

First commercial crayfish harvest permit granted for Lake Tahoe

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Nevada wildlife officials have issued the first ever commercial permit for crayfish harvest in Lake Tahoe, allowing the Tahoe Lobster Co. to go after some of the 220 million crustaceans living in the lake.

The fishing is expected to be a boon for the economy, tourism, cuisine and lake clarity. Waste products from the nonnative crayfish – or crawdads – foster the shallow-water algae growth that clouds the lake's crystalline waters.

The crayfish will be sold for local eating, replacing other, less-reliable supplies and possibly imports from China, such as those used at Isleton's Cajun Festival in June.

"Nothing's more local than Tahoe," said Ben Deinken, a chef for the Brewer's Cabinet in Reno. "We want to get ahold of that."

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