
Coordinated by:

**Smith & Bybee Lakes Natural Area
Management Committee**

Nancy Hendrickson, Chair

Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232
(503) 797-1870

Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee Meeting

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 28, 2000
Metro Regional Center, Room 270
600 N E Grand Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97232

AGENDA

<i>Call meeting to order; Introductions</i>	5:30 - 5:40 pm
<i>Review and approval of February meeting notes</i>	
<i>Updates</i>	5:40 - 5:50 pm
<i>Action Item – Port of Portland Water Management/Conservation Plan</i>	5:50 - 6:10 pm
<i>Submission of comments</i>	
<i>Discussion – Establish sub-committees, set scope of work</i>	6:10 - 6:55 pm
<i>Nancy Hendrickson</i>	
<i>Set April agenda</i>	6:55 - 7:00 pm

**Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee
Summary Meeting Notes**

Metro Regional Center
Room 270
March 28, 2000
5:30 PM

In Attendance:

Troy Clark *	Portland Audubon Society
Bill Briggs *	Merit USA
Peter Teneau *	Friends of S & B Lakes
Elaine Stewart	Metro – Smith & Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area Mgr.
Pat Sullivan	Metro – Parks & Greenspaces
Jim Sjulín *	Portland – Bureau of Parks
Jim Morgan *	Metro – Executive Officer's Rep
Dennis O'Neil	Metro – Regional Environmental Mgmt
Bill Egan	Oregon Bass & Pan Fish Club/Oregon Hawg Hunters
Kevin O'Sullivan *	St. Johns Neighborhood Assoc.
Gerry Meyer *	Port of Portland
Chris White	Port of Portland
Bill Bach	Port of Portland

* - voting member

Introductions/Review and Approval of Meeting Notes

During the review of the February 2000 meeting notes, Elaine Stewart reported she had received a call from Guy Marshall of Columbia Steel Casting (CSC) concerning the mention in the notes of a soon-to-be-convened meeting relative to CSC's permit application to fill the side channel of the Columbia Slough. Troy Clark explained that last month he received a call from Judy Linton of the Corps of Engineers wanting to arrange a meeting between interested parties. Scheduling of such a meeting has not yet occurred, however. The February meeting notes were accepted with Troy's explanation.

Updates

- Kevin O'Sullivan expressed his concern that the Smith & Bybee Lakes Management Committee (SBMC) is being bypassed when decisions are made regarding the application of herbicides at Smith & Bybee lakes. The committee was provided an opportunity to revise the agenda per Kevin's proposal that the issue of herbicide application be discussed at the current meeting. The motion failed for lack of a second. The group agreed to put the issue on its April agenda.
- Elaine reported she had received the review appraisal of the "triangle piece" of property, which supported the original appraisal. The recreational facility plan will subsequently be put on hold until the issue has been resolved.
- Elaine recommended to committee members interested in the topic a very worthwhile class on groundwater sponsored by Columbia Slough Watershed Council to be held Saturday, April 15th. The contact person is Jay Mower (503) 281-1132.
- The purple loosestrife project is moving ahead this spring. They have selected sites for the experimental release of beetles as a biological control.

- Habitat restoration contractors will be at work this week doing site preparation (spraying) and planting trees and shrubs.
- A volunteer crew will be at the lakes for the SOLV-IT Day on April 29th.
- Elaine will meet with Stacy Bluhm of PDOT on Friday to review recently received design drawings of the N. Marine Drive project (at the 90% design stage). Other committee members expressed disappointment at not having received copies of the designs although participating on project advisory committees. According to Chris White of the Port, an open house will be held in June at which there will be an opportunity to review the design and make comments. Troy suggested extending an invitation to Stacy to make a presentation to the committee on the current status of the project **prior** to the open house. Elaine will contact Stacy to try to schedule a presentation for the May meeting.
- Funding for interpretive signage may be available from the Multnomah County jail construction project through the 1% for Art program. The jail advisory committee is recommending it to the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC). The SBMC will send a letter to RACC supporting this.
- A \$195,000 grant through the North American Wetland Conservation Act (via Ducks Unlimited) has been received towards replacement of the water control structure.
- Copies of the 1996 Feasibility and Diagnostic Study of Smith & Bybee Lakes, compiled, written and edited by Jim Morgan, were distributed to potential members of the dam removal sub-committee and other interested parties. It examines the hydrology of the lakes, the biology of the area and offers recommendations. Bill Egan, of the Bass and Pan Fish Club, expressed concern that data in the study from 1986 may be outdated. His club will be conducting creel census work at the lakes of the type and size of fish caught. While not a scientific sampling, it will provide some more up-to-date information.
- Jim Sjulín reported that Dawn Uchiyama is leaving her position with the City of Portland for one with the Unified Sewerage Agency. The anticipated mini-master plan on which she was working, (including 40-mile loop trail plans), will be deferred until her replacement is hired.
- The Columbia Slough Watershed Council will be developing a watershed assessment plan, which may be a future requirement of the Oregon Water Enhancement Board (OWEB) for continuing funds, according to Troy. He suggested the Management Committee may wish to provide input.
- Bill Briggs, of Merit Oil, asked that his two acres of wetland shown on Metro maps as included in the S & B Wildlife Area be discussed at a future meeting. It was suggested that, in preparation for that discussion, Bill submit a letter to the committee describing the issues of concern to him to bring members "up to speed".

