

Coeur d'Alene Lake Tributaries Watershed Advisory Group

Thursday, October 12 2017

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

2110 Ironwood Pkwy, Coeur d'Alene

9:00 – 12:00

MEETING NOTES

Introductions

Fernan Lake

Kristin Larson with DEQ gave an update on harmful algal blooms in Fernan Lake. These blooms have been very consistent and prolonged in the lake since 2013. 2017 was an exception, in that while brief, localized bloom conditions occurred in the lake, no public health advisories were issued this year on the lake. There was discussion on what efforts continue with regards to mitigation of bloom conditions. Dr. Frank Wilhelm, the Limnologist for the University of Idaho, would like to conduct an enclosure study looking at nitrogen treatment to the lake to increase the nitrogen:phosphorus ratio. An increase in the nitrogen:phosphorus ratio has been shown in Dvorshak Reservoir to decrease blue-green algae blooms.

There was discussion about the wetlands on the east side of the lake and the possibility of them being a significant source of phosphorus to the lake. Dr. Wilhelm has observed the wetlands go anoxic early in the summer, which is a condition that causes phosphorus release from bottom sediments. Dr. Wilhelm wants to conduct a study to see the hydrologic connection of the wetland to Fernan Lake and to what extent water moves from the wetland to the lake. A DEQ INBRE intern study showed significant iron release to Fernan Lake after precipitation events – iron is also released from bottom sediment in anoxic conditions. DEQ will meet with Idaho Fish and Game and Ducks Unlimited wetland scientists to see if there are any restoration actions that could be taken to improve the health of the wetland, such that it would be more of a sink for phosphorus, not a source. However, this will likely involve changes in management to the dam that regulates water level in the lake.

State General Fund Agricultural BMP Program

In the 2017 legislative session, the Idaho Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the State General Fund to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for state fiscal year 2018 (SFY18) for a statewide agricultural best management practices (BMPs) grant program. The legislature's intent is for the funding to be used to implement agriculture BMPs in high priority watersheds throughout Idaho. DEQ was

directed to administer the general funds through DEQ's existing BMP grant procedures, which are through the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) §319 program, and personnel. DEQ received 7 applications for the SFY2018 appropriation from all over the state. Four projects were selected, one of which is in north Idaho for bank stabilization work on Mica Creek. Mica Creek is a tributary to Lake Coeur d'Alene. This project is a continuation of over 10 years of work on Mica Creek, which has included riparian exclusion fencing, off-site watering, and streambank stabilization. The project is part of a larger project, a proposal for which was submitted for §319 Nonpoint Source funding in the FY19 cycle. There was discussion in the meeting as to whether the historical work has been effective in improving water quality in Mica Creek, and whether monitoring is occurring to document improvement. Photo-monitoring is being done by the landowner, which has documented vegetation regeneration in the riparian zone and streambank stabilization. Kokanee salmon are again spawning in Mica Creek. It was suggested to ask the landowner for a tour in the spring/summer so WAG members can learn more about the efforts being done in the Mica Creek watershed.

Western Watershed Grant Update

Diane Partridge (Idaho Department of Lands) and Bob Flagor (Kootenai-Shoshone Soil and Water Conservation District) gave an update on the Western Watershed Grant. This grant was awarded to Kootenai-Shoshone Soil and Water Conservation District to identify and mitigate the highest priority resource issues throughout the Blue Creek, Wolf Lodge, and Fernan Creek watersheds. The Kootenai Shoshone Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) are developing a Watershed Action Plan to identify water quality, wildfire, and forest health concerns in the Blue Creek, Wolf Lodge Creek and Fernan Creek watersheds. The Plan will prioritize and coordinate treatments to mitigate threats. The Watershed Action Plan is almost complete. The grant will also fund demonstration projects to implement the Watershed Action Plan. Some demonstration projects have been lined up in the Blue Creek, Wolf Lodge and Fernan watersheds. A location of larch seed orchard has been identified. The Spokane Conservation District was awarded a grant for 7.7 million over 5 years. Project funding is through a competitive grant process. Diane said projects under implementation of the Watershed Action Plan would qualify for such funding.

Wolf Lodge Creek Monitoring

Glen Pettit, with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, informed the WAG that the Coeur d'Alene Lake Management program will be installing a continuous water quality monitoring on Wolf Lodge Creek near the Wolf Lodge Creek campground. Water Quality parameters to be monitored are flow, turbidity, conductivity, nutrients, and total suspended solids. There will be continuous flow and turbidity monitoring at three other sites on Wolf Lodge Creek and Marie Creek (sites to be determined).

Kidd Island Bay Sedimentation

Mr. Ryan Edwards, a landowner on Kidd Island Bay, gave a presentation about excessive sedimentation of Kidd Island Bay. He appealed to the WAG about identification of sediment control projects upstream in the watershed. One of his big concerns was the road. Jeff Price, with Alta Science and Engineering who stated they are a consultant with the local highway district to address road problems. Discussion

followed. Ryan left with contact numbers and names of people interested in further discussion regarding Ryan's concerns.