WEPD SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



WEPD APRIL EVENT

Washoe Healthy Country Planning Workshop

APRIL 26th, 27th

at the Woodfords Community Building

9am-4pm







HELP US IDENTIFY:

- Washoe Land Stewardship Values!
- Threats to our Nature & Culture
- How to restore balance to our lands
- Endangered resources needed to teach our youth their traditional heritage.
- Washoe Tribe's Core Values and threats to those values.
- What Elder's want to share with future generations of Washoe

The Healthy Country Planning workshop is an opportunity for our tribe members to create a plan, that reflects the Washoe Tribe's vision, on what future ancestral-homeland management efforts should be.

Your Voice Matters!

In this issue:

Willow Burns & Education..... pg 3
Lahontan Cutthroat Trout .....pg 4
Pinyon Jays.....pg 6
Invasive Species Cooperative Agreement.....pg 7
Opportunities for Input: Elders to Youth.....pg 8
Word Search.....pg 10
Resilience Garden Spring Planting & Expansion..pg 11

WEPD MAY EVENT





Willow Burns & Education

At the Dresslerville Willow Patch

By Fire Restoration & Resilience Specialist Kevin Rogers

On the 18th and 19th of January, and the 16th of February, the Washoe Environmental Protection Department, and staff from the Washoe Tribe's Roads Department and Resource Crew were able to burn off the pile burns at the Dresslerville willow patch. These burns were conducted to encourage the willow to grow back straighter and with fewer bugs in it, to be better for basket weaving.



Top: Pile burn on 01/19/2024

All three burns went well, with the fire staying within the unit boundaries and under control. After the burns, WEPD staff took time to inventory the new plants coming up in the willow patch. While there are a lot of invasive weeds that are growing in the pre-disturbed soil, some seed banks of native and cultural plants have been rejuvenated. Notable plants are California Mugwort/Wormwood, Watercress, Wild Rose, and Rabbitbrush.

Bottom: Fresh green-up in the burned area



WEPD staff led two education and outreach sessions at the willow patch to teach Washoe youth about the importance of good fire on the landscape, and its role in bringing new plants and preventing catastrophic wildfires. Kids were provided with a scavenger hunt to go and look for the new growth that is coming back, and to learn about what cultural plants respond well to fire. More educational events are being planned to continue passing that knowledge on to the younger generation.



Left: Watercresss

Right: California Mugwort/ Wormwood



Lahontan Cutthroat Trout

By Kristina Burnette—Environmental Scientist



Spawning season has begun at the Lahontan National Fish Hatchery! WEPD staff assisted with retrieval of eggs and milk (sperm) to start the process of egg fertilization of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout back in February. This process required a lot of hands on help between WEPD and USFWS. Each fish within this facility is tagged with a PIT tag which is used to identify the fish and their genetics. The first process was to work with the males. This consisted of netting one fish at a time and wave the fish over a PIT scanner. Once the fish is scanned, it is brought to the next station to extract milk which is extracted into a tube and labeled with that fish's information. The next step is to begin extract female eggs which goes along the same process of netting the fish and bringing it to the scanner. USFWS staff extract the eggs into a quart size bag and then brought to a different station where USFWS use a mixture of distilled water with the eggs and milk to start activation. Once this mixture is activated, everything is moved side to side for a few minutes. The activation time, side to side time, and finish time along with the genetics information are labeled on the bag which are moved to a different part of the facility where they will be placed in tanks to grow and one day swim in their new home at Lake Tahoe.





Trivia!

What color are Lahontan Cutthroat Trout eggs?