Action Item: Port of Portland Water Management/Conservation Plan – Submission of Comments

At the last committee meeting, a draft of the plan was distributed. The comment period for that plan having been extended to March 31st, a discussion of its points followed. There was a consensus that the "conservation" element of the plan was lacking. Jim Sjulín proposed a letter be sent to the Port making the following points: 1) the committee supports evaluating the effects of wells on leachate movement from the landfill, 2) the water right for Smith & Bybee Lakes should be retained and 3) the committee supports continuing work between the Port, Water Bureau and other agencies on water conservation measures. A motion was made and passed that the letter be submitted as described.

Discussion – Establish sub-committees, set scope of work

Time did not permit the discussion of this agenda item. It was agreed Elaine would send a letter to all SBMC members inviting them to sit on a sub-committee. Nancy Hendrickson and Elaine will do a scope of work for each sub-committee, and Elaine will schedule initial meetings for them.

Setting of April agenda

Minutes, updates, agenda setting – 25 min./ Sub-committees- forming and scoping of work- 5 min.
PDOT - discussion of railroad crossing at Lombard and Burgard– 40 min
Role of SBMC on issues such as spraying – 25 min.

St. Johns Neighborhood Association
8316 N. Lombard St., #441
Portland, OR 97203

March 28, 2000

TO: Charles Ciekco, Metro Parks

CC: Metro Council
Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee

RE: Herbicide Use at Smith and Bybee Lakes

This is in response to your letter, dated March 22. That letter raised more questions than it answered, and it deepened our concerns about the proposal to apply herbicides at Smith and Bybee Lakes.

In your letter, you stated that "Metro has a policy in place that covers herbicide use," and you referred to the 1995 executive order establishing an integrated pest management (IPM) policy. The application of glyphosate at Smith and Bybee Lakes therefore "follows Metro policy."

The SJNA would like to point out that, according to Jim Morgan, "there has never been an official policy" in the Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Plan, nor has a policy ever been established by the Management Committee, regarding herbicide use. (see page 3 of the January 25 meeting minutes for the Management Committee). Mr. Morgan also assured the Management Committee that the proposed herbicide application was "not the making of a unilateral decision." Further, as your letter stated, "This is the first time that glyphosate will be used at Smith and Bybee Lakes." Therefore, the SJNA firmly believes that Metro should allow the Management Committee to first establish an official herbicide policy for the Lakes, and until then, Metro should not proceed with any unilateral decision to apply glyphosate at Smith and Bybee Lakes.

Your letter stated that reed canary grass is a "serious problem" at Smith and Bybee Lakes. We remain unconvinced. What is the precise nature of this problem and just how serious is it? Is the canary grass spreading at Smith and Bybee Lakes? It seems to be fairly well contained by natural aquatic and vegetative barriers. How did the canary grass first become established? Wasn't its establishment a result of previous policy implementations at the Lakes (policies that in hindsight were ill-conceived)? We believe that between canary grass and herbicides, the grass is the lesser evil, particularly as its eradication may be unachievable, no matter what you do. In fact, many find the canary grass to be an aesthetically pleasing feature of the area.

Your letter stated that glyphosate will be used "while the new plants become established. As the trees and shrubs grow, they will begin to shade out the reed canary grass." This implies an excessively long period of time during which the glyphosate would need be applied – spanning several years - until the new vegetation takes hold. This is cause for grave concern, as glyphosate has a half-life of over 100 days, is highly toxic in many respects, and is considered "extremely persistent" by the EPA. Thus, the application of this chemical to this sensitive habitat and recreational area would be fairly permanent over a long period of time. We also take issue with your statement that "Rodeo is approved for use in aquatic habitats." Who approved its use, what were the approval criteria, and who developed those criteria?

