



SIGHTLINES

www.scawild.org

Summer 2011

Newsletter of the Selkirk Conservation Alliance

FEATURES

2 -FROM THE DIRECTOR

4 -FISH TALES COLUMN:
REEDER CREEK

5 -WETLANDS TARGETED;
-WILDLIFE CAMERAS

6 -LOCAL HISTORY:
SOURDOUGH LEE

7 -CELEBASIN!

8 -LAKE ARCHEOLOGY

YOU ARE INVITED
CELEBASIN:
SCA ANNUAL CELEBRATION
AUGUST 13, 2011

SEE PAGE 7

FEATURED PHOTO



MOOSE IN MOSQUITO BAY FEN,
(PHOTO BY ELEANOR JONES)

www.scawild.org
phone: 208-448-1110
sca@scawild.org

SightLines is the newsletter of the
Selkirk Conservation Alliance
(SCA), a non-profit corporation
providing environmental
oversight and public information
for the Inland Northwest.

Native Bull Trout Recovery in the Columbia Headwaters

BY JERRY R. BOGGS, SCA HYDROPOWER BIOLOGIST

Over the last three to four years, the Selkirk Conservation Alliance has worked closely with the Pend Oreille Public Utilities District (POPUD), Seattle City Light (SCL), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) on behalf of a native fish. The scope of efforts is to ensure positive approaches and oversight for the federally-threatened and native bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) at Box Canyon Dam, Boundary Dam and Albeni Falls Dam respectively.

The public utilities have agreed in their respective Settlement Agreements to provide habitat improvements and native salmonid recovery efforts for bull trout. Both public utilities have agreed to provide fish passage at their dam sites so that bull trout have access above and below dam sites during migration to and from natal tributaries.

Unfortunately, the best efforts of SCL and the POPUD may be thwarted by the inaction or refusal of the Corps to provide fish passage at Albeni Falls Dam.



Recovery is more than simply a numbers game. In this instance, the various regulatory and supporting agencies, fisheries biologists, and others have been working to re-establish bull trout in their various lifestyles, but, especially, in their adfluvial lifestyle.

Adfluvial trout are born in a stream or tributary, stay there for awhile and then move down to a lake or a river system that provides passage to a lake where they stay for quite some time while they eat, grow and mature. Eventually, such fish travel back to their natal streams for propagation. This is, in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Selkirk Conservation Alliance
P.O. Box 1809
Priest River, ID 83856

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PRIEST RIVER, ID
PERMIT NO. 27

Board of Directors

Mark Kabush
Chair

Sharon Sorby

Steve Booth

Bob Harwood

Karin Overbeck

Randy Curless

SCA Staff

Mark Sprengel
Executive Director

Tim Layser
Wildlife Biologist

Jerry Boggs
Hydropower Biologist

Liz Sedler
Forest Programs Coordinator

Mikki Ravenscroft
Office Manager

Amy Daniels
Highway Program

Kate Drum
Washington Highway Program

Sarah Stoner, Layout
Swordfern Wordsmithing, Ink.
sarah.stoner@earthlink.net

Petroglyph Printing
509-447-2590

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

"If we don't allow this to go forward we have, de facto, seized private property."
Roger Daar, Bonner County Planning & Zoning commissioner.

Mr. Daar's comment, justifying his vote to approve a 14 unit subdivision along the shoreline of a wetland (Mosquito Bay Fen) at the head of Priest Lake is all too typical of an archaic notion of private property that ignores or minimizes responsibilities to the commons in deference to a perceived "right" to despoil biologically valuable habitat regardless of the consequences to wildlife and the public domain.

Since the bears, moose, deer, ducks, geese and other wild creatures that depend on places like Mosquito Bay Fen for their survival supposedly belong to all the people of Idaho, it seems reasonable that all Idaho citizens, including landowners, have an obligation to share in the responsibility of protecting their habitat. Since wild animals are not, and cannot, be cognizant of private property boundaries or deferential toward profit-seeking development schemes, it seems again reasonable that we humans must shoulder our responsibility, acknowledge their needs, and alter our behavior accordingly.

