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# Sightlines

Newsletter of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance

Fall 2021

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## Priest River Fish Kill

BY JAMES LEA, SCA BOARD MEMBER

This summer of 2021, temperatures in the lower Priest River became dangerously high and stream flows exceptionally low. This resulted in fish kills affecting cold water species such as mountain whitefish, cutthroat trout and char. The causes are multiple.

Part of the problem is related to our warming climate. Over the last 100 years there has been substantial increase in temperature, averaging about 2 degrees F, much of this occurring in the last 30 years. (See *Sightlines'* online archives for the Spring 2019 issue, which analyzes over a century of data from the Priest River Experimental Forest weather station.) This trend is not likely to reverse.

Another part of the problem is human caused changes to the environment. In the mid-20th century, the lower river was used to drive logs down to the mills in Priest River. This resulted in scouring of the river bed with loss of deep holes and structure where fish can take refuge.

In 1950, the Idaho State legislature enacted legislation authorizing the building of a dam about 2/3 mile downstream from Outlet Bay. The site of the dam is just downstream from Match Bay where logs historically were held in pens awaiting the spring run-off. The purpose of the dam is to regulate the waters of Priest Lake to preserve for the use of the people the beach, boating and other recreational facilities. A wooden dam was built in 1951 with control delegated to the State Reclamation Engineer. The act was amended in 1957 with the stipulation that the level of the waters be maintained at 3.0 ft on the USGS outlet gauge during the summer recreation season.



**Priest Lake shoreline dotted with dead fi**

Between September 10 and October 31, the lake could be drawn down as determined by the Reclamation Engineer. In 1961 another amendment eliminated the dates of the draw down and left it to the discretion of the Reclamation Engineer specifying only that the draw down should occur after "the main recreational season". For many years the recreational season has been defined as from Memorial Day to Columbus Day. The original dam was replaced in 1978 and is currently being upgraded to raise the level safely to 3.5 feet, authorized by statute in 2018. Also, at this time the ownership of the dam was assigned to the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

With the elevation of the lake water during the summer many lakeshore

**FISH KILL,**  
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*Sightlines* is the newsletter of the  
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**T**he trying times of pandemics, isolation, and increased global environmental crises seem to foster arm chair philosophizing. Now it is my turn!

The controversy over the balance of personal freedom, rights and responsibility are an ignition switch in an increasingly parched global environment. Few would disagree that we need to be responsible to preserve the right of a safe, clean and healthy environment for the well-being of everyone. Too often however, personal freedom and/or economic narcissism seem in opposition to the responsibility for the greater good. I am not saying that this is always an easy balance but sometimes it is easier than we make it out to be.

The Covid global pandemic is a good example of what should be a straight forward balance of human responsibility and freedom, but has become a painful descriptor of human nature gone awry. A large percentage of the population feel they have the personal freedom to ignore this virulent pathogen. Although entitled to the freedom of self-destructive behavior, people are not endowed with an inalienable right to spread pestilence and death to scores of others. There goes the individual mandate we agreed on, "the right for a safe and healthy environment in which to live." The cacophony for freedom has overpowered the importance of responsibility with devastating consequences. The adverse impact of Covid to a healthy environment is immediate and overtly obvious, yet the populous has been reluctant to make corrective changes.

What does all this pandemic talk have to do with the Selkirk Conservation Alliance? Environmental protection is similarly a balance between the impact of our rights and freedom to live, recreate, and prosper as we wish and our responsibility for maintenance of a clean and healthy environment in perpetuity.

The issues are similarly amplified by economic impact, complexity of multi-disciplinary science, and the maze of governmental oversight. Unlike our Covid analogy however, the environmental impacts of our actions are frequently not immediate and causation is frequently multi-factorial. The mantra "trust in the science" again takes center stage.

This is where your SCA can help. I am impressed with the steady flow of potential and active environmental threats to our region. We are fortunate to have a strong Executive Director to help us define and focus multiple important issues. Protracted discussions and

legal bantering about wetland development, forest reclamation projects, lake and river water management controversies, and Grizzly Habitat encroachment can lead to complacency, disinformation and distrust. The SCA mitigates complacency with scientific inquiry and Public education is a renewed emphasis. When human nature goes awry, laws and regulations need to intervene. Oversight of the zoning process for wetland and shoreline development is another crucial focus to balance the scales

toward preservation of our fragile watershed.

The visual beauty of the Selkirks compared to the invisible fright of a viral spike protein provides optimism that scientific rigor, education and reason enforced by the SCA may tip the scales toward better management and outcomes. The joy of living and recreating in such a wonderful region has indeed brought together a strong, responsible community advocating for environmental protection. The SCA is thankful for your community support in the quest to "Keep the Wild in the Selkirk Ecosystem."

Curt Wickre, SCA Board President  
[sca@scawild.org](mailto:sca@scawild.org)

## Selkirk Conservation Alliance

### Mission

Engage the public in southern Selkirk resource and land management issues through cooperation, scientific inquiry, education and economic diversity.

### Vision

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance is the leading and faithful advocate to all who live, love and benefit from Priest Lake and its surroundings. We are committed to understanding, supporting and protecting the environment and all living beings found here. We are dedicated to the educational programs and scientific research that support and maintain this rare and exceptional environment for future generations.

For more in-depth articles, photographs and links, go to our website  
[www.scawild.org](http://www.scawild.org)

# Report: SCA Finance Committee

BY JON QUINN-HURST, SCA BOARD MEMBER, FINANCE COMM. CHAIR

**T**he Selkirk Conservation Alliance budget continues to be monitored on a quarterly basis by the SCA Finance Committee. The committee includes Jon Quinn-Hurst, Jon Miller, and Adam Kress. The committee is supported by Robin Maloney, Office Manager, and is also attended by Amy Anderson, Executive Director.

The 2021 Budget remains balanced and meets the expenses for projects and staffing in this budget year. The ongoing projects include support of the water quality sampling/testing at eight sites annually on Priest Lake, and monitoring the water quality of tributaries of Priest Lake to assess the potential impact of logging on the streams.

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance is the lead environmental advocacy organization of the Priest Lake basin with legal standing on environmental issues. SCA relies on the generous support of our members and donors to fulfill the mission of engaging the public in Southern Selkirk resource and land management issues. There are significant challenges and opportunities on the horizon for the basin, and to meet these the Board of Directors has chosen to focus on in-

creasing membership income and donations. The challenges include protecting the Coolin Wetlands from destructive development, protecting the water quality of the Priest Lake basin, ongoing advocacy and protection of critical wildlife habitat, especially recovery zones for protected species.

SCA is thankful to our dedicated members who support the goals and projects through membership and donations. The Selkirk Conservation Alliance Board sincerely requests that you talk with your friends and neighbors about the work of SCA and encourage them to join SCA to fund its work in monitoring and protecting the environment of the Priest Lake Basin. Donations in addition to memberships are always greatly appreciated!

In summary, we have a tight balanced budget that we are closely monitoring, and our goal is to continue to fund the research, education and advocacy work of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance. We rely on member support and donations, so please keep SCA in mind as we continue to strive to Keep the Wild in the Selkirk Ecosystem.

## Board of Directors Recruitment

**T**he SCA is in need of additional board members.

The SCA bylaws outline a board comprised of between seven and 11 directors. We presently have seven directors. At this time of increased environmental action and activity, your SCA board is indeed busy and needs to expand the leadership team.

