

Aquatic pesticides may be used in Lake Tahoe



Chemicals may be one way to rid Lake Tahoe of milfoil.
Photo/LTN file

The federal government has OK'd the potential use of aquatic pesticides at Lake Tahoe.

The decision affects the entire Lahontan Regional Water Board jurisdiction, which is a large swath of California running from the north to south.

The Lahontan board of directors in December 2011 had sought the amendment to the Basin Plan so these chemicals could be used in isolated instances. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's decision does not automatically give the green light to any and all applications, but instead the ruling approved Lahontan's processes. The regional board will approve any use on a case-by-case situation.

"The amendment included specific criteria and requirements for individuals to meet to be considered for an exemption," Lauri Kemper, Lahontan assistant executive officer, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association wants to apply chemicals in the lagoons to rid the waterways of invasive weeds. Without this month's EPA decision, those plans could never have happened. The South Lake Tahoe homeowners group will still have to apply for a permit with Lahontan.

Exemptions are also likely to be granted to vector control to rid areas of mosquitoes. While these applications already occur, they have historically violated Lahontan's rules.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report