

Winter 2023

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Meet our New Staff Member! Logan Gmuender



Logan Gmuender is the new Environmental Specialist joining WEPD to manage the Resilience Garden project; to grow Pinyon Pines for the revegetation of the Pinenut Mountain's burn scars on Washoe Tribal lands. I was born and raised in Gardnerville Ranchos near the Dresslerville community and went to Douglas High School. I graduated from Fort Lewis College in Colorado, earning my Bachelor of Science in Biology and Environmental Science. In the past, I have worked for multiple agencies including USFS with invasive plants, Nevada Department of Wildlife on Bighorn Sheep diseases, California Fish and Game on black bear research, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife on black bear/human interface problems.

I enjoy working outside, as well as hiking, hunting, skiing and 4 wheeling to ghost towns and hot springs in many parts of remote Nevada. I look forward to working with the Washoe Tribal Community on habitat restoration and protection of our natural resources. I'm impressed with the dedication of the Washoe Tribe and WEPD to preserve and restore their forest lands for future generations and I'm very happy to be a part of this great project!

Washoe Environmental Protection Department

Tahoe Yellow Cress Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Cooperative Project

By John Warpeha, Environmental Scientist



The Washoe Skunk Harbor Parcel Beach. The inlet site in the above photo will have one proposed enclosure unit that will hold and protect TYC plants (right) . Washoe Skunk Harbor Parcel. Lake Tahoe. October, 2023. WEPD photo.

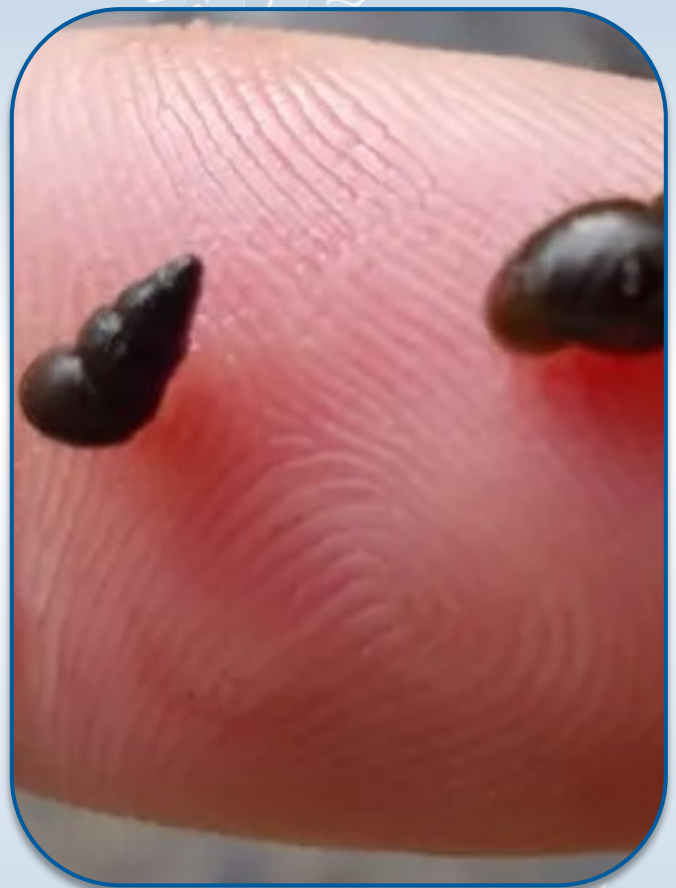
WEPD staff and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) of the Forest Service are planning to re-establish Tahoe Yellowcress (TYC) at the Washoe Skunk Harbor Parcel. TYC populations have been present on this parcel in the past, but have substantially declined due to increased recreational use of the beach area. TYC is an endemic plant species to Lake Tahoe, which means **it does not grow anywhere else**. Populations of the plant have declined around the Lake for similar reasons due to beach use by the public and private interests. WEPD staff visited the beach area with the LTBMU forest botanist to discuss options for re-establishing this special plant. One option is to install 3 enclosures or partial enclosures within each beach inlet that protects clusters of TYC from recreational activities on the beaches. Each enclosure would contain about a 100 TYC plants and be watered and monitored by WEPD and LTBMU staff in summer 2024. The proposed enclosures will have signage informing site users of the importance of protecting these plants. The WEPD and the LTBMU are working on a TYC memorandum of understanding that will cover projects like this. The LTBMU is reviewing this project under the National Environmental Policy Act, though it is expected to be expedited under this process. The LTBMU will schedule additional field visits to assess scenic quality and consult with the WEPD. WEPD staff are planning to involve Tribal communities in this special project in May, 2024. Thank you for your review and interest. John Warpeha.

