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**KEEP  
TAHOE  
BLUE®**

*League to Save Lake Tahoe*

# 2014 Fall Newsletter

[keptahoeblue.org](http://keptahoeblue.org)



# The League at Work

*Combatting pollution, tackling invasive species, protecting the shore and promoting restoration*

## ADVOCATE

### ***Securing funding to fight invasive species***

The League was instrumental in securing \$600,000 in funding from California to fight invasive species at Tahoe in 2014. The money will be allocated in October as part of SB630, the same bill that preserved the Tahoe Compact in 2013. The League was the principal organization helping to write and support SB630. The Lake Tahoe Science and Improvement Account was a provision the League vigorously advocated for, and includes an obligation for the state to annually fund invasive species monitoring and control projects. The California Tahoe Conservancy board will be allocating the funds.

### ***Martis Valley plan lacks benefit for Tahoe***

While the League supports an overall agreement reached between the developers of Martis Valley and environmental groups, it cannot support the agreement's current plan for

building within the Tahoe Basin. The overall agreement is excellent in that it retires a large portion of wilderness outside of the Tahoe Basin in exchange for the ability to develop a small portion of land within and without the Tahoe Basin. Two large wilderness areas will be connected as a result, protecting habitat and providing connectivity for recreationists. However, Tahoe's new regional plan requires that any new development must include some environmental benefits within the Tahoe Basin watershed, and the current Martis Valley plan falls short in this respect. The League continues to work with Placer County and the developers to explore how to create a benefit for the Tahoe Basin.

### ***Placer County area plans fall short of requirements***

Placer County has begun the initial environmental review for five weak area plans covering communities from the West Shore to Martis Valley. The plans currently fall short of the regional plan's requirements in several ways: They lack stormwater treatment strategies in town centers, coverage reduction, and plans for wetland restoration. The most fundamental pieces missing are implementation strategies for environmental improvements. The League is working with the county and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency to improve the plan.

### ***City drops commercial service from airport plan***

The League is pleased that the South Lake Tahoe City Council voted in August to not include commercial airline service as an alternative in the airport's master plan, which has been under review since early this year. A settlement between the League, the city and the California attorney general's office dating back to the 1990s recently expired, allowing the city to explore the commercial service option again. However, most commercial jets would violate the

#### WHAT ARE THE REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE AND COMMUNITY AREA PLANS?

The regional plan is a set of zoning regulations defining how much development will be allowed within Lake Tahoe, including height and density limits, coverage (building footprint) limits, and limits on commercial and hotel square footage. The plan restricts development to within set urban boundaries, and will be updated every four years to address issues as they arise. It aims to fix past mistakes by providing incentives to allow for more development in some areas in exchange for removing development from ecologically sensitive areas. Local area plans are meant to allow each community to develop design standards within these zoning regulations to reflect the wants and needs of that community.

region's noise standards. The League is advocating for an alternative that respects the region's noise ordinances and includes some amount of restoration. The airport's two runways are not sufficiently utilized or profitable, and sit on hundreds of acres of prime wetland, which formerly served as natural filtration for water flowing into Lake Tahoe.

## EDUCATE

### *Beach trash and cleanups gain nationwide attention*

We have significantly expanded our beach cleanup efforts throughout 2014. Our Keep Tahoe Red, White & Blue beach cleanups were a smashing success, with over 150 League volunteers removing over a ton of trash left behind by July 4th beachgoers. The trash included over 3,000 cigarette butts and 300 plastic bags. The astonishing amount of trash is nothing new, but the League successfully drew more attention to it than ever before. Photos of the trash gained a record amount of attention for the League on Facebook, with over 220,000 views. TV stations, radio



*Volunteers sort trash after the Labor Day beach cleanup. Counting items that won't biodegrade is often the most educational part of the day.*

stations and newspapers throughout California and Nevada reported on the issue.

More volunteers than ever before are signing up for beach cleanups. We've also engaged volunteers to report the amount of trash they collect on their personal outings to beaches, which encourages even more cleanup.

