

William Egan
6884 N. Hudson
Portland, Or 97203

1043

RECEIVED
MAYOR'S OFFICE

00 JAN 31 PM 5:17

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 shrink 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 & Ryker 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 what 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



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 ~~and~~ 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 outbreaks 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 & Bybee 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 July) and stayed that way til November rains refilled. The Slough is too low after run off to put water in the lakes naturally. Bybee 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 mosquito 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 dangered. You can drive on Smith lake.

At present Smith and Bybee 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 Ms Emily Roth says we can all go fish somewhere else. The beaver (our state symbol) need to be eradicated and she wants to see shore birds on the mud flats - do we open the dam again and bring back the 2-3000 sea gulls that use to be there? She's 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

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
17330 SE Evelyn Street
Clackamas, OR 97015

FAX No. (503) 657-2050 TELEPHONE No. (503) 657-2000

DATE: 2-11-00

PAGES TO FOLLOW: 8

TO: Elaine Stewart

FROM: Al Smith

SUBJECT: Egan letter

☒ As Requested
☐ Per Conversation
☐ For Your Information

☐ Approval
☐ Comment
☐ Confer

COMMENTS: _____



MEMORANDUM

Department of Fish and Wildlife
Intra Departmental

Date: February 4, 2000
To: Jennell Hoehne
From: Al Smith *akl*
Subject: Letter for Chairman McCracken's signature

I was requested (see attached memos) to answer a letter (copy attached) sent to Chairman McCracken regarding Smith-Bybee Lakes. I have provided a hard copy of the draft response and a disc. Please let me know if there are questions about my response.

The crux of the issue is that Mr. Egan is focused on angling at Smith-Bybee and the resource agencies need to look at the broader ecosystem picture, especially with ESA listings and sensitive species. I spoke to him a couple of months ago in response to a similar letter he had written to Ray Temple in Fish Division.

Holly Michael, wildlife diversity biologist, and Jim Morgan, Metro, reviewed the letter.

ODFW letter
to Bill Egan
2/00

Date

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

Dear Mr. Egan:

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns about Metro's proposed change in water management at Smith-Bybee Lakes. I will try and address some general issues about management of the lakes and then address some of the specific points you brought up.

Metro is independent of the Department of Fish and Wildlife in its management direction for the lakes. However, ODFW has had a representative on the advisory group that led to the Smith-Bybee management plan. ODFW (and other groups and agencies) will have the opportunity to comment on the fill removal permit needed before the new water management structure is built.

Circumstances have changed since the current structure was completed. ODFW, as well as other natural resource agencies, have to consider a broad range of native animals in any resource decision. Paramount for the Columbia River drainage are the federally listed salmon and steelhead species. Rearing and migrating young of these species use areas like Smith-Bybee Lakes and will benefit from a more natural water level regime. They will be able to enter and then leave when they are ready.

Many native wildlife species will benefit from a return to more natural water level fluctuations. This should increase forage and cover for native wildlife such as the red-legged frog, long-toed salamander and painted turtle. The changing water levels should reduce numbers of non-native bullfrogs which prey on juvenile turtles. More seasonal foraging areas would be available to mink, red fox and weasels. Other small mammal populations would also increase. Many of the native plants that depend on natural water level fluctuations, such as wapato and sedges, are important food for waterfowl and shorebirds.

The proposed water management structure will have the flexibility for a wide range of management options. The proposed plan will be evaluated and could be changed to meet unforeseen needs. One of these needs that you mentioned would be botulism if it again occurs in waterfowl at Smith-Bybee.

Several years ago ODFW warmwater fish biologists met with Metro biologists to try and evaluate the impacts to warmwater fish and fishing from the proposed water management change. It was not clear how the change would impact the biology of the warmwater fish species. There were thought to be positives and negatives. The flushing should reduce carp numbers which are by far the dominant fish species in the lakes. There will

definitely be reduced angler access after July as you pointed out. Access for spring fishing, which more people take advantage of, should remain the same.

I hope I have addressed some of your concerns, and, again, thank you for expressing your views.