We are sorry to announce that Paul Sieracki is no longer a board member. With his departure, we will miss his biologic and respected environmental expertise. Thank you, Paul, for your hard work, passion, knowledge and consultation.

If any of you, as SCA Members, are interested in serving on the Board or know a good candidate, please notify us. Interest and passion for the Selkirk Basin is a prerequisite. Experience and knowledge of Environmental issues in the Selkirk Basin watershed is a bonus. Experience in non-profit organizational development would also be beneficial.

## Not receiving our email newsletters and updates?

### How to 'Whitelist' SCA Emails: Gmail, Yahoo, Outlook, AOL

**I**t can be very frustrating when you are unable to receive important emails from organizations you support and want to hear from. Digging through your spam folder to find these communications can also be frustrating and time consuming. If you are not receiving SCA's email ALERTS, UPDATES and general communications it might be because of spam settings on your inbox! Here is a step by step guide to ensure you are receiving SCA's emails!

**T**his article covers how to whitelist a message in Gmail and other major email service providers. By the end, you'll have all the information you need to avoid unnecessary blacklists and make sure that the emails you want to read show up in your inbox like they should.

- Page 4 **Outlook, Yahoo** whitelist instructions
- Page 6 **AOL** whitelist instructions

#### How to Whitelist an Email in Gmail

If you're using Gmail as your email provider, it's easy to set things up so that a given sender is whitelisted for all future communications.

1. Click the settings button (in the top-right corner of the screen, gear icon), then select "See All Settings" from the resulting drop-down menu.
2. Navigate to the tab labeled "Filters and Blocked Addresses" to access information about your existing filters.
3. Select "Create a new filter" and enter the emails or domains you want to whitelist. `sca@scawild.org`

To whitelist a single email address, for example, type the entire address. On the other hand, if you're trying to whitelist every sender from a certain domain, type the domain alone, such as "`@yahoo.com`". This will tell Gmail to approve every

**WHITELIST,**  
CONTINUED, PAGE 4

## FISH KILL, CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

properties became more readily accessible by boat. Likewise, there has been improved access to resorts and marinas. From Outlet Bay to the dam, river property effectively became seasonal lakeshore property with easy access to the lake proper during the summer.

As often happens yesterday's solution becomes today's problem. In 1950 no one could possibly have anticipated the potential impact of the dam on the lower river. At the time there was no such thing as an environmental impact statement. Ecology was a concept familiar only to specialists. Aldo Leopold's A Sand County Almanac had only been published in 1948. No one at that time could have possibly conceived of a thing called global warming.

In spite of the best intentions the dam has now created problems for the lower river and its fishery. In 2015 the flow of the river was completely stopped for two days, turning the river into a disconnected string of stagnating pools. As it stands now the river is being managed to hopefully maintain a minimum flow of 60 cfs; however, the IWRB does not have legal authority to lower the lake level below 3.0 ft during the summer recreational season. This means that there will be times in the future when the dam may be closed and the river flow at the outlet will cease. There are 39 property owners downstream who have water rights for irrigation and

domestic use. The Idaho Department of Water Resources itself has the largest claim for the purposes of recreation and wildlife. This claim is for 700 cfs from 7/1 to 7/31 and 300 cfs from 8/1 to 10/31. In addition, the IWRB has a responsibility to protect the rivers of Idaho with outstanding fish, wildlife, recreational, aesthetic and geologic value identified and assessed for state protection in the Comprehensive Water Plan.

Priest River has been determined by the state to be a highly valuable waterway and is listed as protected under the Idaho Comprehensive State Water Plan for recreation and wildlife. Idaho Fish and Game has determined that the minimum recommended rearing flow for adult and juvenile cutthroat trout and adult rainbow trout is 200 cfs during the period of August 1 to October 31. The optimal rearing flow for adult trout during this period is 400 cfs. Quite clearly there are competing claims for water with a statute requiring maintenance of a fixed summer level regardless of stream flow yet with downstream users legally entitled to a steady flow of water in the river.

Construction of the dam may have also caused increased temperatures in the upper layer of water at the dam where water is spilled; that is to say, increased temperatures relative to prior to dam placement. The dammed upper reach of the river is shallow, broad and sun

exposed. Prior to dam placement, water from the warmer lake epilimnion flowed from the lake into the river, but within 1000 yards received cold water input from the west side aquifer and Lamb Creek. This issue may be addressed by a limnological study to be released this fall.

Ironically these competing claims for water have created an old-fashioned Western water rights fight here in North Idaho where we are surrounded by inland temperate rain forest. Moving forward it seems inconceivable that the summer lake level could be altered given the enormous private and business investment in the status quo. The challenge will be to provide more and colder water to the downstream river to help satisfy the requirements of the river constituency, which include property owners, fisherman, paddle craft enthusiasts, and Priest River businesses.

Elevating the summer level by 6 inches may help with stream flow but not temperature. Historically the fall drawdown was mandated to start as early as Sept 10. Going forward IDWR could begin spilling water over the dam in September after the water cools to 66 degrees F during the Dolly Varden spawn. With a gradual draw down increased flows could be ensured throughout the early fall. Providing for cool abundant water in the hottest days of summer will prove a more significant challenge.

## WHITELIST, CONT'D FROM PAGE 3

message from a Yahoo sender. Click "Create filter" to approve the new filter, then mark "Never send to Spam" to whitelist every email within the filter. You can also choose to Star these emails, apply a given label, or mark them as important.

### How to Whitelist in Outlook

Whitelisting a domain or specific email address in Outlook.com is just as easy and works by adding the address or domain in question to a group called "safe senders." An address that has been

added to safe senders will be pushed to your inbox regardless of your spam filters. To add an address or domain to safe senders:

1. Click on "Settings", then "View all Outlook settings."
2. Go to "Junk email", then choose "Safe senders and domains" or "Safe mailing lists" to select the domain or email you want to whitelist.
3. Enter the domain name or email address you wish to add to Safe senders. [sca@scawild.org](mailto:sca@scawild.org)

Make sure to include the @ character for domain names in order to only

whitelist emails with the exact string of characters you entered (and nothing more). Alternatively, you can add an individual email address that has sent you a message to your Outlook Contacts. Though they lead to the same result, this method is quicker and more efficient than manually entering information.

### How to Whitelist in Yahoo Mail

As long as you have already received at least one message from the address in question, all you have to do is highlight that message in the Bulk folder and mark it as Not Spam. Once you have

**WHITELIST,**  
CONTINUED, PAGE 6

# Economics, Politics and Climate Change

BY JON MILLER, SCA BOARD MEMBER

Soon after the release of the recent report from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and the apocalyptic rhetoric that accompanied it in various media, President Biden urged the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to increase their production of oil in hopes of lowering the price of gasoline at pumps across America. Is there something wrong with this picture? Well, yes and no.

From a long-term economic standpoint, lowering the price of energy from fossil fuels is exactly the opposite of what a sane climate policy would prescribe. We need a higher price on carbon, not a lower one. If we know anything in economics, it's that people do less of something if the price is higher. On the other hand, humans don't like change, especially costly change, so the President, a politician, not an economist, realizes that rapidly rising energy prices in a pandemic will not foster the political coalitions necessary for a transition to a greener, less warm world.

