

## Greg Kisinger

I live on Lake Sawyer and I find this DOE request for public comments ironic. On one hand it appears that the DOE cares about Lake Sawyer, but on the other hand it's become very obvious that the DOE doesn't care about Lake Sawyer and I'll explain.

The DOE has washed its hands of being a Steward of Lake Sawyer, saying that the residents are the Steward – this is not only irresponsible, but dangerous. The public are not the experts to protect a Washington State water. Unfortunately, the DOE granted water rights to Covington Water District (CWD) for their 222nd Street Well site without a lower water limit defined. Since 2015, in the July through September timeframe, the lake level has diminished far lower than comparable surrounding lakes so the contention this is due to weather conditions or lakefront home irrigation is illogical, but what has become obvious is the fact that CWD has been pumping approximately 100 millions of gallons of water from the 222nd Street Well site since 2015 in the same timeframe. And, in 2024, there was a direct correlation when the CWD Well on 222nd Street was out of commission for two specific time periods and Lake Sawyer records show a definitive stop in the drop in water level at the same time. Also, in a CWD 2024 review, a hydrologist cited "Lake Sawyer as a possible source of the extraordinary recharge rate" in his own report. As of 9-26-25, the water level at Lake Sawyer is 36" below the top of its weir – this is totally not acceptable!

It doesn't take a hydrologist to "see" that a pumping station in close proximity to a large lake could have potential negative effects on a lake's water level and a diminished water level impacts not only water quality, but also wildlife and their habitat (we've already had a peacock die being stuck in the mud as a result of very low water level- reported 9-20-25), and humans' enjoyment of a public lake (can't launch boats, home values decline, water quality declines).

Washington State lakes belong to the public and should have official Stewards to protect those waters for the enjoyment of local residents and wildlife. Otherwise, those lakes can be drained for commercial use, which is what's happening to Lake Sawyer. For the DOE and CWD to rely on water studies when the Lake water is above the weir is not only biased but surprising, since they are expected to be trusted experts. Water studies should also include summer and fall months for a fair and complete analysis and that analysis will point directly to the 222nd Street Well site. Unfortunately, both the DOE and CWD have had this issue brought to their attention multiple times and they've shirked their responsibility to investigate and fix the problem. A fix would be to either revoke CWD water rights or establish a minimum water level which would be at the top of the lake's weir, and also to identify an official Washington State Steward for Lake Sawyer (e.g. an entity like the Department of Natural Resources since the DOE obviously can't or won't do it).