

Cocolalla Lake Association Box 133 Cocolalla, ID 83813

Protecting Cocolalla Lake Since 1984

#### FALL - WINTER 2013



Idaho Watercraft Inspection Stations

It was a busy time for our checkpoints this season. There was a total of **43,778** inspections resulting in 12 watercraft being quarantined due to the presence of Mussels.

Inspection sites are scheduled to open much earlier next year, with a target date of February 2014.

Many Thanks to our State Legislators, the Idaho Departments of Agriculture, Fish and Game and Environmental Quality who continually strive to protect our lakes and natural resources.

# \* Water Quality \*

Reported by: Tom Herron of Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality

#### WATER QUALITY CONTINUES TO BE GOOD ON LAKE COCOLALLA:

We didn't see significant anoxia in the oxygen profiles through the season which likely limited nutrient loading from sediments and was potentially an important factor limiting algal blooms on the lake through the later part of the season. Green algae was low this year and no blue-green algae was found. This is good news since the blue-green algae can be very harmful to the use of the lake. This was validated by phosphorus concentrations in the photic zone during August, the most vulnerable season of summer, of only 13.7 micrograms per liter, as well as Chlorophyll-a of 2.7 micrograms per liter (again below average), with good Secchi disk transparency of 4 meters. Early October remained relatively good with photic zone total phosphorus of 21.1 micrograms per liter and Chlorophyll-a of 6 micrograms per liter following significant rains. Phosphorus at 12 meters during this sample was slightly less at 19.4 micrograms per liter, indicating good mixing. Janet and I sampled Round Lake in August to identify any water guality concerns as it is the next downstream lake from Lake Cocolalla. Inlet flow from Cocolalla Creek was low, but water guality in Round Lake was good. Chlorophyll-a was 14.9 micrograms per liter on September 11th, and photic zone phosphorus was 24.3 micrograms per liter at the deepest point. It too was oxygenated at depth, however total phosphorus was approximately 80 micrograms per liter 1 meter off the bottom. It should be noted, however that the bottom sediments in Round Lake are much more organic. Fishing held up very well in both lakes this year.

We will again monitor oxygen profiles through the safe-ice season this winter and we are looking at potentially sampling sediment at various depths in the Lake for characterizing internal loading of nutrients through the University of Idaho. We will find out in a few weeks if we can fit this in with other work that we hope to contract with U of I.

### Wetlands Enhancement Project

Reported by Tom Herron:

The Wetlands Enhancement project on Fish and Game property was ranked by the Panhandle Basin Advisory Group at the October 23rd meeting and finished a close second behind a project in the St. Joe watershed. Fish and Game intends to move ahead with the wetlands component of this project, but will put the Fish Creek channel project on hold. I will be discussing a partnership with Trout Unlimited about this project at their November 21st meeting and we hope to revive this component of the project. This is preliminary, but the Fish Creek channel restoration portion of this overall project is important to fisheries and nutrient management and we will continue to look for opportunities and partners.

### Trivia Fans..... A Little Cocolalla Lake History by Bob Gunter

Anyone fortunate enough to be born before the days of modern refrigeration remembers the sound of the horse and wagon or truck nearing the house with its load of huge blocks of ice. The iceman would take his ice pick and magically chip away until a smaller block would appear just the right size for the waiting icebox inside the house. If a child was good and stayed out of the way then the ice chips would be given to him/her to be wrapped in a piece of newspaper and sucked on with heavenly delight. The ice would then be picked up by tongs and carried to the back porch or kitchen. The transaction would end with, "That will be 10 cents, please," and everything in the old icebox would be safe until the next visit from the iceman.

On special days two blocks would be purchased and one would end up, with a liberal amount of course ice cream salt, in the hand turned ice cream freezer. After what seemed an eternity of turning the cream would be pronounced "ready" and the freezer would be wrapped with either bags or old newspapers to "set." It seemed hours before the top was removed to reveal to numerous young eyes the beauty of the contents.

Few people knew or cared where the large blocks of ice originated. There were many people from the east that ate fruit and berries that were refrigerated by the ice harvested from Cocolalla Lake about 15 miles from Sandpoint, Idaho. Passengers on the Northern Pacific Railroad were assured good ice water as they traveled from west to the east because of the ice of Cocolalla. There was a huge ice plant located on the south end of the lake and in the winter it employed a large number of men. There was a huge barn and two blacksmiths were kept busy putting spiked shoes on the horses used in the ice harvest.

