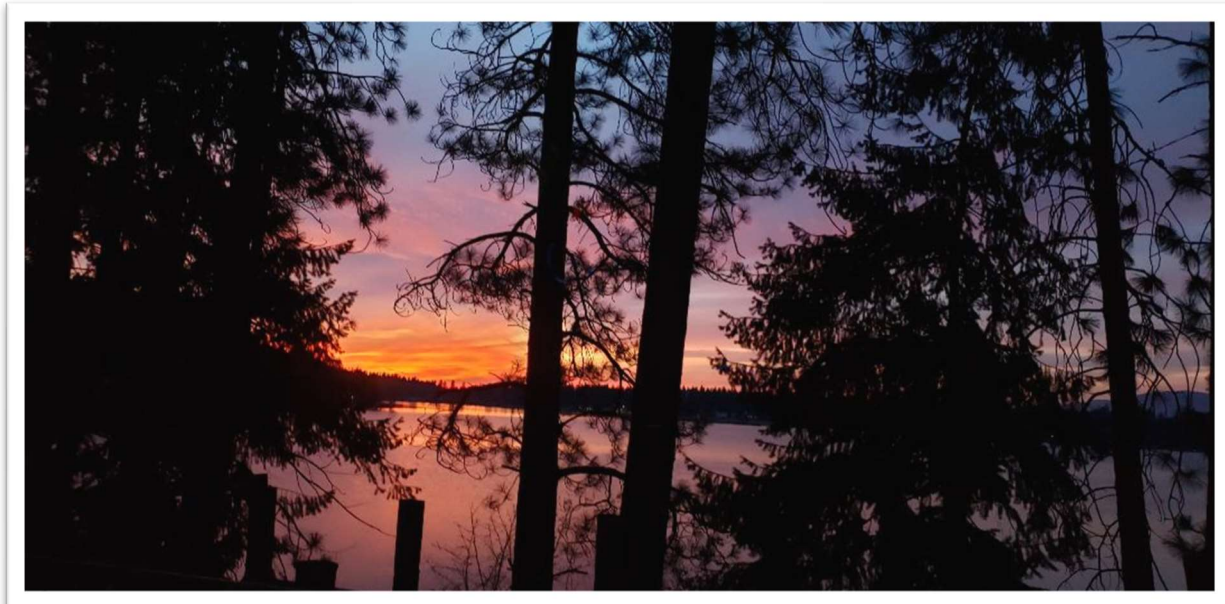


# HAYDEN LAKE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

## STATE of the LAKE REPORT

September 23, 2022



*“Our vision is for Hayden Lake and the overall watershed to be managed, protected and restored to maximize environmental, social, recreational and economic values. We seek to accomplish this with involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders.”*

### **HLWA President Jan Wilkins**



HLWA is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization founded more than 20 years ago to protect the lake and the watershed that surrounds it. We work collaboratively with the community, government agencies, local officials and businesses. Looking around the room on Sept. 23 several of those agencies represented. After these remarks I asked these folks to introduce themselves and to give the attendees an idea of what they may learn when visiting their tables. Thank you, representatives, for giving your Friday night to us. We are grateful that we have these concerned and committed people that understand and share our concerns.

We have had another busy year on the lake! Our education program was in full swing, with a mailing to 1500 of the property owners around the lake explaining the excess wake rules and giving information about how to report excessive wake violations to our

website. “Hot spots” were detected where repeated infractions and damage occurred. We will continue to collect data next year.

We are working with the Recreation Safety division of the Sheriff’s office exploring the possibility of a boat permanently assigned to Hayden Lake for next year. Sgt Miller told me that Kootenai County waterways are 10 times busier than any other waterway in the state. I don’t suppose that surprises any of our members.

We continued to distribute flyers to the boats launching from Honeysuckle and Sportsman’s. More than 500 were distributed in a summer that saw less traffic at those sites than in previous years. It was probably due to the weather and gas prices. We also sent a welcome package to the more than 30 new homeowners around the lake. We had a booth at Hayden Days and had great discussions there. The wake rules flyer has also been distributed to those renting boats at the Hayden Lake Marina, as part of a collaboration with the new owners of the marina.

