

WATERLINE

March 2004

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**Please save *Waterline* issues
for future reference.**

Annual conference is March 31-April 2

This year's conference offers up-to-date information from lake experts on a variety of lakes' topics that are relevant for students, lake residents lake educators and lake professionals. The Bellingham conference runs from March 31 for those in the Hydrolab workshop, or April 1 for those attending the WALPA sessions, to April 2.

Session topics are: lake phosphorus retention and management; Lake Whatcom restoration and management; volunteer monitoring programs; fish and water quality; control of milfoil and invasive weeds in lakes; fish, lakes and stream restoration; lake organizations and regulations; nuisance waterfowl control and management; innovative technologies for lake restoration; and research on lake ecology and management.

On April 2, an aquatic plant workshop will be offered by Kathy Hamel and Jenifer Parsons of Ecology. They encourage participants to bring aquatic plants for identification.

Everyone is welcome to enter their lake-related photo to WALPA's third annual photo contest. For details on the contest, see the brochure or contact Ryan Langan, 360-754-3355 or langanr@co.thurston.wa.us.

Questions about the conference may be directed to WALPA President Lee Mellish, 1-509-922-9016 or WALPA Past-President Rob Zisette, 1-206-441-9080. Thanks to WALPA President-Elect Barry Moore for organizing the conference.

Hydrolab workshop on Wed.

T.J. Sisson will lead a free workshop on Hydrolab maintenance and calibration on Wed., March 31 from 9 am to 4 pm. Participants should bring their own Hydrolab equipment. A free lunch will be provided during the session.

To register for the workshop contact T.J. Sisson at 1-208-543-6697 or tssisson@hach.com. Registration for this workshop is separate from the WALPA conference registration.

About the Lakeway Inn

The conference will be held at the Best Western Lakeway Inn in Bellingham. There is a 24-hour business center with a fax machine, large copier, and computers with Internet access, plus a Fitness Center.

A special rate offered for the WALPA conference is \$84 for two double beds or a king-size bed. Call 888-671-1011 to make a reservation. Mention the WALPA conference to receive these special rates.

To see the hotel or for more information, visit www.bellingham-hotel.com or call 888-671-1011.

Conference brochures were mailed in mid-February. The brochure is available in a PDF format at www.nalms.org/walpa.

House/Senate Bills address tax on LMDs

By Paula R. Lowe, editor

There were two bills before the legislature, HB 2432 and SB 6145, this session addressing "exempting lake management districts from business and occupation tax." The House Bill sponsors were Representatives Alexander, Romero, Bush and Hunt, while the Senate Bill sponsors were Senators Swecker, Fraser, Winsley and Haugen.

"The Department of Revenue was contemplating requiring Lake Management Districts to pay a Business and Occupation tax — the proceeds from their dues," explains Representative Gary Alexander. "After we filed the bills, they had a change of heart and are not going to access a B & O tax. Therefore we don't need the bills. But if they ever change their mind and attempt to get greedy, I will re-introduce the bill, HB 2432, to exempt Lake Management Districts from B & O taxes."

For information on the bills, visit www.leg.wa.gov/wsl.adm/bills.cfm. To contact Representative Alexander, alexande_ga@leg.wa.gov.

WALPA bylaws amended

By Isabel Ragland, WALPA board member

At the January 12 board meeting, the WALPA board voted to amend the bylaws, Article IV, Section D. This section of the bylaws which stated that the membership year ends on December 31 was amended to read that the membership year of the Association shall end on March 31 or at the time of the annual conference, whichever occurs later in the year. This change aligns the membership year with the time of the conference and allows payment of dues to be combined with the registration for the annual conference.



Waterline: Special delivery

By Paula R. Lowe, editor

This issue of the *Waterline* was mailed to past members and lakes associations to inform lake residents and others about the many benefits of being a member of the Washington State Lake Protection Association (WALPA).

Lake associations are especially encouraged to join WALPA, a chapter of the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS).

All members receive the quarterly newsletter, the *Waterline*, and a brochure about the annual conference.

