On the Water...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Current Events

Enter your description

Events

4/19 - City Beach Flowering Rush Dig & Sand Creek Clean Up

4/22 & 4/23- SEEP Training

4/22 - Albeni Falls Dam Public Meeting 6 PM Priest River Highschool

4/25 & 4/26 - Fly Fishing Film Festival

4/26 - K&K Fishing Derby

5/15 & 5/16 - Bonner County Water Festival for

The Lakes Commission Newsletter

This newsletter is a creation of the Lake Pend Oreille, Pend Oreille River, Priest Lake and Priest River Commission, commonly referred to as the "Lakes Commission." The goal of this newsletter is to bring to the public non-biased, fact based information on current topics occuring on our waterways. To learn more about the Lakes Commission please visit our website at www.lakes-commission.com.

We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and feel free to share it. Please let us know if you would like to be removed or added as a recipient of the newsletter by emailing lakescommission@gmail.com. We hope you have fun on the water this season!

Clark Fork Delta Restoration Starts Soon, Volunteers Needed!

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game hopes to start work this summer to help curb erosion and increase island habitat in the Clark Fork Delta. The initial phase of the project will cover Area 3 and include access road construction to Areas 7 and 11. Area 3 includes an un-named island at the center in the front of the delta that is eroding rapidly from the strong wave action it absorbs during high water.

The first season of construction for this project will start this fall when the water has dropped to the winter low of 2,051' in November. The work will include a number of different activities. Access roads will be constructed and improved upon. Erosion protection will be installed

fifth graders

6/14 - Kids Free Fishing Day

Add a title

Enter your description

on the northern, southern, and western boundaries of the island. Rock weirs will be built into the channel along the northern and southern edges island to push the thalweg of the Clark Fork River away from the shoreline. The elevation of the island areas will be raised so they are above the summer high water pool and topography will be enhanced to improve habitat. Vegetation will be added to almost all aspects of the project with most of that effort happening in the spring of 2015. If you would like to learn in-depth about the project please visit the project website by clicking **(http://clarkforkdelta.org/)** or you can refer to the**Draft Environmental Assessment** for the project which provides extensive information about the project.

The success of this project will depend to some extent on volunteer support. Many aspects of the project including pre- and post-monitoring, plantings and outreach are reliant on volunteer support for their success. You can **sign up for volunteer activities** on the **Clark Fork Delta Restoration Project website**. The volunteer efforts will get going this spring with baseline monitoring.

Reduce Water Pollution from Construction Sites

Soil and sediment runoff is one of the leading causes of water quality problems nationwide. Sediment pollution clogs culverts and increases the risk of flooding, impacts recreational waters, diminishes commercial fisheries and can contaminate drinking water. These situations can complicate life for everyone.

The Pend Oreille watershed, which encompasses Bonner County, is impacted annually by stormwater runoff issues. Stormwater runoff scours roads, ditches, and river and stream banks every spring. This fast moving water, erodes soil and picks up other pollutants from paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops that could adversely affect water quality.

Construction sites, by their very nature, disturb soil and involve the use of chemical products such as gasoline, oils and paints. **The Panhandle Stormwater and Erosion Program (SEEP)** is designed

to provide the building industry erosion and sediment training in order to protect our communities valued water resources as well as stay up to date on certification requirements.

Panhandle SEEP will be holding 3 more classes this spring. These classes are 2 days (1 day of class room and 1 field day) for a fee of $200. Upon passing required exam, students will receive SEEP certification, which is the only recognized sediment and erosion training in Idaho, other than Idaho Transportation Department's courses.

Bonner County April 22nd and 23rd
Shoshone County May 7 & 8
Kootenai County May 21 & 22

Register for classes at **www.panhandleseep.org**.

Flowering Rush Invading Our Waters

Flowering rush (Botomus umbellatus) is an aquatic invasive plant that rapidly fills in bays and shallow areas. This plant was first discovered in Lake Pend Oreille in the logyard near Clark Fork about seven years ago. It spread down from Flathead Lake which has had flowering rush for decades and now has spread all the way down the Pend Oreille River. Once the population has become dense it changes the entire ecology of the environment and creates excellent hiding spots for northern pike. Flowering rush is very aggressive and forms thick mats that are nearly impossible to boat through.

Flowering rush can live as a riparian plant, an emergent plant and submerged. From a distance flowering rush looks like any nondescript rush and blends in very well with cattails. The stem of this plant is triangular towards the base which is a unique feature. Some plants form ornate pink flowers. These flowers are popular in water gardens which is most likely the source of new infestations. The secret to this plants reproductive success is in its hardy rhizomes. The rhizomes are thick and plants can grow from very tiny fragments. They readily break apart through waterfowl disturbance, ice heaving during the drawdown (they don't mind freezing), boat motors pulling up plants, or any other

disturbance. Once a fragment of rhizome gets situated in an area the population thickens rapidly and from a distance looks like grass growing on top of the water.

There is no dependable treatment known for controlling flowering rush at this time. Testing is finding that some chemicals show success, but only with three years of committed treatments. Mechanical removal of the plants (digging) has some success, but needs continuous follow-up.
If you would like to view this plant visit the logyard or the Pack River Delta at west end of Sunnyside Road during the second half of the summer. Or you could come **join our Earth Day efforts to remove flowering rush plants** from the high use areas at City Beach, Dog Beach and the Pend Oreille Bay Trail. **On April 19th volunteers will meet at the City Beach Pavilion at 10 am to dig up rush plants**. This is our fourth year of this effort and we now dig again in the fall after the water is down. This effort has curbed the expansion of flowering rush in these areas allowing for continued use, but efforts will need to continue indefinitely.

Flowering rush has not been found in Priest Lake. If you are traveling between Pend Oreille and Priest or any other lake please make sure to Clean, Drain, Dry your boat. There are many different invasive species that we don't want in our waterways so please do your part to keep them out!