

Fallen Leaf Lake residents learn about keeping invasives out

By Stephen Ward

FALLEN LEAF LAKE – A throng of fervent Fallen Leaf Lake residents gathered Saturday at the old local store for the Aquatic Invasive Species Symposium to discuss a growing concern in the area; keeping Fallen Leaf Lake free from invasive species.

The event, hosted by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, focused primarily on quagga and zebra mussels, including more than 30 slides depicting the nonnative species and describing the various threats they beget. There are currently no known invasive species in Fallen Leaf Lake.

According to the TRCD, many invasive species are nonnative species intentionally introduced to the region to increase sport fishing or enhance ecosystem resources. Over time, these species harm the body of water they occupy by altering nutrient cycles and adding phosphorus to the water, which increases algal growth. But they are also unknowingly transported on watercraft.



Fallen Leaf
Lake residents
don't want

invasive
species to
enter the
water.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Some measures the TRCD has taken at Lake Tahoe are the creation of the Asian Clam Pilot Removal and Aquatic Weed Removal Projects. Under these projects, studies and tests have been conducted, as well as vacuum-assisted hand removal along newly established bottom barriers in potentially threatened areas.

In addition to invasive species, a lively discussion at the symposium was bowel tanks, and the hopeful dismissal from the region.

“We are trying to slowly stop allowing them at Lake Tahoe,” said Nicole Cartwright, watercraft inspection program coordinator at TRCD. “They cause a lot of erosion and pollute the water.”

The event was well received by the community, with many residents commending the presentation for its counsel and recommendations.

“Overall, I feel the slideshow had good, effective ideas,” said Mary McCullough, a Fallen Leaf resident. “What really caught my attention was the exchange. It’s also worth noting that this information doesn’t just apply to Lake Tahoe and Fallen Leaf, but to Central California as well.”

Another Fallen Leaf resident, Karl Stauffer, discussed his contribution to maintaining the cleanliness of the area.

“I have an old Chris-Craft I bought in the 1950s that has never been anywhere outside Fallen Leaf Lake. I was the first person on this lake to have a boat washing system, too. People

don't realize how much it pollutes the lake if the boats aren't cleaned regularly," Stauffer said.

More information about aquatic invasive species and preventing their infestation can be found on the TRCD's website.