

Lake level causing problems for boat owners

By Kathryn Reed

Boats already aren't able to get in and of Lake Tahoe marinas and with only a little runoff expected to come down from higher elevations in the next couple months, the situation is only going to get worse as summer rolls into fall.

The Tahoe Queen paddle-wheeler can no longer get in and out of its home port at Ski Run Marina.

"There are plans to dredge if the drought continues. It is being done directly by Aramark," Mansoor Alyeshmerni, owner of Ski Run Marina, told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Steve Pascal had to remove his boat this winter from the Tahoe Keys Marina because he can't get out to the lake. Photo/Provided

Aramark's habit of not returning calls continues. No permit has been sought by Aramark to dredge, according to Lahontan officials.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board has permitted a maintenance dredging project that has already started at the

North Tahoe Marina.

"I've heard from a representative of Tahoe City Marina they may wish to dredge this summer. We are talking about maintenance dredging. That is to dredge to the area that has previously been dredged," Alan Miller with Lahontan told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The agency is also in the process of permitting a maintenance dredging operation for Tahoe City Public Utility District.

Miller said now is the typical time to dredge so marinas avoid the busy summer season when boats want access. It takes about 30 to 60 days to get a permit.

"They can (dredge) anytime unless there's a habitat issue," Miller said.

Steve Pascal had to remove his 56-foot-long boat last month from the Tahoe Keys Marina because he could no longer get out of the channel into the lake. He hasn't been able to do so since September.

The lake level was at 6,225 feet then. The natural rim of Lake Tahoe is 6,223 feet. The water level is about 1 foot above that now.

"My boat draws 4.5 feet and I was unable to get out. The water level in the channel now is about 3 feet," Pascal told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The majority of boats in Lake Tahoe need more than 3 feet underneath them to get out of the channel."

He said the Keys is the only marina that can house his vessel and is the only one where he can remove it. Francesca, named after his grandmother, is now in San Diego.

What irks Pascal is that part of his slip fee was a surcharge for dredging maintenance. He's had large boats at the marina since 1993. In those 21 years he said he's spent \$240,000 on slip fees, maintenance dredging fee, and water quality fees.

Pascal said he's talked to Robert Spinnato, general manger of the marina, about dredging, but nothing ever happened.

Spinnato did not return multiple phone calls.