

WLLID Reports for 2017 Annual General Meeting.

Lake Levels 2016

April 6th Water level was 60 cm below the bottom of the scale.

June 16th the lake peaked . Increase of 184 cm in 70 days, earlier than in the past 3 years

September 7th water level was at the bottom of the scale. Total decrease of 124 cm in 82 days with another 60 cm to go to where we started from in April

As of April 24th this year the lake is still dropping. It was 55 cm below the bottom of the scale

The data logger and an accurate lake elevation at the bottom of the scale would be most valuable.

Flood Watch

As of the April 1st the Forecast Center- Environment Report stated," East Kootenay have moderately high snow packs and subsequent moderate increased seasonal flood risk. The East Kootenay has 116% of the normal basin snow pack. But as we know, a late run off with steady rain and high temperatures can cause flooding.

Interior Health Association has made available some information and things to consider in the event of very high water. They are available at the back.

We know that high water and wave action during the 2012-13 floods caused shoreline erosion, sediment and beach sand movement, damage to plant buffer zones above the shoreline, property damage, flooded septic fields, outhouses, submerged well heads and increased nutrient run off from properties into the lake. These are factors that can effect lake water quality.

In early July of 2012 a Declaration of a State of Local Emergency was granted by the Province. The RDEK acted, and a public announcement was made for a voluntary closure of the lake to power boaters. It was pleasing to see that the closure was accepted by nearly all power boaters. The potential problems were recognized and the cooperation was excellent.

The WLLID is speaking with Interior Health, R. D. E. K, and B. C. Parks about supporting the possibility of establishing a lake elevation during flood times at which power boaters would be asked to voluntarily stay off the lake.

Work should be done on the culvert flood gate to prevent blockages. Last year the culvert was cleared out on 2 occasions by WLLID trustees. It was an unsafe situation and a mechanical lifting system needs to be installed on the flap gate to clear blockages and prevent accidents. A screen on the Cameron Pond side of the culvert is also recommended.. That is yet to be decided.

Native Milfoil

Natural environment factors, temperature, turbidity, nutrient levels and wind. affect the growth and spread of both native and invasive milfoil

Human activity: boating, foreshore alterations, man made obstructions to water flow, nutrient and sediment loading also contribute to the spread and growth of milfoil.

The human contribution could be reduced through conscious efforts, while those contributed by nature are beyond our control.

Have we been able to control the growth of native milfoil? No, but that is not what we initially set out to do.

The WLLID was asked to look into the native milfoil concern: its location, growth, spread, potential effects on the lake, possible control methods and permission to try somethings. We set up a permanent Drain Clean Dry information sign post at the Parks boat ramp. Milfoil information was shared via the T V B. Requests were made in Tri Village Buzz and at pancake breakfasts for boaters to avoid the main patch of milfoil to prevent fragmentation and the milfoil spreading.

We applied for and got a Section 9 approval from M. O. E. to try some control measures. Hand pulling and raking from the shore were the first choices. It was impossible. Mud up to our knees and sinking further, couldn't see a thing.

Next we worked out on the lake. Using several raking and cutting tools made by local residents and the free use of Mike Blair's pontoon and outboard motor, two trustees, and several residents, some in boats collecting fragments, raked, loaded and transported a boat full of milfoil to the dump. It seemed a lot but was insignificant to what was still there.

In June 2016 we arranged to have a former licensed diver and ex Wasa resident, Tony Miguel to give us an idea if using divers /snorkelers would be better. Tony donated his time and snorkeled for over an hour and came up with huge arms full of 99% milfoil. It was impressive. He felt that several certified divers, not snorkelers, with the right equipment, ie a HOOKAH compressor system, working for several days may be able to clear the patch. It would be an annual activity and would only offer some control.

We made inquiries to dive groups in Calgary, Invermere, Cranbrook and the West Kootenay. They were either not equipped to handle it, not available, there was extreme red tape, big insurance issues, and it was really expensive.

We contacted Phil Maki, R.D.K.B. Supervisor of Christina Lake Eurasian Milfoil Programme. Phil replied that he could possibly help in September but only pulling from the shore which we knew was impossible.

In August 2016 , 2 trustees and 7 volunteers attempted to snorkel and dive and hand pull in the large patch which was now visible. In a couple of hours, we did remove a large pile but it was just a fraction of the growth. It was thick, muddy and difficult to remove with the roots. We had great volunteers in water craft, netting fragments. We buoyed off a small area and had a floating boom to contain fragments but with little success. Everyone involved should be thanked for their help.

Two trustees returned to the marked off area the next day and we could see that the small patch we worked on, about 12 X 12 ft was much improved.

It was obvious that many, many similar sessions with more snorkel/divers, more fragment control and if possible buoying off the area from boaters, financial support, support of lake users and boaters, equipment, and more milfoil awareness, are needed to gain any control of that 120 ft X 40ft patch of milfoil. And that is not the only location of milfoil in the lake.

We tried to contact Phil Maki again to see if he could come to Wasa, all expenses covered, get

out on the lake, see what we have and give us an assessment and some options. He replied recently that getting here may be difficult but he would try and I quote "You are not forgotten" The WLLID has been in contact with a drone operator who would be willing to do some surveying, photographing and monitoring. This will be valuable information. Items in the past Tri Village Buzz and WLLID web site have updated our efforts. Maybe it's time for something like a Wasa Lake Aquatic Plant Management Team to be established. Please understand that the situation will only get worse if not perused. We are now at the point where the whole issue of native milfoil control needs to be looked at before going forward. A public meeting in May or June is probably where to decide to continue or stop further actions. A meeting date will be published.