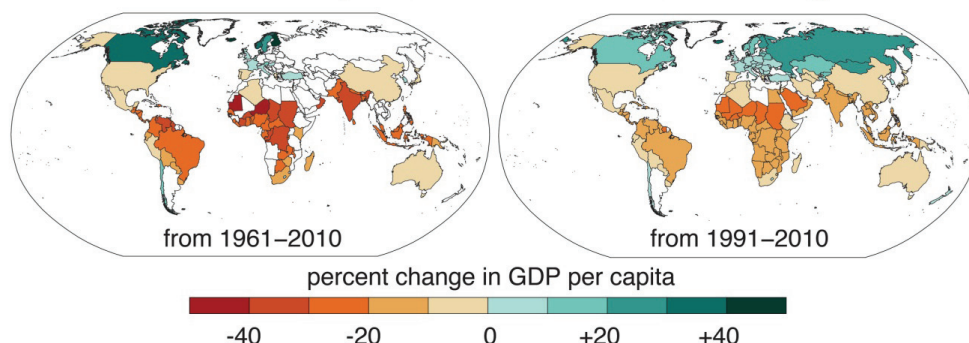
Recognizing this conflict of economics and politics, 3,623 U.S. economists (including myself) signed the Economists' Statement on Carbon Dividends, the largest public statement by economists in history. You can find the details of this proposal at the website of the Climate Leadership Council, <https://clccouncil.org/economists-statement>.

The statement begins with the recognition that climate change is a serious problem that should be addressed forcibly and immediately and that the best way to do this is with a revenue-neutral carbon tax. Revenue-neutrality means that the revenue raised by the tax will be re-funded to Americans through the form of equal

annual carbon dividends. Of course, carbon tax revenue could be used by the government to fund all kinds of activities, or to reduce other taxes, but the devel-

Economic evidence is overwhelming in this regard for many types of pollution control. And cost-effectiveness is important. Making our behavior more climate-

## Economic Impact of Historical Global Warming



opers of the statement felt that raising revenue would also raise political discussions that would jeopardize implementation of the tax.

The carbon tax proposal is based on the idea that activities that generate “greenhouse gasses” create external costs, borne not internal to a market system by those creating them, but by others around the world. Instituting a tax (or a fee) on carbon emissions will help to internalize this external cost. If we must pay for our climate-changing behavior, we'll change our behavior. As carbon-emitting activities become more expensive, we will try to find substitutes for them. And demand for these substitutes will give incentives in the marketplace to provide them. One thing we know as economists, incentives matter.

Using an economic incentive to reduce emissions is more cost-effective than more regulatory command-and-control approaches, or government subsidies to more climate-friendly technologies.

friendly will require costly change. People don't like costly change. Let's make the transition to a more hospitable climate as easy as possible. By returning carbon tax revenue to Americans with equal carbon dividends, the plan will also make climate policy fairer, because the cost of climate policy is often regressive. The lower one's income, the higher the cost as a proportion of income.

The proposal calls for a carbon tax to start low and rise every year until carbon reduction goals are being met. It also calls for a carbon border adjustment, to guard against importing goods from other countries with less stringent climate policy. This will help to preserve the competitiveness of U.S. companies and not penalize good behavior in the world marketplace. I realize that the plan will not be adopted in its entirety, but something like it should be included as part of any climate policy. I hope others, not just economists, can support this powerful policy tool.

SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

**VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

*That's you!*

BOARD MEMBERS

CLEAN WATER  
ADVOCATES

HIGHWAY CLEANER-  
UPPERS

NEW MEMBERS

GRANT WRITERS

**CONTACT SCA**

# Report: SCA Issues Committee

BY JAMES LEA, SCA BOARD MEMBER, ISSUES COMMITTEE CHAIR

**H**ere are the some of the major issues that SCA has dealt with over the last several months.

## Hanna Flats timber sale

On July 23 the US District Court found for the plaintiff, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, suspending the Hanna Flats timber sale near the Priest Lake Ranger Station. This is an important precedent setting decision since it will require exact language and conditions for establishing a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The designation of WUI is one of the categorical exemptions that enable the USFS to award timber sales without an environmental assessment. The importance of this ruling relates to the impact it may have on logging in the entire Idaho Panhandle National Forest. In 2017 Bonner County commissioners declared that essentially the entire county is a WUI. This would have meant that any timber sale on federal lands going forward could proceed without an environmental assessment as prescribed by NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act).

There are specific environmental concerns related to the Hanna Flats project including large tracts of clear cuts or modified clear cuts and proximity to a grizzly bear recovery zone; however, it is the larger issue of the USFS side-stepping the letter and intent of the law

that has led to this conclusion. We are hopeful the forest service will take measures to conform with this ruling. It is quite possible that the Hanna Flat project will proceed if the forest service can demonstrate that the project fulfills the criteria set forth in the Federal Register; however, Judge Winmill has set a high bar. If it does not, a formal environmental assessment will be required.

## Bog Creek road reconstruction

We recently learned that the federal court judge in Missoula ruled in favor of the defendant, the USFS, regarding the Bog Creek Road. This road near the Canadian border runs through the heart of the Selkirk grizzly bear recovery area. We were disappointed to learn that the road will be rebuilt. Although the road will be closed to all but administrative traffic, meaning the Border Patrol, the road will be open to foot and non-motorized traffic. This inevitably will result in many hikers, hikers with dogs, bikes, e-bikes and hunters visiting the area. With the return of hunters there inevitably will be poaching of grizzlies, both accidental and intentional. Since the USFS does not have the resources to enforce their own road regulations, we can expect increasing conflicts between grizzlies and humans. Ultimately, motor bikes, ATVs and side by sides will find their way around or through the gates like everywhere else in the district. Ironically, we fully anticipate that

the newly re-opened road will increase illegal access to the US from Canada. CBP may have opened their own version of Pandora's Box.

## Coolin wetlands

Our executive director has been diligently delving into the proposed development of the Coolin wetlands which would imperil lacustrine wetlands and increase loading of the Coolin sewer district facility. Irregularities may have occurred with zoning and also with permitting for additional sewer hook-ups. We are actively pursuing these issues with the Priest Lake Cabin Owners Association and other allies. Keep an eye on our website for the most current update. Also, see pages 14-15 in this *Sightlines* issue for a wetlands content.

## Proposed IDFG cold water bypass

We are actively delving into the history of the lower Priest River to better understand the issues related to the fishery that existed prior to the placement of the outlet dam in 1951. The history of the dam itself is discussed in this issue of *Sightlines*. This fall IDFG is presenting a limnology study to determine the potential impact of the bypass on the lake and river. We are waiting to get as much reliable, scientifically supportable information before weighing in on this important issue.

## WHITELIST, CONT'D FROM PAGE 4

identified a single message from a given sender, the Yahoo Mail spam filters will automatically allow future messages from the same address into your inbox.

On the other hand, if the person you're attempting to whitelist hasn't yet sent you a message, you'll need to go through the following steps to whitelist the address:

1. Navigate to "Settings" icon, then click "More Settings" from the Yahoo

Mail menu.

2. Select "Filters" and hit "Add" to enter information about the domain name or sender. [sca@scawild.org](mailto:sca@scawild.org)
3. From here, you can enter any string of text you want to whitelist in future emails. This could be anything from an email address or domain name to something you expect to be in the body of the message.

Yahoo Mail makes it much easier to whitelist a domain name or email sender once they've already sent a message to you located in your Bulk folder, so consider asking the person you're trying

to whitelist to send you a test email in advance.

