

DON'T DELAY, VOTE YES TODAY!

Please join members of the Friends of Spanaway Lake by voting **YES on the creation of a Lake Management District (LMD)** (Pierce County Resolution 2021-57). Your ballot will be mailed to you Friday, July 9. Over the past decade+, the 200+ residents that call Spanaway Lake home, as well as the 500,000 annual visitors to the park, have seen deteriorating water quality through the presence and proliferation of invasive weeds and toxic algae blooms (see the graph at the end).

Without a stable funding source and the authority to receive grants and get spraying permits, we will not be able to address the lake-wide issues associated with the problems. We get it none of us want any form of property assessment but we all need to take ownership of the problem and act now as a strong, concerted-effort team, because no one else will do anything until we do this. The FOSL board has tried every other path to funding lake treatment.

FOSL listened to you! During the recent public hearing, the original amount was considered too much. It has since been reduced by 50% to a maximum annual level of \$4/front ft with 21% borne by the County that owns Spanaway Lake Regional Park. **The LMD is our only pathway to different grants and treatment actions that are needed now**, and we will do our best to drop our share even more.

This is our chance. Partnering up with Pierce County and other interested parties will enable us to protect our property values and eliminate health hazards well into the future for ourselves, our children, and our community. If we do not act now, the delay will be costly.

Please read the information sheet next pages to answer your questions. Consider this resolution a step towards positive and robust improvement to our lake.

Call and/or visit your lakefront friends and encourage them to vote YES!

Spanaway Lake Management District Fact Sheet

The following bulleted items represent key reference points in the recommended creation of a Lake Management District for Spanaway Lake:

- The Mission Statement of FOSL, a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, is to target the on-going health and vitality of Spanaway Lake and its fish and wildlife. In addition to 200+ lakeside residents, Spanaway Lake is also host to 500,000+ visitors and growing annually with some of the best rock bass, yellow perch, and black crappie fishing in the area.
- Spanaway Lake is a natural 270-acre kettle lake near Tacoma, WA, that has an average depth of 16 ft and is dominantly (~65%) groundwater fed with a surface outlet. The lake is P-limited (phosphorus is usually considered the “limiting nutrient” in lake ecosystems, meaning that the available quantity of this nutrient controls the pace at which algae and aquatic plants are produced) and classified as mesotrophic (having a moderate amount of dissolved nutrients). Total phosphorus (TP) of the lake is approximately 20 parts per billion (PPB). Upstream of the lake, the TP of surface water and groundwater ranges from 20–40 PPB or more due to the effluent from approximately 1,000-1,500 septic tank systems, primarily up gradient to the south and east of the lake. Even in properly working septic systems, about 50% of the TP is not removed and goes into the ground water. In the shallow, southeastern corner of the lake, groundwater vents have been discovered that appear to be a significant source of the detrimental P loading.
- The 10 weeks of 2019 (as well as 3 weeks of 2020) saw **closure of the boat ramp and park beaches due to excessive and extensive toxic algae bloom** from August to November. This year is looking even worse due to hot dry conditions.
- Further complicating this problem will be the recent implementation of a new interpretation on spray treatment permit applications by the Department of Ecology. **A waterfront owner can no longer get a new permit to spray herbicide or algaecide unless** the subject property lines go out under the lake (less than 2% of properties –the ones recorded very long ago--have this feature) OR there is an active LMD in place that speaks for the health of the lake for the permit.
- Last Fall, FOSL drew up a **petition, signed by 37% of lakefront property owners**, to the Pierce County Council to create a special Lake Management District (LMD) to combat the increasing hazardous algae blooms (HAB) and

nuisance aquatic plant growth. FOSL has tried to do some of this work with local donations and a few small grants in the past but needs a more reliable and substantial revenue source to do the job of preserving the health of the lake. **FOSL, being a 501c3, cannot get direct grants from state government. As an LMD we can get direct grants.**

