

TRPA: Clam suffocation at Emerald Bay successful



Mats in Emerald Bay as seen from the air. Photo/LTN file

It may take until the end of November for divers to remove the 5 acres of rubber mats that were laid on the lake bottom at the mouth of Emerald Bay.

This was done two years ago as a pilot project to control Asian clam populations in the area. The mats measure 10-foot-by-100-foot and weigh 300 pounds.

Boaters are asked to exercise caution when entering and exiting Emerald Bay and obey a no-wake zone that extends 600 feet from shore.

The mats were used to smother and kill the nonnative Asian clams by starving them of oxygen. Early sampling indicates at least a 90 percent mortality rate in the treated area, according to Tahoe Regional Planning Agency officials.

Asian clams can stimulate algae growth, displace a variety of native species, and increase the potential for other invasive species such as quagga mussels to establish in Lake Tahoe by increasing calcium concentrations in the water.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