## How to Whitelist in AOL

Many people looking for email whitelisting instructions for AOL are confused by the fact that AOL doesn't have a traditional email whitelist. Instead, it considers all mail addresses a user has in his or her address book to be trustworthy. This means that the contact list in AOL essentially serves the same purpose as Gmail whitelist and Outlook whitelist.

Here are step-by-step instruc-

**WHITELIST,**  
CONTINUED, PAGE 10

# Focus on Phosphorous: From Blue Water to Green

BY STAN MILLER AND AMY ANDERSON

**W**e hear a lot about “nutrients” and too many nutrients being bad for freshwater lake, river and stream systems. But why? This article will explain the basics of why we should care about and work to prevent excess nutrients from entering our beautiful Priest Lake Watershed surface waters.

The flow of nutrients into water is a natural process. The introduction of excess nutrients, such as phosphorus (P) and nitrogen (N) is a **BIG PROBLEM** for local and global surface waters and is known as cultural eutrophication.

Nutrients (P & N) are found in high quantities in almost everything that enters in to water bodies; sediments & soils, leaves and yard debris, human and animal wastes, soaps & fertilizers, wastewater treatment plant discharge, oil (and other materials that run in to surface water).

Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium (N, P, K) are the main nutrients required for plant growth (think numbers found on fertilizer bags). When found in abundance, plants will grow vigorously. When P and other nutrients enter the lake they act as fertilizer which spurs plant growth.

These excess nutrients encourage the growth of native aquatic plants but also promote the vigorous growth of nuisance species including species of cyanobacteria (which can be toxic to humans and wildlife in some cases) and non-native, invasive aquatic plant species such as Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curly-leaf Pond weed. Two very aggressive invasive plant species that have been recently found occupying bays in Priest Lake.

In addition to turning our beautiful clear blue water green, excess nutrients can also negatively impact our local fish populations as well. When those abundant aquatic plant populations die at the

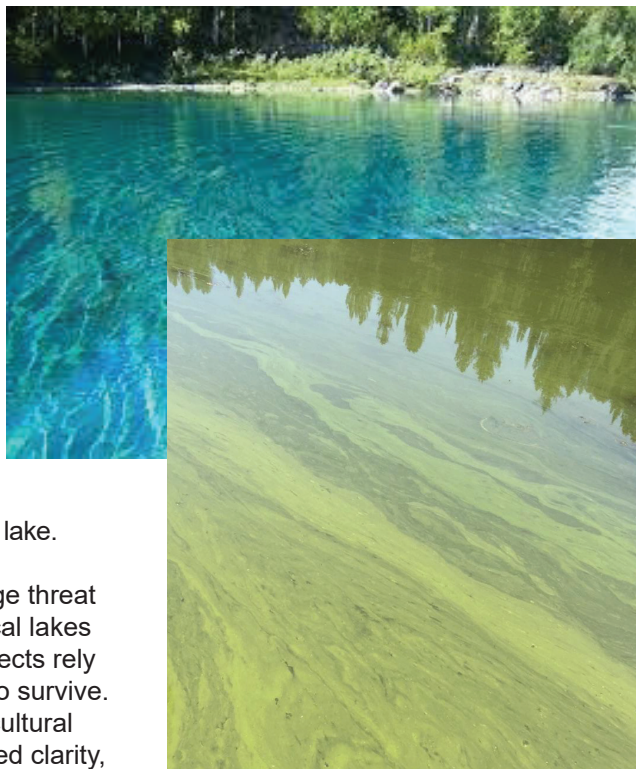
end of the year, they sink to the bottom of the water column and decompose on the bottom of the lake where micro-organisms feed on them using up dissolved oxygen (DO) in the process of plant decomposition. This process is what depletes DO levels at the bottom of the lake.

Lowered DO levels are a huge threat to the water quality of our local lakes because fish and aquatic insects rely on DO in the water in order to survive. Other deleterious effects of cultural eutrophication include reduced clarity, decrease in diversity, food supply and habitat destruction.

If we want to keep the water in Priest Lake clear and free of nuisance algae and aquatic weed growth, we need to keep it in its current oligotrophic state. Oligotrophic means that the lake has very few nutrients to support plant growth (Oligo = Few, little, Trophic = Nourishment, food).

SCA has compiled and collected historic and current sampling data from 1993 to 2021 at 20 sites on Priest Lake. Since 2008 the SCA has worked with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, leading and facilitating the Priest Lake Citizen Science Voluntary Monitoring Program (CVMP) and has continued sampling at these original 20 sampling sites for the last 13 years.

Over that time period data indicates the average P concentration has been about 6 ug P/L. Only a dozen or so tests have shown more than 10 ug P/L. (See online archives of *Sightlines* Fall 2017, Spring 2019, Spring 2020 for information and data on SCA water sampling efforts and phosphorous from sources on land). So currently Priest Lake is in the condition we want it to be in. But there are many things that we do while enjoying the lake that can cause changes we do not want to see.



**Blue water and ideal oligotrophic waters, photo credit Stan Miller; Amy Anderson**

The reason for focusing this discussion on phosphorous is that the SCA monitoring has shown that of the major nutrients that stimulate plant growth, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, phosphorus is the one that limits plant growth in the lake.

The list below includes some major phosphorus sources that humans add or help add to the lake:

## **Tree leaves, needles and cones**

The leaves of a mature deciduous tree contain between a half pound and a pound of phosphorus. That is between 250 and 500 grams of phosphorus per tree. While this seems like a lot of phosphorus to have falling in the lake from riparian shrubs and trees every fall only a small portion, usually less than half, actually gets into the lake. All those leaves that fall on land decompose and add nutrients to the soil to provide for next year's growth. A lake the size of Priest can handle the phosphorus from the natural leaf fall. It is when we humans interfere with the natural cycle that problems occur.

**ALGAE,**

CONTINUED, PAGE 10

# History of Nordic Skiing at Priest Lake

BY JAMES LEA, SCA BOARD MEMBER

**N**ordic skiing has been a part of Priest Lake history for much longer than you might guess.

In 1978, Chipmunk Rapids (located at the Priest Lake Visitor Center) was designated as one of the first two Nordic ski areas in North Idaho by the US Forest Service (USFS). For the most part the trails were skier groomed, but beginning in the early 80s primitive track setters were devised.

The first was an all-steel contraption with rails to set the tracks. Even with greased skids the rails collected frozen snow making grooming difficult. Later they transitioned to wood. The groomer was basically a wooden box with 2 X 4s on the bottom to set tracks. This worked surprisingly well as long as the snow was soft.

However, once there was a thaw-freeze cycle there was no way to break through the crust. In spite of the technical challenges, I have spent many days skiing on excellent tracks at Chipmunk and later Hanna Flats (located near the Ranger Station).

Hanna Flats was opened by the USFS in the mid-80s and, together with Chipmunk, was groomed by Forest Service personnel and volunteers. About this time Craig Hill began grooming the Golf Course. Around 1997, the Priest Lake community came together to establish the Priest Lake Visitor Center near the Dickensheet Junction. Initially the USFS wanted to put in a dump station for RVs, but some of the business community wanted to establish something larger.

The plan was to have the center serve as a staging area for snowmobiles in the winter. The idea was that the snowmobilers would have access to both east and west sides. To this end a dedicated single lane bridge was built adjacent to the road bridge across Priest River. You probably always wondered what that bridge is doing there. At about this time the assistant ranger



**Early nordic skiing in the northwest, photo credit Gary Anderson**

declared that the Chipmunk Nordic trails were not being used sufficiently to warrant grooming.