A: Orange



WEPD's Modified Transfer Station is OPEN

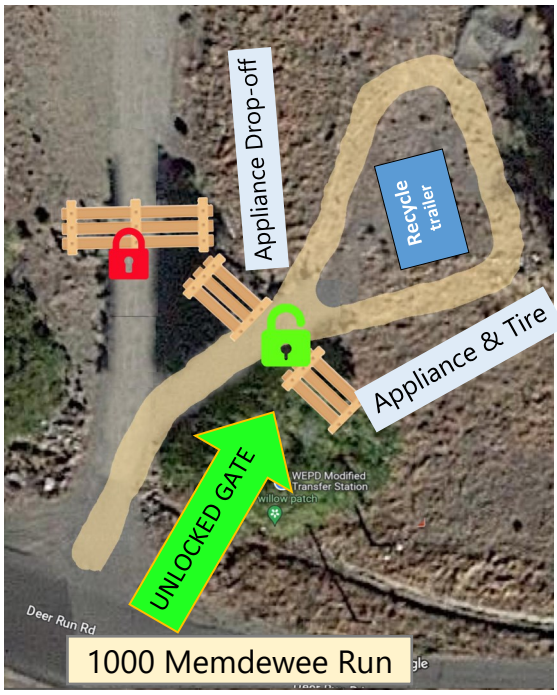
1000 Memdewee Run, Gardnerville, NV

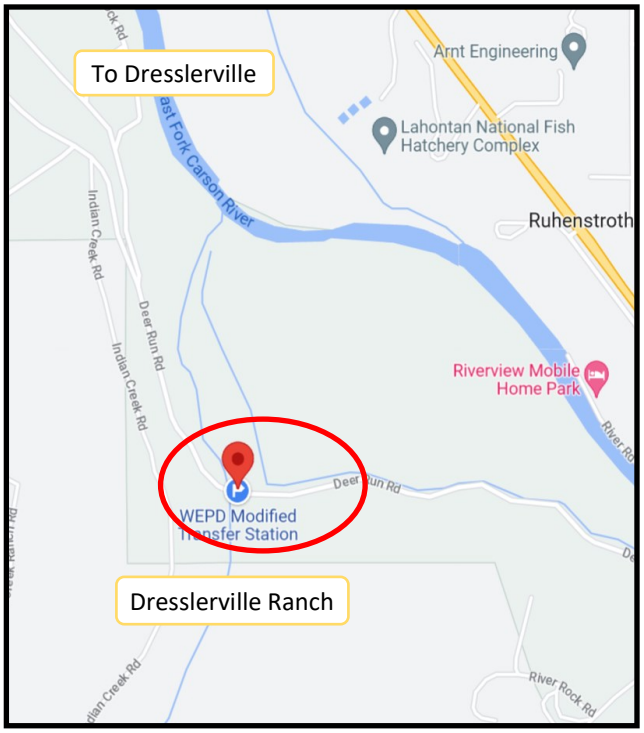
What is allowed to be dropped-off at the Transfer Station?

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!!!



Pinyon Jays

By Allison Kerley, Environmental Specialist

In August, 2023, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began their review the status of the Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) to determine if it is eligible to be listed on the Endangered Species List. This decision is a result of a petition submitted in 2022 to have the Pinyon Jay put on the endangered species list. Pinyon Jay population is estimated to have decreased by about 80% since the 19680s. Threats to the Pinyon Jay include wildfires, habitat loss from deforestation, and decreasing availability of their primary food source, pine nuts, due to drought. Several states, including Nevada, have already listed the Pinyon Jay as Threatened and a Priority Species.

About Pinyon Jays

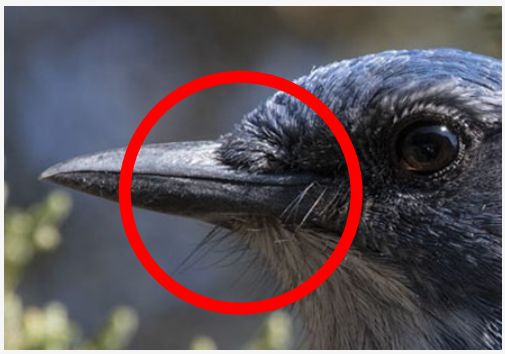
Pinyon Jays are gregarious, highly social birds who live in large flocks across Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. They don't migrate; instead, they travel across their expansive home ranges, utilizing different areas during different times of the year. In the fall, for example, Pinyon Jays travel to areas of high pine nut productivity to cache (harvest and store) pine nuts in piles under rocks and low brush, such as sage-brush, at the very edge of where Pinyon Juniper Forests and Sagebrush Shrublands meet.