Ideally, concession would negate the need for compulsion. Private property zealots unfortunately, are too often short on responsibilities and tall on rights. Such individuals fail to recognize that private rights can only exist within the context of the communal matrix. Plants, animals, land, air and water are attributes of the greater whole

For more information on the proposed subdivision, see page 5: "Wetlands Targeted for Development"

within which we humans impose our notions of discreteness. To ignore the well being of the commons, upon which our lives depend, is a recipe for disaster. Global climate change is one example of the perils of disregarding the well being of the natural commons. Pollution of the air we all breathe and the water we drink another. And the current extinction of wildlife species at thousands of times background rates is yet one more.

It will be argued by some that any one development is unlikely to drive a species to extinction or result in severely detrimental changes in air or water quality. This assertion is likely true. The problem however is cumulative in nature. Thus the science of cumulative effects. Changes are oftentimes only perceived in the aggregate... similar to pulling out one's hair one hair at a time. While the removal of any single hair in itself will not noticeably change one's appearance, keep removing them one at a time and eventually you'll be bald. Each small loss of wildlife habitat is cumulative in nature and, if allowed to continue, disastrous to the whole.

To be sure, private rights are precious. But we must be mature enough to recognize that private rights are dependent upon, and can only exist, within the context of the overarching commons... the natural world upon which all life depends.

Mark Sprengel
Executive Director, SCA
sprengel@scawild.org



Bull moose walks "path" from forest to lakeshore, through Mosquito Bay Fen wetlands—slated for development.

Changes are oftentimes only perceived in the aggregate... similar to pulling out one's hair one hair at a time... keep removing them one at a time and eventually you'll be bald.

For more in-depth articles, photographs and links, go to our website
www.scawild.org

BULL TROUT,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fact, the predominant lifestyle for bull trout in adjacent populations to the Pend Oreille watershed, e.g. bull trout that migrate from natal streams to the Clark Fork River and then to Lake Pend Oreille with a return migration for propagation.

Although the Corps is operating Albeni Falls Dam under a year 2000 Biological Opinion from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that requires it to consider whether fish passage is feasible and, if it is, to implement such passage, the Corps has not and may not ever provide effective fish passage at this dam.

After years of collaboration and negotiation with various agencies and groups, including SCA, the Corps *may* provide a cheap prototype fish passage in the next year, i.e. 2012. If the prototype does not function effectively, there is no commitment to something else. If it does work, no one can predict the outcome in terms of a permanent fish passage facility. Inaction or refusal by the Corps to provide Albeni Falls Dam fish passage may significantly hamper the effectiveness of the tens of millions of dollars to be spent by the public utilities in their efforts to recover this species.

On a more positive sidelight, SCA has been asked by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to participate in the Recovery Group that is writing the recovery strategy chapter for the Columbia Headwaters Recovery Unit which includes upper and lower Priest River, Priest Lake. How this will integrate with efforts to get the Corps to do its part in bull trout recovery is, as yet, unknown.

Stay tuned on the bull trout recovery issue: there should be a public meeting this summer in Newport, WA, or Priest River, ID, at which the Corps will present the fish passage issue.

Among former SCA Executive Director Jerry Boggs' special concerns are protection of grizzly bears and wolves through public education programs. Jerry worked for the Navy and Bureau of Land Management. boggs@scawild.org

Join the SCA

Support the Selkirk Conservation Alliance with Your Membership!

Our newsletter, funded entirely by member contributions, keeps you informed of natural resources issues within the Inland Northwest, and offers regular updates on the efforts of the SCA to promote environmental excellence. Now is the time to give to the environment that sustains us all.

**Make a contribution and keep SightLines coming regularly.
Dues and donations are tax-deductible.**

☐ Enroll or Renew Me as a member of the SCA.
Enclosed are my dues.

