

HISTORY OF THE LIBERTY LAKE SEWER AND WATER DISTRICT

1871 - Etienne Eduard Laliberte (Steve Liberty) homesteaded the west side of Liberty Lake, just one year before Spokane's first settlers arrived.

Late 1800s - The area surrounding the marsh was developed into a cattle ranch. The rancher diverted Liberty Creek (originally named Kalez) into a hand-dug channel along the eastern edge of the marsh. Later the creek was diverted into another hand-dug channel along the western edge.

1900 - 1924 - Liberty Lake a popular resort and recreational location for many Spokane residents. The electric train from Spokane provided transportation. Dancehalls, resorts and hotels existed around the lake.

1934 - The marsh-lake dike was constructed in an effort to aid drying of the marsh. At the same time, a ditch was dug across the marsh paralleling the dike and a pump was installed near the southwest corner of the lake to pump waters out of the marsh. The purpose was to improve the marshland for hay cutting and cattle grazing purposes.

Bureau of Reclamation constructed the bifurcation in Liberty Creek above the marsh.

1940 - Department of Fish and Wildlife records indicate that the original fish found in Liberty Lake were Cutthroat Trout and Whitefish. In the 1940's the Department planted Large Mouth Bass and Carp. These plants were followed by Perch, two species of Sunfish, Small Mouth Bass, Crappie and Bullheads.

1951 - Department of Game poisoned the lake with Rotenone and replanted with Trout. The previously planted fish had reproduced to the extent that overcrowding and dwarfing had made the lake undesirable for anglers. Eight resorts were in operation during this period.

The level of the lake was adjudicated and established at an elevation of 2049.51.

1959 - Water quality of the lake was becoming noticeably deteriorated.

1965 - The Department of Fish and Game poisoned the lake with Toxaphene and replanted with Trout.

1966 - Spokane County purchased the marsh and adjoining land at the south end of Liberty Lake. Land to be used for a County Park.

Spokane County removed pump from the marsh that was installed in 1934.

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1968 - Lake water quality deterioration was a noticeable problem. By late 1968, tons of decaying aquatic weeds and dried algal mats were being removed from the lake. Residents formed a Citizens Advisory Committee. Water tests were sent to WSU. Spokane County was requested to sewer the lake.

1971 - Liberty Lake residents petitioned Spokane County Commissioners to form a Sewer District to clean up the lake from septic tanks effluent. Water quality studies were undertaken by WSU.

1972 - Water quality studies continued by WSU.

1973 - The Liberty Lake Sewer District was formed by a vote of the residents. Three Commissioners were elected (Dennis Ashlock, Art Toreson, and Bill Lancaster).

A demonstration project was proposed in 1973 by WSU to show that phosphorus reduction by aluminum sulfate (alum) would greatly reduce algae blooms and improve water quality conditions.

1974 - The water quality study was published. The study discussed the extent and nature of nonpoint source enrichment of the lake and possible treatment. The Department of Fish and Game poisoned the lake and replanted with trout. Following, was a massive algae bloom. WSU tried an experimental alum treatment after the Rotenone poisoning. The algal bloom was minimized.

1975 - The District requested and received approval for grant funding under the Clean Lakes Program for a lake restoration project. The District requested and received grant for funding to construct a sewage collection and treatment system as part of the restoration project.

Shirley Johnson elected as Commissioner

1976 - Design of the sewage collection system was started, and the District purchased the existing collection and treatment system from Delbert McHenry.

John Yake surveys lake for sewer system

Lynn Genteman elected as Commissioner

1977 - Construction of the sewage collection system began. A plan of study for the restoration of the lake was prepared.

The District requested that the legislature amend the law to allow districts to spend funds to protect lakes. The legislature gave sewer districts the protection authority in Section 56.08.013 RCW.

Parshall Flumes were installed on main stem and East Fork of Liberty Creek in July as part of the Restoration Project.

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Rick Manum elected as Commissioner

1978 - Construction of the collection system continued, and residences were connected as soon as the lines were completed.

John Yake stakes construction and is there for all construction

1979 - An Environmental Impact Statement for the lake restoration project was prepared, and public hearings were held to review the project.

Design of the new wastewater treatment facility was started.

The stream diversion structure was constructed to stop the annual flooding of the marsh by snowmelt at the south end of the lake.

Dikes and channel improvements were constructed around the marsh.

1980 - Dredging of fifty acres at the southwest end of the lake occurred to remove a two-foot layer of nutrient rich materials from the lake bottom. The slurry was pumped through the newly constructed (and not yet used) sewage interceptor line to fields north of the freeway.

An alum treatment of the lake was started.

Construction of the new wastewater treatment facility as started.