This was a controversial decision disputed by the recreation manager Roger Bonneau who groomed Chipmunk on a regular basis. Nonetheless, Chipmunk trails fell into neglect. Only the efforts of the Back Country Horsemen have

kept the trails passable to hikers and equestrians. In the early 2000s the Nordic Club asked to begin grooming Chipmunk Rapids once again but were turned down by the Forest Service because it was determined to be winter habitat for deer.

Beginning in 1998 the golf course managers opened the golf course and

clubhouse in the winter as a Nordic Center. Various programs and instruction were offered. The operation was taken over by the newly founded Priest Lake Nordic Club in 2001.

After the pipes froze at the clubhouse in 2005 the Nordic Center folded. At that time the Nordic Club opted to enter the Idaho Park N Ski program, to which we still belong. The club, which was formalized as a 501(c)3 nonprofit in 2011, receives 90% of the parking fees collected from Hanna Flats, Priest Lake Golf Course and most recently Chipmunk Rapids.

In 2004, the Schweitzer Homeowners Association donated funds to purchase skis, boots and poles for three Idaho elementary schools (Priest Lake, Idaho Hills, Priest River). Since 2004 to now, volunteers of the Nordic Club have provided an opportunity for 5th and 6th graders of those schools to learn to ski and snowshoe. Just this last year we received two \$5,000 grants to upgrade our skis, bindings and boots.

Grooming remained a primitive affair until 2013 when the Forest Service bought a 5' Yellowstone groomer. This device is pulled by a snowcat or snowmachine. There are steel "knives" that can penetrate a hard crust and mix the underlying dryer snow, then the renovated snow is packed to create a corduroy surface. Finally tracks are set with a track setter attachment on the rear.

Craig pulled the groomer with an Argo snowcat, well known for its frequent breakdowns. In 2014 the club pur-

chased three used Ski-Doo Alpine snowmachines to pull the groomer. This machine is affectionately known as The World's Slowest Snowmobile by aficionados of antique snowmachines. The Alpine had a single ski in front, which was the alleged steering mechanism.

A major breakthrough occurred in 2018 when the club cobbled together enough money to purchase a Yamaha UTV. This pulls the groomer effortlessly while the operator can be enclosed and out of the elements. In 2019, we were awarded a RAC grant from the Forest Service to buy a 7' groomer and a roller/compactor. This expands our capabilities significantly.

A fairly recent development is the resurrection of the Chipmunk Rapids trail system after 20+ years of neglect. In the fall of 2019 we began clearing brush which allowed for limited skiing for the 2019-20 season. Last summer and fall

volunteers put in over 200 hours to further clear canopy and small trees that had encroached on the trails over the years. Also the eastern segment of the Marsh Trail (see accompanying map) was cleared and widened to its original foot print.

This last season we have opened the entire trail system for traditional skiing and snowshoeing. In June we surveyed the trails with a forester. He has proposed a small timber sale to take out larger trees that create canopy over the trail. If this is approved this fall, we may be able to move forward with widening the trails next summer to 12 feet. At that point we could then groom for both traditional and skate skiing. This would really put Priest Lake on the Nordic skiers map. If you would like to volunteer or contribute to the Nordic Club, you can contact us at: [jyleamd@msn.com](mailto:jyleamd@msn.com). Ski reports will be available on Facebook at Priest Lake Nordic Club.



**Equipment adaptations for early nordic skiing in the northwest, photo Gary Anderson**

## ALGAE, CONT'D FROM PAGE 7

### Yard debris

If you rake up those pine and fir cones, leaves, twigs and other plant debris you rake up the nutrients they contain. This debris has about 9 grams of phosphorus per pound dry weight.

If you toss this debris in the lake you put those nutrients in the lake. If you burn the leaves, needles and branches you rake up on the shore and leave ashes to be washed away by the lake it gets into a form useable by algae even faster. Imagine a pile of algae the size of your debris pile growing in the lake – because that is what will happen.

### Lakeside lawns

Phosphorus can enter the lake from lawns through two mechanisms. The first is the one everyone talks about: fertilizer. Runoff from a freshly fertilized lawn is very bad for the lake. It can even get to the lake through seepage through the soil from over watering. After the first year of life a lawn does not need phosphorus in the form of fertilizer, it can get all it needs from the soil. The three numbers on a bag of fertilizer represent the percentage of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium in the contents. If you have to fertilize use products with the smallest middle

number, zero if possible.

The second mechanism is through lawn clippings. Like the leaves of trees and shrubs, lawn clippings contain phosphorus drawn in from the soil. If these clippings get into the lake so does the phosphorus they contain. The amount can be estimated the same as yard debris

### Lake shore erosion

Forest soil contains enough phosphorus to grow all those trees, so it is also a source of phosphorus when it erodes into the lake. Typical forest soils usually contain less phosphorus than good agricultural soil. But there is still about 1 gram of phosphorus for every 10 pounds of soil. When you are on the lake in your boat, remember that your wake can cause the shoreline to erode, bringing the phosphorus in that eroded soil into the lake.

### Wastewater treatment and disposal

Sewage treatment from development around the lake is generally accomplished using lagoon systems to break down organic's and land application where plants remove nutrients and bacteria are filtered out. A recent study on Kalispell Bay showed that ground water down gradient (next to the lake) from the land application site contained high concentrations of nutrients, includ-

ing phosphorus. The nutrients from waste disposal are likely a major cause of increased algae growth on docks and pilings in the Bay. This type of impact could be occurring at any of the waste disposal systems/sites that exist around Priest Lake. Only site specific studies can determine if a problem exists.

### 2-Cycle engine oil

The oil that is mixed with gasoline for 2 cycle engines – like many older outboard motors for boats or personal watercraft including those with oil injection – contains as much as 0.75 grams of phosphorus per quart. At a 50:1 mix ratio that means every 17 gallons of gasoline you burn can put a full gram of phosphorus in the lake.

One gram of phosphorus added to the lake can grow over 1 pound of algae on dry weight basis.

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*It will take a COLLECTIVE effort from us all if we are going to protect and conserve our beautiful lakes, rivers and streams for future generations to enjoy as we have! Help SCA continue to do the work we do to protect and conserve regional water quality and become a member and donate TODAY!*

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## WHITELIST, CONT'D FROM PAGE 6

tions for whitelisting an email address in AOL:

1. Log in to your AOL account.
2. Open Contacts from the left navigation pane.
3. Click the New Contact icon and enter the required information. sca@scawild.org
4. Click the Add Contact button located at the bottom.

As you can see, the process is straightforward, and deleting existing contacts is similarly easy. All you need to do is select the contact you want to delete and click the Delete button at the top of the page.



If you want to block the deleted contact, you need to go to Options -> Mail Settings -> Spam Settings. There, you can

add the contact to your blacklist.

It's as easy as that!

# Down the drain: Overloaded wastewater treatment facilities in our watershed

## Coolin Sewer District moratorium on new hook-ups to the system

BY AMY ANDERSON, SCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**O**n October 5, 2021, the Coolin Sewer District Board made the wise and common-sense decision to press the pause button on allowing new developments to hook into a system whose capacity is in question.

### **What makes overloaded wastewater facilities in our watershed an environmental “issue?”**

The Coolin Sewer District is responsible for the effective treatment and management of wastewater for properties around the Coolin area that do not have a septic tank system.

