



Spirit Lake Report

Periodic Update on Spirit Lake by the SPIRIT LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

October 2021, Vol. 7

SLPOA Mission: *To develop the capacity within our community to provide a sustainable lake habitat that will allow all people who live, work and play within its environment an optimal North Idaho experience.*

Lake Data – Sid Wurzburg, SLPOA Board Director

Low snowpack in the drainage meant that although we experienced high water in the normal range, it was about 20 inches below what is the recent norm and the lowest high water in recent years. Early in the summer the lake was only dropping about 2 to 3 inches a week. That is less than usual with hot dry days. That changed on July 12 when the lake was down 4.5 inches for the week. That is a rate we usually see in mid-summer.



The lake has continued to drop 2 to 3 inches each week. On Sept 13 the level was 69.25 inches below normal high water. That is only one inch higher than the comparable date in 2015, the lowest water levels since the millpond repair.

Blue-Green Algae Bloom – Jerry Peterson, SLPOA Board Director



On August 20, 2021, Panhandle Health District (PHD) and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued a public health advisory for Spirit Lake in Kootenai County. The report urged the public to use caution when recreating in or near the water especially where ingestion is a risk due to toxins released by the algae bloom.

Water Sampling – Putting your dues and donations to work, the SLPOA board approved up to \$1000 for deep water testing because some property owners draw water from the lake.

In early September, SLPOA board directors, Jerry and Sid, were on the lake. Small amounts of blue-green algal bloom were found at Silver Beach, where they collected shallow and deep-water (14 meters) samples. At Bronze Bay they collected at 10 -12 meters. Results from testing were good with very low levels of toxin indicated. Maiden Rock had huge amounts of algae but it disappeared in several days. DEQ is planning to continue monitoring and sampling before lifting the warning notice.



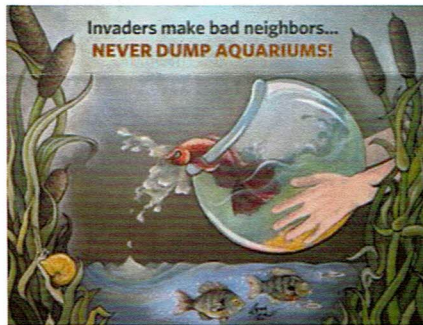
Mitigating Blue-Green Algae – Paul Sturm, SLPOA Board Director

Harmful Cyanobacteria Bloom (HCB) species, like all living organisms, require nitrogen and phosphorus for growth. Nutrient management on land is key to reducing HCBs (From ITRC (Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council, <https://hcb-1.itrcweb.org/>).

So what can a property owner do to prevent HCBs? Reduce nutrient runoff into the lake by minimizing or eliminating lawn and other fertilizers that can leach into the lake. Keep or develop a natural zone of plant growth at the shoreline. Minimize or eliminate manicured lawns and concrete barriers at the lake shore. Clean up pet wastes. Make sure septic waste systems are installed correctly and maintained. Keeping our lake water in the lake so that water can flow throughout the summer may help. The Weir project being undertaken by SLPOA and the City of Spirit Lake may help reduce future HCBs.

Chinese Mysterysnail – Paul Sturm SLPOA Vice-President

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture detects invasive species such as the Asian Mysterysnail during annual monitoring surveys. ISDA has identified Asian Mystery Snail in Spirit Lake for several years now (since around 2019).



This introduction was most likely an aquarium release. Sometimes we think we are doing the right thing, like releasing a pet into the wild, but we are actually introducing a non-native species into the ecosystem which, if established, can cause detrimental effects. There are also other lakes in northern Idaho with this species, indicating a number of potential scenarios for the movement from one waterbody to another.

ISDA does not currently have any control or treatment programs in place for Asian Mystery Snail in the state. Their main objective is to restrict sales in the marketplace and limit further new introductions. When introduced, ISDA recommends removing and destroying these snails when found.

SLPOA Board Director, Doug Freeland reported at the Annual Meeting that the previously reported invasive Chinese Mysterysnail (Cipangopaludina chinensis) infestation is much greater than earlier assessments. The snail can be kept in check for a period of time by fish and other predators. However, it reproduces rapidly and is now at a point that it is apparently outstripping predation. There were discussions at the Annual Meeting regarding projects that might reduce the numbers and keep it in check. No certain plans have been made at this time.



More information is available at [Chinese mysterysnail \(Cipangopaludina chinensis\) - Species Profile \(usgs.gov\)](#) from the [Nonindigenous Aquatic Species \(NAS\)](#) information resource for the [United States Geological Survey](#).

Board President and Spouse Resign – *Paul Sturm, SLPOA Director*

Karen Winston and Don Miller have put their Spirit Lake Home on the market and resigned from the SLPOA board. Both of them have contributed a great deal to SLPOA over many years. Their service is greatly appreciated and missed. We wish them the best as they transition to a new phase of life with more time for family. The Board accepted their resignation September 7, 2021.

Board Updates – *Paul Sturm, SLPOA Board Director*

Election of Directors and Officers – The membership at the Annual General Meeting of SLPOA unanimously elected a slate of Directors. The Directors elected include Karen Cowan, Doug Freeland, Mallene Herzog, Don Miller, Jerry Peterson, Brad Pendleton, Linda Pendleton, Paul Sturm, Karen Winston, and Sid Wurzburg. Carol Capra and Randy Hurst are currently serving as advisory members to the board. At the September 7, 2021 board meeting the following officers were elected: Karen Cowan, President; Paul Sturm, Vice-president; Jerry Peterson and Linda Pendleton, co-secretary and treasurer.