The Sandpoint Daily Bulletin reported in 1922 just how big the operation was of the Cocolalla Ice Company; "One hundred and ten cars are being loaded daily, or 3,500 tons; while 2,500 tons are being daily shipped up the loading chains into the mammoth icehouse. The cars (railroad) are loaded 16 cars at a time..." for shipment to the railroad's ice stations that were located at Yakima, Ellensburg, Toppenish, Walla Walla, Pasco and Spokane, Washington.

Today there is nothing along the beautiful shore line of Lake Cocolalla that would indicate that years ago there existed bunk houses, barns, and ice houses that was the source of prime "blue ice" for the nation.

Milfoil and Curlyleaf Pondweed

#### Report from: Tom Woolfe of ISDA

We did identify a high number of Eurasian watermilfoil plants on the southern end of the lake in early September. Prior to that only a low density of milfoil was observed and these plants were hand removed from that area (around 300 plants). Eurasian watermilfoil

was not found anywhere else on the lake this season.

Due to the high density of milfoil observed, a herbicide treatment will again be needed on the southern end of the lake (about 20 acres).

Depending on the spring runoff and degree of plant growth, we will target the treatment date for April or May 2014. Treatment at this time using a 2,4-D / endothall mix should get us effective control of the curlyleaf pondweed and the Eurasian watermilfoil. Hopefully this will also allow for water use restrictions to clear (homes within about 0.5 miles of the southern part of the lake) before any irrigation starts.

Please note, treatment will be contingent on runoff, lake conditions and plant growth. My hope is that we can treat early and remove both the milfoil and curlyleaf from area. If conditions are not conducive for a treatment then we should work together to find a timeline that best works for the Association in order to conduct a treatment of this area.

Most of us are familiar with Eurasian Watermilfoil and its destructive impact in our waterways, but Curlyleaf is a new addition to the invasive species scene. Below are some facts to help you understand our concerns.



Eurasian Watermilfoil



Curlyleaf Pondweed

Curly-leaf is a submersed aquatic plant that is not native to North America. It generally grows in 3-10 feet of water. Curly-leaf tolerates low water clarity and will readily invade disturbed areas.

In spring, curly-leaf pondweed can form dense mats that may interfere with boating and other recreation on lakes. Curly-leaf also can cause ecological problems because it can displace native aquatic plants. In mid- summer, curly-leaf plants usually die back, which results in rafts of dying plants piling up on shorelines, and often is followed by an *increase in phosphorus, a nutrient, and* undesirable algal blooms. Like other aguatic vegetation, the abundance of curly-leaf varies from year to year depending on environmental conditions, such as winter snow depth, and spring water clarity, which can effect its growth.

#### How does curly-leaf pondweed spread?

Curly-leaf is believed to spread from one body of water to another primarily by the unintentional transfer of turions, which are hardened stem tips, on plant fragments carried on trailered boats, personal watercraft, etc.

Hayden Lake Conducts Experiment That May Help

## Clear Up Lake

By Becky Kramer of the Spokesman Review

A Hayden Lake homeowners association installed a floating wetland next to its community dock, with the goal of improving water quality in one of the lake's murky bays.

Water sedges, monkey flowers and nutrient-loving grasses sprouted from two rafts constructed from spongy, plastic membranes. As the plants grow, their roots will form a thick mat that sucks phosporus out of the bay.

"They're basically growing like hydroponics," said Karen Hayes, who is part of the Kootenai Environmental Alliance's (KEA) Hayden Lake project.

KEA is looking for ways to improve water quality in the lake, which has exceeded federal water quality limits for phosphorus since the late 1990's.

Adrienne Cronebaugh, KEA's executive director, said the floating wetlands could be a partial solution to the problem of excess nutrients in the lake, which has been affected by rapid residential development as well as past logging and farming.

KEA used grant money to purchase the two floating wetlands, each about 70 square feet. The wetlands are made by Floating Island International, a Montana company that sell them for about \$30 per square foot.

