



# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

*Protecting Lake Tahoe since 1957*

# Lake Tahoe

A PLACE FOR ALL SEASONS.



Photo: peterspain.com



Photo: peterspain.com



YOU HELP **Keep Tahoe Blue.**

# Letter from the executive director and board president



Photo: Dylan Silver | tahoeclarity.com

Dear Friends,

Last summer, on a warm July evening, many of us gathered in South Tahoe for the annual Keep Tahoe Blue members' meeting. Smoke from wildfires filled the Tahoe Basin. We had chosen the top of the Heavenly resort tramway as our site for the meeting for its views. Instead, you could see nothing through the smoke. In a way it was fitting: at the meeting we discussed how climate change is affecting the Tahoe region. One of those changes—as the western U.S. experienced too well last year—is an increased risk of catastrophic wildfire.

Fortunately, that gathering of Keep Tahoe Blue members was a reminder of the reason to have hope for the Lake. As it has for over 60 years, the League to Save Lake Tahoe is leading the charge in fighting the threats facing Tahoe. In 2017, members like you made so much progress possible:

- Our Eyes on the Lake program removed an infestation of aquatic invasive plants from Glenbrook Bay. Invasive plant fragments from massive infestations on Tahoe's south shore had drifted across the Lake, colonizing Glenbrook's shallow waters.
- We brought a successful bike share pilot program to South Tahoe, providing fun and lake-friendly transportation to thousands. Because people bicycled almost 10,000 miles instead of driving, the bike share program cut pollution that degrades Tahoe's clarity.
- Last summer, we initiated bi-state consultations between Nevada and California government leaders to find long-term solutions to Tahoe's pressing transportation problems so we can handle the Lake's 24 million—and growing—annual visitors.



Lake Tahoe faces continued threats: from stormwater pollution, aquatic invasive plants and climate change. Leadership to safeguard Tahoe has never been more important. Thanks to you, the League stands ready.

- We will champion passage of California’s Proposition 68 to fund projects to restore the pollution-filtering functions of Tahoe’s sensitive wetlands.
- We will fight rapidly-spreading aquatic invasive plants at their source: the Tahoe Keys. The fate of the Lake’s ecology depends on finding a solution in the Keys, and we’ll continue to lead efforts to do so.
- We will drive bi-state discussions to launch on-the-ground options for more convenient lake-friendly transportation to get you to and around Lake Tahoe in 2018.

There will be more days like that evening last July, which reminds us that we need to strengthen Tahoe’s resilience to our changing climate. In this Annual Report, you’ll find stories about people like you—people who are making a difference for Lake Tahoe. We could not be more grateful for your support. Every day, we see the progress made because of your contributions. Together, we can Keep Tahoe Blue.

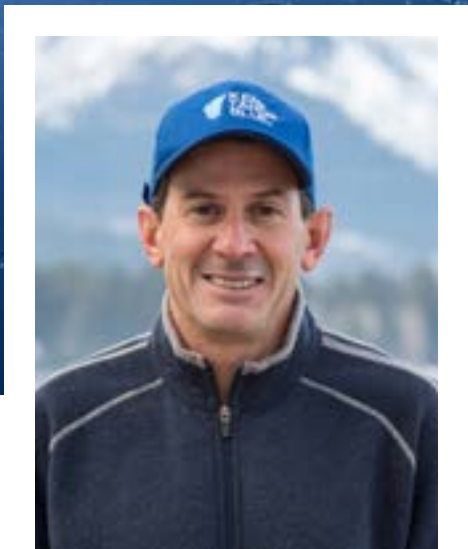
Sincerely,

Darcie Goodman Collins, PhD  
Executive Director

David Brandenburger  
President



Photo: Mark Tripp



## Swim to be blue

As a participant in the annual [Trans Tahoe Relay](#), Mike Ross and his team of six take turns swimming legs of a 10-mile, open-water course from Sand Harbor to Skylandia. In 2017, Mike launched a peer-to-peer fundraising page on the [Keep Tahoe Blue](#) website, raising almost \$10,000 from friends and family who sponsored his relay, all benefitting the League's programs to safeguard the Lake's water quality.

