

Shana Ferguson

I am writing out of concern for the continued degradation and pollution in Vancouver Lake, Vancouver, Washington. The lake is a vital part of our community as it not only hosts numerous outdoor activities for community members. However, over the past few years, the lake has frequently been choked by toxic algae, making it unsafe for swimming and boating. It also has been clogged by invasive grass species, which is slowly overwhelming the lake. It also has frequent notices about e coli in the water, which again closes it to boaters and swimmers. Vancouver lake has a beautiful park and beach that families enjoy throughout the summer. It is also where our local high schools host cross country meets, where our pacific northwest rowing association hosts regattas, and where we have an active group of kayakers, sailors and dragon boaters. The rivers nearby are far too dangerous to support these activities and the lake is a vital part of our recreational community.

It is also a key part of our ecology and supports any number of local and migratory bird populations. I have volunteered with our local parks department to plant native species near the lake and to clean out invasive plants. Throughout the year, the lake and its surrounding parks provide a vital habitat in an otherwise urban city. Water quality is vital to a thriving ecosystem and the lake needs help in supporting numerous species.