John Yake works as inspector for all work on WWTF

The Fish and Game Department undertook a fish study as part of the restoration project.

Gib Sears elected as Commissioner

1981 - The lake dredging project and alum treatment completed.

Dikes around the marsh were repaired in April 1981

1982 - The wastewater treatment plant completed.

Repairs made to the west fork of Liberty Creek to prevent marsh flooding.

The Watershed study was started.

John Yake hired with District

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1983 - The Fish and Game Department announced that Liberty Lake would be treated with Rotenone in the Fall of 1984.

The Watershed study completed.

The post restoration monitoring of the lake began.

1984 - The District organized the symposium on rotenone and fish stocking techniques in shallow and eutrophic lakes.

The watershed study was completed.

The clarity of the lake improved dramatically. The bottom of the lake was visible again.

Concerned citizens attended the Department of Fish and Game hearing on rotenone treatment of the lake. The project was deferred for two years.

1985 - The Restoration report and watershed management guidelines were prepared, and adopted by the District.

Water quality of the lake continued to improve.

Dikes around the marsh were repaired in December 1985

Senator McCaslin set up a meeting to review alternatives for rotenone treatment of Liberty Lake.

The District reviewed the Game Department's submittal of research on Rotenone received by the DOE.

Spokane County Engineers office agreed to enforce watershed guidelines for developer planning requirements and limitations on road dust palliatives.

1986 - The Diversion structure on Liberty Creek rebuilt. West channel of Liberty Creek reconstructed.

Operation and maintenance manual for marsh flushing controls was prepared.

Senator McCaslin invited the Director of the DOE, Andrea Beatty-Riniker, to tour the facilities and lake to enlist DOE support against the Rotenone project.

1988 - Milfoil removal was controlled by divers until 1998, when the infestation became too great to handle by divers then 2,4-D became the successful treatment.

Chris Hayes elected as Commissioner

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1989 - Spokane River Phosphorus Management Plan Adopted by the District to limit Phosphorous discharge to the Spokane River.

Adoption of the Liberty Lake Restoration Plan.

Adoption of Liberty Lake Watershed Stormwater Management Plan.

Ban on the disposal of Phosphorus detergent in the District.

1990 - Corrine Mountjoy hired as District Manager.

An in-house accountant was hired.

Bill Hemmings elected as Commissioner

Jack Blair elected as Commissioner

1992 - Liberty Lake Water Comprehensive Plan amendments adopted.

The District initiated a fall beach and shoreline clean-up program as an effort to reduce leaching of nutrients from debris entering the lake.

Frank L. Boyle elected as Commissioner

Harley Halverson elected as Commissioner

1993 - Lee Mellish hired as District Manager.

Liberty Lake Sewer District annexes 950 acres.

1994 - Outlet gates and drainage culvert rebuilt.

Intertie with Eastside Liberty Lake Improvement Club completed.

Stormwater Planning Grant from DOE in amount of \$45,000 received.

Interlocal Agreement between District and Spokane County approved to discharge untreated sewage to Spokane Interceptor at some future time.

Metering of District completed.

First District planning retreat held.

McHenry water system purchase paid off.

New accounting and billing software system purchased.

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WSU continues to monitoring the lake.

Bob Gamble elected as Commissioner

1995 - Sewer Comprehensive Plan amendment approved.

Underground tanks removed from wastewater treatment plant.

Eurasian watermilfoil discovered in Lake. WSU aquatic biologist hired to harvest.

1996 - Contract amended between Developer and District for new reservoir and well.

District purchased pontoon boat for lake monitoring.

District purchases utility vehicle for meter reading.

1985 Refunding bonds called.

Architect hired to design new Administration building.

New headworks installed at wastewater treatment plant.

Spokane County agreed to mitigate 5 direct stormwater discharges to lake.

Ice Storm in November causes severe damage to property in the District.

Ice storm causes lake ice to break sewer main under lake.

1997 - Maintenance Building bids awarded. Building completed in August 1997.

Outlet Channel of lake declared a serious problem for marsh flushing of nutrients.

ERU schedule amended.

Video production for lake protection authorized.

ERU schedule for irrigation adopted.

District purchase of property for new Administration Building.

Grease Ordinance adopted.

ERU's for Irrigation connections adopted.

Eastside water issues discussed at community meetings.

Radio Telemetry System bids awarded.

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Beach and leaf cleanup project an annual success.

Wetland Mitigation Plan for outlet channel completed.

District receives Outstanding Performance Wastewater Treatment Operations Award

1998 - New Administration Building was constructed. No money was borrowed.

Mitigation Plan for outlet channel commissioned.

Feasibility Plan for upgrading of wastewater treatment plant completed in August 1998.