	Individual	Family
Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Limited Income (living lightly)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20



SCA mug

To help more, I'm enclosing an additional contribution:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ other _____

Include the following SCA merchandise:

☐ SCA mug #_____ \$15 each + \$5 shipping/handling
☐ SCA bear t-shirt #_____ \$12.50 each + \$3 S&H / Size _____
☐ SCA fish t-shirt #_____ \$12.50 each + \$3 S&H / Size _____

Name _____

Email _____

Winter address (dates) ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

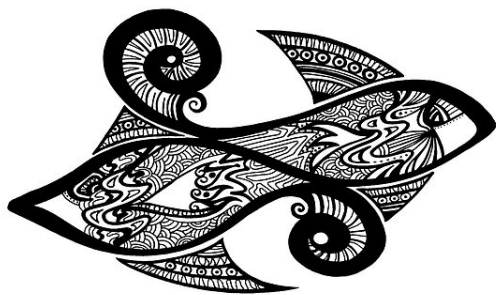
phone: _____

Summer address (dates) ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

phone _____

To pay by credit card, please include type, number, expiration date and three digit security code on back.
Call the SCA Office with any questions. 208-448-1110

Mail to: SELKIRK CONSERVATION ALLIANCE
PO BOX 1809 PRIEST RIVER, IDAHO 83856



FISH TALES Reeder Creek: *The Degradation of a Trout Stream*

BY MARK KABUSH, SCA BOARD CHAIR

"So I speak for the fish:

those that are native to the region,
and those that are not."

Mark Kabush

Fish Tales begins...

A new SightLines column.

On June 1, 1947, Reeder Creek which runs through Bismark Meadow adjoining Nordman, opened for fishing and I was there, eleven years old, telescoping steel rod in one hand, Prince Albert worm-filled can in the other, ready to do battle with the brook trout planted years earlier, probably by Idaho Fish and Game.

I tried following the stream west toward Nickleplate Mountain, but was thwarted by the thick underbrush of stream bank willow which grew beside the creek and blocked my way. I had to circle around along vague trails on my hands and knees, swatting the clouds of voracious mosquitoes, until I found my way back to the creek—and one deep hole after another.

At each hole I could pull out numerous eight to 10 inch brookies which, after swallowing my barbed and worm-baited hook, I would unceremoniously fling backward over my head into the thick brush, requiring me to crawl through to retrieve them. I fished this way two or three days a week, and always provided my family with enough fish for a Friday fish fry when my father arrived home from Spokane where he was establishing his architectural business.

As the weeks passed, I worked my way farther upstream until I came to the hayfield and open ground which held the herd of Rosie Hearst's cattle. They

would aggressively chase me back into the willow brush with the gnats and mosquitoes. I discovered, though, that the fish were smaller and less numerous in the open field which lacked the shade and cover of the streamside bends and bushes.

Isometimes enticed friends to fish with me, but after falling into one or two of the many sinkholes filled with ice cold water and battling the brush and bugs, they never came along for a return trip. As for me—I was addicted.

Later that summer, I noticed grasshoppers floating downstream being taken in surface eruptions. This disproving the local lore that brook trout didn't eat insects and I started using a fly rod. My father's boxes of flies quickly evaporated. But I did learn to cast accurately and never baited a worm again. It wasn't that I was a purist—it was simply easier to carry the flies, much cleaner, and I caught just as many fish.

Sadly, the section of the creek that I fished is not the same. Years later the creek was straightened and the brush removed to provide more hay for the cattle. The whole meadow, a natural wetland, was ditched in an effort to drain it. The fishing deteriorated.

Sometime in the sixties, I think, a fisheries biologist surmised that Reeder Creek should hold West Slope Cutthroat, and retenon-ed the entire creek. This act killed all the brook trout, which then washed out at Elkins Resort. I heard that some of the brook trout weighed up to five pounds. The creek was planted with the Cutthroat, but they did not survive.

I recently flew over Bismark Meadow and saw the creek from the air—a

perfectly straight line running West all the way to the treeline on the lower slope of Nickleplate Mountain. Although the Brookies in Reeder Creek are not a native species, a wonderful part of my fishing history is gone, and the creek probably cannot be restored.

Vital Lands, a conservation group, has taken control of Bismark Meadow, removed some of the drainage ditches, and the wetland is being restored to provide enhanced wildlife habitat. And that's a good thing.

Next time: Granite Creek.

