



Dear Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the State Water Board

We are writing to express my support of an amendment to allow limited use of aquatic herbicides in Tahoe Keys.

As residents of and members of Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association, my wife and I commend the Lahontan Water Control Board and Lahontan Staff for their vision and perseverance in recently passing the amendment allowing exemptions to the prohibition of aquatic herbicides in Lake Tahoe. We now trust that the State Water Board will pass this important amendment.

Non-chemical methods have not worked in Lake Tahoe and, in fact, the problem is getting worse. We ask that the State Water Board pass this important amendment before invasive species are not controllable.

The homeowner association that we belong to (Tahoe Keys) has invested significant resources towards controlling weeds in the Keys by the use of weed harvesters. A full summer crew is employed to operate 4 large mechanical weed harvesters which run 8 hours a day and 6 days a week to remove the top 5' of the weeds. After harvesting, the majority of weeds remain to adversely impact beneficial uses, degrade water quality, increase water temperature, and provide habitat for non-native warm water fish. Because of these known adverse impacts, it is in the best interest of the State Water Board to preserve and improve water quality by allowing the careful, controlled use of all proven methods to control aquatic weeds.

Extensive research was conducted this past summer in the Keys. The project was undertaken in cooperation with TRPA and the Lahontan Water Board, and will be continued in the summer of 2012. The study included what are called "dye studies" to map the degree to which herbicides, if applied, would be contained in the Keys. These empirical studies have demonstrated that the controlled application of herbicides in the Keys will remain in the Keys and not impact surface water intakes in other areas of Lake Tahoe. The remoteness of the Keys to the intakes areas and the rapid dispersal of low herbicide concentrations used will assure compliance to the highest standards.

Please allow us to employ every reasonable and proven tool available to control the spread of invasive species in Lake Tahoe, and do so while the eradication of these species is still a viable goal.

My wife and I thank you and the State Water Board for your effort and courage in passing this amendment.

Sincerely,

Stuart and Diana Roberson  
Property Owners  
Tahoe Keys