Sincerely,

Paul N. McCracken
Chairman, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

JAN 14 '00 12:34PM ODFW FISH DIVISION

P. 3/5

William E. Egan
6884 N. Hudson
Portland, Or
97203

Paul N. McCracken
Chairman ODFW
2501 SW 1st
P.O. Box 59
Portland, Or 97207-0059

Jan 9, 2000

Dear Sir,

Located in North Portland are two large warm water lakes, connected by a canal Smith, and Bybee lakes. These lakes have produced some of the largest bass and Crappie caught in our State. Last years entry to Bass'n Magazine's big bass contest came from Smith and was in excess of 12#.

I work in North Portland and fellow workers have brought in Crappie from Smith over 4#. At a time when angler access is dwindling these lakes produce good fishing. Additional access is available through the closed north portland landfill.

Metro has proposed removing the dam on Bybee lake which maintains the lakes water level. The dam was put in 16 years ago because avian botulism was killing 2-3000

JAN 14 '00 12:35PM ODFW FISH DIVISION

P. 4/5

Ducks and geese each year. I've hunted and fished this area for over 30 years and removal of these dams will drain both lakes after July you'll be able to drive cars on Smith. The bontullum may reoccur and the fishery will be dead.

I've talked to metro and many staff (ODFW) biologists who want to see what will happen. This is ludicrous. Pond turtles and painted turtles are both in these lakes. Friends of Smith and Bybee Lake want this done to dislocate the large beaver population which is eating trees. That's what beavers do! The FSB people have a bird watcher president who admittedly doesn't care about the fishery.

Removing the dams would allow sludge from the slough (which is polluted) to wash into the lake. When the water is high the lakes would fill, after July you'd have a major mosquito breeding ground. I also believe that with the disappearing land for business development the Port would look at these dry lakes as a place to fill and build, not to preserve wild life habitat.

A survey of the lakes was done during a high water year which showed smolt present in the lakes but, the same year 1/2 the farmers fields in the state also had smolt present.

JAN 14 '00 12:35PM ODFW FISH DIVISION

P.5/5

Hopefully, you request Metro go through the wildlife Commission before destroying this fishery. They justify removal of water for fishing as well as the dam, and get necessary permits. I watched Hocks Lake and the creek fill at Swan Island, and I watched as the back of the Lagoon was filled in. It use to be a major warm water spawning area. Please don't allow the destruction of another fishery.

William E. Egan

1-503-286-7734

Date

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

DRAFT

Handwritten comments
from Jim Morgan, Metro

Dear Mr. Egan:

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns about Metro's proposed change in water management at Smith-Bybee Lakes. I will try and address some general issues about management of the lakes and then address some of the specific points you brought up.

Metro is independent of the Department of Fish and Wildlife in its management direction for the lakes. However, ODFW has had a representative on the advisory group that led to the Smith-Bybee management plan. ODFW (and other groups and agencies) will have the opportunity to comment on the fill removal permit needed before the new water management structure is built.

Circumstances have changed since the current structure was completed. ODFW, as well as other natural resource agencies, have to consider a broad range of native animals in any resource decision. Paramount for the Columbia River drainage are the federally listed salmon and steelhead species. Rearing and migrating young of these species use areas like Smith-Bybee Lakes and will benefit from a more natural water level regime. They will be able to enter and then leave when they are ready.

Many native wildlife species will benefit from a return to more natural water level fluctuations. This should increase forage and cover for native wildlife such as the red-legged frog, long-toed salamander and painted turtle. The changing water levels should reduce numbers of non-native bullfrogs which prey on juvenile turtles. More seasonal foraging areas would be available to mink, red fox and weasels. Other small mammal populations would also increase. Many of the native plants that depend on natural water level fluctuations, such as wapato and sedges, are important food for waterfowl and shorebirds. *The overpopulation of beaver in Smith-Bybee Lakes will be reduced; thereby, allowing restoration of the willow, ash, cottonwood forests they have devastated.*

The proposed water management structure will have the flexibility for a wide range of management options, not just the one proposed. The proposed plan will be evaluated and could be changed to meet unforeseen needs. One of these needs that you mentioned would be botulism if it again occurs in waterfowl at Smith-Bybee.