Director Term Assignments – The board assigned each director to a one, two or three-year term. Those assignments are: three-year – Karen Cowan, Jerry Peterson, Linda Pendleton and Paul Sturm; two-year – Doug Freeland, Marlene Herzog, Brad Pendleton and Sid Wurzburg; one-year Don Finney and Tony Brawner. New members appointed by the board serve until the next Annual Meeting and then may be nominated to be elected for a three-year term.

New Directors Appointed – Tony Brawner and his family have been on the lake since 1988, and is the nephew of the late Jimmy Brown. Tony wants to give back to and help be a good steward of the lake. He brings experience in construction and small business as well as experience in contributing to non-profit organizations.

Don Finney's grandparents purchased 42 acres on Spirit Lake's South Shore in 1939. Don became a fish biologist because of his lifelong interest in fishing at Spirit Lake since age 3. He conducted fisheries research projects at Spirit Lake in the 1970's while studying at UW. Don intends to retire in 2022 at Spirit Lake for the spring, summer, and fall seasons, after 30 years with King County, WA. He intends to closely follow and support/monitor IDF&G in their various fish experiments in our beautiful lake.

Weir Project – At the Annual Meeting in August members suggested that the board comment at the September City Council meeting to support the Weir Project. Speaking for the board and association, Board President, Karen Cowan, expressed our desire to expedite completion of the project. She reported that the Association has raised over \$70K for the project. She reported our current fundraising plan to raise another \$20K by the end of the year. Karen was able to report on a conversation between Jerry Peterson and property owner, Dave Simon, in which Mr. Simon reiterated commitment to the project. Finally, Karen expressed our dedication to and appreciation for our partnership with the City in this project, and expressed gratitude for the City's support. The board continues to work to raise funds for the project.

!!! SEE EXCITING FUNDRAISING NEWS ON THE BACK PAGE !!!

2021 Annual Meeting Summary – Paul Sturm, SLPOA Board Director

The meeting began just shortly after 10:00 AM on August 14, 2021, called to order by president, Karen Winston. Linda Pendleton presented the treasurer report

Board Director, Karen Cowan, provided an update on the Weir Project. There was discussion among some members about steps we might take as a board and association to expedite the Weir Project. There was a suggestion to attend the city council meeting in September to inform the Mayor and Council of our enthusiasm to see the project completed. It was suggested that an online petition be established for members to sign. Karen indicated that the board would consider both options for action.

Board Director, Sid Wurzburg, reported on the lake level and water quality.

Board Director, Doug Freeland, reported on the advancement of the so called Chinese Mysterysnail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis*) in the lake. He also discussed the advancement of Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*).

President of the Historical Society, Althea Sondahl, reported on the status of the Society and the opening of its museum at 6th and Jefferson on Saturdays from 1-4 PM through September.

Kootenai County Marine Patrol reported about the current department status. They fielded questions: 25 mph boat speed limit at night; skiers are permitted 1hr before sunrise and 1hr after sunset; jet skis not permitted after dark because no lights; boat distance from docks is 200ft. There was discussion about a “significant wake” ordinance. Wake boat limitations is a county commissioner or legislative issue. The Sherriff deals exclusively with safety issues.

Spirit Lake Fire Chief, John DeBernardi, reported on fire danger, recent fires, and fire suppression.

Spirit Lake Police Department reported safety issues and situations in the City and around the Lake. If there are issues on the lake the SLPD will respond. Call (208) 623-2701

Paul Buckland, Inland Empire Paper Co., reported that its lands are closed due to fire danger. He discussed conservation easement on new land purchased by IEP Co. The Woods Tour was canceled this year due to fire danger.

Board Director, Karen Cowan, updated attendees about the board’s work and plans.

Board Director, Paul Sturm called for nomination of the current slate of directors, Kathy Johnson made a motion to accept the current board directors, Carl Reed seconded. There was no discussion. The members voted unanimously to approve. Terms will be applied to each current director position. There are five open positions on the board. The duties and responsibilities of board directors were described. Nominations were open for new members. None were made. The SLPOA Bylaws provide for appointment of new directors that must be approved by a vote of the members at the next Annual Meeting.



Friends of Spirit Lake
Spirit Lake Property Owners Association
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Spirit Lake, ID 83869

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Membership Dues – *Linda Pendleton & Jerry Peterson SLPOA Board Directors*

Your Board has been updating the Membership List. Please help us keep it up to date. In order to send out timely information/updates by mail, email and text, we need everyone's current mailing address, email and cell phone (*if you want to receive text messages*). You can send us your current information:

Go directly to www.friendsofspiritlake.com and scroll to the bottom of the home page and fill in your name, email and other contact information in the comment area.

You can become a member by clicking on the "Sign Me Up" button

Want to make a donation? Click on the "I Want to Help" button



DOUBLE YOUR MONEY!



ONE OF YOUR GENEROUS SPIRIT LAKE NEIGHBORS WILL MATCH UP TO 10K IN DONATIONS FOR THE WEIR PROJECT!

Our fundraising efforts began in 2018 and were on hold during COVID-19. Our goal now is to raise the funds needed to begin construction in 2022! At this time, we are moving forward with planning, city and agency coordination and applications.

We are a 501C3 organization and you will receive a confirmation letter for tax purposes.

Thank you to those who have already donated



Donated:
\$70,685



Still need:
\$90,000



Estimated Cost:
\$160,000-\$200,000

MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY AND HAVE IT DOUBLED! SEND DONATION TO:

SPIRIT LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 363, SPIRIT LAKE, ID 83869

OR

ONLINE AT:

[HTTPS://WWW.FRIENDSOFSPIRITLAKE.COM/](https://www.friendsofspiritlake.com/)