Contact Mark Kabush, SCA Board Chair,
at kabush@bmi.net

Wildlife Sightings

BY TIM LAYSER, WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

Many of us in our time outdoors in the Selkirks and other places often have the exciting opportunity to observe different species of wildlife. Sometimes the wildlife that we have had the unique opportunity to observe may be a somewhat rare species: grizzly bear, wolverine, lynx, fisher, or some other unique species.

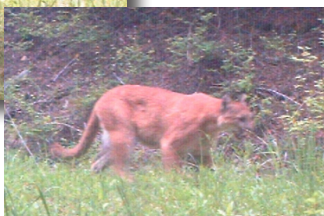
Reporting these observations is important to wildlife managers and land managers alike in many instances. It gives managers a better understanding not only what species may be out there but where and when.

I am encouraging you to report any significant wildlife sightings to the state wildlife agencies or SCA at our office. We will ensure that the information is forwarded on to the appropriate agency. Call SCA anytime at (208) 448-1110.

Smile! You're On Candid Camera: Wildlife Surveys Using Remote Cameras

BY TIM LAYSER, SCA WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

The Selkirk Conservation Alliance is working alongside of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in conducting cam-



Black bear and cougar caught on camera.

era surveys for wildlife within the Washington State portion of the Selkirk Mountains. The cameras detect the presence of any large carnivore species, and other wildlife that may inhabit Washington State portion of the Selkirk Mountains. Wildlife species of interest include bear—especially grizzly bears—wolves, and fisher. Photo documentation of wildlife species previously unknown for this area will likely be valuable information for the state and will assist in management of wildlife within this area.

For this effort, remote cameras are deployed at various locations within the survey area. Camera locations are chosen based on their accessibility, their surrounding habitats, and their overall landscape position. The remote cameras are digital picture format with the capacity to store up to 180 images. Photos can be downloaded onto a portable computer as the cameras are being checked. Battery life on the remote cameras is up to three weeks. The cameras are checked approximately every two weeks and relocated within the survey area if deemed necessary.

So far the cameras have yielded no surprises with the wildlife subjects that have been captured on film. To date: deer, elk, moose, black bear, coyote, and cougar have been detected at most of the locations.

Tim Layser worked for the U.S. Forest Service for more than 30 years and was the Priest Lake Ranger District wildlife biologist for the past 20 years. layser@scawild.org

Priest Lake Water Quality Testing Program

BY MARK SPRENGEL, SCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Despite somewhat unseasonal weather this summer, SCA's Water Quality Testing Program is on schedule with monthly samples successfully collected and delivered to a lab in Coeur d'Alene for further testing. Data is collected and recorded according to strict protocol and shared with Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

The purpose and value of this program is to determine incremental changes in water quality and if deleterious, to identify problems and take steps to address causes before they become intractable.

This season's program will conclude in October. Stay tuned for results!

Wetlands Targeted for Development

On July 19th, the Bonner County Planning & Zoning Commission tabled a decision to approve a 14 lot subdivision on the north end of the Mosquito Bay Fen... located near the Sandpiper Shores subdivision at the head of Priest Lake near the mouth of the Thoroughfare.

Another hearing is scheduled for August 2nd (7:00 PM) at the County Building in Sandpoint to consider detrimental impacts to wildlife from implementation of the proposed development. Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG) will provide comments as will SCA's wildlife biologist Tim Layser. Other comments are expected from the general public.

The proposed subdivision, called "Sandpiper Shores 1st Addition," is situated on the shoreline of Mosquito Bay Fen, a wetland rated Class 1 by IDFG in a 1997 document entitled "Conservation Strategy For Northern Idaho Wetlands." The wetland is cited for its extremely high value to wildlife and for its function as a filter for ensuring clean water. The Conservation Strategy goes on to recommend that "...Mosquito Bay Fen should



Bull moose feeding in the Mosquito Bay Fen, a protected wetland slated for proposed development, in violation of County land use code.

be of the highest priority for acquisition [by the public]."

During the July 19th hearing, SCA Executive Director Mark Sprengel pointed out that,

developer assurances to the contrary, the issue wasn't whether wildlife "can" access the wetlands after negotiating a route between the proposed houses... it really should be whether they "will" given the lack of appropriate hiding cover and access corridors.