Several years ago ODFW warmwater fish biologists met with Metro biologists to try and evaluate the impacts to warmwater fish and fishing from the proposed water management change. It was not clear how the change would impact the biology of the warmwater fish species. There were thought to be positives and negatives. The flushing should reduce carp numbers which are by far the dominant fish species in the lakes. There will

definitely be reduced angler access after July as you pointed out. Access for spring fishing, which more people take advantage of, should remain the same

I hope I have addressed some of your concerns, and, again, thank you for expressing your views.

Sincerely,

Paul N. McCracken
Chairman, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

The negative impacts of the artificial reservoir conditions caused by the existing dam is well documented. Replacing the dam with a flow control structure will provide many more management options currently not available, such as allowing an impeded exchange of daily tidal flows and seasonal flooding and drying. The proposed water control structure is intended to help meet the management goal of increasing species richness and diversity of the flora and fauna of the Smith and Bybee Lake Wildlife Area.



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

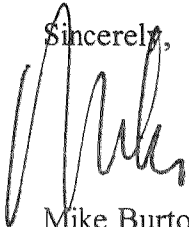
levels to drop naturally through the summer will concentrate waterfowl on the lakes, and we will monitor for any outbreaks. If and when botulism becomes a problem, the new water control structure could be closed and the water surface area of the lakes can be increased using an irrigation pump if necessary.

- *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.

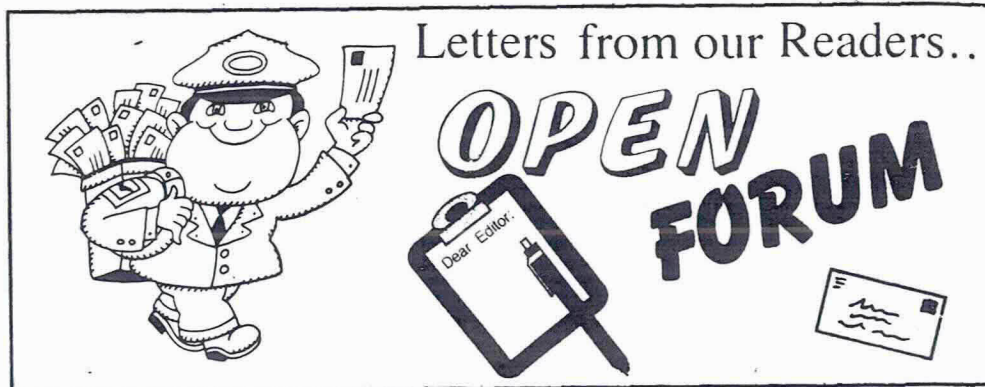
Finally, I want to emphasize that we are planning to replace the current water control structure with one that provides Metro with greater control and flexibility. There will be times when we want to hold water in the lakes, for example, to inhibit invasive plants while we are re-establishing the native 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 dark 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

March 9, 2000

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



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





METRO
Blue Lake Regional Park

Regional Parks and Greenspaces
600 NE Grand Ave. Portland OR 97232 (503) 967-1830
Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces Department
FAX

DATE: 3/22/00 FROM: MARSHALL TODD JONES
TO: E(A)INE AND DEB TITLE: REGIONAL PARKS SUPERVISOR
PHONE: _____ PHONE: 503-665-4995
FAX: _____ FAX: 503-491-1385
EMAIL: jonast@metro.dst.or.us

COMMENTS:

THIS WAS IN OUR CURRENT ISSUE (MARCH) OF
"OREGON BARS 'N' PANFISH NEWSLETTER ... FYI

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET

3

SMITH AND BYBEE LAKES

By Bill Egan

Located on the peninsula of North Portland, Smith and Bybee are two large lakes connected by a canal. They are all that remains of many small lakes and ponds that once covered the peninsula. Depending on who you talk to, the Lakes hold in excess of 10,000 surface acres of water.

In the early '80s, these Lakes were impounded by a small dam at the outflow of Bybee Lake. The reason for the dam was each fall when Smith lake dried up and Bybee Lake became a stagnant pond, thousands of migrating water fowl fell prey to avian botulism. With the addition of the dam, the problem disappeared. Once impounded, smart weed and other grass grew in the Lakes and the fishery improved.