Did You Know?

Pinyon Jays evolved alongside Pinyon Pine trees, and have traits specifically adapted for eating Pinyon Pine nuts. For example, Pinyon Jays have long, pointed beaks that enable them to pry into closed pinyon cones. Another example is the lack of the rictal bristles (the feathers covering the nostrils and beak) that other related species have. The rictal bristles could potentially get covered in sap when the birds pry open pinyon cones. Not having the rictal bristles mean Pinyon Jays don't have to worry about sap gumming up the bristles, potentially obstructing their breathing.



A picture of a fluffed up Pinyon Jay, a behavior done to keep themselves warm. The red circle shows the lack of rictal bristles over the nostril and beak. (Credit: Andrew Spencer) https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pinyon_Jay/photo-gallery/302351591



A picture of a Woodhouse Scrub Jay. The red circle shows the rictal bristles over the nostrils and around the beak. (Credit: Mia McPherson) https://www.onthewingphotography.com/wings/2018/09/13/woodhouses-scrub-jay-portrait-in-the-stansbury-mountains/

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Aquatic Invasive Species Cooperative Agreement

By John Warpeha, Environmental Scientist

WEPD's staff continue to engage in work, as agreed to, under an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife' Service in Reno. WEPD staff will be submitting a 2024 Scope of Work to the USFWS to continue to participate in activities and tasks with the goal of reducing or eliminating AIS. An example of an aquatic invasive species are the Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curlyleaf Pondweed, which are found in areas like the Tahoe Keys, and Lake Tahoe. Invasive species are any kind of non-native organisms that cause harm.

WEPD provides reports to the USFWS every 2 weeks. Each report form consists of 22 questions that allow the USFWS to gauge the efforts that WEPD is putting toward this important program. One question might be: please discuss WEPD's staff coordination efforts with partners in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The report is submitted directly to the USFWS. WEPD is currently scheduled to submit report number 35 to the USFWS.

WEPD staff have continued to attend the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Weed Coordinating Group meetings. which are important for updating participants about the status of Federal Lake Tahoe Restoration Act funds that are instrumental for funding AIS surveys and removal activities in Lake Tahoe.

In order to help keep invasive species out of Lake Tahoe there will be a non-motorized watercraft washing station available at Meeks Bay to clean water craft before entering the Lake. Active control of AIS is occurring at the mouth of Meeks Creek by using barriers and hand removal. WEPD staff continue to monitor developments in response to the discovery of New Zealand Mud snails, off shore of the Tahoe Keys. This mud snail species can only be addressed with containment activities and not control at this time. The USFWS has provided $100,000 for a New Zealand Mud snail grid survey. WEPD staff strongly welcome your questions regarding this cooperative agreement.

Invasive Species—Curlyleaf Pondweed

Can be found growing in large clusters at Lake Tahoe.



Photo: M. Rydel, Marine Taxonomic Services



Restoring native species: WEPD's Environmental Scientist, Kris Burnette, rinsing a container of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout eggs, at the Lahontan National Fish Hatchery in Gardnerville, NV. This is needed to improve the propagation chances of this cold water native fish species. The fish that result from these eggs will be re-introduced into Lake Tahoe. The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout are released at special events that Washoe Tribal members can attend. WEPD works closely with the USFWS and other agencies to protect Lake Tahoe and to restore our cultural heritage. Photo taken February, 2024.



Opportunities for Input: Elders to Youth

By James Gatzke—Environmental Scientist

Preserving, reviving and living the Washoe culture and traditions.