Mike fell in love with Lake Tahoe after he started visiting the area with his wife and her family in the 1990s. "And," Mike says, "it's a short step from falling in love with Tahoe to getting involved with the League to Save Lake Tahoe."

In 2018, at Mike's initiative, the organizers of the Trans Tahoe Relay with the Olympic Club will be expanding on his example, encouraging all swimmers to volunteer to fundraise for Keep Tahoe Blue.

Swimming in Lake Tahoe's famously clear water is a unique experience. The contributions by Mike and his fellow swimmers are driving restoration of the Lake's clarity by supporting efforts such as the League's advocacy and citizen science programs to combat stormwater runoff pollution. We're grateful for Mike's leadership and to everyone who follows his lead in this year's swim.



Photo: @stevebymephoto



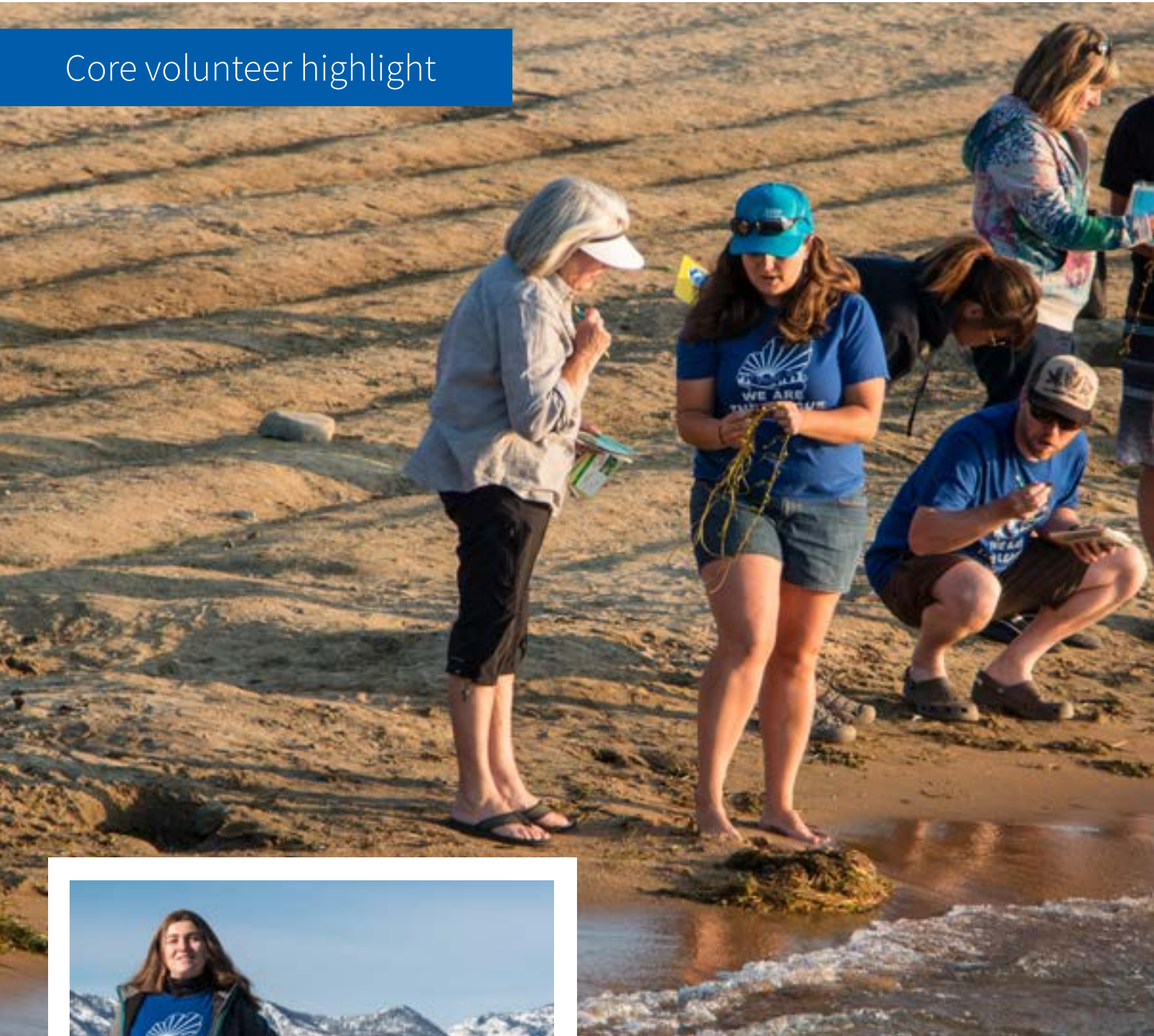
## Ski to be blue

Home to skiing with the world's best view, Lake Tahoe is also home to excellent ski builders. Keith O'Meara, founder of Praxis Skis, has been crafting custom skis in Incline Village since 2005. Last year, Keith teamed with League board member Mike Zukerman to design custom Keep Tahoe Blue Praxis skis. Praxis tailor-makes each pair to suit the customer's skiing style. Better still, Praxis has generously donated to support League programs as part of our corporate sponsorship program.

"I skied the first pair of Keep Tahoe Blue skis that Praxis made," says Mike. "They are sweet, handmade skis, and I like that I can help protect the Lake even while I'm out on the mountain! It has been great working with Keith and Praxis. They are a fantastic Tahoe-based company committed not only to making great skis, but also giving back to the local community. That is something I feel great about supporting!"

Contributions from Praxis and the League's other corporate sponsors support the League's four primary campaigns: combating pollution, tackling invasive species, promoting restoration, and protecting Tahoe's shoreline.

## Core volunteer highlight



# Krystle Heaney

The League could not protect Lake Tahoe without the support of an educated and engaged community. Some of our most critical support comes from Core Volunteers like Krystle Heaney.

“I began volunteering with the League to meet friends and find community,” says Krystle. “I’ve loved being part of a group where everyone cares so much about Tahoe.”