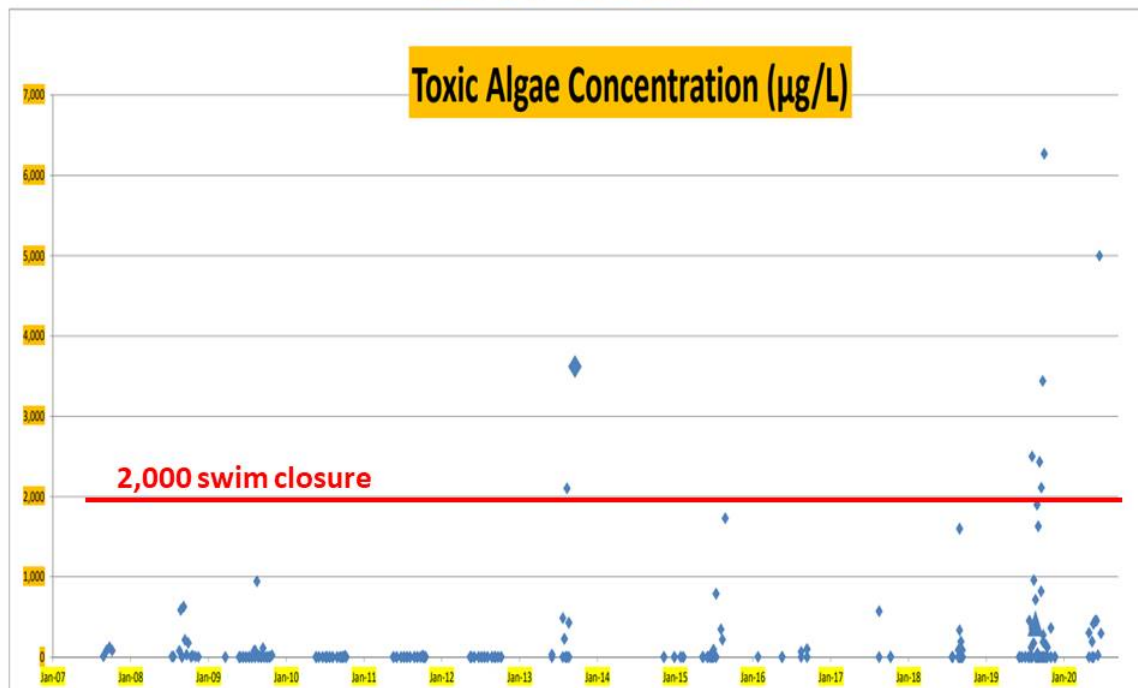
- On Monday, May 3, the [Pierce County Council Rules and Operations Committee](#) had a hearing on the petition (Resolution 2021-57) that was submitted with 70 signatures of lake front property owners. Subsequently, the [Pierce County Council](#) met on May 11 and unanimously passed the resolution. A public hearing was held on June 10. Each fall the LMD board of lakefront owners will propose the following years budget and rates [limited by the voted on maximum of \$4/front foot] to be approved by the [Pierce County Council](#). Once the **LMD is approved, the maximum annual rates may not be altered without another public vote** and [Pierce County Council](#) approval.
- FOSL heard the concerns of property owners and reduced the maximum LMD assessment by 50% from its original petition submittal (from \$8 to \$4/front foot).
- The LMD creates a funding source referred to as a Special Purpose District that would charge each lake lot owner between \$1 to \$4 per lakefront foot to help with the costs of maintaining the health of the lake. The variability estimate was created because **the assessment can be reduced by the pursuit and award of additional funding sources** that have unpredictable success outcomes.
- The creation of a LMD will provide the pathway to actively pursue other types of grant funding as well as the larger grants that are only available to governmental agencies, ultimately keeping the per foot assessment as low as possible.
- In addition to funds from the LMD, FOSL will continue to ask for our State Senator and Representative's support with targeted yearly funds (recent example - \$150,000 per year for 2 years (7/2021 to 6/2023) from a state budget appropriation to improve water health for Spanaway). **Without the LMD we may not be able to use these funds for lake treatment.** We estimate the annual treatment costs to be at least 200k. Lake Steilacoom, slight larger, spends \$370k, but we think we have a more cost effective and environmentally sound solution to reduce the phosphorus in the lake rather than spraying to kill weeds and algae. The LMD tax will only provide 100k at the

maximum, so we will need outside funding that having and LMD will give us access to.

- The charges will be applied per lineal foot of Spanaway Lake property shoreline footage as computed from the appraiser's office system. The proposed boundaries of the LMD include all the properties with lakefront on Spanaway Lake within the jurisdictional boundaries or as allowed by the Pierce County Council as authorized under Chapter 35.61 RCW. It is assumed that Pierce County, as owner of Spanaway Park, and road ends, will share the cost for lake treatment and annual survey costs on the same lineal foot of property shoreline basis (21% of the total).
- The proposed tax charges will be assessed by the Pierce County Tax Assessor as follows: Of the total 24,000 Spanaway Lake lineal water frontage, 5,000 (21%) is owned by the county with the 19,000 (79%) balance owned by private individuals. The 4 private boat launches that have shared ownership by multiple properties would split the frontage and associated assessment fee by the number of shared individuals serviced by the launch. Generally they each own about 1 ft of waterfront
- The estimated maximum amount that is proposed for the LMD to collect via taxes in 2022 is about \$100,000. The County Council will appoint volunteers to a Spanaway Lake LMD Advisory Committee to represent the interests of LMD property owners. This advisory group will be resourced with some FOSL board members, private lakefront property owners, and one to represent other public interest groups. There will be non-voting county representatives. The annual rates will be recommended by this advisory committee to the Pierce County Council with consideration of other income including grants, donations, etc. The issuance of revenue bonds is not proposed. County Staff will work with the Advisory Committee to develop an annual work plan. The annual LMD work plan and budget will be implemented to benefit Spanaway Lake water quality alone. By state statute it cannot be used for other uses. The Advisory Committee will track and review activities and expenditures by the County as well as outside contractors. County staff will provide Advisory Committee support including quarterly financial reports. The Advisory Committee may ask the County to delay assessment in a particular year if funds already collected would cover current costs on the work plan for that year to lessen the financial impact on lakefront property owners.
- 37% of lakefront property owners signed the petition that proposed a duration of 10 years for the LMD. This time span was determined due to

the need to affect a change and see the results. Weather, as an example, can alter results significantly: 3 unusual drought or rainy years can make it difficult to interpret results to develop a correct strategy and solution over a shorter time frame. After 10 years the LMD will 'sunset' and will have to be voted on again.

Toxic Algae Trends-Spanaway Lake 2007-2020



FOSL board phone numbers

Sandy Williamson 253-376-8273 chair

Penny Cooper Howard (253) 503-9749

Ed Larson (253) 861-2813

Jim Overway (253) 632-1585

Randie Armatas (253) 777-5118