It's the first line in the vision statement of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. Washoe Environmental Protection Department (WEPD) aims to turn that vision into a reality for Tribal members and descendants, not just on the lands held in trust by Bureau of Indian Affairs, but on all lands within the Washoe homelands. The WEPD is building effective working relationships with key partners and allies in Tahoe and beyond, so that Tribal members and descendants can preserve, revive, and live the Washoe culture and traditions. The key ingredient in this effort is the input of elders, youth, and everyone in between to help imagine and describe this vision of Washoe culture and traditions. Below are some opportunities for providing input to the WEPD during this year.

Washoe Elder Center Outreach: The WEPD staff visit with elders a couple times per month during meals in Dresslerville and Stewart. This is an opportunity for elders to provide input on environmental programs and for the WEPD to share upcoming events. The WEPD coordinates with Washoe Elder Center to assist with rides for elders to attend events and field trips in the summer time. Please contact Darwin (775-309-9571) or James (775-309-8749), if you are interested in participating in any of the events described below.



Healthy Country Workshops: These two day workshops are two days of food and conversations about Washoe values and creating a plan based on those values. Healthy Country Workshops are a process developed by aboriginal groups in Australia and recently adopted by tribes in northern California to incorporate indigenous values (from land return to spirituality to materials for baskets) into a plan that will guide the future activities of the WEPD.

Restoration of Cultural Losses due to Leviathan Mine: The cultural losses due to pollution from Leviathan Mine are recognized and now there is a tested method to measure the cultural losses and identify what restoration should be. Prior work on restoration measured the fishing losses for Tribal members, but did not demonstrate a strong connection (nexus) between the losses and the proposed restoration. The WEPD will be coordinating a series of listening sessions for elders, cultural practitioners and other Tribal members to provide input on losses and restoration.



Tahoe Outreach: The WEPD will be arranging field trips for elders and others to visit California State Parks (CASP) and important streams around Tahoe. Washoe Tribe recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CASP which allows free entry to state parks around Tahoe for Tribal members and provides for the WEPD to be involved in co-stewardship of the state parks. The WEPD looks for input from elders and others on how Tahoe and the streams that flow into it can be improved. What Washoe values are being overlooked or not adequately addressed.

Dog Valley Meadow Restoration: The WEPD will be arranging field trips for elders and others to visit this mountain meadow located on ancient Washoe paths between Tahoe and Wel Mel Ti. The WEPD will be working with partners to create plans and designs to restore the meadow and the many cultural plants and animals that depend on.

FUN RUN!

Join WEPD for the Annual Earth Day Fun Run!

Get Some Exercise!

Win Prizes!

1 Mile total distance

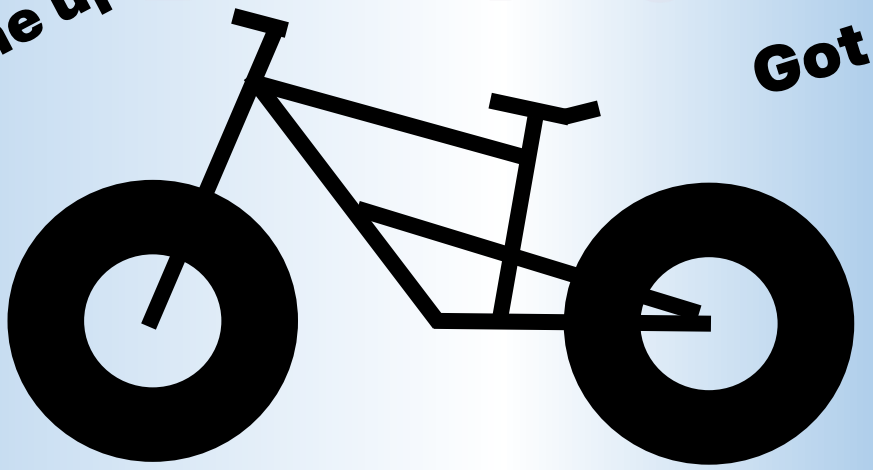
Fun Run starts at 10am at the Carson Gym

Bike Repair Station

There will be a bike repair station set up at the Earth Day event!

Need a tune up?