We believe that this proposed approach to canary grass eradication/control needs to be better researched and more fully assessed. George Kral, BES forester, told the Management Committee that he found "little hazard" after looking at only two websites - Monsanto's and Greenpeace's. It is our belief that, with further objective research, reasonable alternatives to pesticides can be found. We are very wary of the precedent that would be set by the introduction of a chemical-based revegetation program, especially one that doesn't involve the Management Committee and the neighbors.

Other questions we have: In "seeking a balance of risk, cost and effectiveness," what balancing criteria would you use and how were they developed? And what is the source of funding for this pilot project? What are the total project costs? How are risks measured and assessed? Have all risks been anticipated? We believe not. If this pilot project is deemed "successful", what then? More herbicide applications?

Finally, we disagree with your statement that the herbicide application "will be located away from the public use area." This is simply not true. The proposed 20-acre treatment area is an area of high public use. Fishermen (women and children) walk throughout the entire area, off trail. Many other recreationists (including small children), as well as many children on class field trips, also explore throughout the area, and wander off-trail through the tall canary grass as part of their enjoyment of the area. This is particularly alarming, given the proposed broadcast spraying, in addition to spot spraying. Posting the "small area near the interlakes trail" would be entirely inadequate. To adequately protect the public, the entire area would need to be closed off for a lengthy period. Even then, no protection would be afforded to the aquatic, terrestrial and sub-terrestrial wildlife.

We therefore urge you to postpone indefinitely this proposed herbicide project, and to work closely and cooperatively with the Management Committee, the St. Johns neighborhood, and the outdoor classroom teachers (and parents). Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Linda Hval, Chair
St. Johns Neighborhood Association

Correspondence

- Dam removal
- Herbicide use

Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee Meeting
March 28, 2000

**METRO**

March 22, 2000

Linda Hval, Chair
St. Johns Neighborhood Association
8316 N Lombard St #441
Portland, OR 97203

Dear Ms. Hval,

I received your letter of March 14th relating the St. Johns Neighborhood Association's discussion and concerns about the use of an herbicide (glyphosate) on reed canary grass at Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area. In your letter, you requested that Metro refrain from using glyphosate until an herbicide policy has been developed by Metro.

Metro has a policy in place that covers herbicide use. In 1995, Executive Officer Mike Burton issued an executive order establishing an integrated pest management (IPM) policy for the agency. Integrated pest management focuses on long-term management of pest problems using a variety of control tactics to minimize impacts on human health and the environment. Glyphosate is specifically listed as a control agent for reed canary grass in our IPM plan, so the use of glyphosate on reed canary grass at Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area follows Metro policy.

I would like to explain why Metro is conducting this pilot project at Smith and Bybee Lakes. Reed canary grass is a serious problem at Smith and Bybee Lakes and elsewhere. Throughout the United States, reed canary grass is spreading and eliminating a wide array of native species and habitats. The monotypic stands of reed canary grass are much less diverse than the habitats they replaced, and natural resource managers across the country are scrambling to control it.

Our management objective for Smith and Bybee Lakes is to maintain and enhance the area in a manner that is faithful to its original natural condition, and suppression of reed canary grass is essential to re-establishing other native plant communities. The spread of reed canary grass and prolonged impoundment of water in the wildlife area have caused the loss of much of its diversity and habitat value.

We are planting a variety of native plants in areas dominated by reed canary grass, and glyphosate will be used to suppress the reed canary grass while the new plants become established. As the trees and shrubs grow, they will begin to shade out the reed canary grass and

should be able to hold their own against it. This is the first time that glyphosate will be used at Smith and Bybee Lakes, and we will carefully monitor its application and then evaluate the success of this approach.

Unfortunately, there are no silver bullets in dealing with reed canary grass. Land managers have used disking, herbicides, controlled burns, inundation and mowing, in all sorts of combinations, in attempts to control the plant. Eradicating reed canary grass is not an option; managers just hope to reduce its dominance to allow other plants to thrive.

We do not take the use of glyphosate lightly – this is a pilot project and not a permanent choice. This method of spraying reed canary grass before planting other species has been one of the more successful approaches used elsewhere. Another promising approach, flooding the grass for consecutive growing seasons, is not available at this time and will never be an option in the more upland areas at Smith and Bybee Lakes. We will probably be experimenting with various methods for some time, seeking a balance of risk, cost and effectiveness of habitat restoration.

In your letter, you expressed concerns about Roundup and the surfactants it contains. We plan to use Rodeo, not Roundup, to spray the reed canary grass. Rodeo is approved for use in aquatic habitats and lacks the surfactants found in Roundup. Even though much of the area to be treated lies far enough from the water to allow the use of Roundup, we are choosing to use the other form (Rodeo).