Since 2015, Krystle has volunteered 169 hours. Her service to the Lake has truly shined through her role in our citizen





science monitoring efforts: Pipe Keepers, Snapshot Day and Eyes on the Lake.

“Krystle has become highly skilled at plant identification. She’s gone to the next level, helping to train other volunteers to identify aquatic invasive plants at our Eyes on the Lake trainings,” says Savannah Mendoza, the League’s natural resources program coordinator.

Learn more about the Core Volunteer program at [keeptahoeblue.org/core-volunteers](http://keeptahoeblue.org/core-volunteers).

## Board member highlight



# Scott Torgan

Scott grew up in the Northeast, moved to San Francisco 25 years ago, and immediately fell in love with Lake Tahoe upon his first visit to ski. Scott is a tax partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, specializing in high net worth individuals and families. He and his partner have a home in Tahoe Vista, where he now spends as much time as he can at the Lake: snowboarding, biking, hiking and swimming with his dog.

“My introduction came through Will Evers [a fellow League board member]. Will is a good friend and knew I had experience serving on a nonprofit board,” says Scott. “I wanted to be more of a part of the Lake Tahoe community and find a way to contribute.”

After a year of involvement, Scott joined the League’s board in 2016. “Getting to know the organization, I’ve been amazed seeing the impact the League has had in protecting Lake Tahoe,” says Scott.

## Combating pollution

12,731

bicycle trips were made last summer instead of pollution-generating car trips, all via the bike share pilot program the League brought to South Tahoe. In 2018, the League will keep advocating for fun and lake-friendly transportation choices for Tahoe.



## Promoting restoration

7,652

feet of trail were restored by volunteers at our 20<sup>th</sup> annual Tahoe Forest Stewardship Days. Participants also released 2,655 young native trees from overcrowding shrubs so they could thrive and restore sensitive forest habitat in the recovering Angora Burn area.





# Tackling invasive species

## 0

aquatic invasive plants remain in Glenbrook Bay after the League's Eyes on the Lake program completed its 2017 surveys, community trainings and plant-removal events. Looking ahead, trained homeowners will monitor the Bay to ensure it remains weed-free.