SCA's contention is that the development will significantly reduce access for wildlife thus eliminating its value as habitat... a clear violation of Bonner County's revised land use code.

The Saga of Sourdough Lee

BY STEVE BOOTH, SCA BOARD MEMBER

Sourdough Lee was one of those elusive pioneer characters who would never be remembered if they hadn't been mentioned by someone else who cared enough to record their own experiences. That someone was A.K. Klockmann, the initial investor in the Continental mines just north of the upper Priest Lake.

"old Sourdough Lee" who had a ranch with a dingy, windowless cabin located on a bench overlooking the East River about 12 miles north of the city of Priest River. He was described as being rather unfriendly, very deaf, and was nicknamed "sourdough" for his habit of baking his biscuits and bread using sourdough starter.

River and lived to be a ripe old age.

The rest of Lee's story was gleaned from this death certificate, his obituary, and census records. He was born Frances M. Lee in Missouri in December of 1846. His father was from Kentucky; his mother from Holland.

He came to Idaho in the early 1860s, presumably to prospect for gold—the primary occupation in Idaho at that time. Prospectors were notorious for their sourdough cooking methods and that might explain how he picked up the cooking method and the nickname. By 1874 he owned patented land in Owyhee County, Idaho. He came to what is now Bonner County in the early 1880s, settling (squatting) on his ranch on East River. He could not have staked a legal claim because the area was not even surveyed until the late 1890s and was part of a Forest Reserve that was not open to settlers. No one paid much attention to the Forest Reserve status.

The pack trail from Priest River to Coolin was about 50 feet from the front of his cabin. This trail became a wagon road by the late 1890s and evidence of it still exists near his cabin site.

He lived there until about 1903, which was shortly after his land was patented. During his time there, he also carried the mail from Priest River to Coolin by horse or with snowshoes when necessary.

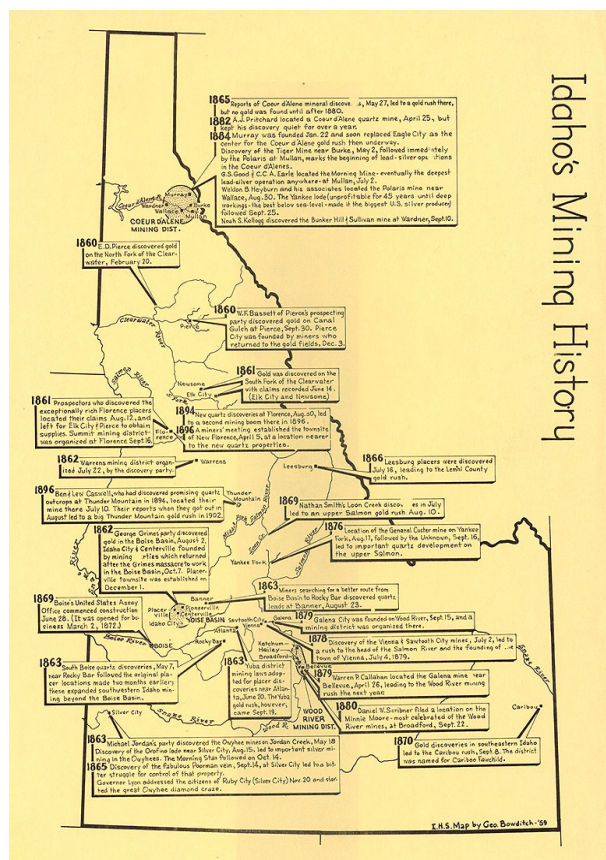
His death certificate, dated January 1, 1913, stated that he had gastrointestinal problems for about 10 years before his death. That might explain why he sold his farm

Lee evidently didn't get along with one of the local "roving" Indians. He was on "war footing" with this individual and felt he might have to "fight it out" with him at any time.

On one of Klockmann's trips to the mines in the mid 1890s he stopped at Lee's cabin to spend the night. He built a fire outside of Lee's cabin and began to fry some grouse in a large frying pan, along with some coffee and some of Lee's sourdough biscuits. He built the fire outside because he could not stand the smoke in Lee's cabin. Evidently his chimney did not draw well.

