zebra mussel.

The fee, which was authorized March 26 by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board, is needed because grant funding that has been used to finance the inspections is running out.

Inspections will expand to more facilities for the summer season May 1 while fees will take effect June 1. This will give boaters the opportunity to have their vessels inspected at certain locations free of charge; boats that stay in Tahoe need only be inspected once if an inspection seal is kept intact. Locations will be announced this month.

Inspections began at Tahoe ramps and launch facilities last May. Since November, boaters have been able to launch only at facilities where qualified inspectors are present.

Fees will range from \$10 to \$60 depending on vessel size. Most boaters will pay \$30. A \$10 surcharge will apply for vessels with ballast tanks, live wells and bladders. When a vessel comes out of the Lake, an inspection seal will be attached to boats so that they do not have to be inspected or pay a fee again as long as the boat returns with the seal intact. This method will save boaters time and money at the boat ramps.

Boat inspection fees to protect water bodies from aquatic invaders are not unique to Lake Tahoe. Other water bodies in the West have begun charging for boat inspections as well.

“We are committed to keeping Lake Tahoe free of these destructive aquatic invaders and in order to remain successful are turning to the boating community for assistance,” said Ted Thayer, TRPA’s natural resource and science team leader. “If we could have kept these inspections going without charging a fee, we would have. Putting the Lake at risk is not an option.”

2-2-2 Inspection Fee

Nicole Cartwright, who manages the Invasive Species program for the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, said, "Inspections and outreach are the best tools available to us to prevent the spread of aquatic invaders. Although collecting a fee may be burdensome for the public, it is the only solution that will allow our efforts to continue."

All watercraft launched at Tahoe are subject to inspection and decontamination. Further, launch facilities and ramps must be closed when qualified inspectors are not present.

"While the inspection process is imperative to the Lake's safety, so is enhancing the recreation experience at Tahoe," Thayer said. "With the inspection seals, we are making it possible for boaters who stay at Lake Tahoe to only pay and go through an inspection once."

Up-to-date information on boating rules including the inspection requirement and launch facility details are available by phone at 1-888-TAHO-ANS and online web at www.protecttahoe.org.

The fees and the inspection and decontamination program that they support 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 Tahoe Resource Conservation District manages Tahoe inspectors and coordinates efforts and projects prioritized by the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Working Group, a multiple-agency task force assembled to address the issue at 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.

Fee schedule adopted March 26 by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board

Vessel Category	Inspection fee
Non-motorized vessels	\$0
Vessels with intact inspection seal	\$0
Vessels up to 16 feet	\$10
Vessels over 16 feet to 25 feet	\$30
Vessels over 25 feet to 39 feet	\$40
Vessels over 39 feet	\$60
Vessels containing ballast tanks/ bladders/live wells	\$10 additional fee