

LTBMU recognized for work with invasive species

The U.S. Forest Service on Wednesday honored staff from the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit with the 2010 National Forest System Invasive Species Program Award in recognition of their work with more than 50 external partners as part of the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Working Group to prevent and control aquatic invasive species.

Forest Aquatic Biologist Richard Vacirca accepted the award on behalf of the Lake Tahoe Basin team at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. Also recognized were biologists Holly Eddinger, Sarah Muskopf and Maura Santora, recreation staff members Bob Becker and Jonathan Cook-Fisher and public affairs officer Cheva Heck.

In nominating the team, the Pacific Southwest Regional Office noted the significant efforts of partners, including the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Tahoe Resource Conservation District, Lake Tahoe Water Trail Association, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, California State Parks, California Department of Fish & Game, Nevada Department of Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In collaboration with partners during 2010, the LTBMU team's accomplishments included working with California Land Management to develop a screening process at Forest Service-staffed recreation sites to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species through non-motorized watercraft and staffing a roving inspector at Fallen Leaf Lake to inform the public of aquatic invasive species risks and prevention. Team members also helped to organize cutting-edge research and coordinate education and outreach efforts.