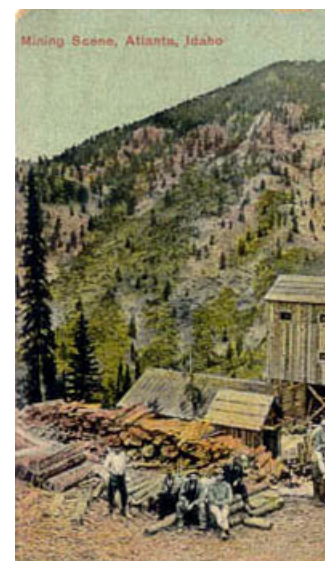
Klockmann stretched out on one side of the fire; Lee on the other side with his rifle, which Klockmann noticed was never out of Lee's reach.

Suddenly, a renegade Indian silently stepped up behind them and deliberately spit in the frying pan. Lee, with one swift motion, grabbed his rifle and shot the Indian through the heart. Lee immediately proposed to throw the Indian into the East River but Klockmann would have none of it. He had never seen a human being killed before, was shocked by Lee's callousness, and insisted on giving the Indian a decent burial. Lee strongly objected but Klockmann eventually prevailed and the Indian was buried, a prayer said, and grass seed was sprinkled on the grave. Klockmann closed the story by stating that Lee later moved to Priest



In the early 1890s, Klockmann accessed the mines by pack trail from Priest River, though Blue Lake country, around the west side of Priest Lake and Upper Priest Lake, up the upper Priest River to Cedar Creek, and up to the mines from there. Later he found an easier route from the Bonners Ferry side and used it instead. Klockmann mentions Henry Keyser as one of the settlers he stayed with when traveling to the mines. Kaiser lived east of the present city of Priest River.

Klockmann also mentions staying with

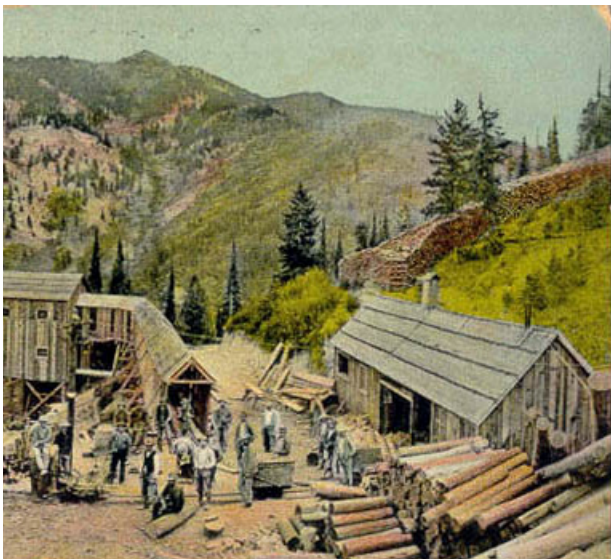


and moved to Priest River in 1903. He was too sick to run the ranch. He died of stomach cancer and was buried of Priest River, although there is no record of his burial there.

He certainly was one of the earliest pioneers in this area. Klockmann said he lived to be a ripe old age; he died at about 67 years of age. His obituary said he had a niece in Priest River at the time of his death, so someone in one of the long established Priest River families could be related to him.

Lee was just one of the pioneer characters who settled in the area and left very little record of their existence. Some didn't want to be bothered and had their own reasons for retaining their independence—and sometimes, anonymity. We will probably never know Sourdough Lee's whole story—though if it hadn't been for the unfortunate shooting incident on the East River and the man who recorded it, even his name may have been lost to history.

Steve Booth is a former teacher, coach, historian, and forest service firefighter. He is a longtime resident of Priest Lake and has owned his small construction business for 28 years. Steve has been on SCA's board since 2002.



Historic scene from a 19th century Idaho mining town.



Who Me? Yes You!