New Zealand Mud Snails

By Kristina Burnette, Environmental Scientist

Millions of people visit Lake Tahoe every year. As people learn of the majestic waters that the Washoe Tribe holds sacred, there is a major concern and threat when it comes to making sure that this major body of water is protected. With the increase of visitor traffic every year, the growing concern is that new aquatic invasive species will be introduced due to lack of education or outreach. This statement holds true with the recent discovery, by scuba divers during a plant survey in September 2023. The New Zealand mud snail (*Potamophrgus antipodarum*) is now found in Lake Tahoe's pristine waters.

New Zealand mud snails are native to freshwater streams and lakes throughout New Zealand and surrounding islands. Even though New Zealand mud snails are only found in native ranges in freshwater, their non-native range, they can be found in both freshwater and saltwater habitats. Their size is very small and can range from 3 to 6 mm of an inch. The appearance of the cone-shaped shell usually has about 5 to 6 whorls, sometimes up to 8, and the coloration of the shell is either black or brown. Since New Zealand mud snails release live young rather than eggs and the offspring are cloned females meaning that they are asexually reproduced. At this stage, the offspring already have developing embryos in their reproductive system and once the young reach 3 mm, they are mature. The concern with New Zealand mud snails is that females can reproduce 230 new females per year, one snail and its offspring can result in over 2.7 billion snails within four years. They have no natural predators and even if they are eaten, they can be passed through the digestive tract and survive. They are a problem to native trout and aquatic insects.



Prevent the Spread!

New Zealand mud snails can attach to aquatic plants, boats, fishing gear and clothing to name a few. Clean, drain, dry is a must when visiting Lake Tahoe and other bodies of water. Some other precautions one can take to decontaminate equipment is to dry for 24 hours, freeze for 4 hours at 26°F, heat for 10 minutes in water at 120°F or higher or bleach for 10 minutes in 2.2 tablespoons of household bleach in a gallon of water.

Willow Thinning and Piling



By Kevin Rogers, Environmental Specialist



WEPD staff and Americorp volunteers from Alpine Watershed Group in Markleeville, CA have begun to thin and pile the willows at the Upper Ranch in preparation for the second phase of WEPDs Cultural Burn started in February 2023. WEPD staff and volunteers used hand loppers to thin the willow. This will prevent shredding of the outer bark of willow which can kill it. In addition, eco-friendly waxed paper will be placed in the top layers of the piles to help keep them dry until they are ready to be burned.

this preliminary step is necessary for our cultural burning as this willow patch has not been burned or thinned in many, many years and is very overgrown. Due to the lack of beneficial fire and management, WEPD is thinning the willow to provide greater access to the willows along the creek. Plans are in place for the spring to burn the understory along the willow patch and creek to help promote growth, and tend this area in order to keep it as a healthy willow collection spot for basket makers.



If you would like more information on our Cultural Burning Program or are interested in being on WEPDs Cultural Burn Crew, Please reach out to us @ WEPD.frontdesk@washoetribe.us

Or check out our Facebook page for updates on burns, training, and learning experiences!

<https://www.facebook.com/WTEPD>

Washoe Environmental Protection Department

Pinyon pine Propagation Update

By Allison Kerley, Environmental Specialist

Right: WEPD Staff Yancy Burt extracts pinyon pine seeds from the pine cones. This process had to be done by hand, and took over three weeks to complete!



Far Right: A pinyon pine seedling planted underneath a burned pinyon tree in the Tamarack burn scar. The white mesh protective tube is biodegradable but will be collected in the following year, and re-used for future plantings!



Harvesting poles made in the traditional method of lodgepole pines. These poles were used by WEPD to harvest Pinyon pine Cones this year.

This fall marks the 2nd year of WEPD's Pinyon Propagation efforts. This fall, WEPD collected over 300 lbs of Pinyon Pine cones from local trees. From those cones, approximately 31 lbs of seed were harvested, and will be planted as a part of WEPD's Resilience Garden.

WEPD observed a small cone harvest from nearly all areas surveyed, with the exception of one or two areas with exceptional harvest.

Last year's crop of pinyon seedlings were planted this fall in the Tamarack burn scar. These, in combination with the sagebrush also planted there this fall, are intended to create small pockets of growth, or "restoration islands", which will slowly expand outwards as these new plants produce seed and propagate new plants in the coming years.

Washoe Environmental Protection Department

WASHOE HEALTHY COUNTRY PLANNING

By Craig Christensen, Environmental Technician

On November 13-14, 2023 WEPD staff held their 2nd Healthy Planning Workshop! The purpose of the Healthy Country Planning is to create a plan by Washoe people for Washoe people, to determine how we view the state of our homelands and resources and how we would like to see land management efforts unfold in the future, and how we can incorporate more Indigenous stewardship and cultural fire into our land management practices.

