

## **KLHOA Lake Management Committee Update August 21, 2023**

In the last two months, Rick and I have met with Solitude twice and two other Lake Management Vendors (Lake Doctors and Superior Waterway) I have also had a phone conversation with our contact and friend at Earth Tech Environmental and reviewed some summary reports over the last 4 years provided by Ecological Control & Management and the county. I learned about past projects we did to address spike rush and other invasives such as manual harvesting and stocking Lake 1 with carp. Nothing is ever just once and done. We have data now from quarterly water testing done so we can define frequency and specific tests needed ; we now can funnel some of those dollars to the treatment side.

Bottom line, it is time to change vendors. Multiple operational issues have gotten in the way of providing good customer service and proper management of our lakes.

### **Some Background**

We awarded Lake & Wetlands our lake management contract in late 2021 (they won the bid over 5 other companies). A few short months later they were acquired by Solitude. Several meetings along the way, the relationship with Solitude did not get any traction but treading water and failed attempts at meeting the full scope of our needs.

We just received two proposals from new lake management vendors; one of the contenders in our last search was Lake Doctors. They were second on our list. Rick and I met with their consultant and he has spent some time reassessing our current situation and comparing it to his previous observations. We discussed many solution options that fall under best practice lake management. The reality is that we need a comprehensive plan utilizing several tools to address relevant issues. I have learned in all the research, lake management is not simple when addressing all the goals of protecting wildlife, water quality, aesthetics , accessibility especially in an aging water body as we have. It is always changing and no one size fits all plan exists.

Our focus problems are Lake 1 (Kings Lake), and Lake 2 (Prince Lake ) Lake 2 requires special attention because it is so shallow, and the underwater weed growth is now about 100% of the lake. Lake 2 has considerable muck that adds to the problem. Lake 1 has about 40% weed growth higher than we had planned for. We have tried some muck digestive enzymes, but we haven't seen much benefit. We even stocked carp about 5 years ago. They love to eat the spike rush, but their fecal matter created other problems so not much of a gain.

According to the consultant we last spoke to:

“The underwater weeds (chara, filamentous algae, southern naiad, hygrophila, and pondweed) are extensive. Due to the extent of coverage in Lake #2, extreme caution will be needed to avoid an oxygen depletion and fish kill while the treated vegetation is dying and decomposing. This will require multiple partial treatments to safely get it under control. This will be labor and

herbicide-intensive and take a while to accomplish. Use of a harvester in Lake #2 to remove the bulk of material may be an initial option prior to treatments. This would remove the bulk of the vegetation and reduce to chance of a fish kill, while also removing a lot of material (and nutrients) from the system.”

The Lake Committee is recommending that we terminate Solitude’s contract .

Lakes Committee will be preparing an updated lake management plan that will include requests for funding as part of the 2024 operations and reserve budget plans.

We currently have spent about 12, 000 against an annual budget of 28k. We have 45k in the reserve lake account. We have some time and money to address these issues immediately.

Gail Miers