# Protecting Tahoe's shoreline

## 4,010

pounds of trash were gathered by the nearly 900 volunteers at the League's beach and community cleanups, with single-use plastics being the top trash found. These committed volunteers' efforts attract widespread media attention, educating the public about the threats of litter to the Lake.



# Alyssa Gagliani

Alyssa Gagliani has spent summers and winters in the South Lake Tahoe area her whole life. She originally got involved with the League while volunteering as a child with her parents and grandparents. Today, Alyssa donates to the League and she still volunteers locally when in Tahoe, but she realized that another way she could give back was by raising awareness in the San Francisco Bay Area about the efforts needed to protect the Lake.

As a founding member of the League's Associate Board, Alyssa helps connect the Bay Area's younger generations that enjoy the Tahoe region to the League's mission and work. "Whether it be through donations, through volunteering their time in the League's beach cleanups, or by telling others who love Lake Tahoe about the threats to the Lake, the League and how to get involved, I hope more people take the time to give back," says Alyssa.



# Friends of Bill Evers Sr.

We are so grateful to the friends and family members who contribute to the League each year in memory of loved ones who have left us. When the family of our co-founder Bill Evers Sr. suggested a donation to Keep Tahoe Blue in his honor, the outpouring of support was extraordinary—a fitting testament to a man who did so much for Lake Tahoe.

Review all the gifts made in Bill's memory, and all other 2017 honor and memorial gifts at [keptahoeblue.org/2017-honors](http://keptahoeblue.org/2017-honors)

"We needed to protect and preserve one of nature's rarest beauties for future generations to enjoy."

*-Bill Evers Sr. on co-founding the League.*

# Members of the League

Members like you ensure our legacy of success continues through our programs of policy and environmental protection. Your generous gifts in 2017 enabled the League to continue our work as Tahoe's oldest and largest environmental advocacy organization. We are grateful to the following members for their support, which allows our work to continue. The League to Save Lake Tahoe is a nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code. All contributions to the League are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by the law.

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Over 250 participants came out to the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Tahoe Forest Stewardship Day in the Angora Burn area in South Lake Tahoe. Learn more at [keptahoeblue.org/tfsd](http://keptahoeblue.org/tfsd). Photo by Bob Harms.

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Some of our core volunteers gather at the League's Tahoe friendly garden. We couldn't do our work without our amazing volunteers. Learn more at [keoptahoeblue.org/core-volunteers](http://keoptahoeblue.org/core-volunteers)

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 Martin Vanderlaan  
 Marianna Vaughan  
 Jonathan and Maarit Visbal  
 GA and Marsha von der Lieth  
 Mr. Richard von Ernon  
 Ms. Carolyn Walker Shaw  
 Linc and Criss Walworth  
 Margaret Ward  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jack Weingart  
 Roland D. Westergard  
 Robert and Kirsten Whalen  
 Mrs. JoAnne Willens Widzer  
 Mr. Gregory Wilson  
 Jane Witter  
 Ms. Patricia Wyrod  
 Ms. Carla Wytmar  
 Mr. and Mrs. William Zaima  
 Mr. and Mrs. Xavier Y. Zang

\* indicates Keep Tahoe Blue sticker businesses.  
 Review the complete list of 2017 Keep Tahoe  
 Blue members and supporters at  
[keoptahoeblue.org/2017-supporters](http://keoptahoeblue.org/2017-supporters).

### Legacy Society

Legacy Society members protect Lake Tahoe now and for the future by including the League in their bequest, will or trust. Estate gifts are the single most effective way to ensure that Lake Tahoe is protected in perpetuity. You, too, can leave a legacy for Lake Tahoe.

Visit [keoptahoeblue.org/legacy](http://keoptahoeblue.org/legacy) to learn more, or contact 530.541.5388 or [membership@keoptahoeblue.org](mailto:membership@keoptahoeblue.org).