### *Storm drain marking ramps up*

Our storm drain marking program expanded significantly this summer, with help from a generous grant from Wells Fargo and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The program held five "Stewards of Stormwater" events and marked over 250 drains with both English and Spanish "No Dumping – Keep Tahoe Blue"



*Boy Scouts help mark storm drains in the Sierra Tract neighborhood with AmeriCorps Member Brenna Blessing.*

markers. Thanks to a partnership with the Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association, the League and dedicated community volunteers were able to mark every storm drain in the Tahoe Keys development that is linked directly to the lake. This is the first neighborhood in the Tahoe Basin to have all of its drains marked.

Tahoe's storm drain system is outdated, and in many cases, pipes lead directly into the lake or its tributaries, carrying nutrient and sediment-laden stormwater runoff into the lake. Marking storm drains helps keep pollution out of the lake by reminding people that Tahoe's neighborhoods are connected to it.

### *Stewardship Day and Coastal Cleanup*

As our fall newsletter went to print, we hosted our 17th annual Tahoe Forest Stewardship Day, the largest volunteer event at Tahoe. This year's restoration efforts were once again focused at Tahoe Paradise Park in Meyers, with the intention of shoring up and completing previous years' work to restore stream banks on the Upper Truckee River (the largest tributary to Lake Tahoe), delineate trails and plant native plants. These volunteers' work is essential to keeping fine sediment from entering the lake, which is the leading cause of clarity loss. We also hosted beach cleanups at three Tahoe beaches to commemorate Coastal Cleanup Day.

### *Engaging the next generation to Keep Tahoe Blue*

From field trips and presentations to storm drain marking, the League is engaging and educating children more than ever before. We held educational programs that reached 573 children this summer, and engaged 187 youth volunteers. Our information booths always include fun learning activities for children. Our presentations to camps and schools provide information on watersheds, invasive species and the effects of pollution on the lake. The League partners with family services organizations in North and South Lake Tahoe to include at-risk children in our programs.

"We know that one hands-on experience with children can leave a lifetime impression, so we're reaching out more

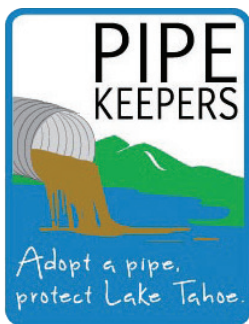
*see p.4 →*

than ever before to educate the next generation about how to Keep Tahoe Blue,” said Marilee Movius, the League’s community engagement manager.

Coming soon, the League is also customizing a Tahoe-based environmental curriculum to meet common core standards in local schools.

### *Pipe Keepers set for success entering third year*

As fall storms brew in Tahoe, and pipes begin to flow with sediment-laden stormwater, our Pipe Keepers volunteers are preparing their mud boots for a third season. One major accomplishment for the program in 2014 is the selection of a pipe for more rigorous monitoring by a multi-agency collaboration (the Regional Stormwater Monitoring Program) as a result of volunteer data confirming the pipe



as a “top polluter.” The pipe is slated for improvements as part of a California grant awarded to the City of South Lake Tahoe. Pipe Keepers data before and after the improvements will be used to measure effectiveness. Pipe Keepers is setting the groundwork to partner with research institutions and top Tahoe stormwater scientists to collect even more data about

over 100 pipes entering into Lake Tahoe and its tributaries. Check our website for program updates and to see how you can get involved.

#### IN A NUTSHELL

##### *In 2014, so far we’ve:*

- Hosted or presented at 81 events
- Engaged 450 volunteers, including 187 children
- Expanded Eyes on the Lake volunteers to 100
- Marked 250 storm drains
- Improved 9.6 acres with terrestrial weed pulls
- Improved 4,000 square feet of riverbed through aquatic weed pulls
- Total volunteer hours: 1,433
- Total pounds of trash collected: 2,888
- Total number of cigarette butts collected: 7,500
- People reached through information booths: 2,700
- Educated 573 K-12 students with presentations or field trips
- Attended 81 policy meetings
- Reviewed 21 development projects or plans
- Submitted 15 comment letters with detailed suggestions on environmental improvements to development plans.