Septic waste and wastewater from homes, businesses, developments, schools etc. attached to the Coolin Sewer District infrastructure is pumped to two lagoons where it is chemically “treated” for pathogens and then pumped to “drain-fields” where it is applied to the land. The wastewater applied to the land still has very high concentrations of nutrients (primarily nitrogen and phosphorous), ammonia, metals and other toxins that in a working drain-field system are filtered out of the water as it percolates through the soil and is taken up by plants/vegetation on the drain-field site.

The two treatment lagoons and drain-fields have a limited capacity of wastewater that they are able to treat effectively. If the system is overloaded (too many hook-ups to the system) these overtaxed systems will eventually pump excessive amounts of nitrogen, phosphorous, ammonia, metals and other toxins that the lagoons and drain-fields will not be able to “treat” effectively. These contaminants will inevitably make their way into our beloved creeks, rivers, streams and Priest Lake waters—potentially spreading disease, spurring the growth of algae and aquatic invasive plants and contaminating surface and groundwater drinking sources.

The Coolin Sewer District Board is concerned over these capacity issues as more and more developments want to hook their properties up to the Coolin wastewater infrastructure. This concern provoked the action by the Board at the last meeting to place a moratorium on all new “will serve letters” and applications to connect to the Coolin sewer district (from new entities - developments) until data on current and future capacity is gathered and examined.

This data will allow the board to determine current and future capacity of the Coolin lagoons and drain-field system in order to make educated decisions on new hook-ups or decide if the board should approve construction of a new lagoon to support current and future development in the area.

Let us not forget that there are five systems around Priest Lake, all lagoons with land application of wastewater to treatment sites “drain-fields.” All systems have the potential, if not managed properly, to pump large amounts of contaminants into our water bodies.

Further, not only are the systems around Priest Lake decades old, the methods used to determine capacity are severely antiquated and do not account for modern day use.

That is, the current systems are not accounting for year round use of properties as more and more users are remaining year round or renting/air B&B (historically districts were only equating for summer use), the size of new developments (compared to the small cabins of the past) with many bedrooms and

multiple bathrooms and large irrigated lawns and landscaping, impacts from more frequent storm/rain events (to name a few).



**Caribou Creek flows in the Priest Lake area, photo credit Eleanor Hungate Jones**

Selkirk Conservation Alliance and the Coolin/Priest Lake communities are very concerned over the capacity issues of our wastewater treatment in the Priest Lake Watershed and fully support the Coolin Sewer District Boards decision to place a moratorium on all new “will serve letters” and applications to connect to the Coolin sewer district (from new entities—developments) until data determining current and future capacity is gathered and examined.

# SCA Leadership: How decisions are made, how SCA is governed

BY AMY ANDERSON, SCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**A**t a Board of Directors (BoD) meeting a few months ago it was discussed and decided that it would be good to provide our membership with an explanation and breakdown of SCA leadership, and committees. I also wanted to take this opportunity to showcase the current members of our amazing Board and “toot their horns” as to what amazing people they are and shine a light on just how much time and energy they are dedicating to SCA and our community!

Our members (YOU) are the bricks of SCA and our Board is the foundation of this 35 year old building!

## SCA Leadership

SCA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan environmental organization that has been operating out of Priest River, Idaho for the last 35 years. SCA is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors (BoD), ranging from 7-11 individuals, that serve three year terms and are voted/elected into position by SCA membership (YOU!) at the SCA Annual Meeting in the fall. Each elected Director must be over 18 and a member of SCA. SCA has four executive officer positions; President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The SCA BoD meets on the third Thursday of every month throughout the year.

## SCA Bylaws

### Duties of the SCA President

The President shall be the principal officer of the SCA and shall preside at all meetings of the Membership and the Board of Directors, may sign, and with the Secretary or any other proper officer of the SCA, contracts or other instruments which the Board of Directors has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution is expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or by these Bylaws or by statute to some other officer or agent of the SCA; and, in general, shall perform all duties incident to the office of the President and other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

### Duties of the SCA Vice-President

In the absence of the President or in event of his or her inability or refusal to act, a Vice President (or in the event there is more than one Vice President, the Vice President in the order of election) shall perform the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

### Duties of the SCA Treasurer

The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be re-

sponsible for all funds and securities of the SCA; receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the SCA from any source whatsoever, deposit all such moneys in the name of the SCA in the banks, trust companies or other depositories to the office of Treasurer and other duties as assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors. As per Section 1, the Board of Directors may elect or appoint other necessary officers and assistant officers and agents and designate their duties.

### Duties of the SCA Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Membership and of the Board of Directors and committees having any of the authority of the Board of Directors; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law; be custodian of the corporate records of the Corporation; keep a register of the name and address of each Member, proxy votes and in general perform all duties incident to the office of the Secretary and other duties as assigned by the President or by the Board of Directors.

### SCA Executive Director (ED)

Is the principal employee of the SCA Board of Directors. The SCA BoD has the authority to select and remove the Executive Director. The ED executes the will of the SCA Board.

### SCA Board of Directors

President: Curtis Wickre

Second Term (1/1/2021-12/31/2023)

Curt is our fearless and even keeled president! Curt has a long and distinguished medical career in nephrology and is the former Director of Sacred Hearts Kidney Transplant Program as well as the former Medical Director for Inland Northwest Dialysis Services. Curt gives countless hours to SCA in his role as President but he additionally dedicates his time on several of SCA's working committees; Issues Committee, Hiring Committee, Ad Hoc/Sub-BoD Committee and the Scientific Research Program: Water Quality working group.

Vice President: Eleanor Hungate Jones

Second Term (1/1/2020-12/31/2022)

Eleanor brings thoughtful counsel and guidance to our Board of Directors as our dedicated VP. Eleanor is a long time educator, international teacher and faithful community servant. She dedicates her time to many worthy causes including the Ronald McDonald House and the Sweet Pea Cottage of the Arts. Eleanor and her family have walked this land since the 1890's and she is passionate about protecting it for the next generation! In addition to the large amount of hours Eleanor dedicates to SCA as our BoD VP, she also gives her time to helping produce SCA's *Sightlines* newsletter and participates on the Governance Committee, Ad Hoc/Sub-BoD Committee.

Secretary: Jon Miller

First Term (1/1/2019-12/31/2021)

Jon is a very dedicated member of SCA and brings a keen economic eye to our BoD. Jon has a long and prominent career in the field of Economics and has recently retired from 28 years of teaching at the University of Idaho; College of Business and Economics. Jon brings a much needed economic perspective to our BoD and our work. In addition to serving as SCA's Secretary Jon also gives his valuable time to our Finance Committee.

Director: Jon Quinn Hurst

Second Term (1/1/2021-12/31/2023)

Jon, also known as our one man HR Department brings an extraordinary amount of thoughtful compassion and kindness to our team. His many years as a licensed clinical social worker are a valuable asset when working collaboratively as a Board and with the greater public. Living off the grid in the Priest River area Jon is a self-taught and university trained Master Forest and Water steward. Jon tirelessly and amiably gives his time to the Finance Committee (Chair), Hiring Committee, Ad Hoc/Sub-BoD Committee and the Scientific Research: Water Quality working group! Jon is also the courageous captain of our Priest Lake water sampling boat.

