

I am asking the Dept. of Ecology to make the Vancouver Lake a top priority for cleanup. I have lived in Vancouver, WA since 1977 and have been witness to the degradation in the watershed area surrounding Vancouver Lake. The Lake has been a vital resource to our community; however, it is now in great danger due to pollution fed by the Lake River, Burnt Bridge Creek, and Salmon Creek, and the surrounding industrial lands; the inadequacy of the current Flushing channel that does not allow appropriate flow from the Columbia River; and now the threat by the invasion of Eurasian Milfoil. In the summer the temperature of the lake greatly increases contributing to the growth of blue green algae. Why does this matter? This lake is a treasure as it draws people for recreation and it is a vital part of the Northwest flyway for migrating geese, ducks, swans, Sandhill cranes, and white pelicans. Vancouver and Clark County families come to the park to swim, paddle, row and sail on the lake, fish, and walk the trails. It would be a travesty for us to lose this resource. I have been visiting the lake regularly for the last 40 years to enjoy the natural environment. In the last year I have been paddling an average of 3 days a week on the lake with the dragon boat team. So I have seen the lake firsthand as it tries to gasp for breath. I have seen dead fish floating. I have run into sand bars with my paddle in the middle of the lake and paddled through milfoil. I have had to forgo paddling due to blue algae blooms poisoning the water.

This lake was here when Lewis and Clark first paddled down the Columbia. Let's make sure we keep it healthy enough to last another 200 years.