

The Ecology of Blue-Green Algae Blooms and Implications to Management Decisions Concerning Water Quality

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Blue-green algae which produce toxins harmful to humans, livestock and pets are termed HABs and are at the forefront of water management worldwide. Throughout the US, including the Pacific Northwest, advisories restricting contact with or outright closure of water bodies to the public have increased recently as awareness of HABs has increased. Because not all blue-green algal blooms produce toxins, management of water bodies with recurring blooms requires special attention by managers. In this talk I will address conditions which typically result in blue-green algal blooms; present experimental research on managing HABs; and examine policies of state agencies throughout the northwest for protecting public health in association with water bodies experiencing outbreaks of HABs.