Our plan is being modeled after other indigenous peoples that have created similar plans with success in being able to share these documents with other agencies to give an indigenous view into our values, culture and traditions and how that guides land preservation & stewardship.

This event is open to any and all Washoe members who want to provide input on this planning process. The event was held at the beautiful River Fork Ranch located near Genoa, Nevada.



Our next workshop will be March 13,14th!!

River Fork Ranch is operated by The Nature Conservancy who have been instrumental in assisting with this process along with the Indigenous Peoples Burning Network.

During this workshop we covered Washoe Tribe Core Values and some of the threats to those values. This planning workshop is an ongoing process and we will continue to hold workshops through 2024! The Tribal membership involvement has been crucial to this process and attendance was great!

Incline Village Parcel Thinning

By Kevin Rogers, Environmental Specialist

On Tuesday and Wednesday, November 28th-29th, WEPD and North Tahoe Fire Protection District completed thinning operations on the Tribe's Incline Village Parcel off of Village Rd in Incline Village, North Lake Tahoe. The 2.41 acre parcel contains a portion of Third Creek, and a wealth of riparian species such as alder and aspen, as well as some aspen and wild rose. This thinning project removed 98% of the conifer encroachment into the Stream Environment Zone (SEZ), and 75% of the conifers in the non-riparian areas to protect the fire from fire, as well as to improve habitat for wildlife and increase the health of the riparian area.

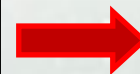
WEPD partnered with North Tahoe Fire and Forester Jason Furmaniak to get the parcel thinned in a way that will responsibly achieve the objectives described above. Piles of cut material were made, with a plan to burn them next winter after they have had a chance to dry out. Once piles are burned, the upper portion not impacting the creek will be able to have fire reintroduced to further help restore this portion of the Tribe's lands.

WEPD would like to thank Jason Furmaniak, Chief Isaac Powning, and all of North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District for their hard work in helping get this parcel thinned and restored!

Before



After



ꞑuwaꞑáꞑawí (Thank You) !!

2023 wrap up!

By Rhiana Jones Environmental Director



Hello Washoe Community and Environmental Partners! As 2023 has come to an end, we are planning and looking forward to the future, finding new ways to engage the community and environmental partners and continue our thousands of years of stewardship in our homelands. This past year we furthered many projects and partnerships and are excited to continue this work in the new year!

Washoe Environmental Protection Department (WEPD) has engaged in Healthy Country Planning with the Nature Conservancy and are looking to examples set by Aboriginal People of Australia and the Yurok, Hupa, and Karuk Tribes of Northern California. Healthy Country Planning will identify threats to our environment and culture and address how we, as

Washoe people, will work towards protecting those resources in the future.

We will be continuing our post fire restoration in the pine nut hills this year and will continue to propagate and grow Pinyon pine for planting on Tribal land as well as on adjacent lands in collaboration with our partners. In addition to restoration, we are looking into how we conduct more fuels reduction on Tribal lands to protect our cultural and natural resources before a wildfire comes through.

WEPD will be continuing with their Aquatic Invasive Species work in the Tahoe Basin and work to prevent the spread of invasive species in Lake Tahoe as well as boosting our efforts with Lahontan Cutthroat reintroduction! We also hope to take the Mayala Wata Restoration Project to the next stage and have the meadow thinned in 2024.

In addition to the above mentioned projects, we also continue to sample surface water quality on tribal lands, are engaged in the Leviathan Mine risk assessment reviews, are working on restoration of Tribal buildings, monitoring of invasive and noxious weeds on tribal lands and will be joining new projects that will train our staff in project planning and NEPA/CEQA in Dog Valley!

As all the work we do is affected by climate change, we will continue our efforts in climate adaptation planning to preserve and protect Washoe cultural and natural resources. Thank you to our community and partners for all the wonderful collaborations and support. Looking forward to seeing you all in the new year!

~Rhiana Jones

Washoe Environmental Protection Department

Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals

Tribal Superfund Working Group

Leviathan Mine Site Tour!



On September 19th 2023, the Washoe Environmental Protection Department were hosts to the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) Tribal Superfund Working Group (TSFWG) on a site visit to Leviathan Mine Superfund Site in Alpine County, California.

Sixteen (16) participants attended the two (2) day training. The first day was a classroom session to give the group background information on the history of Leviathan, and the role the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Atlantic Richfield (ARCO), Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (LRWQCB), and the Washoe Tribe play with the site. The second day was the site tour of Leviathan so the group could see the extent of contamination, along with the steps being taken address acid mine drainage (AMD) generation. This is the first of hopefully many meaningful collaborations with ITEP, and is a great first step in getting the Washoe Tribe's voice out to Indian Country pertaining to environmental issues.