Photo: Scott Thompson of ScottShotsPhoto.com

# Continuing a family legacy

The League is grateful to the family members of Diana Dollar Knowles—the late philanthropist and patron of conservation efforts at Lake Tahoe was among the founders of the League’s Annual Fashion Show, which began in 1969. Last year, her family donated her classic wooden powerboat, the Tamarack, to the League. The 1931 Gar Wood Triple Cockpit Runabout had an appraised value of \$277,000. Proceeds from our immediate sale of the Tamarack made an extraordinary contribution to support our programs to

protect Tahoe. We could not be more thankful to Dr. Heidi Hickingbotham Cary, Kimberley Cary Hersov, Darayn Hickingbotham, J. Hickingbotham, Wendy Cary, Carolyn Cary Alt and Leslie Cary Buerger. Their gift commemorates the multi-generation connection of the Dollar/ Hickingbotham/ Cary Family to Lake Tahoe and will support the preservation of the Lake for generations.

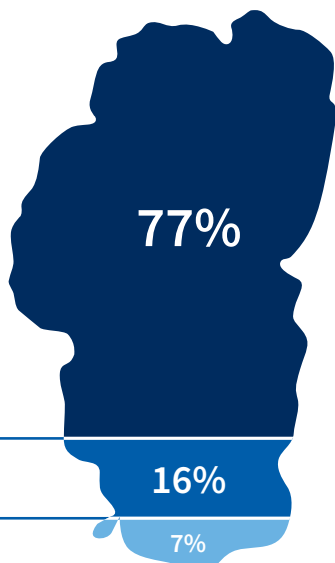
To review 2017 in-kind contributions to the League, please visit [keptahoeblue.org/2017-in-kind](http://keptahoeblue.org/2017-in-kind).

## League finances

### Expenses

Total: \$2,012,373

Programs to advocate, educate and collaborate to Keep Tahoe Blue

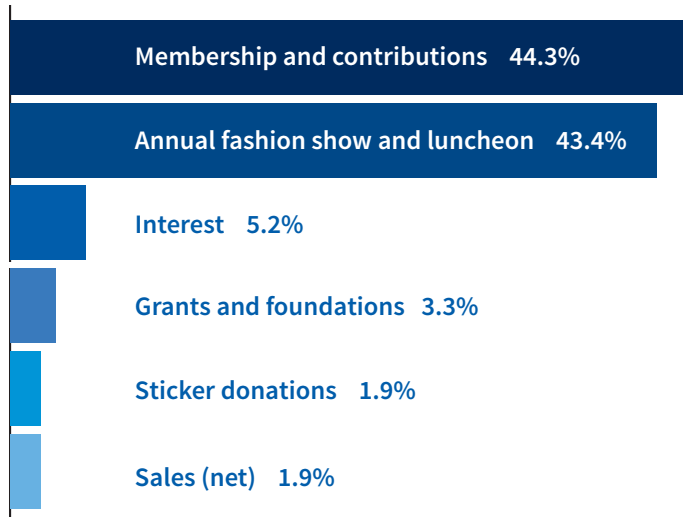


Fundraising

Management

### Revenue

Total: \$ 2,550,044



Find audited financial statements at [keptahoeblue.org/financials](http://keptahoeblue.org/financials)



# Your Keep Tahoe Blue team



## Board of directors

*Top row from left:*  
Scott Drummond; David H. Blau; Robert A. Damaschino; Steve Spurlock; Mike Zukerman; Scott Torgan; Phil Metting van Rijn; Brooks Stratmore; Tom Mertens; Ash Daggs; Luke Giordano; Allyson Willoughby and Jeffrey Brown.

*Bottom row from left:*  
Darcie Goodman Collins, PhD, executive director; Lorie Sinnott, secretary; David Brandenburger, president; William D. Evers Jr., vice president; and Dennis Neeley, treasurer.

*Not pictured:* Jennifer Cormier.

## About the League

The League advocates for reasonable environmental policy, backed by science. We are committed to community education and engagement and working together to Keep Tahoe Blue. We collaborate to find solutions that address Tahoe's environmental challenges. We are a member-based organization: all of our successes are made possible through the generous support of our members.

## Our mission

The League is dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. We focus on water quality and its clarity for the preservation of a pristine Lake for future generations.