As a member of WALPA, associations may request the organization's lake experts to make educational presentations at meetings.

The upcoming annual conference is a great time to learn more about lakes, current issues and regulations.

Conference participants receive a year-long individual membership to WALPA when they attend.

To renew your membership in the organization, complete the form below and mail it to WALPA. We are looking forward to seeing you soon!

Attention lake associations

We are updating our mailing list and would like to have the names and addresses of your current officers. Remember to include your lake association name. Send your address corrections and updates to WALPA, P.O. Box 4245, Seattle, WA 98104 or to moya.joubert@ci.seattle.wa.us.

For further information about WALPA, visit our Web site, www.nalms.org/walpa/.

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WALPA is a nonprofit organization. WALPA accepts donations of any amount throughout the year. Dues are renewable at the annual spring conference, but if you attend the conference, you will automatically receive one-year membership to WALPA.

New permits available by request

By Tricia Shoblom, Lakes Specialist, Washington State Department of Ecology Northwest Regional Office



Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) in past years has provided oversight of pesticide applications to waters of the state with Administrative Orders (seasonal permits that preceded NPDES Permits). On March 12, 2001, The Ninth Circuit District Court ruled in the Talent Irrigation District v. Headwaters Inc. case. The ruling affects nine western states and requires that herbicide applications to waters of the United States be covered under an NPDES Permit. Since that time Ecology has developed NPDES Permits for Mosquito Larval Control, Fish Management, Irrigation Systems, Oyster Growers, Noxious Weed Control, and Nuisance Plant and Algae Control.

The Aquatic Nuisance Plant and Algae Control NPDES Permit went into effect on July 5, 2002. The permit covers aquatic nuisance plant and algae control activities that discharge herbicides or algaecides into surface waters in the state of Washington. Permittees are generally lake associations seeking to control native plants that are viewed as hindering beneficial uses such as swimming or boating. Between the north and southwest regional offices of Ecology, there are approximately 30 lakes that receive seasonal coverage under the permit.

The process for obtaining coverage under the Nuisance and Algae NPDES Permit can be accomplished by completing a few simple steps. First, contact the Natural Heritage Program to determine if the proposed waterbody has the presence of threatened, rare, or sensitive plants. Second, submit a completed application for coverage from 38 days prior to the treatment, along with a copy of a published public notice, and the expected date of the second publication. Publishing the second notice (at least one week after the first notice) is the start of the 30-day public comment period. Permit coverage will be effective 38 days after Ecology's acceptance of an application, or

publication of the second published notice, whichever occurs later.

The Aquatic Nuisance Plant and Algae Permit also requires that an Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (IAVMP) to be developed when more than two coverages per permit cycle (5 years) are desired. Appendix A of the permit details what is required for an IAVMP to be approvable. Describing past management efforts, setting reasonable goals, detailing lake-specific waterbody characteristics, researching alternative plant control alternatives, and developing a detailed action strategy are some of the areas that must be included in a plan. The Aquatic Nuisance Plant and Algae Permit can be viewed at:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/pesticides/final_pesticide_permits/nuisance/nuisance_index.html.

To view an example of an approved Nuisance IAVMP, go to: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/pesticides/index.html

For information, contact Tricia Shoblom 425-649-7288, or tsho461@ecy.wa.gov or Margaret Hill at 360-407-0246 or mhil@ecy.wa.gov

WALPA produces fact sheets

By Isabel Ragland, WALPA board member

The WALPA lake user survey showed five areas of concern. They are: impact of new development on shorelines and wetlands; responsible pesticide and fertilizer use on lake shores and watersheds; bacterial and fecal contamination; invasive aquatic plants; and nuisance waterfowl.

Each of these topics will be addressed in fact sheets presented as two-page pull-out sections inserted in the *Waterline* beginning in June and for the following four issues.

Ecology welcomes comments on state's Water Quality Assessment

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) has prepared a preliminary assessment of water quality in Washington. Assessed waters include all the rivers, lakes and marine waters in the state where data were available. The assessed waters are listed in five categories that describe the status of water quality. Category 5, the polluted waters category, is also known as the "303(d) list." **Comments are welcome on Washington's Water Quality Assessment through March 15.**

Information, including comprehensive listings and an interactive map that shows all waters in the state for which data exist, is available at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/2002/2002-index.html.