Last year, crappie over four pounds and a number of large bass were caught. One bass entered in the BASS'N Magazine's national contest, was over twelve pounds (and would have been a state record if properly recorded). These lakes are shallow with limited access. Float tubes, canoes, and small boats (electric motor only) can get to the Lakes. Many people walk into the dam area in the summer and fish for bass, crappie, catfish, and other panfish. Most access is off North Marine Drive and is used heavily on weekends by many user groups.

Beaver, otter, nutria, and occasionally mink inhabit the Lakes. Hawks, bald eagles (on occasion), owls and other predators are present, as well as ducks and a variety of birds. Deer, coyotes, rabbits, and squirrels are also seen. The adjacent slough to the Lakes has a large population of western painted turtles, and western pond turtles are also present in both Lakes. (Western pond turtles are a threatened species—one step below endangered.)

In the last three or four years, people have been working toward the removal of the dam. People say that salmon/steelhead smolt get trapped in the Lakes and can't get out. The beavers have eaten much of the surrounding trees, destroying habitat for other wildlife and birds. By removing the dam, people feel that the beaver will move out and the salmon/steelhead smolt will be free to come and go. Removal of the dam will destroy the existing warmwater fishery. The key group pushing for dam removal is the Portland Audubon Society. The Society controls Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes, and has made many friends at Metro.

Removal of the dam will cause Smith Lake to go dry after the Runoff in July. Bybee Lake will hold some water due to a more clay base, but until Fall rains and higher water in November, the Lakes will not refill and the risk of new outbreaks of avian botulism exists. No safeguards have been made to handle a major outbreak.

The only plan proposed by Metro staff is to pump water into Smith and Bybee with irrigation pipe from the North Columbia River Slough, a body of water that nearly dries up in the Fall as well. A suggested exchange of tidal water into Smith and Bybee sounds good, but the lakes are both higher in elevation than the Columbia or Willamette Rivers. Barring a major lunar event, high tides won't reach the Lakes from August until November and we'll lose an excellent warmwater fishery.

Now suppose--did ODFW actually shock the Lakes and find smolt present or did they only do the North Slough? There is no real access to Smith and Bybee for the ODFW shocking boat. Even if salmon/steelhead smolt enter the Lakes, they can still leave except for a four-month period. Most migrant fish are long gone by June. Smith and Bybee get too warm to support salmonids, and I believe those not eaten by warmwater fish are probably gone.

This whole thing appears to be a bunch of well meaning public officials doing what someone tells them is right for all of us. (Staff writes letters for their bosses to sign because the staff better know the problem?)

Unfortunately, we nearly let this fishery slip away. We all need to get involved and question what the bureaucrats tell us. Question what I have written as well. Raise your own questions and write ODFW and Metro. Write Vera Katz—the Lakes are in the City. Write The Oregonian and ask them to research this. We all need to get involved.

The Corp of Engineers has to issue permits for a new structure and the dam removal. They have public review. The permits have not been applied for and the type structure has not been decided upon. A new structure could allow for boat passage (electric motor only) into the Lakes at high water. I personally believe a new dam structure on these Lakes will be cost prohibitive but the time to pull and build the dam will be late August through October and the permits need a 90- to 120-day approval process.

Metro and Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes have obtained some money for a small boat ramp or unimproved launch site on Smith Lake. If their own proposal goes through, Smith will be dry or unusable for four to five months each year. Good use of public funds?

Where to write: Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes
Post Office Box 83862
Portland, Oregon 97283-0862

Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
James W. Greer, Director
Post Office Box 59
Portland, Oregon 97207-0059

Mike Burton, Executive Officer
METRO
600 N.E. Grand Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-2736

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Paul N. McCracken, Chair
Post Office Box 59
Portland, Oregon 97207-0059

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, N.W. Division
220 N.W. 8th Avenue (Portland Dist. 333)
Portland, Oregon 97209-3503

Try Ducks Unlimited. They are rumored to be going to give a grant to Friends of Smith and Bybee or Portland Audubon Society for planting feed at the Lakes after the dam is pulled. They don't know the whole story either!

Write your County Commissioners. They have control over Multnomah County and what Metro does there.

NEEDED: Four to six volunteers to do a creel study on Smith and Bybee Lakes from April through June. Call Bill Egan at 503-286-7734 (Portland number).