*A volunteer learns the difference between native and invasive milfoil at an Eyes on the Lake training.*

## COLLABORATE

### *Eyes on the Lake grows, volunteers remove infestation*

Our Eyes on the Lake program quadrupled in size this summer, growing to over 100 trained volunteers who are keeping an eye out for invasive weeds in the lake and its tributaries. In late July, a volunteer identified a previously unknown infestation of Eurasian watermilfoil, a first for the program and first in Tahoe since 2012. During California Invasive Species Week in August, about a dozen volunteers removed the majority of the infestation, which ran down the Upper Truckee River near the Tahoe Keys Marina for about 3,000 feet, and will be keeping watch on this site to make sure it does not return. Identifying new infestations when they are still small can save resource agencies millions in control costs. The Tahoe Daily Tribune aptly described the program as a “neighborhood watch for invasive plants.”



Anyone who plays in Lake Tahoe’s waters can participate in the program. “The idea is that if you are out enjoying the



*Volunteers improved this stretch of the Upper Truckee River by removing an infestation of the invasive weed Eurasian watermilfoil.*

lake anyway, and you happen to spot something suspicious, you can check your field guide and complete a simple online report so agencies can take action. It's easy and fun to participate and helps immensely," said Jesse Patterson, League deputy director. The program is part of the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species program, a collaborative effort of over 40 organizations throughout the Lake.

### ***Supporting bikeable communities***

The League is a sponsor of the Lake Tahoe Bike Trails Map, issued by the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition. In August, 50,000 copies of an updated version were distributed to shops, visitor centers and hotels throughout the region as well as at 325 bike shops in Northern California and Nevada. The maps enable recreationists to travel by bike from the mountains to the lake. It includes all bike paths, neighborhood connector routes, shared bike lanes and mountain bike trails.

The League was also an enthusiastic participant in the Lake Tahoe Bicycle Challenge in June to commemorate Bike-to-Work Week, in which employees of businesses and organizations throughout the lake took part in a friendly competition to see who could log the most miles. Participants

rode 17,000 miles in total. The League sponsored a bike path cleanup and picnic to kick off the week.

### ***Creating a wetlands restoration strategy and tracking system***

The League worked closely with TRPA staff this summer to create a restoration strategy and tracking system for "stream zones," an all-inclusive term for Tahoe's wetlands, its most sensitive type of land. Protecting and restoring streams, rivers, meadows and other wetlands are all critically important to restoring the lake's clarity. The League was hearing concerns from local jurisdictions that most development will occur within urban areas covered by area plans, while the actual restoration would occur outside of the area plan boundaries, and thus technically not included in the plans. The League and TRPA staff created a tracking mechanism for wetland restoration and coverage reduction on a Basin-wide level, to show any net benefits of plans and projects over the long term. Jurisdictions will be able to track annual progress for these environmental goals. It will also be used to inform the Regional Plan Update's four-year review to determine what regulations and incentives have been successful and what needs to be changed.



# Benefit Raises Record Funds

## *Oscar de la Renta makes 15th appearance at Lake Tahoe*

**O**n August 2, amongst a record-breaking crowd of 670 stylish guests, Oscar de la Renta, in partnership with Saks Fifth Avenue, presented his collection for the 15th time on the iconic cobalt blue shores of Lake Tahoe.

This year the event raised a new high of \$780,000 to support League programs.

Guests arrived early to the beautifully manicured estate of Kern Schumacher, who graciously hosted the event for the third year running, to enjoy a cold beverage on the lawn and peruse the silent auction before they were seated for lunch.

Once seated, guests were welcomed by League Board President Bob Damaschino and introduced to the legendary designer, whose heart-felt request to be good stewards and protect the lake for future generations to enjoy resonated with those assembled,

jump-starting the live auction and producing results not seen in years.

Over lunch guests were dazzled by de la Renta's Resort 2015 Collection, full of bright jewel-toned gowns that seemed to float on the blue water beyond the runway. This set the stage for a few final live auction lots, masterfully presented by Andrew McVinish of Christie's, New York.

McVinish, together with Damaschino, highlighted the League's Pipe Keepers program and encouraged guests to raise their paddles for specific amounts in support of the volunteer-based water quality monitoring program that examines storm drains flowing into Lake Tahoe.

Over \$20,000 was raised for the program in just a few minutes.