Ecology is asking people to review waters with which you are familiar and provide comments where you see problems or disagree with the assessment results. If you disagree with the assessment results, explain why and submit additional data, if available.

During this review, Ecology will also accept new data that were not submitted during the 2002 call for data. This information will be reviewed and incorporated into the final assessment as appropriate. See the Web page for details on how to submit data.

Since this is a large database with over 40,000 records, it is available on Ecology's Web site. For an alternate format, contact Ken Koch at 360-407-6782, 303d@ecy.wa.gov or by mail, Ken Koch, Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.

Lakeside landscaping: Go native

Living near a lake offers residents beautiful surroundings and recreational opportunities. It also comes with the shared responsibility to keep the waters clean and healthy. One easy and inexpensive way to achieve this is to add a mix of native plants near the water's edge or along unstable slopes.

Rewards of going native

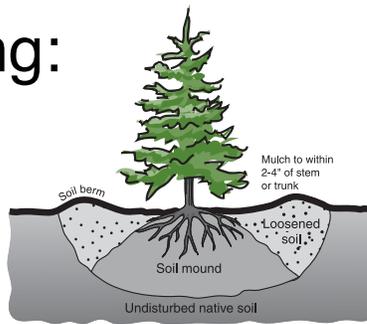
In the past, clearing vegetation near the shoreline and filling in low areas with sand or creating bulkheads was the standard practice. While this brought homeowners more traditional beach areas, water quality was detrimentally affected. Runoff from adjacent fertilized lawns and oils and other pollutants from nearby roads easily moved into lake water. Moreover, this type of landscape proved to attract nuisance waterfowl such as Canada geese, which can further degrade water quality.

Today we know that restoring native vegetation as a buffer along the edge of streams, lakes, and wetlands helps to maintain and improve the quality of our water. It also helps to prevent erosion, especially on steeper properties.

Plants can play a role in cleaning stormwater runoff by filtering out sediments, pollution, and bacteria. Homeowners are further rewarded with less erosion, minimal landscaping hassles, and far fewer geese calling their yards home.

Getting started

Planting a native plant buffer is not much different from planting a garden. A variety of beautiful trees, shrubs, perennials, and ground covers are available that are suitable for all tastes and budgets. Many local nurseries now offer native Northwest plants and advice on how to plant and maintain them. Additionally, a wealth of information is available online. A good place to start is with the King



County's Web site <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/PI/npresrcs.htm>. The site offers links to books and publications on native plants and a list of nurseries specializing in Northwest native plants. Another good Web site for information is Washington's Native Plant Society at www.wnps.org/index.html

Right plant, right place

Take a moment to assess what you already have and then work to augment existing plantings. Each native plant performs a role. Some are excellent at reducing erosion, others are beneficial for birds and other wildlife. For example, to attract hummingbirds, plant red flowering currant and orange honeysuckle.

Placement is important too. Sedges, rushes, and reeds grow best at the edges of water in sun or partial shade. Vine maples and dogwoods are good under-story trees, preferring light shade.

Slope-side planting

Some native plants have extensive root systems and excellent soil holding abilities. These plants can be used on steep slopes or on eroding water edges. For dry slopes plant big leaf maple, black hawthorn, kinnikinnick, Nootka roses, thimbleberry or sword fern. To control erosion near the water's edge, red osier dogwoods, willows, Oregon ash, and vine maples are good choices.

Make a positive change along the shore of your lake – GO NATIVE!

This article was written by King County staff and reprinted by permission.

Graphic credit - Laurel Preston, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

Pooping pets pose pollution predicament

From Washington State Department of Ecology

When Daisy and Digger dally on their daily doggie walks, they produce a surprising amount of bacteria-filled waste, adding up to as much as 150 tons a day in Washington alone.

According to the state Department of Ecology, all this pet waste can cause serious environmental harm unless it is properly controlled.

