

Alan Stewart

- Severity of the pollution problem – since 2004, Vancouver Lake has been designated an impaired water body in need of clean up and yet no water improvement project exists. The Lake falls is impaired for temperature, PCBs, turbidity, bacteria in the water, total phosphorous, Deldrin and other toxins. Conjoined bodies of water like Lake River, Burnt Bridge Creek, and Salmon Creek all add to the Lake's level of impairment.
- Risks to public health – every season the Lake and this community miss out on the opportunity to bring thousands of visitors to the largest lake within a 50-mile radius of a major West Coast city and international airport (Portland) as hosts for world, national, west coast, regional, and state competitive rowing competitions because of closures due to blue-green algae. The same conditions affect swim beaches and recreational uses such as kayaking, sailing and paddle boarding. Risks to health from cyanobacteria are well established.
- Risks to threatened and endangered species – the Lake is a refuge for migratory waterfowl and has identified salmonids including chum, chinook and steelhead as part of the fish population.
- Vulnerability of water bodies to degradation - As temperature, toxicity, flow and dilution issues remain unaddressed, the Lake faces a new foe – Eurasian Milfoil Weed taking hold throughout the shallow waters threatening swimmers and recreation. Failure to address increased flow of colder Columbia River water through the existing Flushing Channel remains a key disappointment and issue.
- Local support and interest in a watershed - For more than 40 years, the Vancouver and Clark County communities have understood the enormous possibilities that Vancouver Lake represents for outdoor recreation, economic development and the important personal well-being that results from time spent recreating with families and friends in the beautiful outdoors. Vancouver Lake Regional Park represents a major local source for recreational shoreline opportunities that remains accessible to those with limited resources or using public transportation. There is recent renewed interest in taking advantage of the lake's potential for public access and use. Clark County has been acquiring land along the shore through its Legacy Land program and started to build a series of trails looping around the lake as part of the Lewis & Clark Regional Trail project (proposed alignment attached). This is a major investment with the belief that Vancouver Lake and the surrounding watersheds can be a major attraction for public use.

Please see attached pictures of blue green algae blooms and fish die off as a result. This past summer 2019, the lake was closed to recreation for over 100 days which had a direct economic impact on the local community due to loss of scheduled events which brought people in from the entire west coast.