KEA Piloted the floating wetland concept two years ago on a 1-acre private pond in the Hayden Lake watershed. North Idaho College students tracked water quality in the pond, documenting decreases in phosphorus levels and coliform bacteria. The pond's pH also improved after the floating wetlands were installed, with the water becoming less acidic.

When the organization was ready to launch the wetlands in the lake, it chose McLeans Bay for the demonstration site. The bay's water quality will be tracked for five years to evaluate the floating wetlands effectiveness.

The 2 acre bay on the north side of the lake is "a perfect petri dish" for the project, said Diane Lawrence, who belongs to the McCauley Emerald Homeowners Association, which has been working cooperatively with KEA.

"A couple of summers ago, the clarity of the bay was horrible," Lawrence said. "We had trouble backing the boats out, the vegetation was so intense."

A neighbor who had a Jet Ski ended up selling it because the intake was constantly choked up with weeds, said Lawrence's husband, Tom.

Protecting the lake's water quality is good for the property values, the couple said, the issue is multifaceted. Nutrients enter the lake through a variety of sources, including *erosion*, *fertilizers*, and *runoff* from residential construction.

Better development standards are helping address runoff, Tom Lawrence said. Residents also need to know how their actions affect Hayden Lake's water quality, he added. *Fertilizing lawns* and using *phosphorus rich soaps* contribute to the nutrient load.

On other lakes, the floating wetlands have been planted with flowers or vegetables. They're safe from hungry deer, and they don't require watering, Diane Lawrence said. Fishing Report by: Cary Poston

The absence of significant algae blooms this summer and fall made for very pleasant fishing conditions. I usually say that the nastier the weather, the better the fishing. What I really mean by that is that when the weather is nasty (wind, rain, and cold) the fish seem to bite at all hours. When the weather is pleasant, one must kinda watch the clock. Be on the lake fishing by about 8 am. The bite will likely end about 10:30 am, but will start again about 4 pm. Be off the lake at dark.

As I've said before, the best bait is whatever your favorite happens to be. My favorite happens to be my secret, but it sure attracts fish. This fall I averaged about 2 fish per hour.

I participated in a program of catch-and-release this fall. Necessitated by the fact that my wife said no way were we packing fish filets all the way to Arizona. So, I pinched the barbs down on my favorite baits and gave the fish a better chance to get away. That's where the term "release" comes in. I released more fish than I caught. Those that managed to find there way into my boat are easily removed from a barbless hook and, if unharmed, returned to the lake.

Idaho Dept of Fish and Game maintains an interesting website. IDF&G posts historical fish stocking activity/information statewide. Fish stocking in Cocolalla Lake this year consisted of approximately 20,000 3 – 6 inch fingerling westslope cutthroat trout planted on 4/25/2013, and 26,000 triploid troutlodge kamloop trout fingerlings planted on 4/25/2013. Go to www.fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/fish/stocking for statewide stocking information. If you're reading this report on line then just click on the link here.

Ice fishing will begin soon. If the size of the perch this summer and fall is an indication of what's to come this winter, then enjoy the ice fishing season because your buckets should contain some nice fish.







#### FALL CLEANUP OF EAST SIDE

Our faithful board members once again braved the high winds and rough water to perform the annual clean-up of the east side along the Burlington Northern Tracks. A big thank you to Norm Anderson, Vern Newby, Cary Poston and Fred Vincent. New "No Trespassing" signage and barricades implemented by BNSF helped to discourage some of the campers this summer, however, a few disrespectful persons still found it necessary to leave their trash behind.

Happy Thanksgiving

#### Cranberry Sauce with Sour Cherries and Rum

Makes 3½ cups

- 1 bag (12 ounces) raw cranberries, washed and picked over
- 3/4 cup dry sour cherries
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup currant jelly (or strawberry jelly)
- 2/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup dark rum



**1.** In a large saucepan, combine cranberries, sour cherries, sugar, jelly and water. Over low heat, bring to a low simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes, or until cranberries begin to pop.

**2.** Remove sauce from heat. Stir in rum. Refrigerate overnight to thicken sauce. Return to room temperature to serve.

**Note:** The cooked cranberries should be tender, but not mushy. You may cook the sauce to your taste, from firm, whole cranberries to softer ones that give off more pectin and make a thicker sauce.

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