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## STAFF REPORT

Date: June 17, 2019  
To: TRPA Governing Board  
From: TRPA Staff  
Subject: Notice of Preparation for Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weeds Control Methods Test

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### Summary:

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan) released a Notice of Preparation for a CEQA Draft EIR and TRPA Draft EIS for the Tahoe Keys Lagoons Target Aquatic Weeds Control Methods Test on June 17, 2019. The Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association (TKPOA) will be the project implementor. TRPA has contracted with TRC, Inc. to implement significant water quality and biological field studies, conduct an independent environmental review and analysis of the test methods and prepare the Draft EIR/EIS.

This report is informational, and no action is required.

### Background:

The Tahoe Keys is a residential development on the south shore of Lake Tahoe and consists of over 170 acres of waterways and lagoons. These areas are almost completely infested with aquatic weeds Eurasian watermilfoil, curlyleaf pondweed and coontail. This infestation represents the largest and most complex infestation in Lake Tahoe; over thirty times larger than any other aquatic invasive species project to date. These weeds seriously threaten the lake's famed clarity, water quality and economy, harm native species and degrade recreational experiences. While significant progress has been made in locally eradicating these species in other areas of Lake Tahoe, the Tahoe Keys infestation is growing. This infestation has been identified as the highest priority aquatic invasive species project in Lake Tahoe and given the high level of public and agency interest and concern, TRPA has convened a collaborative stakeholder committee that is being guided by a facilitation consultant, Zephyr Collaboration. The stakeholder committee is comprised of TRPA, Lahontan, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association and TKPOA. This committee has met on multiple occasions since October 2018 and has collaborated to identify potential test methods that will ultimately inform what the best options are for large scale treatment. The committee identified a range of methods proposed for investigation that incorporate new technologies such as UV light, as well as the potential use of aquatic herbicides.

The collaboratively developed project description identifies eighteen (18) sites that equate to 17% of the total surface area of the Tahoe Keys waterways to be used for testing treatment methods over a two-year time frame. Specific methodologies will be refined with input from the public and partner organizations during the scoping period. The goal of the project is to test control methods that will:

- Reduce target aquatic weed infestation as much and as soon as feasible to help protect lake Tahoe,
- Bring target aquatic weed infestation to a manageable level,
- Improve water quality of the Tahoe keys waterways and reestablish native aquatic habitat,
- Improve navigation, recreational use, as well as enhancing aesthetic values, and
- Reduce the potential for target aquatic weed re-infestation after initial treatment.

The stakeholder committee identified the following measurable objectives to evaluate performance of control methods:

- Determine the effect on water quality in the Tahoe Keys lagoons through monitoring
- Achieve and maintain at least a 75% reduction in target aquatic weed biomass in test locations.
- Achieve and maintain a minimum of three (3) foot vessel clearance within navigation channels to maintain beneficial uses and prevent weed fragment generation and dispersal.

Due to the scale and interest in this project, two public engagement workshops have been planned, in addition to this hearing, during the scoping period. The workshops are scheduled on the following dates:

**June 25, 2019 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

(Official CEQA scoping meeting and public workshop)

Lahontan Waterboard Annex

971 Silver Dollar Ave.

South Lake Tahoe, CA

**July 16, 2019 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

(Public workshop)

North Tahoe Event Center

8318 North Lake Blvd.

Kings Beach, CA

Additional project information may be found on the project website:

<http://tahoekeysweds.org>

Contact Information:

For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Dennis Zabaglo, at (775) 589-5255 or

[dzabaglo@trpa.org](mailto:dzabaglo@trpa.org).