The benefit dates back to 1969 and has become somewhat of a tradition for many who share a love for Lake Tahoe.



*Oscar de la Renta with friends.*

*Bike path cleanup*



*Young citizen volunteers*



*Tahoe Expo electric bike pipe tour*



*Weed pull*



*Pipe Keepers Public Forum*



# Summer of Success

Over 81 educational events kept League staff busy this summer. For the first time, due to our partnership with Blue Moon Brewing Company, the League was able to host a Keep Tahoe Blue night at games with both the Reno Aces and the San Francisco Giants, reaching over 48,000 people with reminders of how to more gently love Lake Tahoe. Our community engagement team held over 20 youth educational presentations, field trips and tours. We hosted informational booths at concerts and festivals throughout the region, and helped raise funds through competitions like the Trans Tahoe Relay. Eyes on the Lake volunteer trainings took place throughout the summer, as well as our first Pipe Keepers Public Forum in April, with a standing-room only crowd. Our beach cleanups and storm drain marking events engaged hundreds of volunteers. Contact us at [events@keptahoeblue.org](mailto:events@keptahoeblue.org) to become involved.

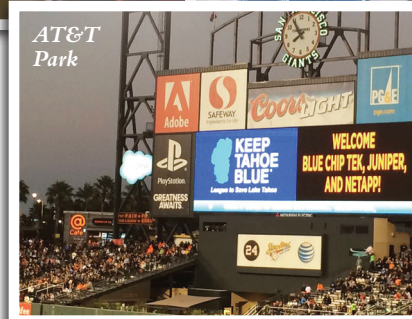
*Parabajitos field trip to Cove East*



*Eyes on the Lake training*



*AT&T Park*





## Bill Evers

*League founding officer  
brings early history of  
organization to light*

As Jim remained in Washington and Evers returned to California, Evers founded a nonprofit California corporation with “the awkward name Jim and I had concocted: the Tahoe Improvement and Conservation Association, fondly referred to as TICA,” Evers said.

That was 1957. For five years, he and others worked tirelessly to build TICA, which helped to successfully block the planned highway and bridge across the entrance to Emerald Bay, for which some rights of way were already being acquired. Evers also worked closely as a board member and Vice Chair of the Lake Tahoe Area Council, which was well organized, well financed and was centered on creating a bi-state agency and a Lake-wide sewer system.

After five intense years, a group of Tahoe summer homeowners, including among others, Jim Crafts, Lee Emmerson and Al Heiner, offered to take over TICA. “I was elated to pass on to these able men the burden. As proof of their ability, they came up with a new name for the corporation, the ‘League to Save Lake Tahoe’ and also

*“Tahoe is not going away. It needs care, or our kids, our grandkids and our great grandkids, will not experience what we have today. It needs tender loving care if it’s going to be in the future what you enjoy in the present.”*

It was nearly 60 years ago when Bill Evers was having dinner with his friend Jim McClatchy and they began discussing the worrying development trends at Lake Tahoe. Both had grown up spending their summers on Lake Tahoe’s West Shore.

“Things are not going well. The lake’s going to get polluted and there’s going to be unbridled development,” Evers recalled thinking. The Tahoe Keys had broken ground, and was already recognized as a disaster for the lake.

That evening, he and McClatchy decided there had to be an association to represent those who loved Tahoe, had property at the Lake, but didn’t have a vote relative to matters affecting the Lake. The thrust of the thinking was the need to protect the unique environment of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

That dinner 60 years ago took place in Washington, D.C., where Evers was living with his wife and young son for a year while he was working for the Securities and Exchange Commission. This was just three years after his graduation from the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.







*The Upper Truckee Marsh circa 1930, before the Tahoe Keys were built.*



*The League, when it was still named the Tahoe Improvement and Conservation Association, blocked a planned bridge over Emerald Bay, at the time the most photographed place in the world. Image courtesy of California Department of Transportation.*

brilliantly, the slogan ‘Keep Tahoe Blue.’ And even more brilliantly, they gave a party at Trader Vic’s to get the ladies involved and to raise funds.” The name changed in 1965; the slogan in 1969.