We supported the Watershed Improvement District’s successful efforts to obtain permits for an additional 14 buoys around the lake, bringing the total number of buoys to 33. The new buoys are now installed. Our observations show that locations that have a buoy within sight distance have experienced fewer excessive wake violations. The buoys do work. Boaters now know what 200 feet from shore or dock looks like. Additional education will be necessary for boats towing or plowing to recognize what 300 feet looks like, and to honor it. We are expecting the sheriff’s marine division to enforce state and county wake regulations.

We are still analyzing the data from our cameras on the lake. Ironically, those cameras were put out of commission on August 13 when an excessive wake severely damaged the dock the camera was sitting on, and repairs could not be completed for a month. Look for a follow-up on our website when those analyses are complete.

We took part in the City of Hayden’s working group exploration to move the city’s boat launch into Honeysuckle Bay. We presented a compelling list of social concerns and scientific shortcomings and communicated those concerns to our members, planners and the city council over a period of several months. Fortunately, the city council voted unanimously to deny the proposal and to work to make their existing facilities more functional instead.

In all, about 60,000 acres make up our watershed. The largest single landowner is the US Forest service, which owns more than 40,000 acres. The rollout of the Honey Badger Project, which we’ve discussed with our membership over the last two years will begin in 2023.

We have met with Forest Service representatives monthly to ensure that our concerns about the sediment rich runoff from Forest Service Road 437 does not get into Hayden Creek, the lake's major tributary. This is a major contributing factor in the already problematic north arm water quality issues.

A joint project with the Watershed Improvement District and the Forest Service is in planning to erect a berm at the shooting site on 437 to prevent sedimentation containing lead and other potentially hazardous materials from reaching the creek. Watch our website for news about the progress of this critical project, and for other information about the future of FSR 437.

As the popularity of our lake has grown, lots that were previously considered "unbuildable" due to slope or terrain are now being built on, sometimes with disastrous erosion results. The resulting code violations have negatively affected lake water quality by contributing large quantities of sediment (phosphorous) into the waterways. We have been tracking and documenting the violations, and unfortunately there is quite a list. We have been repeatedly disappointed by the County's inability to enforce its code violations. Community Planning Director David Callahan was at the meeting, and he has told you in the past that no one is more frustrated by this process than he is.

We are forming an ad hoc committee this Fall that will be studying recommendations for improving the county's erosion control methods, with additional recommendations for beefing up enforcement efforts. Please watch our website for updates about our progress. We anticipate that we will need a public display of support at hearings to ensure that real progress is made on this front. If you would like to be part of the committee, please let me know. If you have experience in civil engineering or landscape architecture, your expertise would be particularly useful.

Members of our Board of directors were introduced. Our board members are on the sewer board, regional planning groups and county committees. Our goals are to be proactive players developing solutions to the impacts that face our lake and watershed and we will continue to play a role in future decision making processes. We would like to add board members to our board, so we encourage members to contact us if you are willing and able to serve. (In particular we could use a recording secretary!)

Board member Gil Rosner spearheaded efforts to circulate the message, "Take Your Wake to The Middle of the Lake." We are looking for dock owners to host the signage next summer. Please contact Gil if you or someone you know is interested.

Our Vice President, Will Neal, also our technology expert, was on hand to walk interested folks through access to our website.

I thanked the many folks who have contributed through dues and donations for their support, including members of the Hayden Lake Yacht Club, who sponsored a very successful silent auction in August. I also acknowledged the grant funds we have received in the past from The Watershed Improvement District. In this last fiscal year, we also received grants from the Coeur d'Alene tribe and Innovia. Our Association is in a strong position for whatever challenges we will be facing.

Geoff Harvey, immediate past president of the HLWA, and our resident expert on the lake's water quality, gave a short summary of the most recent data.

At the end of his remarks, we asked our agency guests to introduce themselves. Many guests took the opportunity to speak to those folks directly about the issues that concern them. The agencies that were present included: Sergeant Ryan Miller from the Kootenai County Sheriff's Department Marine division, Mr. David Callahan, Kootenai County Community Development Director, Professor Jim Eakins of The University of Idaho Water Education department, Mr. Jeremy Varley from The Idaho Department of Agriculture, and Ms. Mary Ann Stoll from the Hayden Lake Watershed Improvement District.