

Black Lake Special District Briefing Notes 5/30/2024

Formed in 2013 under RCW 85.38

750 parcels in district, 190 parcels are waterfront, 560 are upland

Board Members: Lake Stintzi, Kirk Van Landeghen, Cory Freeborn
6 year terms, one seat election every 2 years

Limited purpose government entity – must follow RCWs for Open Meetings, Records, State Auditor, etc.

Purpose – to improve and maintain the water quality of Black Lake for local homeowners, those with lake access, visitors, fish and wildlife

No employees – contract with OrgSupport to answer phones, pay invoices, maintain web site and email, publish agendas/minutes, answer “Freedom of Information” requests, and conduct mailings to district.

Use County services

- Treasurer to collect assessments and charges, make loan payments, invest funds
- Auditor for elections and issue warrants
- GeoData Center for mailing lists
- Public Works - Road Services for beaver dam removal in the Black Lake Ditch

Black Lake water quality problems are over growth of plants and algae. The over growth is due to increased nutrient loads from the watershed due to runoff from roads, housing areas and septic systems which were previously forest land. Nutrient loading has occurred over decades.

Water quality problems are moderated by herbicide treatments applied annually to improve the lake for recreation. Treatments affect less than 4% of the lake surface and must follow the requirements of the Department of Ecology. Environmental Health is informed of treatment plans and actions.

Water quality can be improved by reducing the nutrient loads. Studies are sponsored by the district to identify nutrient and pollution sources and determine next steps. Our pollutant study in 2019 and 2020 identified septic contamination in streams entering Black Lake. The study was presented to the county for further action. The county was able to leverage our study to secure grants and other funding totaling \$400,000 and implement Environmental Health’s current “Black Lake Pollution Identification and Correction Project”.

Challenges

- Not all citizens agree with our actions – particularly herbicides. There is a tendency for citizens to bring complaints to the county or Ecology and bypass dialogues with the district.
- Some citizens wish us to become involved in activities beyond our scope such as enforcement of boating regulations and WDFW boat ramp operations.
- Black Lake water levels vary with precipitation and the condition of the Black Lake Ditch. The Ditch is the principle outflow and can be constricted by beaver dams within the City of Olympia