

Boating on BC Lakes Report by Nowell Berg May 10 2021

On April 28, 2021, the BC Lake Stewardship Society (BCLSS), Living Lakes Canada and Lake Windermere Ambassadors hosted an online forum called Boating on BC Lakes – A Diverse Future. Three WLLID Trustees took part in the forum.

Six speakers presented a range of information regarding the impacts of boating on lake bottoms and the foreshore. Regulatory issues were discussed along with identification of potential solutions.

Heather Larratt presented findings from a power boat study she conducted on Kal Lake regarding the impact of prop wash on lake bottoms. Her conclusion, all boats prop wash affect the lake bottoms even 4 to 6 meters in depth, especially from wake boats. The powerful prop wash can scour the lake bottom loosening any toxic material embedded in the top 5 to 6 inches of sediment. Larratt also pointed out the causal link between wake boat prop wash and the creation of toxic algae plumes.

Darryl Arsenault talked about foreshore restoration and showed photos before and after of various projects he's worked on along Lake Okanogan. This includes removing old material and replacing it with logs, rocks, gravel and other local vegetation.

Alan Drinkwater, Decibel Coalition, spoke about his group's efforts to have the Federal Government legislate a maximum decibel level of 75dB for all power boats. He noted some high performance boaters use no muffler system at all making boats very loud and disturbing for lake users. He noted that current Federal government regulations are "completely unenforceable."

Shannon McGinty, Lake Windermere Ambassadors spoke about the efforts of that group to deal with the impacts of rapid development around the lake. This community based lake management committee supports local communication and education for lake users. The Ambassadors also provide comment to local government, including RDEK, on development proposals and tenure applications which are not always listened to or acted upon.

Georgia Peck, Living Lakes Canada presented an over-view of Foreshore Integrated Management Planning through local water monitoring. This group is in the process of surveying four lakes in the region to assess the current state of the foreshore. This survey includes recommendations for shoreline guidance, protection or remediation.

Captain Mark Fry ended the session with an over-view of electric boats.

You can watch the entire forum here: <https://youtu.be/9cojm0U4w68>