



## Winter 2023 Report

To the Cocolalla Lake Association members,

Yes, we are in the middle of the winter 'recess' at the lake. Most of the projects from last summer are either complete or on hold until spring returns. While ice fishing may be going strong, ice bathing has not been reported to be one of the favorites this year, but I am aware that it has happened!

That being said, there is still substantial work for the Association that needs to, and is, being done during the quiet of the winter. The following is not in any specific order, but they all have an impact on the quality of our enjoyment and the reasons we each have chosen to spend our time at Cocolalla and the impetus behind our memberships.

First, the membership. Please return your membership dues as soon as possible as this affects how we implement our budget from last year until June.

Next, CLA is currently without a host at the boat launch. As we have seen in the past, the lake host can be a positive interaction between the Association and the guests that visit the Cocolalla. The lake host is also another line of defense between the invasive species and the qualities of Cocolalla that we so much enjoy. We are currently developing a lake host plan and subsequent budget to manage that plan. The board encourages anyone with suggestions to contact Fred Vincent or myself (or any board member) to relay those ideas for incorporation into the lake host plan.

Flowering Rush, Left

Curly leaf Pond Weed,





Also, Cocolalla Lake experienced another substantial Harmful Algae Bloom last summer. There are a number of conditions that lead up to our HABs, but, quantifying and prioritizing them are difficult. In general, to the greater extent that we can address each known issue the less likely we will be watching from the shore wishing that we had done more.

Some of these areas are for individual property owners to address and others areas require a community commitment to make a difference.

Individually, we can each have our septic systems inspected and pumped. I did so last summer so I know that my system is not unduly adding to the HABs of our lake. Many of us like to have grass right up to the water, so those of us that do, it is important that we do not use phosphorus fertilizers that can leach into the lake. Please consider the impact of any land fills that approach the high water mark as these materials are easily washed into the lake. Dog dropping also add to the phosphorus assault of the lake (one article stated that nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations were above that which is legal for fertilizer in some jurisdictions). Please dispose of them and not let them decay and wash into the lake.

Collectively, the CLA board is researching phosphorus remediation programs to reduce the phosphorus levels in Cocolalla Lake water. Any program that is determined to be effective will likely be an item for which the Association will need to raise funds.

A new factor for last summer is the increased height of the beaver dam at the outlet at the north end of the lake. Our natural ecologists (beavers) have raised the level of the two major spillways by approximately 1 foot. This results in over 800 acre feet of additional water that is not flushed down the creek and it aids bank erosion regardless of the source of wave action. The Board has approved that we contact the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as well as the Army Corp of Engineers to determine how this situation should be handled.



Finally, the age of the board continues to increase. Specifically, our chief financial officer (treasurer) has requested to retire when her term expires at the end of June. Also, it is becoming more difficult to maintain our meeting schedule due to health issues, sometimes by us individually, and sometimes by family members that we care for. Please consider adding your perspective to the CLA board discussions. Without our board we lose our effectiveness and become just another voice in the wilderness.

Sincerely,

Vern Newby, President  
Cocolalla Lake Association

P.S. Our next meeting is Thursday, March 23, 2023, 7:00 p.m. at the Cocolalla Community Center (Old School House).