

## Calkins: There is another lake

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According to a recent Associated Press article, lawmakers (Senators Feinstein and Boxer included) plan to introduce legislation authorizing \$390 million over the next eight years to protect the clarity of Lake Tahoe. The lake has only been clear to a depth of about 70 feet for the past eight years but in 1968 was clear to 102 feet.

A crisis? The money will be added to current funding that is being used to control erosion, etc., towards the goal of managing algae in Tahoe. Management plans to keep non-native species (e.g. mussels) out of this favored lake will also be funded. A noble effort as this lake is a state and national treasure.

However, as we know, Clear Lake is also a state and national treasure. While not an ultra-clear alpine lake, it is eutrophic and known worldwide by scientists as one of the oldest and most interesting lakes in North America.

Geologists are amazed and challenged to understand all the mechanisms that have kept our lake healthy and in existence for over 500,000 years &ndash; maybe over 1,000,000 years.

Although seemingly off the radar of our elected officials, our national treasure lake is seriously challenged. Arguably, more significantly than Tahoe is.

The watershed issues being addressed here to manage algae in our lake, the weed issues including hydrilla, and the prevention efforts relating to mussels and other invasive species are all underfunded. One to 10 percent of the funds our lawmakers are planning for Tahoe could go a long way towards properly managing threats to Clear Lake over the next several years.

Tahoe clearly has more economic leverage (state and national) than we do. But these funds are being justified for environmental reasons and our lake is of equal or greater environmental significance than Tahoe. The funds are to &ldquo;protect&rdquo; a lake.

We all need to write and call our senators and congressional reps and let them know that there is another lake that is more in need of such protection. Everyone can contribute through this effort to both protect our lake and our economy. The first letters should come from our supervisors to their political chain of command firmly asking why Tahoe and not us.

Ed Calkins lives in Kelseyville.