The Washoe Environmental Protection Department wants to send thanks out to all agencies who attended the training, EPA, ARCO, LRWQCB. Without their participation this would not be possible. This event highlighted the working relationship the Washoe Tribe has with EPA and its partners, and how it has improved after changes in project officers throughout the years.

- Cale Pete

Washoe Environmental Protection Department

CURBSIDE RECYCLING IS ENDING

LAST DAY: DECEMBER 29th

WEPD would like to thank all participants in Washoe country for recycling over the years and doing your part to protect and clean up Mother Earth!



But Good News!

Washoe communities can still recycle!

As curbside ends, WEPD is transitioning to the next phase and opening The Modified Transfer Station at 1000 Memdewee Dr in Gardnerville, NV



Name: _____

Date: _____

Find the words listed. Words may appear forward, backward, up, down or diagonal. Words may overlap and cross each other. When you have found a word, be sure to circle it and cross it off the list.



NATURE

Word Search



W	C	X	R	E	V	I	R	V	M	R	L	R	K	D	V	F
C	V	N	C	S	T	T	R	E	E	K	H	D	Z	V	R	N
I	H	A	S	Q	R	B	N	H	T	N	L	K	D	O	P	J
T	P	O	L	T	Q	C	A	V	E	R	Z	Y	L	L	L	W
C	M	T	P	L	E	K	A	L	A	D	T	K	E	C	A	O
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- ARCTIC
- BEACH
- CAVE
- CLIFF
- COAST
- COUNTRYSIDE
- DESERT
- ENVIRONMENT
- FIELD
- FLOWER
- FOREST
- GRASS
- HILL
- ISLAND
- LAKE

- LAND
- MEADOW
- MOSS
- MOUNTAIN
- OCEAN
- PLANTS
- RAINFOREST
- RIVER
- SAND
- SEA
- SHRUB
- TREE
- VALLEY
- VOLCANO
- WATERFALL



OPEN

For your recycling convenience — recycle drop-off is available during non-business hours.

WEPD's Modified Transfer Station is OPEN

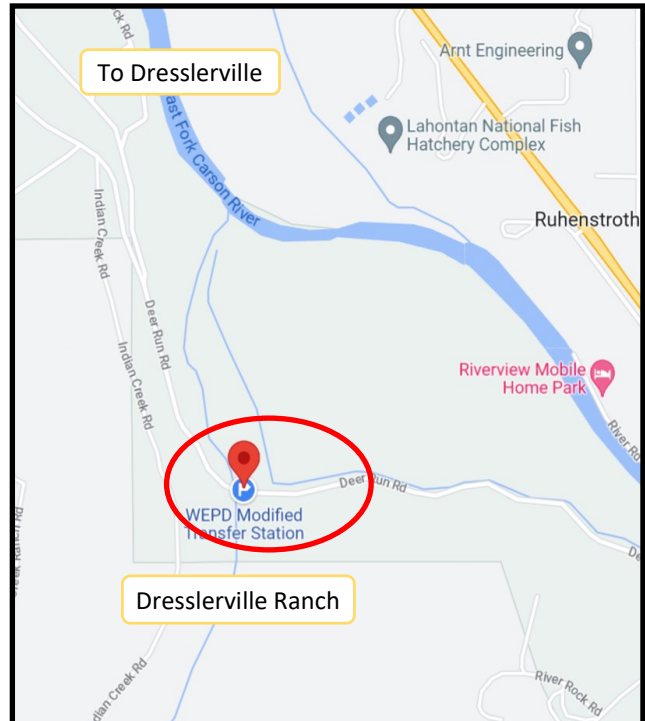
1000 Memdewee Run, Gardnerville, NV

What is allowed to be dropped-off at the Transfer Station?

Paper	Tin cans
Aluminum	Plastic bottles
Glass	Magazines
Cardboard	& NO PIZZA BOXES!!!

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW):

Gasoline	Used Oil
Vehicle Parts	Tires
Aerosol Cans	Batteries (Car/Home)
Propane Tanks	Electronics
Fluorescent Lights	Heater/Coolers
Microwaves	
Antifreeze & other Automotive Fluids	



The entrance gate is unlocked

1. Place recyclables in the **blue** recycle trailer bins
2. Appliances and Tires in the drop-off areas
3. HHW in designated areas—no leaking containers
4. **Please be sure to close the gate when you leave.**



Please Call WEPD if you have questions! Phone #(775)-265-8680

RECYCLE ONLY

NO TRASH OF ANY KIND ♦ **NO CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS** ♦ **NO MEDICAL WASTE**
NO FURNITURE OR MATTRESSES ♦ **NO PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS** ♦ **NO STYROFOAM**
NO PIZZA BOXES!!!

