

California may allow crayfish harvesting in Tahoe

Besides having to deal with stolen traps, crayfish operations on Lake Tahoe are also limited to where they can work.

But that may change.

A bill sponsored by Assemblywoman Beth Gaines, R-Rocklin, to allow commercial fishing of crayfish in California's waters of Lake Tahoe passed the Assembly on Wednesday.

Assembly Bill 165, which allows for commercial fishing of crayfish, is a response to worsening clarity of Lake Tahoe, the assemblywoman says.



Tahoe Lobster Co. crawfish were used at a food and wine fest. Photo/LTN file

The crustaceans are not native to Tahoe. Fishing them as close to extinction is a goal. Having them out of the lake, according to scientists, would help improve lake clarity. In the interim, it gives restaurants a uniquely local item to sell.

It is estimated that there are 240 million crawfish in Lake Tahoe. Without a native predator this number is expected grow at a faster rate.

“AB165 will now move to the Senate Natural Resource Committee. The bill has not received a single no vote in the Assembly, so the outlook is very positive,” Daniel Outlaw with the Gaines’ office told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Nevada changed its law in August to allow for commercial fishing for crayfish.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*