Director: Martin Stacey

Second Term (1/1/2020-12/31/2022)

Martin is one of our wisest (and most humorous) Directors and is a lifetime member of SCA. Martin is a retired attorney and former owner and publisher of the Nickle's Worth. Martin wholeheartedly dedicates himself to his community and actively participates as a volunteer on the Boards of the Spokane Chamber Music Association, the Coeur d'Alene Rowing Association as well as coaching the Lake Coeur d'Alene High School Rowing Team. In addition to dedicating his time to SCA as a Director, Martin is also the Chair of SCA's Governance Committee.

Director: James Lea

Second Term (1/1/2020-12/31/2022)

Jim is a recently retired neurologist who brings a vast amount of scientific background and rigor to our BoD. Jim is a huge asset to our Scientific Research Program and leads the aquatic vegetation growth studies and the citizen science stream monitoring program. In addition to giving his time on SCA's Board, Jim also Chairs the Issues Committee, as I mentioned, leads the aquatic vegetation growth studies and the citizen science stream monitoring programs and he participates on the Ad Hoc/Sub-BoD Committee and the Scientific Research Program: Water Quality working group! Jim has also lent a hand publically speaking on behalf of SCA's work and programs as well as writing grant proposals.

Director: Stan Miller

First Term (1/1/2020-12/31/2022)

Stan is a new and beloved member of our Board and gifts us with boundless amounts of knowledge on surface and ground water resources management. Stan has an extensive background in science with degrees in Chemistry, Engineering Management and Environmental Science. Stan has cheerfully begun to dig into and analyze historic and current water quality monitoring data for our region and has taken on the primary leadership role for our citizen science Priest Lake water quality monitoring project; Scientific Research Program.

## Current and Standing SCA Committees

### Governance Committee (Standing)

The Governance Committee is one of three SCA core committees (Issues and Finance are the other two)The Governance Committee is in place to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity, inclusiveness, and broad-based participation within the organization as a whole. The purposes of this committee are to oversee the process of providing SCA with strategic leadership, including setting direction, making policy and strategy decisions, overseeing and monitoring organizational performance, and ensuring overall accountability. In addition the Executive Committee is responsible for the recruitment and hiring of an Executive Director and assuring SCA conformance with SCA Articles of Incorporation, SCA By-Laws & State/Federal Laws. *Official members include; Martin Stacey (Chair) & Eleanor Hungate Jones*

### Finance Committee (Standing)

The Finance Committee is one of three SCA core committees. This committee provides oversight and gives guidance to SCA's Board on SCA annual budgets, current & future finance outlooks and reports on monthly and annual incomes and expenses. SCA has some significant finance issues and funding challenges and some of the main purposes of this committee are to track and report on SCA finances and to implement a strategic approach to grant applications and other funding opportunities annually. This committee meets every other month, gives reports at all BoD meetings and is open to the full SCA Board and membership/public. *Official members include; Jon Quinn Hurst (Chair), Jon Miller and Adam Kress*

### Issues Committee (Standing)

The Issues Committee is one of three SCA core committees. This committee provides oversight and gives guidance to SCA's Board on all regional issues of environmental concern. The Issues committee provides direction to the BoD and Executive Director as to which regional environmental issues are most paramount and in need of SCA's backing and support. With

**GOVERNANCE,**  
CONTINUED, PAGE 15

**COOLIN WETLANDS UPDATE:** The following is the formal Letter of Inquiry SCA sent to the Bonner County Planning and Zoning Commission on September 26. Please check the SCA Facebook page and website for updates on the potential development of 65 acres of the Coolin Wetlands by a local developer. At the bottom of this article is a link to an October 3 article in the Spokesman Review regarding the subdivision of the wetlands and SCA's letter to Bonner County.

Bonner County Planning Commission  
Cc County Board of Commissioners  
1500 HWY 2, Suite 208  
Sandpoint, ID 83864  
[planning@bonnercountyid.gov](mailto:planning@bonnercountyid.gov)

September 26, 2021

Dear Bonner County Planning Commission; Ms. Suzanne Glasoe, Ms. Sheryl Reeve, Mr. Taylor Bradish, Mr. Brian B. Davis, Mr. Donald Davis, Mr. Matt Linscott, Dave Frankenbach

*RE: Formal Letter of Inquiry into the county subdivision of Govt. lots 2, 3 and 4 Section 9, Township 59N, Range 4W, Boise Meridian, Bonner County, Idaho off of Warren Beach Road in the Coolin Wetlands, south Priest Lake.*

**S**elkirk Conservation Alliance (SCA) is one of north Idaho's oldest conservation organizations and has been working to protect and conserve the lower Selkirk Mountain ecosystem with a particular focus on the Priest Lake Watershed for the past 35 years. Bonner county lies within our advocacy area and the decisions made by Bonner County Commissioners, Bonner Planning Commission and the Planning Department have a direct effect on the short and long term preservation and conservation of our region's air, land, wildlife, forests, water and wetlands.

Selkirk Conservation Alliance is very concerned over the recent waiver of the county subdivision requirements and subsequent subdivision of land that was approved administratively by the county's Planning Director on August 5, 2021 for a 65 acre parcel owned by Tricore Investments LLC (PLBM LLC) in

the Coolin Wetlands off of Warren Beach Road, south Priest Lake.

On August 3rd 2021 Tricore Investments LLC submitted 54 Quit Claim Deeds, 27 of which were for Boundary Line Adjustments (BLA's) and 27 were to create "20 acre plus exempt parcels" on the property they own in the Coolin-Warren Wetland area. See summary table below. The county's Planning Director approved and signed all 54 documents in the same day 8-5-21 and cited the following code.

*F. [codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/bonnercountyid/latest/bonnercounty\\_id/0-0-0-3375](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/bonnercountyid/latest/bonnercounty_id/0-0-0-3375) Waiver Of Land Division Requirements: The Director may waive minor land division, short plat and regular subdivision requirements on parcels to be created that have legal access and the resulting parcel size is not less than twenty (20) acres or can be described as a one thirty-second (1/32) aliquot description or larger. This waiver may be granted upon review of the proposed legal descriptions prior to recording. (Ord. 577, 5-23-2018)*

However, upon review of the legal descriptions submitted to the county with the 54 Quit Claim Deeds for BLA's and to create (27) "20 acre plus exempt parcels", the parcel boundaries spelled out in each legal description are all clearly less than 20 acres in size. County code in place at the time of signing states, "And the resulting parcel size is not less than twenty (20) acres..."

How can the county waive parcel sizes under 20 acres according to the above code?

SCA is concerned that these documents may have been signed in error and that the subdivision of land in the Coolin Wetlands is not a legal division of land.

In fact, the total acreage Tricore owns in the Coolin Wetland area is around 60-65 acres. If we multiply the 27 "20 acre



plus exempt parcel" documents that were signed by the Planning Director by 20 acres we are looking at a total of around 540 acres.

SCA would like to formally request an explanation by the county Planning Commission and BOCC to the public as to the legal framework under which this subdivision of land and the creation of 20 acre plus exempt parcels have been created.

At this time, it is unclear as to how many parcels have been created by the Planning Director via the Boundary Line Adjustment and administrative waiver (20 acre plus parcels) process.

SCA would like to formally request, in addition to the legal descriptions, that the county provides the public with a surveyor's map/sketch of the parent parcels and a surveyor's map/sketch of the adjusted parcels including the location of all approved Boundary Line Adjustments on the 65 acres.