Got a flat?



Bring your bike by and get it fixed up free of charge!!!

Spring Time is...

Planting Time

bloom
green
pollen
soil
Sunlight
equinox
hatch
potting
sowing
Transplant
germinate
metamorphosis
seeding
sprout
water

K Q C D F P A P H T C V S M Q
Q Z Z Z O N B M M A M R V Z G
P U P L B C E U E H T X E X M
C Y L K P S O F T O N C Z I I
R E T U O R P S A K X B H J C
N A G I H X L I M X G U Z L M
B P L N Y C X E O E N V Z P E
N R O S I O G E R M I N A T E
J E K T N D K O P W W H J C Z
M V E I T X E C H A O D P K Z
V K U R E I G E O T S P A M L
K Q G N G P N Y S E L K E O B
E N X V I O V G I R E M C O E
T H G I L N U S S R X D X L J
T R A N S P L A N T S M N B Q



Resilience Garden Spring Planting and Expansion Update

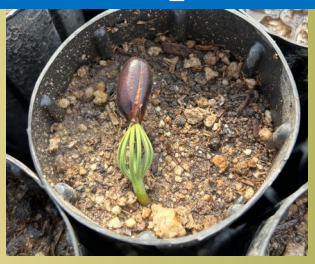
By Logan Gmuender, Environmental Specialist

Spring Planting

This Spring WEPD staff started planting Pinyon Pine in the Resilience Garden Greenhouse with total of 7000 seedlings from the seeds collected last fall harvest in the Pinenut Mountains. The preparation for planting started early January with staff efforts to fill 7000 pots with soil for these seedlings and starting the Pinyon Pine seeds sprouting through cold stratification in wet media in the refrigerator for couple months. The first 5000 Pinyon Pine seedlings were planted near the end of February with WEPD staff and outside volunteers that took over two weeks to plant that now has been growing for a month. The second batch of 2000 Pinyon Pine was sprouted a month later and through the last few weeks WEPD Staff and Carson and Stewart Youth planted 2000 Pinyon Pine and secondary crop of 10,000 Sagebrush. This



Carson and Stewart Youth out planting Pinyon pine on their Spring Break.



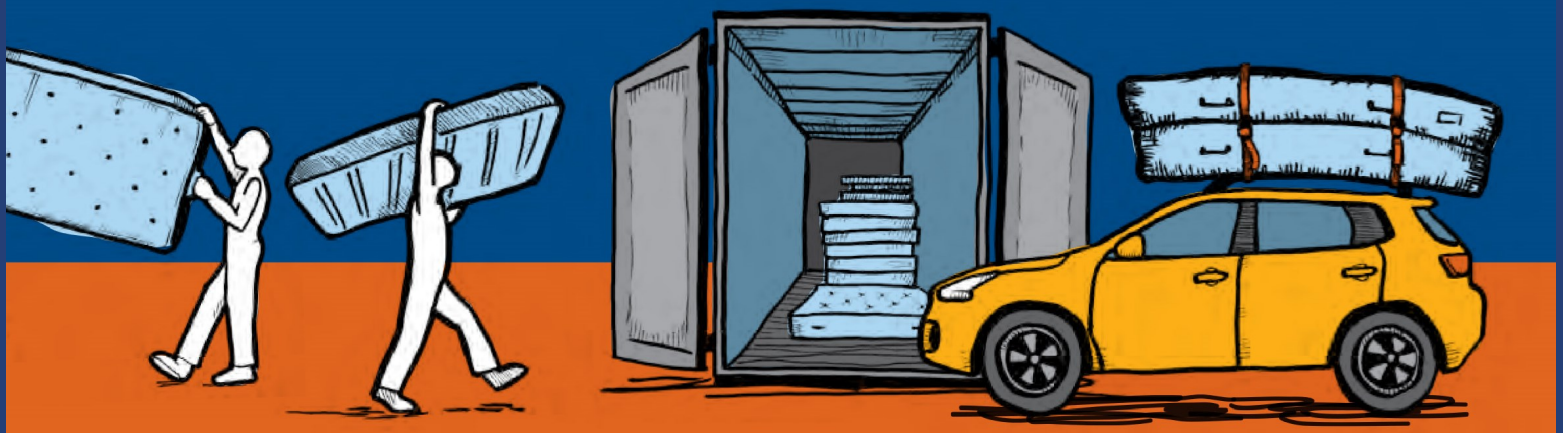
Above: Pinyon Pine seedling after 1month. **Below:** Raised site for new Greenhouses Expansion.



