

# Paddlers encouraged to learn how to not transport invasive species

A coalition of local and visiting Lake Tahoe paddlers, business owners and Tahoe basin environmental groups are helping to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species by becoming Tahoe Keepers.

Tahoe Keepers are paddlers who inspect and decontaminate their boats and gear every time they haul out and move between new waterbodies. Nonnative species, such as quagga and zebra mussels, the New Zealand mudsnail and the spiny waterflea, could irreparably damage the Lake Tahoe watershed, and their transport is illegal. These invasive species are spread through water and debris that can collect in cockpits and hatches, cling to outer hulls, rudders and paddles, and even hide out on footwear and gear long after paddling.

Paddlers can learn online how to self-inspect and decontaminate their canoes, kayaks, paddleboards and inflatables. Those who successfully complete the free 10-minute online training program will become members of the Tahoe Keepers stewardship community, and will receive “proof of training credentials” and a membership sticker.