Land development and housing construction on this 65 acre site would entail the filling in (with vast amounts of sediment), ditching, draining and destruction of this important and finite wetland ecosystem. Development would equate to the permanent loss of numerous wetland species both flora and fauna and many ecosystem functions (which greatly benefit humans) at the south end of Priest Lake including (but not limited to) flood control, water filtration and aquifer recharge. When wetlands are filled, the water that normally occupied the site annually and during flood/rain events is rapidly diverted to neighboring properties and downstream to Priest River and regional

## GOVERNANCE, CONT'D FROM PAGE 13

limited resources it is important that SCA be very strategic as to where we spend our limited finances, time and energy and the Issues Committee helps to steer SCA in the right direction. *Official members include; James Lea (Chair), Curt Wickre.*

### Ad Hoc Planning Committee (SCA Sub-Board)

This committee was formed and began meeting in May 2021 in order to expedite the review and feedback from the SCA Board on new SCA operational, planning, program and project documents. This committee is the first step towards final Board review and approval of governing plans, projects and formal operational documents. This committee meets every other week and is open to the full SCA Board. *Official members include; Curt Wickre, Eleanor Hungate-Jones, Jon Quinn Hurst and James Lea.*

### Fundraising Committee

This committee is brand NEW and was formed in June 2021 in order to oversee the planning and facilitation of SCA

events and fundraisers. This committee meets every month and is open to the full BoD and membership/public. *Official members include; Jon Miller, Nancy Wickre and Janet Torline,*

### Scientific Research Program; Water Quality Working Group

This committee oversees and facilitates the work of all of our citizen science water quality monitoring programs; Priest Lake and stream tributaries sampling projects and aquatic vegetation growth studies in Priest Lake. This working group is open to the full SCA Board and membership/public. *Official members include; Curt Wickre, Jon Quinn Hurst, Stan Miller, Paul Sieracki and James Lea.*

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*SCA is always in need of amazing community members (like YOU) to join our Board of Directors and or any of our open committees. Please consider joining our amazing team and supporting your community! SCA is powered by YOU our community members!*

streams causing increased erosion, especially shoreline erosion and property damage from flooding. The Coolin wetland is located over the Priest River Aquifer and plays a critical role in water filtration and recharge for the aquifer.

In addition to the critical importance of protecting and preserving Bonner County wetlands many questions also arise with the approval of this subdivision as to the capacity and ability of the Coolin Sewer District to support current and future users. Sewage wastewater treatment has the great potential to further degrade regional surface and ground water quality if not managed properly.

Other considerations for wise land management and growth are; water supply, solid waste, fire protection, emergency services, school facilities and transportation. The public services infrastructure in the Coolin area is already under intense pressure and cannot adequately support increased housing and major subdivisions.

The Bonner County Comprehensive Plan recognizes and articulates a growing concern over the compounded effects of human activity on/in the watershed stating, "The Upper and Lower lakes and tributaries are of very high water quality with a watershed

dominated by federal, state, and private forest land offering exceptional natural aesthetics. In recent years, there has been a growing concern about maintaining the high water quality of Priest Lake, given the expanding shoreline development of homes and businesses, the capacity of existing sewer treatment facilities, and increasing recreational use of the lake. There is also major timber harvesting activity in the watershed on state and federal lands."

SCA's comments are in accordance with the Bonner County Comprehensive Plan (Implementation Component) goals and objectives as they were laid out and determined by the public and adopted by the County in 2002. The Bonner County Comprehensive Plan succinctly states the clear public sentiment that the county's beauty and culture not be compromised and that growth occurs in a responsible way that preserves the natural environment. The Comprehensive Plan considers and accounts for environmentally sensitive areas such as lakes, rivers, wetlands and wildlife corridors and seeks to reduce development pressures in these areas.

Due to the critical importance of protecting and preserving Bonner County wetlands and protecting and preserving the "rural" nature of, and the long-term

environmental health of Bonner County in accordance with the Bonner County Comprehensive Plan we greatly appreciate your investigation of this concern as soon as possible.

Selkirk Conservation Alliance (SCA) would like to thank the Bonner County Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners and Planning Department staff for working collaboratively with the community members of Bonner County and giving thoughtful, considerate attention to the comments of the public. Land use decisions made by county officials regarding our beloved Bonner County have a direct effect on the health, safety and general welfare of the people of Bonner County in addition to our lakes, rivers, air, wildlife, agriculture lands, forests, water and wetlands.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Anderson, Executive Director  
Selkirk Conservation Alliance  
[anderson@scawild.org](mailto:anderson@scawild.org)

**Spokesman Review, Coolin Wetland subdivision article (10-3-21) [www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/oct/03/development-of-priest-lake-wetland-moves-forward-a](http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/oct/03/development-of-priest-lake-wetland-moves-forward-a)**

# Profile: Meet Adam Kress, Amazing Volunteer on the SCA Finance Committee



**Adam Kress with his family.**

**M**ost people think I'm joking when I tell them I've wanted to own a lake cabin since I was 12. While the exact age is, admittedly, a guess, what I do know is that my favorite childhood memories were those on a lake with family and friends. We were not fortunate enough to have a cabin of our own, so opportunities to be at the lake were few; just once or twice a summer.

And so even at a young age (perhaps 12!), I knew what I wanted: A lake cabin of my own!

From the moment my (now) wife, a Moscow, ID native, brought me to north Idaho in the summer of 2009, I immediately fell in love with the lakes, the rivers, and the mountains. Growing up in New England and spending time in Vermont and New Hampshire, north Idaho was familiar; but there was something more profound about it and I knew it was where I wanted to be.

As such, in 2016, after the birth of my first child, we relocated from Denver to Spokane to raise our family in the Inland Northwest. Within 2 years of that, after many years of searching, the lake cabin became a reality.

During one of those early years I spent researching the lakes and rivers of north Idaho, I stumbled upon SCA while looking for information on water quality and clarity. It was then that I learned of the SCA Water Quality Monitoring Program at Priest Lake and decided to support the organization through membership and donations, and subsequently by volunteering for the Finance Committee. I'm a firm believer that it will

always be easier to prevent water quality deterioration than it will be to eliminate problems after they are introduced. That starts, in my opinion, with active monitoring and continues with ensuring the results of that monitoring are appreciated and understood so we can collectively take the actions necessary to sustain our wonderful resource.

A little more about me: I live in Spokane with my wife, Rose, my son, Emmett (5), and my daughter, Hadley (3). I work for Mortgage Cadence, a subsidiary of Accenture (the global consulting firm). Mortgage Cadence strives to provide mortgage origination software for banks, credit unions, wealth management firms, and mortgage lenders that expedites and improves the mortgage lending process for lenders and their borrowers. I am also fortunate enough to have owned a small real estate brokerage for the past seven years where I primarily focus on helping my clients realize their dream of owning a second home.

In addition to spending time at the lake, we enjoy anything and everything outdoors, from hiking and biking in the warmer months to skiing in the winter.

I look forward to meeting more of you in the future and wish you all a happy holiday season!

*SCA would like to extend a heartfelt and sincere THANK YOU to Adam and his family for their support of SCA, participation on the Finance Committee and working to make our community and watershed a better place for generations to come.*

**Volunteers + Members  
= SCA's greatest asset**

Help SCA continue to be a strong vocal voice for conservation in our watershed.

**SCA FALL MEMBER DRIVE.** If you like what we do, "gift" a friend a membership to SCA for 2022! It's as easy as filling out the "friend" membership form that came with your *Sightlines* newsletter or visiting our website (*Join/renew/donate* page, [scawild.org](http://scawild.org))

Send the gift that keeps on giving all year and for generations!