Knowing he’d left the League in good hands, Evers moved on. He eventually sold his family home at Tahoe

to Senator Dianne Feinstein, for whom he had chaired the Economic Development Council when she was mayor of San Francisco.

He went on to create and contribute to many great environmental causes, including founding the Planning and Conservation League, which serves as the lobbying arm of the environmental movement in Sacramento. PCL is responsible for creating the California Environmental Quality Act, the strongest environmental law in the nation. Evers also served as the managing partner of Pettit, Evers & Martin for 12 years as it grew from seven attorneys to 70. He cofounded Alpine Meadows and Boreal Ridge ski resorts. He is a former chairman of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. He also served as president of SPUR, chair of the Yosemite National Institutes (now known as “Nature Bridge”) and on the national board of the Wilderness Society. Now 87, he has no plans to retire: He is the general council of a healthcare company.

Evers recently renewed his involvement with Tahoe issues, particularly the threat of invasive species, and maintains a conviction that the Lake still needs a strong watchdog. He is involved in an effort to bolster the League’s “Keep Tahoe Blue Endowment” in order to keep the organization strong for another 60 years and beyond. He encourages members to include the League in their wills.

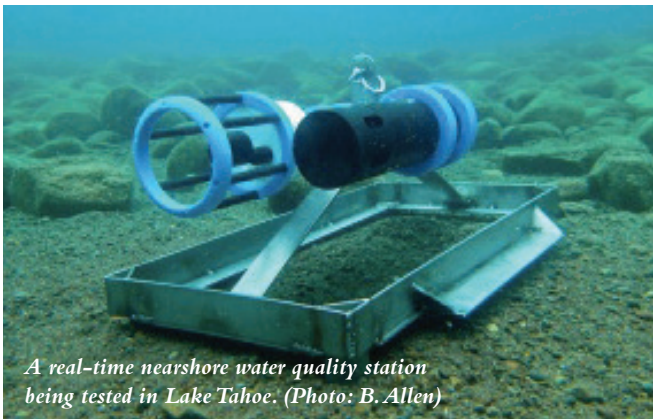
“Life is such a joy, people just don’t want to think they won’t be around someday,” Evers said. “I’ve got news for you: The Lake is going to be there. Tahoe is not going away. It needs care, or our kids, our grandkids and our great grandkids, will not experience what we have today. It needs tender loving care if it’s going to be in the future what you enjoy in the present.”

# Tahoe in the News

## State of the Lake report highlights deteriorating nearshore conditions

UC Davis researchers released their annual State of the Lake report in August, highlighting results from multiple monitoring programs.

“While this year’s data shows that progress is being made on many fronts, the biggest concern is what is not able to be shown,” said Geoff Schladow, director of the Tahoe Environmental Research Center, in a press release. “This really applies to the nearshore, where most people experience the lake. Even with the planned increase in monitoring, why it is continuing to degrade is poorly understood.”



*A real-time nearshore water quality station being tested in Lake Tahoe. (Photo: B. Allen)*

TERC launched a Nearshore Water Quality Network in August 2014 to monitor Tahoe’s shoreline conditions. A partnership between private property owners and scientists, the network will deploy advanced instruments at 20 sites

around the shoreline that will provide minute-by-minute data on the key water quality indicators of nearshore health and will allow researchers to begin exploring solutions that agencies can implement.

## Inspectors stop quagga mussels from entering Lake Tahoe

Watercraft inspectors intercepted a boat in July with quagga mussels and an unidentified snail species hiding in the anchor locker, according to a news release from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

“The fact that this boat was predominantly cleaned, drained and dry, yet inspectors still found the mussel encrusted in mud on the anchor, is significant and proves that the rigorous Lake Tahoe watercraft inspection program is working,” said Dennis Zabaglo, TRPA’s Aquatic Resources Program Manager. “This also serves as a reminder for boaters to check all compartments of their boats.”

The boat came from Lake Mead, a known quagga-infested water body.

Since the start of the boating season in May of 2014, inspectors have intercepted 24 boats containing invasive species. Eight of these boats contained invasive mussels and another four boats were carrying several different snail species. Without natural predators, these invasive species pose serious threats to the ecology, recreation and local economies of the Lake Tahoe Basin.