Resilience Greenhouse Expansion

The next update is the expansion of the resilience garden greenhouse capacity with the starting of the construction of 5 additional greenhouses that will add growing space for a total of 100,000 seedlings of Pinyon pine, Sagebrush and medicinal plants per a growing season. The construction started with raising ground in the building site by couple feet to prevent flooding damage that was completed in March ahead of construction of the 5 additional greenhouses. The construction of the additional greenhouses will take place over next few months with the help of Thriving Roots Inc. to complete them. This exciting addition of greenhouse space will provide a bright opportunity for the Washoe people to secure their fire damaged lands with traditional foods and native plants for the future generations to enjoy!

FREE mattress recycling at Woodfords Fire House!



What: **FREE Mattress Recycling for Alpine County Residents**
MATTRESSES, BOX SPRINGS AND FUTON MATTRESSES THAT SEPERATE FROM THE BASE ONLY. 10 UNITS MAX.

When: Call For Appointment or contact Community Chairman Ellis

Where: 96A Washoe Blvd.
Markleeville, CA 96120

Info: Call 775-265- 8680

bye bye mattress®
A Program of the Mattress Recycling Council®

ByeByeMattress.com

Management and Conservation of Pinyon and Juniper Woodlands

Public Workshop Hosted by the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service

Agenda Overview

May 8: 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. PT; May 9: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. PT

Nugget Casino Resort

1100 Nugget Avenue, Sparks, NV 89431

To attend the event, individuals are required to reserve a spot. This is a two-day workshop, but you must register for both days to attend. To attend on May 8, please register through the Eventbrite portal for day one here online: May 8 registration link. To attend on May 9, please register through the Eventbrite portal for day two here online: May 9 registration link.

Portions of the workshop will be livestreamed for those who cannot attend in person. Breakout and discussion sessions will not be available for virtual participation. For more details on the livestream and how to register, visit the webinar site Virtual Option Registration Link.

Desired Outcomes

This workshop aims to create a venue for information sharing among federal agencies, other land managers, Tribes, public land users and stakeholders, nongovernmental organizations, state and local governments and other interested entities on the range of ecosystem science and knowledge, management trends, social and cultural values, existing and potential threats, and climate resilience of pinyon and juniper woodlands, particularly mature and old-growth forests.

Topic Overview

The workshop consists of a set of presentations and panels with opportunities for the audience to engage with the presenters, other experts, and each other. Local Tribal presenters have been invited to share their perspectives on these topics and stewardship of pinyon and juniper woodlands.

Mature and Old Growth Pinyon and Juniper Woodlands

- Presentation overviewing the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service's national inventory and threat analysis of mature and old-growth forests, completed under Executive Order 14072. The presentation will focus on findings for pinyon and juniper woodlands.

Pinyon Juniper Ecology

- Exploration of the historical context and distribution of the various types of pinyon-juniper systems, current conditions, and the values associated with old-growth pinyon and juniper woodlands. Speakers will discuss wildlife species that inhabit pinyon and juniper woodlands and ecosystem function.

Trends and Threats

- Exploration of the current trends associated with pinyon and juniper woodlands, including geographic and population dynamics, such as contraction, expansion, and future conditions. Speakers will discuss climate impacts on pinyon-juniper systems and opportunities for increasing woodland resiliency.
- *Management of Pinyon and Juniper Woodlands*
- Speakers will discuss management goals and methods in pinyon and juniper woodlands related to habitat improvement, fuels, and forest health.