Most of the herbicide application and subsequent planting will be located away from the public use area. We will post the small area near the interlakes trail where some spraying will occur.

If you have further questions or concerns about Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area, please do not hesitate to call Elaine Stewart, the refuge manager. Elaine can be reached at 797-1515.

Sincerely,



Charles Ciecko

Director

Regional Parks and Greenspaces Department

cc Metro Council
Executive Officer Mike Burton
Jeff Stone, Council Chief of Staff
Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee



St. Johns Neighborhood Association
8316 N. Lombard St., #441
Portland, OR 97203

March 14, 2000

TO: Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee
Metro Council
Charles Ciecko, Metro Parks

RE: **Herbicide Use at Smith and Bybee Lakes**

Please do not use herbicides to kill the canary grass at Smith and Bybee Lakes, at least until an official herbicide policy is fully developed by Metro with full public involvement. There is no need to rush the proposed application of glyphosates before the high water arrives this spring. It would be better to develop the herbicide policy first, even if that means doing nothing about the canary grass this year.

The St. Johns Neighborhood Association (SJNA) does not want herbicides to be used at Smith and Bybee Lakes, which lie entirely within the boundary of our neighborhood association. There are too many knowns and unknowns about these chemicals. Metro should adopt a cautious and conservative approach to the use of chemicals. The SJNA has many concerns, as summarized below:

- The use of chemicals will set a bad precedent for the management of not only Smith and Bybee Lakes, but all of Metro's parks and greenspaces.
- The reliance on chemicals to address invasive plant species is never a final solution. Rather, it leads to invasion by other plant species, and ultimately to a habitual reliance on chemicals.
- Although canary grass is a non-native plant species, it is a lesser evil than the use of chemicals.
- Metro doesn't know enough about the effects of these chemicals on the environment. Examining the web sites of Monsanto and Greenpeace does not create a knowledge base from which to proceed.
- The Journal of Pesticide Reform (JPR) is a good reference for guiding Metro policy. There are many articles that should compel Metro to develop earth-friendly, green alternatives to chemicals. See the references in the endnotes of this letter.
- Notification and Posting should saturate the area before, during and long after the application of any chemicals.

- The canary grass is esthetically pleasing. Why get rid of it? It is pretty much self-contained. It also keeps the area open, which is what an open area should be all about.
- Some people are extremely sensitive to chemicals. Children are also more vulnerable than adults.
- The EPA calls glyphosate "extremely persistent." Half life exceeds 100 days. Glyphosate has been found in streams following agricultural, urban and forestry applications.
- Glyphosate is "acutely toxic to animals, including humans. Symptoms include eye and skin irritation, headache, nausea, numbness, elevated blood pressure, and heart palpitations. The surfactant used in Roundup is more acutely toxic than glyphosate itself. The combination of the two is yet more toxic." (JPR, Fall 1998, p. 3)
- "Laboratory studies have found adverse effects in all standard categories of laboratory toxicology testing [of glyphosate]. These include medium-term toxicity (salivary gland lesions), long-term toxicity (inflamed stomach linings), genetic damage (in human blood cells), effects on reproduction (reduces sperm counts in rats; increased frequency of abnormal sperm in rabbits), and carcinogenicity (increased frequency of liver tumors in male rats and thyroid cancer in female rats)." (IBID)
- "In studies of people exposed to glyphosate herbicides, exposure is associated with an increased risk of miscarriages, premature birth, and cancer non-Hodgkin's lymphoma." (IBID)
- "Glyphosate treatment has reduced populations of beneficial insects, birds, and small mammals by destroying vegetation on which they depend for food and shelter." (IBID)
- Glyphosate products contain "inert" ingredients with toxic effects, including nervous system depression and severe fire hazard (Roundup), fetal loss and reduced fetal weights in lab animals, increased incidence of miscarriages in lab tests, eye burns, skin blistering, nausea, diarrhea, irreversible eye injury, deep skin ulcers, and severe allergic reactions, to name a few.

This position was adopted by unanimous consent of the general membership on February 14, 2000. Although advisory in nature, we hope Metro will follow this recommendation. It is our understanding that the Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee also agrees with the need for an official herbicide policy before any further use of chemicals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Linda Hval, Chair

END NOTES and REFERENCES

The following articles should be required reading. They are well researched and list references:

"Herbicide Factsheet: Glyphosate (Roundup)", Journal of Pesticide Reform, Fall 1998.

