

## Nancy Southwick

As a child in the 1950s, my grandparents (Fritz and Caroline Johnson), would drive to Soap Lake for the health benefits of the mineral lake. They believed it helped with skin issues and Arthritis. My mother (Mildred F. Little) and her brother (Karl Johnson) moved to Soap Lake as adults. They believed the lake had holistic values. My family continues to holiday at Soap Lake for the mineral water and black mud baths.

I am writing in support of Soap Lake's designation as an Outstanding Resource Water - Tier III(B). Soap Lake has unique, mineral-rich water created by the geology of the region concentrating the minerals in the water and the mud. This is a regionally unique recreational value and destination for healing nature of water. Used since pre-historic times to heal and rejuvenate people living here. The layers of water that do not mix in Soap Lake. This is unique. The chemically stratified layer of naturally formed meromictic lakes ... has evolved uniquely adapted species. This unique habitat that is a rare example of its kind with bacteria only found in this lake. Researchers with Montana State University have been awarded a series of grants totalling \$6.4 million to identify ways algae can be used for biofuels and other products as it removes carbon dioxide from the air. In addition to other research being conducted on the water and mud in the lake. Helping keep the lake healthy will help the economy of Soap Lake. The minerals keep the water from excess forming toxic algae.

It is vital to protect and preserve Soap Lake as never before. No water from outside sources, no drilling to upset the aquifer beneath the Soap Lake preserve. It is necessary to not put gas or oil into the body of Soap Lake mineral water.