"In an area of 100,000 people, about the size of Everett or Yakima, dogs generate about two and a half tons of feces per day," said Ralph Svrjcek, a water clean-up specialist for Ecology. "That's almost two million pounds a year. That's a lot of bacteria."

Studies show about half of all dog owners walk their dogs in public places, and up to 40 percent of them don't pick up after their pets.

Dog and cat waste left on the ground can be washed into storm sewers, most of which drain directly into natural water bodies. There the waste contributes to all sorts of problems - from sick kids to mucky algae that suffocates fish and is sometimes poisonous to humans.

"It seems like such a small amount when it's just your dog, but it really does add up," Svrjcek said. "Many people don't realize how important it is to take care of their pet waste so it stays out of our lakes, rivers and streams."

The same bacteria that make pet waste dangerous to people in parks can make water unsafe for swimming or drinking. Children and others can get sick if they dunk their heads or accidentally get a mouthful of polluted water. And when waste gets into shellfish beds, it can make clams and oysters unsafe to eat.

Children and others who play in yards or in parks where pets do their business can pick up illnesses from disease-causing bacteria and parasites. These include diarrhea, fever, muscle aches, headaches, vomiting, roundworms and toxoplasmosis (a parasite **continued on page 5.**

Pooping pets

continued from page 4

carried by cats that can cause birth defects if a woman becomes infected during pregnancy). Other pets can get sick too.

So, what should a responsible pet owner do?

"Don't just throw your dog's business over the fence," Svrjcek warned. "Yes, it will biodegrade eventually, but meanwhile it can cause problems for the rest of us."

Cleaning up after pets can be as simple as taking along a plastic bag on your next walk. The "used" bag can be disposed safely by securing the plastic bag and putting it in a nearby trash can. At home, larger volumes of pet waste should be double-bagged to ensure it can be safely handled by local sanitation workers.

Many wastewater treatment plants allow pet waste to be flushed down the toilet (just the waste, not the

litter). Check with the treatment plant first, though.

Homeowners who use septic systems should use another disposal method for pet waste. For example, pet waste can be buried in the yard, at least six inches deep, away from vegetable gardens, lakes, streams, ditches or wells.

"Even in rural areas, if you leave your pet's waste to decay in your yard, try to make sure it doesn't cause a water pollution problem," Svrjcek said.

Clean up near wells, storm drains, ditches and waterways, and always remove waste from areas where children play.

For information, contact Leslie Thorpe, public information manager, 360-407-6848 or www.ecy.wa.gov.

Advertising lake-related products or services in the *Waterline* does not imply endorsement by WALPA or any of its officers.

Diseases that can be passed from pet waste to humans:

Campylobacteriosis - a bacterial infection carried by dogs and cats that frequently causes diarrhea in humans.

Salmonellosis - the most common bacterial infection transmitted to humans by other animals. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, vomiting and diarrhea.

Toxocariasis - roundworms usually transmitted from dogs to humans, often without noticeable symptoms, but may cause vision loss, a rash, fever or cough.

Toxoplasmosis - a parasite carried by cats that can cause birth defects if a woman becomes infected during pregnancy. Can

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Lake Focus on Lake Whatcom

By Heidi Wachter, Taylor Associates

Located in southwestern Whatcom County, Lake Whatcom provides an important and essential resource to the people and environment within its watershed. In addition to supporting the lake's biota and ecological processes, this multipurpose lake provides drinking water for more than half the population of Whatcom County. Other human uses include education, fishing, swimming and boating. To ensure protection and preservation of the lake as a drinking water source, Whatcom County, Water District #10, and the city of Bellingham have jointly adopted a set of goals, which are the foundation for the Lake Whatcom Management Program.

Physical characteristics

As the largest lake within the county, Lake Whatcom has a surface area of 5,000 acres with 26.5 miles of shoreline. This large (770,000 acre-feet), deep natural lake extends to a maximum depth of 330 feet, with a mean lake depth of 154 feet. Lake Whatcom's surface elevation is at 315 feet beneath its 56 square mile watershed. The western end of the lake extends into the city of Bellingham where its waters flow into Whatcom Creek and eventually into Bellingham Bay.