Copy of this is attached for Smith and Bybee Lakes Management Committee

"Pesticides and Birds: From DDT to Today's Poisons," Journal of Pesticide Reform, Winter 1991.

"Altering Oregon's Destiny: Hormone-Disrupting Pesticides in the Willamette River," report by the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, October 1997.

"Landscaping Nature's Way: Using Natural Landscaping to Reduce Herbicide Use," Journal of Pesticide Reform, Winter 1999.

"Managing Weeds at Home and in our Communities," Journal of Pesticide Reform, Spring 1997.

"Information Please! Notification and Posting of Urban Pesticide Applications," Journal of Pesticide Reform, Winter 1998.

"Inert Ingredients in Pesticides: Who's Keeping the Secrets?," by Caroline Cox, Journal of Pesticide Reform, Fall 1999.

Glyphosate Pesticide Fact Sheet, US Dept of Agriculture, Forest Service; US Dept of Interior, BLM; and US DOE, Bonneville Power Administration, January 1992.

"Toxic effects of Carbofuran and glyphosate on semen characteristics in rabbits. J. Environmental Science and Health, 1995.

Responses of songbirds to glyphosate-induced habitat changes on clearcuts," Journal of Wildlife Management, 1989.

Responses of small mammals and habitat to glyphosate applications on clearcuts," Journal of Wildlife Management, 1989.

The following websites are good sources of information about pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals.

<http://h2osparc.wq.ncsu.edu/info/pest.html>

<http://www.ubavie.gv.at/umweltregister/sachinfo/atrazin/PANNA.HTM>

<http://www.panna.org/>

www.ncamp.org

www.pesticide.org

<http://www.pesticide.org/factsheets.html#pesticides>

<http://www.panna.org/resources/advisor.html>

<http://www.pesticide.org/gly.pdf>

<http://www.pesticide.org/birds.pdf>

<http://www.pesticide.org/inerts99.pdf>

<http://www.pesticide.org/willreport.pdf>

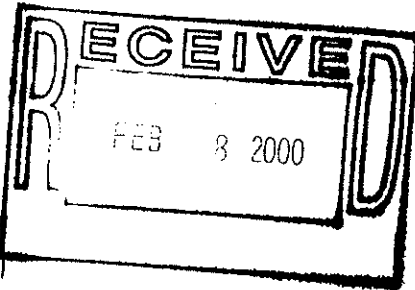
<http://www.pesticide.org/NaturalLandscaping.pdf>

<http://www.pesticide.org/weeds.pdf>

<http://www.pesticide.org/notification.pdf>

William E. Eggen
6884 N. Hudson
Portland, OR 97203

Metro
Executive Offices
Attn: Mike Burton
600 NE Grand
Portland, OR



Feb 6, 2000

Dear Mr. Burton,

This letter is about Smith & Bybee Lakes which metro manages in N. Portland. I have been informed that Metro plans to remove a dam ~~on~~ on the lakes that controls the water level. This dam was placed there some 17 years ago by the Port of Portland to stop yearly out breaks of avian botulism.

Since the dam's inception the botulism which killed several thousand ducks each year has been eradicated. The lakes now have vegetation maintain water year round, offer an excellent warm water fishery including some of the biggest bass in the state. They have good populations of beaver, nutria, year round waterfowl and blue heron. Hawks and owls are also present.

Now the Friends of Smith & Bybee most of whom don't live here, don't work here and are Audubon Society members want to drain the lakes, except at high water and turn the area into a bird sanctuary. I've lived

In N. Portland all my life. I've hunted and fished the area. Before Smith & Bylee were incorporated into the city I got the Port to open the lakes to hunting.

Before the dam kept water in the lakes year round Smith went dry yearly after the spring run off - (now daily) and stayed that way till November rains refilled. The slough is to low after run off to put water in the lakes naturally. Bylee lake has more clay in it than Smith and will maintain several inches of water year round. As the lakes drop they'll become a mesquite breeding ground and we'll lose an excellent warm water fishery as the lakes dry up. The beaver population will become Road Kill and other amphibians including a large population of western painted turtles maybe in danger. You can drive on Smith lake.

At present Smith and Bylee offer canoe and small boat use and could be developed for better limited access points for the public and the people of N. Portland. Your former biologist was Emily Roth. Says we can all go kill somewhere else. The beaver (our state symbol) need to be eradicated and she wants to see some birds on the mud flats - do we open the dump again and bring back the 2-3000 sea gulls that used to be there? She basically told every one to take a hike, what she says goes.