Stormwater Plan draft under public review. Adopted in May 1998.

Water By-laws amended.

Sewer By-laws amended.

1 Million Gallon reservoir under construction.

Schultz well added with 2400 gpm capacity.

District held first Legislative Reception

1999 – The District participated in a Watershed Planning Unit to plan for future water use in the Middle Spokane and Little Spokane River watersheds.

A demonstration garden was established at the Administration Building to demonstrate what types of plants could be used for environmentally friendly landscapes.

Outlet channel rehabilitation project loan approved for \$300,000.

Clarke Street fire lane stormwater swales completed.

Funding approved for Lilac Lane sewer replacement and Garry Rd. Reservoir.

Y2K Plan Published.

Meadowwood Reservoir under construction.

Fish and Wildlife Public Access under construction.

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2000 - The outlet channel and infiltration galleries were cleaned to adequately drain water from Liberty Lake.

Liberty Lake filed notice for incorporation.

District met with the new City of Liberty Lake Public Works Committee.

Water rights issued.

Sump property appraised.

Meadowwood Reservoir completed and filled.

Tom Agnew elected as Commissioner

2001 - The City of Liberty Lake was incorporated.

Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee active.

Lilac Lane Sewer Replacement project completed.

Garry Rd. Reservoir and Booster Station upgrade project completed.

Security of District facilities reviewed after terrorist attacks on Sept 11.

District holds 1st Eastern Regional Lakes Conference.

Pictures of Staff and Commissioners.

2002 - The District hires BiJay Adams as Lake Manager.

Safeway plans fueling station next to District well. District and Safeway enter into lawsuit. Safeway halted its plan for construction of a gas station.

District website was developed.

The District was awarded a \$20,000 grant by the Washington State Department of Ecology to develop an Aquatic Weed Management Plan for Liberty Lake
District installed UV Light disinfection at the treatment plant.

Manager Lee Mellish elected President of the Washington State Lake Protection Association.

District was awarded the District of the Year award for Industry Achievement and Meritorious Service by the Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts.

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2003 - The District participated in the Spokane River Use Attainability Analysis (UAA) and Spokane River/Long Lake TMDL to examine the human and natural factors influencing the River's water quality and watershed health.

The Aquatic Weed Management Plan for Liberty Lake was completed and approved by the DOE.

District celebrates 30th year of service.

The City of Liberty Lake began discussions to assume the District.

The City of Liberty Lake passed Ordinance 120 to assume the District.

The District and the City of Liberty Lake enter into lawsuits over assumption.

Poplar trees planted at the treatment facility.

2004 - Superior Court ruled that the City of Liberty Lake violated state laws in the process to assume the District. The City's Ordinance 120 to assume is declared null and void.

District annexed Rocky Hill area (area East of Simpson and North of Mission).

Treatment plant upgrade bid awarded to Williams Brothers.

The District passed a No Feeding Waterfowl Policy in an effort to protect the public's health, reduce pollutants that contribute to algae blooms, and control waterborne parasites.

The District was awarded a \$100,000 grant by the Washington State Department of Ecology for implementation of the approved Aquatic Weed Management Plan in an effort to manage Eurasian watermilfoil in Liberty Lake.

District participated in the update of Spokane County Shoreline Master Program.

District's Lake Manager obtained certification for a Landscape Irrigation Auditor.

The Glens sewage lift station abandoned.

Burlington Northern railroad refilling station spill threatens aquifer.

2005 - Construction began on the treatment plant to upgrade to a 2-million gallon a day facility. Project to be completed in the summer of 2006.

The District passed a ban on phosphorus in dishwasher detergent.

The District passed a ban on phosphorus in lawn fertilizers.

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Phosphorus free fertilizer giveaway program launched with Greenstone.

District donated fill dirt for pedestrian/bike path freeway overpass.

The District implemented a Direct Debit payment option.

The Water Emergency Response Plan was developed.

The District implemented irrigation technology to demonstrate proper water techniques and water conservation at the Administration Building.

Wright Street Water Replacement project completed.

2006 - The State of Washington passed a law limiting the phosphorus content in dishwasher detergent.

Upgraded treatment plant completed to 2 million gallons per day.

Alpine Shores Homeowners Association dredged inlet at Liberty Lake.

District's Lake Manager BiJay Adams elected President of the Washington State Lake Protection Association.

2007 - Harley Halverson resigns as Commissioner. Steve Skipworth appointed as Commissioner

Zephyr Christian Conference Grounds logged 50 acres at the south end of Liberty Lake

The District's Wastewater Treatment Facility was awarded the Treatment Plant of the Year award by the Washington State Department of Ecology along with an Innovative Solutions award.