Fish use

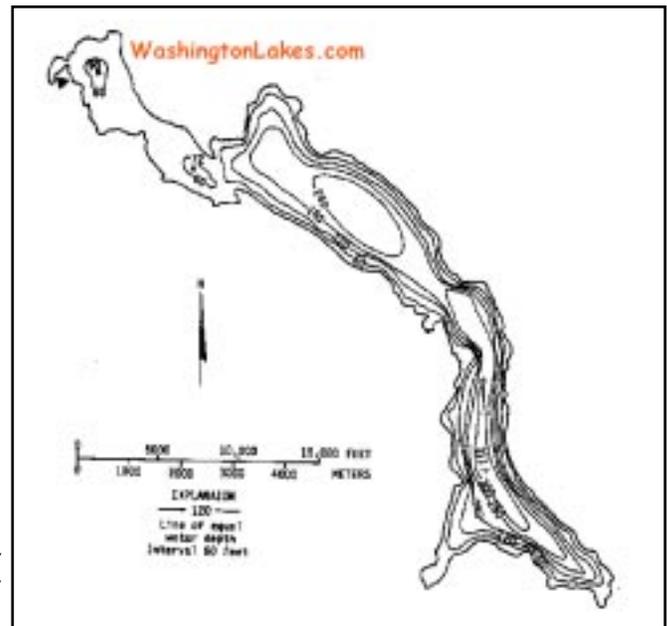
Lake Whatcom is inhabited by a variety of fish, including kokanee, brown bullhead, pumpkinseed, cutthroat trout, smallmouth bass and yellow perch. It is important to note that in 2001 a fish advisory for mercury in Lake Whatcom smallmouth bass and yellow perch was posted by Whatcom County Health and Human Services and the Washington State Department of Health. For more information on this advisory, contact these two agencies.

Water quality

Lake water quality has been affected by land uses in the watershed, which include forestry and urbanization. In 2000, Lake Whatcom was targeted for a five-year water cleanup program with implementation for 2000 through 2005. An Ecology Focus Paper (2002) noted pollutants in the lake to include depleted oxygen levels, high phosphorus levels, bacteria and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). A recent Western Washington University monitoring report (2001/2002) found relatively low soluble phosphorous levels at five monitoring sites and during the summer high total phosphorous levels at two of the five sites. Total bacteria counts were low for all sites with the exception of one site during September, October and December 2001. In response to community concerns for mercury contamination, mercury has been measured in the water column and at several lake inlets. Mercury levels were found to be below reporting limits and drinking water standards. Community concern for potential mercury contamination has prompted a United States Geological Services (USGS) study of mercury sources and movement within the watershed with results estimated for 2004. (See source list for details on water quality.)

Current research

The city of Bellingham and Western Washington University have long collaborated on research studies for Lake Whatcom. Working together since the 1960s and as a joint effort in 1981, they initiated a long-term water quality monitoring program. As part of this program, annual Monitoring Project reports have been written since 1990, with reports from 1998 to present available for download from the Institute's Web site (see sources).



Bathymetric map of Lake Whatcom. Figure provided by WashingtonLakes.com, with thanks to Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Additional studies on Lake Whatcom and the Lake Whatcom watershed include: an evaluation of the effectiveness of stormwater treatment in the watershed; a variety of undergraduate and graduate research projects; and development of a hydrologic model of the lake.

Note: WALPA makes no guarantee to the accuracy of this information.

Sources for this article:

- Robin Matthews, W.W.U., Institute for Watershed Studies
- Lake Whatcom Monitoring Project 2001/2002 Final Report, R. A. Matthews et al.
- Ecology. Lake Whatcom Cleaning up Water Pollution, Focus Paper Dec. 2002. Publication # 02-10-070.
- W.W.U., Institute for Watershed Studies – www.ac.wvu.edu/~iws
- Whatcom County, Public Works – www.co.whatcom.wa.us/publicworks/water
- Lake Whatcom Management Program – www.lakewhatcom.wsu.edu
- WashingtonLakes.com

Want to recommend a lake for the next Lake Focus? Send to Heidi Wachter at heidi@taylorassoc.net.