North Portland gets a new jail, a detox center, parole and probation center. The lakes on Swan Island have been filled in as have waters (Ramsey lake) in Rivergate and now certain Environmentalist bird watchers want to destroy the best warm water fishery in the metro area. Many people fish the lakes in ~~spring~~ and summer and we gladly will share the birds with these other groups. Please don't destroy what's left.

There's no guarantee that removing the dam will not bring back the botulism problem and then you'll have added expense to correct that problem. Please listen to all user groups. Metro can spend the money in more useful ways. Hopefully the wildlife commission and the city will both become involved. Permits, environmental impact can all be avoided by leaving things as they are. I'm told the beavers are becoming plentiful, they can be trapped and moved.

Thank you,
Bill Egan
286-7734



METRO

February 15, 2000

William E. Egan
6884 N Hudson
Portland, OR 97203

Dear Mr. Egan:

Thank you for your letter of February 6, 2000, regarding Metro's management of the Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area. I know that you have spent a lot of time at the wildlife area and care about it very much.

As you may know, the Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area is one of the largest remaining wetlands in the region. Metro manages the area for its natural resource and passive recreational values. One of our main objectives is to manage the lakes in a manner that is as faithful to their natural condition as possible.

A key part of restoring the lakes' natural condition is replacing the current water control structure with one that provides Metro with more flexibility and control in manipulating water levels in the lakes. Under the current regime, the lakes are slowly filling in with sediment and organic material, wildlife diversity has decreased, the perimeter forest is disappearing, and the overall habitat quality is declining. Metro wants to reverse that trend.

You stated a number of concerns in your letter, and I would like to respond to each one:

- *Avian botulism* – Outbreaks of this disease were widespread throughout the lower Columbia River in the 1970s. One bird from Smith and Bybee Lakes was tested and found infected, and from this evidence the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) worked with the Port of Portland to construct a dam. This was a controversial decision, but impoundment of the lakes was intended to keep water levels high through late summer and early fall, dispersing waterfowl to avoid spread of any botulism outbreaks that may occur. Allowing water

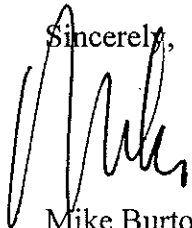
levels to drop naturally through the summer will concentrate waterfowl on the lakes, and we will monitor for any outbreaks. If and when botulism becomes a problem, the new water control structure could be closed and the water surface area of the lakes can be increased using an irrigation pump if necessary.

- *Fish issues* – Impounding the lakes has produced good conditions for warmwater fish growth and angling, but fish surveys indicate limited recruitment in younger age classes of largemouth bass and other warmwater game fish. Further, the water control structure may block access to the lakes for downstream migrating salmonids or trap them in the lakes if they move in during high water periods. A more natural flooding regime should benefit these federally listed species, and angling access for warmwater fish species should remain good from late fall through early summer.
- *Beaver* – The artificial conditions at Smith and Bybee Lakes has produced a large beaver population, which has accelerated loss of surrounding forests. Trapping and moving beaver is typically very difficult, time-consuming and expensive. When water levels are allowed to fluctuate, some beaver will migrate out of the area. However, Smith and Bybee Lakes will always have a core population of beaver.
- *Western painted turtles* – As you noted, the painted turtles also inhabit the wildlife area. We are presently monitoring the turtle population and conducting research on their habitat use. Like the other native species, the turtles became established at Smith and Bybee Lakes when it flooded naturally and they should benefit from replacing the current water control structure, especially as populations of predators such as bullfrogs decrease.

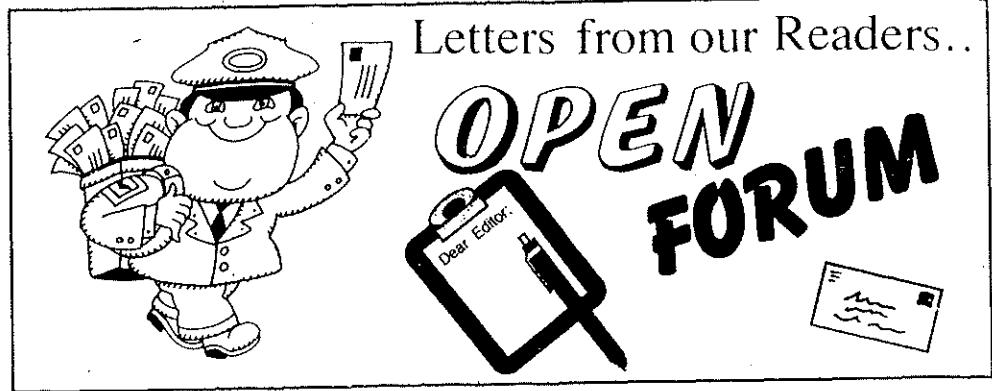
Finally, I want to emphasize that we are planning to replace the current water control structure with one that provides Metro with greater control and flexibility. There will be times when we want to hold water in the lakes, for example, to inhibit invasive plants while we are re-establishing the native vegetation around the lakes' edges. We will adapt our management at Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area as problems arise and we learn how to resolve them.