Please join SCA's 2011 Celebasin Celebration

Date: August 13th

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Coolin Grange

RSVP: Mikki

(208) 448-1110

ravenscroft@scawild.org

**Enjoy a home-style potluck lunch,
a raucous live auction,
multiple silent auction items
to bid on, and delightful company.**

**Varietal wines
from Pend Oreille Winery and
three varieties of garlic from
Dalkena Gardens, available
by donation.**

Bring your family and friends...

Lake Archeology 2011: A Crash Course Look at Lake Artifacts Washed on Shore

BY ELEANOR JONES, SCA MEMBER/SUPPORTER

At our little piece of Priest Lake paradise, the routine for the summer season includes hooking up appliances, running the pump until crystal clear cold water spouts out, and setting up the mosquito-proof gazebo. Then, it's time to clean the beach. Some years now I've considered it a beach treasure hunt, but this year I realize it's more like an archeology dig. The artifacts I find washed up prompt me to ponder: who did they belong to? What do the traces we leave in the lake say about us, and how we use the lake?

PLASTIC: Since the appearance of plastic water and soda bottles, there are usually double-digit numbers of



The author gives us a “trashy look”: modeling and putting on display several of the items found washed ashore on her property this year.

them caught in the shoreline wood. Not this year! It would appear that the campaign to reduce their use is a positive one for the lake—except for the 23 water bottle caps I picked up.

BALLS: Being an avid tennis player, I was interested in the five tennis balls—only one of them the usual florescence yellow green. The other four were well chewed leading me to believe that dogs had enjoyed them

in the lake. Should I consider that a recycling use? And the two golf balls? Really, no clue as to whether a beach side putting or iron challenge put them into the Lake, but I will speculate that neither scored a hole-in-one at the golf course!

TOYS: Every year, sand toys wash up in the best condition of all lost lake equipment. This year's retrieved Frisbee, white shovel, sifter, and turtle sand mold leads to the supposition that when a wave hits the beach parents let the toys float while their grab their kids. A very wise choice!

CLOTHING: Gender is not a deciding factor for items lost at the lake. This year, I found one man's water ski glove, an extra-large wet suit shirt, one pink flip flop that I'll assume was female-owned, and a black OP strapless-elastic waist dress. The brown Priest Lake cap is unisex so the gender breakdown score remains 2 to 2.

MISCELLANY: It's anyone's guess as to who lost the ballpoint pen, flashlight bulb, fish lure, balloon and pieces thereof—or the Tide detergent container cut to resemble a water bailer, bottle of insect repellent, McDonald's soft drink cup, or the dozen plastic straws. One does wonder who lost the full can of Grizzly tobacco, aptly labeled 'moist stuff' or the white cigarette holder. But wonder of wonders, not one cigarette stub littered the beach.

FOOD WRAPPERS: Of the non-biodegradable candy wrappers found this year, Snickers and Hersheys appear to the Priest Lake candy of choice. Surely those Hersheys were used for campfire s'mores—while perhaps Snickers is the neo-chocolate

The artifacts I find prompt me to ponder: who did they belong to?

What do the traces we leave in the lake say about us?

About how we use the Lake?

bar of choice to moosh between the marshmallows and graham crackers? Or is a Snickers the quick energy bar used by kayakers?

NATURE: All of the above listed are human produced, so it's only fair to mention those of nature. I found one belly-up fish of undeterminable species and, sadly, a deer carcass floating in the water near shore. I must admit that was quite a surprise and being only an amateur summer archeologist, I made the decision not to attempt to determine cause of death.

STYROFOAM: The thousands of fragments of blue, white, and orange poly-foam speckled in the sand—many the size of a small pea, other pieces fist-sized—attest to its durability and to its frightfully large spread in earth littering. Why is there so much of it at the Lake? What is it being used for? What's our responsibility to limit this invasive styrofoam from being a trash issue at the Lake?

In reality, my annual “dig” is more like a skim. But, it does open my eyes to the way we use our Lake... or misuse it?

Eleanor Jones neé Hungate has spent nearly 70 summers at Priest Lake. The Hungate family's historic log cabin, hand-built by Eleanor's grandfather and his five sons, stood at Canoe Point from the early 1920s until the late 1990s. She can be reached at ejjones3@earthlink.net