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## *Team Keep Tahoe Blue thanks Climate Ride sponsors*

Team Keep Tahoe Blue's riders Seth Chanin, Danielle Richardson and Rebecca Pierce rode 250 miles in May as part of California Climate Ride 2014 to promote sustainable communities and climate change action. The event raised over \$530,000 for beneficiary organizations, including Keep Tahoe Blue. Please contact us if you are interested in joining our team in 2015. Find our custom cycling jerseys at our online store: [keptahoeblue.org/shop](http://keptahoeblue.org/shop).

The League extends a big thank-you to these 2014 team sponsors: WattaBike Shop, Cyclepaths, Tahoe Mountain Guides, FitBit, Clif Bar, Napa Valley Wine Train, Pedego Electric Bikes Lake Tahoe, and Tahoe Center for Orthopedics.



## *Member survey: Tell us how we are doing*

How should we best use your investment in a pristine Lake Tahoe for this and future generations to enjoy? Please complete our member survey so we can continue the important work of Keeping Tahoe Blue. We hope to hear from you about what you think should be our priorities: working on policy improvements, supporting funding opportunities to reverse the trend of clarity loss in Lake Tahoe, identifying the most polluting stormwater pipes dumping into the lake, discovering and removing new infestations of aquatic weeds, educating and engaging the Tahoe community, involving youth in Keeping Tahoe Blue, or advocating for improved environmental protections. We want to know what you think. The survey can be found online at <http://keptahoeblue.org/joinus/membersurvey2014> or request a hard copy of the survey at [membership@keptahoeblue.org](mailto:membership@keptahoeblue.org) or by calling 530-541-5388.

## *Join the Lake Tahoe Legacy Society*

Planned giving represents the single most effective means of ensuring the League's long-term success in our efforts to Keep Tahoe Blue. Past planned gifts have enabled us to establish our Board Designated Policy Fund and even purchase the building housing our Education Center and South Lake Tahoe office headquarters. These generous gifts strengthen our organization and enable us to set money aside in order to respond to unforeseen challenges as they arise. Planned gifts can be designated for use at the Board of Directors' discretion, or can be contributed to the Keep Tahoe Blue Endowment.

There are myriad options for leaving a deferred gift to the League. Many choose to bequest liquid assets, life insurance, stock, retirement plans, real estate, or other tangible items. For more information, contact Seth Chanin, Major Gifts Manager, at 530-539-4854, or email [seth@keptahoeblue.org](mailto:seth@keptahoeblue.org).

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*League to Save Lake Tahoe*

## 2014 Fall Newsletter

### ***CAMPAIGNS 2014: Combatting pollution, tackling invasive species, protecting the shore and promoting restoration***

Tahoe has lost 30 feet of clarity since the 1960s, primarily due to pollution from urban development that destroyed 50 percent of Tahoe's meadows, which naturally filter sediment and pollution from rain and snowmelt. There is hope to restore Tahoe's clarity to historic levels. Our work to Keep Tahoe Blue includes four main campaigns: Combatting pollution, tackling invasive species, protecting the shore and promoting restoration.

Each of our programs spans more than one of these campaigns, whether its volunteer programs such as Eyes

on the Lake, Pipe Keepers, beach cleanups and invasive and terrestrial weed pulls, or policy initiatives to bring funding for restoration and invasive species protection, advocacy to ensure strong environmental safeguards for development projects, or our collaborative efforts to find innovative solutions to issues such as stormwater regulation enforcement or the need for enhanced monitoring and data collection. You can join us by becoming a volunteer, voicing support for policy initiatives at public meetings or through letters, or supporting the League with a yearly membership contribution.

### ***Join us: 57th Annual Members Meeting***

Members of the League are invited to join us for our 57th annual members meeting at Fort Mason Center Conference Center in San Francisco on Thursday, October 9 at 6 pm. Guests will enjoy a small plate dinner, cocktails and presentations by League Executive Director Darcie Goodman Collins and special guest California Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird. Please RSVP to [AnnualMeeting@keptahoeblue.org](mailto:AnnualMeeting@keptahoeblue.org) or by calling 530.541.5388. This is a member's only event. To become a member today, visit <https://support.keptahoeblue.org/gendonate>.