**METRO**

April 27, 2000

William Egan
6884 N Hudson St.
Portland, OR 97203-6228

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter of March 30th. You touched on several points that are important to consider in managing Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area.

As you stated, we have limited fish information for Smith and Bybee lakes. The most extensive survey was conducted in 1986 and indicated that juvenile Chinook salmon got into the lakes during high water events and were "everywhere in the system" in the spring. Elaine Stewart, wildlife area manager, is working with other agency biologists to initiate regular juvenile salmon surveys in the lakes and slough. We are excited about the possibility of providing better access and valuable rearing habitat for salmon, and appreciate your efforts to obtain more information about the lakes' warmwater fishes through your volunteer angler survey.

Regarding western painted turtles, we are in the second year of a five-year study to evaluate their population status, habitat use and other important aspects of their management. I know that Elaine Stewart is monitoring this work closely. She is also coordinating our work with other biologists and agencies to ensure that we obtain the best possible information.

I appreciate your continued interest and involvement in Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area issues. Please continue to contact me or Elaine Stewart (797-1515) about issues related to the wildlife area.

Sincerely,

Mike Burton
Metro Executive Officer

Charlie,

you probably already
have addressed these
questions one way or
another (and considering all these questions)
but I'd like to
try to keep Egan "in
the loop"

Please make some
friendly suggestions for
my response

Thaler

Mike B

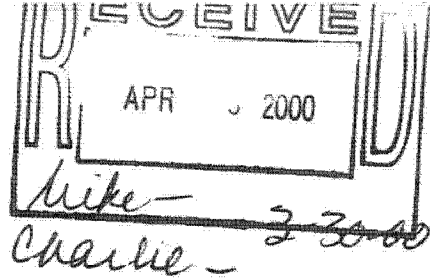
Elaine -
Pls draft letter for
M.B. sig (I'll review)
Thanks C'6

Charlie -

Please review.

Thanks -

OK - EMS
Pls finalize for
M.B.'s sig. Father
Car. deliver
copy C'6



Dear Mike Burton,

Just a line, check with your staff. There hasn't been a fish survey done on Smith & Bybee since 1987. Salmon & Steelhead smolt that enter these lakes may also leave thru the existing structure as water temperature levels rise.

Your staff may also lose the large turtle populations if the lakes drain and they don't have an alternative to an out break of avian botulism either.

Maintaining the lakes in a natural manner doesn't mean paved paths and mowed fields of canary grass that have been there at least 30 years or more or herbicide use.

As to the fishery, it is sustainable and planned creel samples by Oregon Bass and Panfish may confirm this. (it may not) ODFW biologist Kim Daily has himself, fished these lakes and caught different year class bass.

You might question some of what your staffs been cookin. Thanks for your time. No reflection on your new Wildlife Area Manager Elaine Stewart she just came on line.

Thank You,
Bill Egan
OBPPC 1/2
Oregon Hunt Hunters

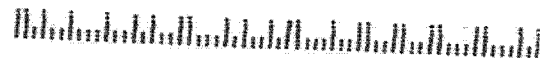


WILLIAM EGAN
6884 N HUDSON ST
PORTLAND OR 97203-6228



Mike Burton
Executive Offices
Metro
600 NE Grand Ave
Portland, Or
97232

97232-2736



**METRO**

May 1, 2000

Mr. William Egan
6884 N Hudson St.
Portland, OR 97203-6228

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter of March 30th. You touched on several points that are important to consider in managing Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area.

As you stated, we have limited fish information for Smith and Bybee lakes. The most extensive survey was conducted in 1986 and indicated that juvenile Chinook salmon got into the lakes during high water events and were "everywhere in the system" in the spring. Elaine Stewart, wildlife area manager, is working with other agency biologists to initiate regular juvenile salmon surveys in the lakes and slough. We are excited about the possibility of providing better access and valuable rearing habitat for salmon, and appreciate your efforts to obtain more information about the lakes' warmwater fishes through your volunteer angler survey.

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I appreciate your continued interest and involvement in Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area issues. Please continue to contact me or Elaine Stewart (797-1515) about issues related to the wildlife area.

Best regards,

Mike Burton
Metro Executive Officer