Attachments:

- A. Notice of Preparation

Attachment A  
Notice of Preparation



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION for the  
TAHOE KEYS LAGOONS AQUATIC WEED CONTROL METHODS TEST**

**DATE:** June 17, 2019

**TO:** California State Clearinghouse  
California Responsible Agencies  
California Trustee Agencies  
El Dorado County, County Clerk  
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Nevada State Clearinghouse  
Other Interested Agencies  
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California  
United Auburn Indian Community  
Interested Parties and Organizations  
Affected Property Owners

**FROM:** Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)  
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

**LEAD AGENCIES:**

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency P.O. Box 5310 128 Market Street Stateline, Nevada 89449	Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board 2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
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**CONTACTS:**

Dennis Zabaglo, Aquatic Resources Program Manager Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (775) 589-5255 <a href="mailto:dzabaglo@trpa.org">dzabaglo@trpa.org</a>	W. Russell Norman, P.E. Water Resources Control Engineer Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (530) 542-5435 <a href="mailto:russell.norman@waterboards.ca.gov">russell.norman@waterboards.ca.gov</a>
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**SUBJECT**

TRPA and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board Notice of Preparation (NOP) to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and a TRPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weed Control Methods Test ("Project"). The joint environmental document will analyze the potential environmental effects of the Project.

**PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD**

The Lead Agencies invite public comment on the scope of the project and content of the EIR/EIS in response to this NOP. Pursuant to Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this NOP will be circulated for a minimum 45-day review period beginning on June 17, 2019 and ending on August 2, 2019. In your response, include your name, the name of your agency or organization (if applicable), and contact information.

Comments on the NOP may be received via e-mail to [tahoekeysweeds@trpa.org](mailto:tahoekeysweeds@trpa.org), or via U.S. mail to Dennis Zabaglo, Aquatic Resources Program Manager, at the above TRPA mailing address by 5:00 p.m. on **August 2, 2019**. In addition, comments may be provided at the public scoping meetings, noticed below.

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS**

The Lead Agencies have scheduled public scoping meetings at the times and locations indicated below. The purposes of the public scoping meetings are to receive verbal and written input on the scope of the proposed project, project alternatives and environmental document. The Lead Agencies will consider all comments, written and oral, in determining the final scope of the evaluation to be included in the EIR/EIS.

<p><b><u>Public Scoping Meetings:</u></b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, June 25, 2019, 5:00 p.m.</b>  Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board  Annex Building  971 Silver Dollar Avenue  South Lake Tahoe, CA</p> <p><b>Wednesday, June 26, 2019, 9:30 a.m.</b>  Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  Governing Board Meeting  128 Market Street  Stateline, NV</p> <p><b>Tuesday, July 16, 2019, 5:00 p.m.</b>  North Tahoe Event Center  8318 North Lake Boulevard  Kings Beach, CA</p>
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## **BACKGROUND**

The Project site is in the lagoons of the Tahoe Keys. The Tahoe Keys was constructed in the 1960s by excavating lagoons in the Upper Truckee River Marsh, and now includes more than 1,500 homes and townhomes, a commercial marina, and a commercial center. Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) became established in the 1980s and 1990s, and curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamoeton crispus* L.) was discovered in Lake Tahoe in 2003. Surveys document aquatic weeds growing rapidly to occupy up to 90 percent of the lagoon areas in recent years. Seasonal harvesting has been the main weed control practice since the mid-1980s, removing more than 10,000 cubic yards of biomass annually. Aquatic weeds have the potential to impact all the marinas around Lake Tahoe, and their continued spread constitutes the most immediate threat to the lake, according to the University of Nevada's 2015 Implementation Plan for the Control of Aquatic Invasive Species within Lake Tahoe. The goal of the project is to test control techniques of the populations of aquatic weeds in the designated test areas and reduce the spread of these plants to other parts of Lake Tahoe.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION**

See attachment

## **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

At a minimum, each of the following environmental issue areas below will be addressed in the EIS/EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality  
Biological Resources  
Human Health  
Hazards and Hazardous Materials  
Recreation

Geology and Soils  
Land Use and Planning  
Public Services  
Greenhouse Gas Emissions  
Global Climate Change

The NOP and the project file, including the Initial Study/Initial Environmental Checklist prepared under CEQA and TRPA regulations, are available for review between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (except Tuesday), at the TRPA office, 128 Market Street, Stateline, NV. Project information may also be found at [www.tahoekeysweeds.org](http://www.tahoekeysweeds.org). The project file is also available Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board office, 2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA.