

State of Lawrence Lake

Report for the period 1 October 2021 through 30 September 2022

This report was prepared by the constituents of the Lawrence Lake, Lake Management District (LMD). It reflects the status of past and current lake stewardship initiatives from the stakeholder's perspective.

This report also serves as required input to the Noxious Weed Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program report and to meet requirements for Storm Water fee reduction.

Vegetation Surveillance

Lawrence Lake is divided into 12 treatment zones along the shoreline. Weeds are assessed visually at the surface of the water, and by throwing a rake to sample submerged vegetation. The survey team uses a numerical scale to record the density of vegetation growth. Data are collected in each zone to assess herbicide treatment needs, and to track species shifts. Documented results of each survey are sent to lake residents and the County-assigned Aquatic Resource Specialist (ARS).

Vegetation monitoring surveys were conducted monthly from February through August 2022 on Lawrence Lake. Six surveys were scheduled, a total of 12 were conducted (3 Dock and 9 Boat). After-action review from 2021 indicated that surveys should be started earlier (February) to detect early weed growth.

Vegetation Control

Yellow Flag Iris (YFI). We are making great strides eliminating YFI from our shorelines. During 2015 we treated with 8.58 gallons of Imazapyr; 4.47 gallons in 2017; 3.5 gallons in 2020; 2.6 gallons in 2021 and 2.47 gallons in 2022 with the addition of a new treatment area at Hoot Owl Ranch. The reduction of quantity of gallons used is reflective of effective YFI control. Treatment is conducted by boat and backpack using a directional applicator to minimize overspray.

Post-treatment surveys revealed favorable results in the treated areas however, problem areas persist: the pasture adjacent to the south end of the large basin and one cove on the south end of the small basin.

Nuisance and Invasive Aquatic Weeds. Following 2021's submerged weed (Elodea) treatment failure, plans were amended for 2022 to detect weed growth early and to proactively implement a tailored treatment regimen.

During 2022 submerged aquatic weed growth was significantly slower than past seasons due to cooler air and water temperatures. Surveys revealed an absence of Elodea compared to 2021 but a notable increase in Narrow Leaf and Curly Pondweed. Accordingly, the Steering Committee and County staff proscribed a treatment regimen of Aquathol, targeting approximately 33 acres of the littoral lake. Approximately nine acres displayed Curly Pondweed, an invasive plant non-native to Lake Lawrence. Both species of pondweed were effectively controlled with Aquathol, as documented by subsequent lake surveys.

Fragrant Water Lily. LMD Meeting Minutes from 23 November 2008 reported that Fragrant Water Lily covered approximately 80 acres of the lake in 1998. Targeted treatments were

effectively applied during subsequent years. Surveys conducted during 2021 indicated minimal Lily presence (~ 1 acre); further treatment was suspended.

During 2022 lake surveys it became obvious that Fragrant Water Lily was making a comeback and treatment would be necessary to control this invasive species. Surveys also identified Spatterdock (Cow Lily) masses along residential areas including the canal, limiting recreational activities. Lily control was conducted on 3 August for ~1 acre of Fragrant Water Lily and ~.5 acres of Spatterdock using 75 oz of Roundup Custom. Treatment effectiveness will be monitored during ongoing surveys. This has been a very successful treatment regimen, but continued vigilance is warranted.

Volunteer Activities

Assistance to Thurston County Undeveloped Park. Activities included weekly trash pickup, assistance toward removal of an abandoned boat, reporting of vandalism and illegal campfires, installation and suggested improvements to signage along the park. It is estimated that volunteers contributed ~120 hours to these activities during 2022.

Assistance to Thurston County Health & Social Services. LMD volunteers coordinated with County officials to report algae outbreaks and perform sign placement and removal tasks. Informational and warning signs were posted at the Public Boat Launch, Lake Lawrence Community Club (LLCC), Wildaire, and Scenic Shores HOA parks. Volunteers contributed approximately 10 hours to these tasks.

Assistance to Thurston County Noxious Weeds Department:

- **YFI Treatment.** LMD volunteers coordinated the dissemination and collection of YFI Permission Letters, posting and retrieval of required treatment signage. Assistance for these efforts is estimated to be ~100 hours.
- **YFI Floating Island Relocation.** LMD volunteers researched, organized, and distributed procedures for reporting and relocation of YFI floating islands. These break-away floating masses can be a hazard to boats, including the sanctioned annual Boat Race event. During 2022, one large (~ 50x25x2.5') floating island was extracted from two private docks and temporarily secured in a cove designated by Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). On 21 July 2022 the LMD Steering Committee sent a letter to the County Storm & Surface Water Utility (SSWU) Manager formally reporting the floating island and requesting coordination with WDNR and WDFW for removal of the island. As of this date, the floating island remains temporarily secured in the cove, pending SSUW Management assistance for removal. Approximately 10 volunteer hours were expended on this single incident to date.
- **Restoration of "Goat Island"** – Several LMD members participated in work parties to restore Goat Island to its natural state. Activities included removal of nuisance and invasive terrestrial plants. Approximately 70 volunteer hours were expended in 2022 with much work remaining to complete the restoration.

Assistance to US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Several volunteers formed a committee to control the geese population of the lake, using a legal and humane practice sanctioned by USDA. This effort, funded and managed independent of the LMD, resulted in a significant

reduction of the geese population and the feces (nutrient) loading of the lake. Volunteers contributed 100+ hours to coordinate, fund, and effectively execute this effort.

Education and Outreach. Led by the Steering Committee, Lawrence Lake conducted four general membership meetings, culminating with the Annual Meeting/BBQ on 10 September from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. 91 members participated. Expenses for BBQ = \$376.37. Guest speakers & Topics:

- Chris Hougan, Integrity Septic gave a presentation on Septic System Design, maintenance/care, inspection and Do's & Don'ts.
- Will Hobbs, WA State Department of Ecology gave a presentation on how algae develop, types of algae, toxic algae, lake turn over, preventative measures and chemical treatment options.
- Jennifer Johnson, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services, Environmental Health gave a presentation on Septic Systems, water quality/testing, Do's and Don'ts around lake front areas.

In addition to guest speaker engagements, the following educational material was distributed to all LMD members over the course of the year:

- Thurston County Fact Sheet titled: *Blueprint for a Lake Friendly Landscape* describing residential practices to reduce toxins and undesirable nutrients from entering our lake.
- Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Fact Sheet addressing *Toxic Algae*.
- Thurston County Environmental Health report (2019) on *Lake Lawrence Water Quality*.
- Center for Disease Control (CDC) Fact Sheet describing *Swimmer's Itch*.

In support of a NASA-sponsored global lake monitoring program, lake levels are measured and reported from two sites located on our lake. A third gauge is located at the public boat launch for observation by the general public. Appendix A is historical data reported since our involvement began. Approximately six volunteer hours are expended on this effort annually.

LMD Administration

LMDs are administered by Thurston County Public Works Department. An Aquatic Resource Specialist is assigned to coordinate and direct boots-on-the-ground operations at our lake. Citizen-volunteers comprise our Steering Committee, coordinating stewardship plans, budget, periodic meetings, and volunteer activities with County staff. Our current LMD expires 31 December 2026.

Administrative Procedures. During 2022 the LMD Steering Committees of Lawrence and Long Lakes were informed by County staff of unilateral changes to the historically successful (35 years) governance of LMDs. These changes were not vetted with the LMD residents (fee payers) and were not approved by the BoCC. Leadership from four lakes (Lawrence, Long, Offut & Pattison) formally objected to the new *Administrative Rules* as they remove decision-making authority from the LMD residents. Key areas of disagreement with the County's Administrative Rules include:

- County's demotion of LMD citizen leadership committees to "advisory" vs "decision-making" status.

- County staff will have sole authority to decide and direct LMD expenditures and operations. During 2021 County staff unilaterally spent \$6K (5% of our budget) on county-wide IT improvements that “promise” to save unspecified LMD funds in the TBD future. LMD leadership was not informed prior to this expenditure decision.
- County defines the elections of LMD citizen leadership committees for all lakes.
- County staff authorized to unilaterally remove citizen-elected Steering Committee members.
- County version does not hold staff accountable for Expenditures that exceed the approved Budget.
- County does not hold County staff accountable for technical performance, to include the timely approval of Contracts prior to the annual “grow” season.

Resolution of this issue remains a contentious topic as we await BoCC direction to jointly develop mutually acceptable rules.

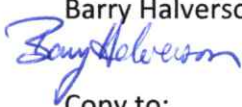

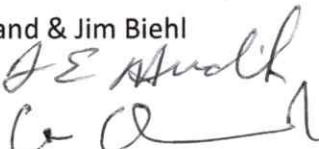
Budget. Each year the Annual Budget and concomitant Work Plans are developed by the LMD Steering Committee and County staff as required by County process. The annual budget for the Lawrence Lake LMD is approximately \$107K. The primary source of these funds is voter-approved fees collected from each parcel owner. The intended use of these funds is lake stewardship, as commissioned by RCW 36.61. During 2021 the LMD members passed a motion to increase our LMD Assessment Fees by 5% for 2023 to cover inflation costs.

During 2021/2022, the LMD Leadership Teams from both Lawrence Lake and Long Lake appealed to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) regarding County expenditures to administer the LMD. A summary of our recommendations and the status of those recommendations are provided as Appendix B. Resolution of these budget issues remains a contentious topic as we attempt to protect our funds for lake stewardship activities, in a manner consistent with other LMDs throughout Washington State. A few notable successes were achieved during the 2021-2022 period.

- On 13 May 2021 the BoCC voted 2 to 1 to reimburse all 2021 Interfund Costs. Commissioner Menser dissented. Result: \$10,000 was returned to LMD account.
- On 28 October 2021 the BoCC voted unanimously to reimburse all LMD Interfund Costs for 2022 and 2023; \$7,000 each year.

YOUR LAKE LAWRENCE LAKE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM,

Barry Halverson, Frank Hudik, Kim Nelson, Curt Cleaveland & Jim Biehl

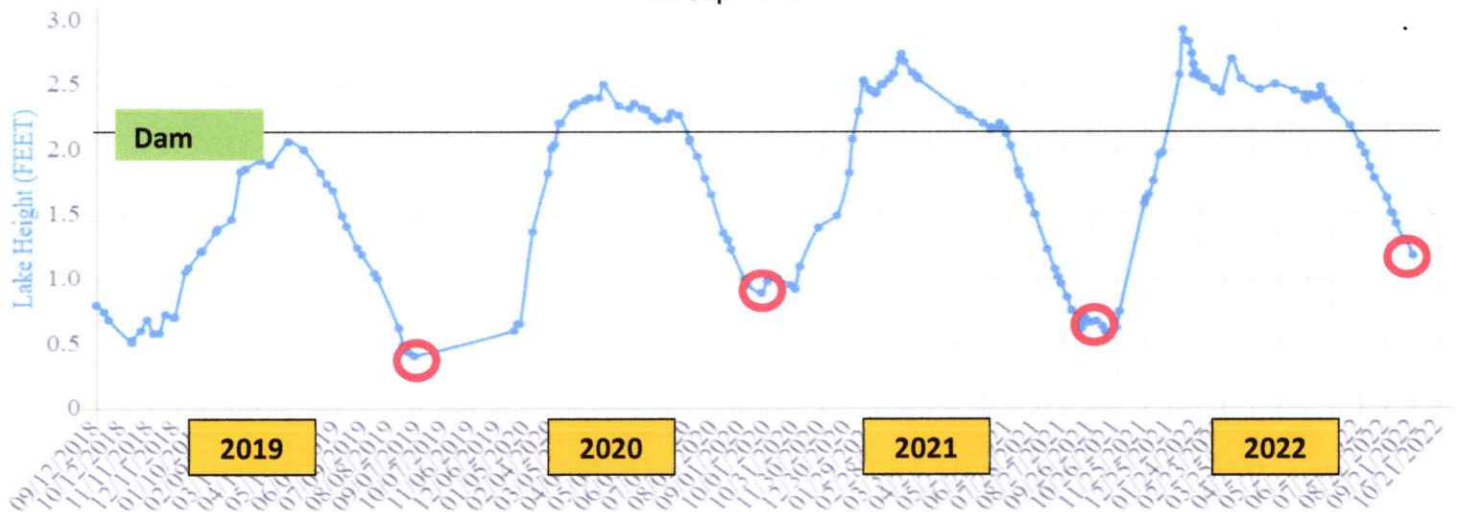
Copy to:

State Senator John Bruan; State Representatives Peter Abbarno, Ed Orcutt and Andrew Barkis; BoCC; Thurston County Public Works Staff, LMD Leadership for Long, Pattison, and Offut Lakes.

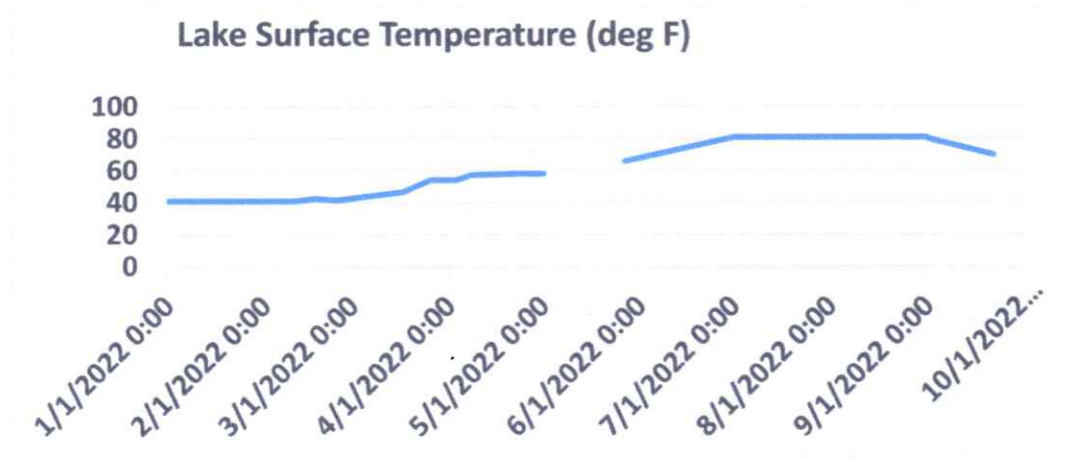
Mr Dwight Malhiot, Race Director, Seattle Outboard Assoc. 279 Gold Creek Rd NW, Bremerton, WA 98312

Appendix A
Lake Level and Temperature Data

Lake Level Comparison
22 Sep 2019 - 2022



Lake Surface Temperatures



Appendix B
Recommendations to Thurston County Commissioners
(3 August 2022)

The following recommendations were vetted and approved by the leadership of all four LMDs for presentation to the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners during a special public session 3 August 2022. Recommendations include:

- Support citizen-initiated lake stewardship consistent with State Law: RCW 36.61.
- Instantiate systemic changes to Thurston County financial processes to protect LMD budgets for lake stewardship activities only.
 - LMD funds are a citizen-elected fee, not another tax.
 - A simple “litmus test” for allowable expenditure of LMD funds was provided.
- Direct County staff to develop *Administrative Procedures* in cooperation with LMD leadership. A citizen-approved version was provided to County staff.
 - Supports *LMD Charter* development unique to each lake. Charters define lake-specific Steering Committee composition and internal processes.
 - Retains citizens’ decision authority via a *Steering Committee*.
 - Holds County staff responsible and accountable for fiscal and technical LMD performance.
- Focus County resources to support new and existing LMDs for Thurston County lakes, as provisioned by State Law RCW 36.61. A draft *Letter of Intent* was provided to the Commissioners to guide these efforts.
- Support a citizen-led effort to revise the existing State Law (RCW 36.61) defining LMDs. The revised version would formally codify many of the changes presented above, aligning Thurston County processes with lake-friendly counties across the State.

Washington State Law

RCW 36.61.010 Findings-Intent-Purpose.

(1)“The legislature finds that the environmental, recreational, and aesthetic values of many of the state’s lakes are threatened by eutrophication and other deterioration and that existing governmental authorities are unable to adequately improve and maintain the quality of the state’s lakes.”

(4)“It is the purpose of this chapter to establish a governmental mechanism by which property owners [not government] can embark on a program of lake or beach management and maintenance for their and the general public’s benefit, health, and welfare...”