

# Why “Best Science” Criteria Should Be the Least Restrictive In the DESCL Decision Process

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Information management regarding the Capitol Lake issue has been a case study of questionable fairness which appear to serve the biases information managers.

Here are examples.

CLAMP History: (The CLAMP Steering Committee was an appointed group charged with improving the management of Capitol Lake)

**Port of Bellingham Economic Study (2006)** ----- This study gives us a very good idea what the loss of shoreline businesses (due to no sediment capture by Capitol Lake) would mean to the local (especially downtown) economy. CLAMP intentionally ignored this study.

**Survey of Public at large** ( The following might have easily been asked of the public, “If the Lake can be shown to your satisfaction to be acceptable with regard to O<sub>2</sub>, bacteria, toxins, and fish habitat, which management plan would you favor, the Lake or mudflat?)-----Such a scientific and valuable survey was expressly avoided.

**Decades of extensive work by Evergreen State College professors** -----These professors and their body of evidence were ignored. There was no attempt to tap their expertise. This issue would likely have been resolved many years ago had these academics been consulted.

**Lake Washington Juvenile Chinook Study (2006)**-----This study supports the high probability that Capitol Lake hatchery Chinook habitat is equal to that of an estuary or river. If we consider the probable increase in predation with a mudflat, it is quite possible that the lake is the most fish friendly option. This study was ignored by state agencies and the tribe.

## More Current History - In addition to the above, add the following:

### **Failure by WDFW and the tribe to publicize the critically important PSNERP decision.**

It was left for CLIPA to uncover and publicize this essential finding after 13 months of suppression.

**What is the biologic relevance of WDOE's findings?** WDOE has not answered this. Dr. Milne attempts to do so.

**What are the economic consequences of acting on WDOE's findings?** WDOE and other agencies leave this issue unaddressed. CLIPA gives a well-reasoned analysis.

**What are the effects of harvesting macrophytes in Capitol Lake to reduce the unwelcome post growing season nitrogen/carbon overflow into Budd Inlet?** WDOE has not addressed this workable and cost saving idea.

**Where are the current field testing results to substantiate DOE's hypotheses?** Apparently these tests have been totally neglected.

Unfortunately these types of information manipulations lead to misunderstandings among our citizens and decision-makers.

Here are four examples.

## Recent History

**December** Then mayor of the Olympia City Council wrote to dozens of decision-makers and shared with *The Olympian* that the NZMS would not survive the brackish waters of an estuary. (Patently false information)

**January** An Olympian reporter reported in a Sunday edition reaching many thousands of people that Capitol Lake still had a bacterial problem. He got the information from a website of a state agency. All bacterial counts in Capitol Lake have been acceptable for over 14 years. )

**April** Lock-out of CLIPA from the Technical Committee. Experts on sediment, cost, and water quality belonging to the CLIPA Science and Policy Committee were not allowed to provide input to or collaborate with the members of the Technical Committee. We have good reason to believe this was done for political reasons, not in the interest of good

science. Many of the above examples of misinformation may never have been corrected had it not been for the CLIPA experts.

**May** An Olympia City Councilperson told the CLIPA board of Directors that Capitol Lake was low on oxygen and therefore unacceptable. (The DO in Capitol Lake is, of course, unquestionably high and considerably higher than an estuary's. The councilperson was using out of date, incorrect information put out by the WDOE.

### Conclusion:

These historical facts and observations make it clear that information managers have used their positions of "official standing" to control information flow on this issue. This cannot be helpful to the community.

"Best Science" restrictions should be absolutely minimal to avoid gross misunderstandings (like those just mentioned) and to reduce chances of poor decisions.