I appreciate your interest in Smith and Bybee Lakes and hope that you continue to enjoy the area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Burton", with a stylized, cursive script.

Mike Burton
Executive Officer



Metro breaching Smith & Bybee lake dam will cause more harm than good

Dear Editor,

I am a long time resident of North Portland. I've lived here most of my life and raised five boys. Over the years I've watched as they filled in the lakes and slough in Mocks Bottom (Swan Island) they filled in a quarter of the lagoon. The lakes on the Peninsula have been drained or filled until Smith and Bybee Lakes and the surrounding sloughs are about all that's left.

Eighteen years ago an earthen dam was placed on Smith and Bybee lakes. The purpose was to control botulism which killed 2000 chicks and geese yearly. The dam worked well, instead of the lakes going dry after spring run-off they contained water year round. Grass grew and the lakes support excellent bass and crappie populations with bass to 12# and crappie to 4-plus being caught. I saw and weighed the crappie. The bass was entered in the Bass 'N Magazine National Contest and would have been on state record had it been weighed on certified scales and then it was photographed, measured and released.

This August, Metro is going to pull the dam. The last survey of fish population in Smith and Bybee was done in 1996. It showed Salmon and Steelhead Smolt present in the lake. 1996 was a high water year and Smolt could be found in most flooded fields across the state.

Before the dam, Smith and Bybee Lakes would go dry in July and you could drive on it by August. Bybee Lake had a clay/sand base and held several inches of water. When the dam is pulled we'll lose the fishery and the swampy mess that's left will become a haven for mosquitoes. The lakes which sit higher than the slough won't exchange water

as (Emily Roth) former Metro biologist suggests until November rains raise the slough level.

Friends of Smith and Bybee which I find to be more bird watchers than friends, want the beavers gone so they won't eat any more trees and they seem to want the fishermen gone as well, so they can, quote Emily Roth, "watch shore birds on the mud flats." The beaver problem could be solved by trapping (dead or alive) and moving the beaver. All user groups could have access and use/share the lakes and their resources.

Returning this fishery to it's natural state will be a man made disaster as the public will be the loser and in time Metro and the Port of Portland may find an excuse to fill the lakes and use their 21,000 acres for industrial purposes. They brought North Portland the landfill (now closed), the parole and probation office and the new jail and detox center. Why not destroy these lakes and later fill them too.

The old jeep trails are gone I used to use to duck hunt, in their place is a paved trail to the lakes and bird watching stations. The grass fields Metro mows. Natural state I think not. The people of North Portland and the fishing public is about to lose again to Metro and environmentalist who do more harm than good.

Please look into this.

Sincerely,

William E. Egan

Show love for animals

Dear Editor,

February is the month of love, not just for humans, but for our pets as well. It's the time when "instinctual" love begins that creates thousands of unwanted and homeless animals. That's why February is deemed national "Spay/Neuter Awareness Month."

During February (and all year long) shel-



METRO

March 9, 2000

Editor
St. Johns Review
11919 N Jantzen Dr #141
Portland, OR 97217

Dear Editor,

I read Bill Egan's letter in the March 3 issue with great interest. Before I address his concerns about the dam at Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area, I want to get the facts straight about who is doing what. The St. Johns Landfill was the City of Portland's dump for about 50 years. As a Metro Councilor in the early 1980's, I got Metro to take it over so we could close the mess. As a state legislator for the district, I was able to see final closure with a bill I had passed in 1985 – that same bill set up the fees for the North Portland Enhancement Fund which in the latest round awarded over \$200,000 to projects in the area. So if anything, Metro should be credited with closing and cleaning up the dump and making lemonade out of a lemon.

Mr. Egan is correct in stating that Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area and the nearby Columbia Slough are the last remnants of a large wetland complex that covered the peninsula and was home to a stunning variety and abundance of fish and wildlife. These wetlands were dynamic, flooding with the fall rains and spring runoff and slowly drying over the summer. The changing water levels supported a habitat diversity that in turn supported a wide array of fish and wildlife, including young salmon seeking feeding and resting areas on their way to the ocean.