See television special about watersheds

EPA's Acting Assistant Administrator for Water Benjamin Grumbles announces the airing of an upcoming television special about watersheds co-produced by the Environmental Protection Agency and The Weather Channel. *After the Storm* premiered on The Weather Channel in early February, but additional showings are set for Sun., May 9 at 8:30 and 11:30 pm EST and Sat., June 26 at 8:30 and 11:30 pm EST. Check local listings for local times.

"I encourage everyone to tune in to learn more about the threats facing our nation's waters from polluted runoff," said Grumbles. *After the Storm* shows the connection between weather and watersheds and the importance of watershed protection. We all live in a watershed and we all have an impact on our environment."

The program reminds viewers that a finite amount of fresh water exists on the planet, and that everyone needs to take actions to protect water resources. "Over the last 30 years, the nation has done a tremendous job in tacking pollution from large factories and sewage treatment plants," said Grumbles. "Remaining threats are much more difficult to regulate. When it rains or when snow melts, pollutants from city streets, suburban lawns, and farms may run off into our nation's streams, lakes, wetlands and coastal waters."

The show highlights three case studies — Santa Monica Bay, the Mississippi River Basin/Gulf of Mexico, and New York City — where polluted runoff threatens watersheds highly valued for recreation, commercial fisheries and navigation, and drinking water. Key scientists, water quality experts, and citizens involved in local and national watershed protection efforts provide insight into the problems as well as solutions to today's water quality crisis.

Grumbles added, "EPA was pleased to team up with The Weather Channel on this educational special. Broadcast meteorologists are considered trusted and effective spokespersons for conveying complex environmental and scientific information to the American public, and millions of viewers tune into The Weather Channel daily for the latest weather updates. Weather events — like droughts, floods, and rain — directly impact the quality of our water resources. They offer a perfect opportunity for meteorologist to discuss connections between weather and watersheds." <http://watershed.interactive-environment.com/main/>

In addition to illustrating the environmental implications of weather events, the special provides useful tips on how people can help make a difference. *After the Storm* explains simple things people can do to protect their local watershed — such as picking up after one's dog and recycling household hazardous wastes. It also shows how some communities and private companies are getting involved through low impact development — utilizing rain gardens and green roofs to minimize stormwater runoff.

Viewers are encouraged to visit the EPA Web site, www.epa.gov/weatherchannel for more information about what they can do, including a free brochure about stormwater pollution.

After six months, EPA owns the rights to the special. The agency intends to make *After the Storm* available to other television stations and educational organizations interested in broadcasting the show.

Thanks to WALPA President Lee Mellish for submitting this article.



Waterline accepts ads

The *Waterline* accepts advertising for environmentally-friendly, lake-related products or services.

For advertising information and rates, contact Paula R. Lowe, 360-491-0109, pmrlowe@comcast.net.

Volunteer natural resources projects in Thurston and King Counties

Stream Team of Thurston County offers a Tour of Salmon Recovery Projects on Sat., March 6 from 9 am to 3 pm at the Thurston County Courthouse.

Learn about the most recent salmon recovery projects and learn how to help select future projects.

To register, call Susie Vanderburg, 360-357-2491.

King County Water and Land Resources

offers a Native Plant Salvage on Sat., March 6 from 9 am to 4 pm near Redmond. Spend a day outdoors salvaging native plants from a future development site. Plants rescued will be repotted and used for future salmon habitat restoration projects along King County Streams. To volunteer, contact Greg Rabourn, 206-296-1923 or greg.rabourn@metrokc.gov.



Graphic credit - Laurel Preston, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks.

Waterline is the newsletter of the Washington State Lake Protection Association (WALPA). Articles may be reproduced; credit the Waterline. For information about WALPA, call 1-800-607-5498. WALPA is a chapter of the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS).

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Include the topic, suggested
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