

## Debra Anderson

I grew up in Soap Lake 1956-1973. My entire childhood was spent swimming, diving for mud, and water skiing, in Soap Lake. The town hosted a population of many WW1 veterans who had limbs amputated from the war. They also had skin disorders that bathing in the lake helped to arrest. Increased circulation and drying out the skin helped. This is a unique lake (miromectic, layered minerals) that the Native Americans who frequented the area as they traveled aptly called it "healing waters" (smokiam). There is a strong history and heritage from the aboriginal tribes as well as anyone else who wanted to improve their health, that includes swimming in the waters and spreading Soap Lake mud on the skin and allow it to dry in the sun. Rinse as needed then dry it again the next day. As a child I saw many folks covered in mud laying around on rocks or the beach. I got paid 5 cents for a small bucket of mud for those who didn't want to go swimming. The lake water was plumbed into homes and the local hospital. The fountain on Main street hosted drinking water and lake water for those wanting the lake water when the weather didn't permit swimming. Thorson's hotel had cement ponds that dried the water crystals to market as salts in pharmacies. Similar to epsom salts.

Soap Lake has changed over the years. I used to water ski on the lake. Summers held water ski slalom racing, boating of all kinds, hydroplane races included. Folks loved this lake because of the lack of drag. It's slippery to touch. Everything was smother and faster, record breaking in fact. Tourism soared in those years.

I love to water ski and I missed not being able to water ski in the lake when motor boats were restricted but I value the lake on a different level and that is more important than a hobby.

We desperately need to help the local community help the lake recover.

Please make Soap Lake the choice.