## Together, we Keep Tahoe Blue

Become a member, volunteer and shop and visit our Fritzi and David Huntington Environmental Education Center and Store. Find us online at [keptahoeblue.org](http://keptahoeblue.org).  
2608 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150  
530.541.5388 | [keptahoeblue.org](http://keptahoeblue.org)  
[info@keptahoeblue.org](mailto:info@keptahoeblue.org)

## Staff

Executive Director | Darcie Goodman Collins, PhD  
Deputy Director | Jesse Patterson  
Finance & Human Resources Director | Meghan McGowan  
Natural Resources Manager | Zack Bradford  
Communications Manager | Chris Carney  
Senior Policy Analyst | Marissa Fox, Esq.  
Community Engagement Associate | Emily Frey  
Development Associate | Jeremiah Houle  
Membership Associate | Martha Lopez  
Executive Assistant | Leila Maloney  
Operations Manager | Jennifer Marshall  
Natural Resources Program Coordinator | Savannah Mendoza  
Community Engagement Manager | Marilee Movius  
Outreach Assistant | Soloman Nunnally  
Membership Manager | Amanda Rothstein  
Outreach Assistant | Meghan Walsh



**2017**  
ANNUAL REPORT

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Photography by League staff unless otherwise indicated.  
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## Combating the top threat to Lake Tahoe's clarity

The largest threat to Lake Tahoe's clarity is tiny. In fact, the culprit—fine sediment particles—is smaller than the width of a human hair.

Unchecked twentieth-century development paved over much of Tahoe's marshes and wetlands, which had acted as natural pollution filters. Now, when rain hits our roads and parking lots, it washes off these fine sediment particles into storm drains that lead to the Lake. There, the fine sediment remains suspended, degrading lake clarity. Auto traffic exacerbates fine sediment pollution by crushing winter traction materials and deteriorating roads.

We need big changes to avoid further decline of Tahoe's clarity. The League is leading the fight. We are launching pilot programs to test cutting-edge transportation solutions, such as dockless bike share and dynamic, on-demand shuttle services. Your support will enable people to choose less-polluting options to get to and around Tahoe. These improvements will also let people enjoy the walkable, bikeable communities envisioned in the regional plan update.



## Preventing peril to Tahoe's ecology

The sight of truckloads of aquatic invasive plants has no place at Tahoe.

Aquatic invasives could destroy the Lake's ecology forever. The League is tackling the problem at the source: the Tahoe Keys, where hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of invasives plants are removed each year, while boats spread many more plants into the Lake.

In 2018, support from the League's new Science Fund will deploy and test first-of-its-kind measures to contain plant fragments in the Keys. We're playing a lead role in identifying and funding long-term solutions to permanently control the infestations. We face a tough fight. But with your support, we'll find solutions to this long-standing hazard.



## Shoring up resilience to climate change

In the past four years, Lake Tahoe's water has warmed 10 times faster than the historic trend. Warmer water is more hospitable to algae and invasive species. The warming also threatens the Lake's turnover. The cold water at the bottom of the Lake has typically mixed with the surface water about once every four years. Warming surface water changes the dynamics that lead to lake mixing. It has now been seven years since Tahoe turned over, and the day could come soon when deep water mixing ceases permanently. (Source: Tahoe Environmental Research Center's *State of the Lake* reports)

Without the mixing, pollution entering Lake Tahoe will remain trapped in the surface water, worsening water clarity and aggravating algal blooms.

Lastly, climate scientists expect increases in heavy rain storms (as opposed to snow) at Tahoe, which poses added risks to lake clarity by intensifying the flush of fine sediments (see opposing page) into the Lake and its tributaries.

The League is combating these drastic changes by leading efforts to enhance the Tahoe Basin's environmental resilience. We are tackling invasive species (see article above) to protect the Lake's delicate ecology and improve water clarity. Our advocacy is driving restoration of the Tahoe Basin's meadows and wetlands, which act as shock absorbers for storm floods and serve as natural filters for stormwater pollution. We have much work to do, but with your support, we remain hopeful that we can Keep Tahoe Blue.



*League to Save Lake Tahoe*

LEAGUE TO SAVE LAKE TAHOE  
2608 Lake Tahoe Boulevard  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150  
[keptahoeblue.org](http://keptahoeblue.org)

Forwarding service requested

