

Memo to John Kleppe, Terri Thomas and Mike Kraft:  
From Mike Casey  
Date: 6/7/10

I just attended by phone today's meeting of the AIS non motorized group (hosted by Patrick Stone of TRPA and Kim Boyd of TRCD).

Much of the meeting was taken up with a report from Aaron Fox, Fallen Leaf's inspector. It was obvious that all present felt that Fallen Leaf's pilot program is very important as a means of studying what will work and what won't work in terms of protecting the Tahoe basin from AIS borne by non motorized water traffic.

Aaron reported the following:

1. Initially he was without effective communications since cell phones don't work where he spends most of his time. He is grateful for the two way radio that was provided to him by Rob Wirth and which works very well. He was also provided with a zodiac which was kindly lent to him by Jim Hill for the summer. That too makes his job much easier.

2. He has been most impressed by the campground concessionaire. The concessionaire has sent employees through inspector training, and they are highly interested in AIS prevention and in educating people coming through the Kiosk. Indeed, Aaron has been impressed, not just by what he has seen at the Kiosks but also by how knowledgeable and cooperative are the people he has spoken with who have come from the campground to launch their non motorized craft at the lake. He acknowledges that it is very early in the summer, and that his contacts has been far fewer than they will be in a few short weeks; however, those 5-10 people per day he speaks with now on weekends and 2-3 people he sees on weekdays, have without exception been knowledgeable about AIS and careful to clean, drain, and dry their vessels. He has not seen any suspicious vessels to date, nor have any shown up which have been in contaminated watercourses. So far 100% of the traffic he is seeing on the trail from the campground is coming from the campground itself and none has come by way of the day use road which bypasses the kiosk. He knows that will change as traffic builds this summer, but for now it is an interesting observation. He has also seen virtually no traffic coming down the trail which starts several hundred yards south of the campground entry, and he feels that that will likely not be a large source of traffic since it is longer and narrower and, therefore, more difficult to navigate while transporting watercraft.

3. Aaron now starts his day at the campground trailhead but then also goes to Lily Lake, Stanford Camp, the marina, Sawmill Cove, and the government dock at the end of Cathedral. He is also impressed by the thoroughness of Rob Wirth's crew at the marina and by the commitments by both Stanford Camp and Camp Concord to be vigilant and helpful. Specifically, he noted that Dave Bunnett has also received inspector training and is eager for Aaron's help to control launches at Baby Beach. He has also had good talks with Kathryn Monroy (resident head of Camp Concord).

3. Aaron responded positively to inputs from the group to the effect that they would like for him to collect as much data as possible, including numbers of people spoken with each day, percentages of those who are AIS educated versus those who are not, information about where (each location) the watercraft have been in the past six months, how they have been stored, how they were transported to the lake, whether or not they were inspected and if so by whom, etc.

Regarding the idea of a "sticker" program, the group felt that overall it was a good idea. One person was familiar with sticker programs in Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming. They seem more focused on raising revenue in order to pay for education than as a reward for education and good behavior. Our working group felt, instead, that, although there are inherent dangers in a sticker program which could conceivably, in reliance on a sticker on a vessel, miss a contaminated watercraft, the overall goal should be self education, and the sticker should be seen as evidence that the vessel's owner understands and

appreciates the steps which need to be taken to protect the lake. They talked at length about online education which would include a test somewhat like online traffic school tests and which would enable the student to receive one (or more) stickers upon successful completion. They see those stickers as evidence that the user is educated as opposed to focusing on the vessel. Obviously, there is danger there, but as Aaron pointed out, he cannot be everywhere at once, and so he will not be able to inspect every watercraft that is launched from the multiple sites he oversees. Looking at it from that perspective, then the sticker program does have value.

The group hopes to have a self certification program online later this summer.

Mike