When the dam was put in place in 1982, this dynamic system became stagnant, and the habitat immediately began to decline. Salmon no longer had two-way access to the lakes; any that came in with the floods were stranded and died. The willow forests on the wetland's edge flooded and trees began to die from constant saturation or harvest by the expanding beaver population. The mudflats were no longer exposed to the air; the aquatic insects that once were abundant were reduced to a handful of species and shorebirds lost their feeding areas. The species that thrived in the new habitat included carp, warmwater game fish like bass and crappie, and beaver.

Metro's goal for Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area is to maintain and enhance it in a manner that is faithful to its historical natural condition, and to encourage recreational uses that are

compatible with that objective. Replacing the current dam will provide Metro with the ability and flexibility to restore the lakes' natural functions. A new water control structure will also have the ability to maintain the current water levels. Whether or not we replace the dam and allow water to move freely in and out of the lakes, the warmwater fishery is probably not sustainable – surveys show limited recruitment of younger fish. The avian botulism outbreaks of the 1970s occurred throughout the lower Columbia River basin, and the effort to control it locally by placing a dam at Smith and Bybee Lakes was controversial even then. The native species that thrived under the original flooding regime will thrive again when it is restored.

We will not replace the existing dam without a public process. This spring, I will bring the issue before the Metro Council for its consideration. In addition, we will continue our rigorous technical review of the project, including a careful evaluation of summer water levels in the lakes. I invite Mr. Egan and any other interested citizens to participate in this process.

Sincerely,

Mike Burton
Executive Officer

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William Egan
6884 N. Hudson
Portland, Or 97203

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

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1-29-2000

Mayor Vera Katz
122 SW 4th Ave
Room 340

Dear Mayor,

I live in St. Johns, north portland, I've lived here all my life. I'm a sportsman, I've raised five boys. Over the years I've watch as Mocks Bottom was filled in and industrialized. I watch the lagoon at Swan Island Strunk as we lost some of the areas best spawning for warm water fish disappear. I want to bring to your attention two excellent warm water lakes inside our city limits.

Smyth & Bybee lake are two large shallow lakes in North Portland. They hold huge bass and crappie and offer good recreational opportunity to city residents. Metro Controls these properties but, they belong to city. Some sixteen year ago a dam was placed behind the N. Portland Landfill to maintain lake levels and protect from outbreaks of avian botulism which killed 2-3,000 ducks and geese annually. Metro now wants to pull the dam. The lakes would go dry after high water in July and become a swamp until fall rains filled them in November. CNE

They'd be a great breeding ground for mosquitos
and I don't trust the Port of Portland not to
want to fill them for development purposes.
The city's given N. Portland a dump (now closed)
well soon get the new jail and alcoholic
treatment center. We have the parole and
probation office. It would be nice to be able
to keep these lakes and develop park facilities,
fish access, small boat access (limited to electric
motors) for the public and N. Portland residents.

The bass fishing is so good in these lakes
that annually bass to 10-12 pounds are caught
and mostly released there. I know at one
time there where plans for a model air
plane field and park at the old dump site.
Perhaps, the city could help out and stop
Metro from removing the dam.

Good luck with your many endeavors
and may you run unopposed for our next
mayors' election. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,
William Egan
1-503-286-7734





City of Portland
Vera Katz
Mayor

March 13, 200

Mr. William E. Egan
6884 N. Hudson
Portland, OR 97203

Dear Mr. Egan:

Thank you for contacting my office in regards to issues effecting the Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area. I can certainly understand your special connection to these beautiful and unique sites. The protection of these natural environments certainly must remain a priority, as they provide pleasure for countless residents of our city. Portland's commitment to maintaining and expanding its parkland, is a big part of what makes this city such an attractive place to call home.

Apparently you have also conveyed your concerns directly to Metro. This was a wise judgment as Metro is closely involved with the maintenance of these locations, and therefore would be able to offer the most pertinent and current information. It appears as though you have garnered two responses to your inquiry, one from Mike Burton an executive officer at Metro, and another from the Chairman of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The implications of both of these evaluations suggest that the proposed water management scheme will be ultimately beneficial to the wildlife species that inhabit the lakes, and therefore should be a welcome change for those who wish to enjoy these areas well into the future. I hope that these responses have provided you with some practical information that has successfully resolved some of your foremost concerns.

Again, I thank you for your valuable input on this matter. It is very rewarding for me to know that there are so many individuals, such as yourself, who are involved with the vital issues effecting our communities.

With warm regards,

Vera Katz
Mayor