Interactive Opportunities

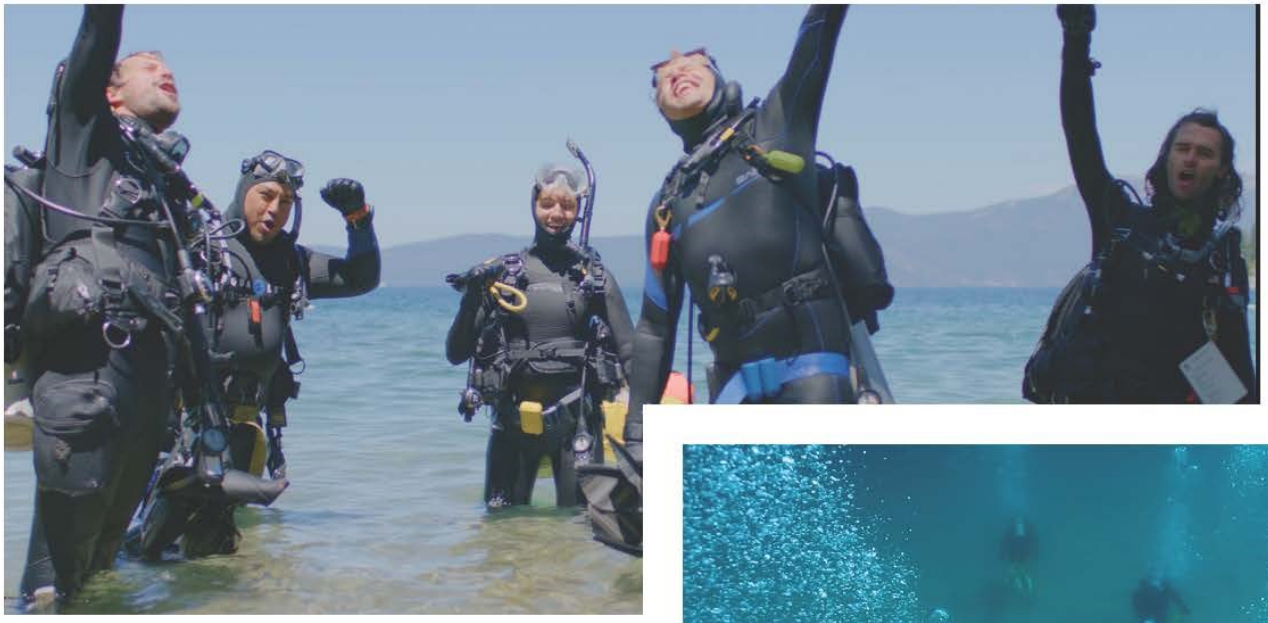
- Throughout the workshop, audience members will be able to participate in question-and-answer sessions after presentations.

- **Day 1:** https://www.eventbrite.com/e/science-and-management-of-pinyon-and-juniper-ecosystems-workshop-day-1-tickets-872243472707
- **Day 2:** https://www.eventbrite.com/e/science-and-management-of-pinyon-and-juniper-ecosystems-workshop-day-2-tickets-872244174807
- **Virtual:** https://empsi.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VybVJfzkSA6A1bXZ11chJQ#/registration

CLEAN UP THE LAKE

LEARN TO DIVE

Free SCUBA Certifications for Washoe Tribal Members





THIS PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- Cost free training and certifications
- Free rentals for all equipment
- Continued Certification beyond basic Open Water
- Learn valuable skills to protect treasured waters

CLEAN UP THE LAKE

Come join our dynamic team of volunteer SCUBA divers working to get litter out of Tahoe and surrounding Lakes. Check out our website for more details on classes and what Clean Up The Lake is up to now!

SPONSORED BY:

ROSE FOUNDATION for COMMUNITIES and the ENVIRONMENT

MORE INFO HERE:

REACH OUT TO SHAWN@CLEANUPTHEAKE.ORG TO SIGN UP