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CLIPA

Capitol Lake Improvement and Protection Association

"Save the Lake – Preserve the Past, Improve the Future."

NEWS RELEASE

March 23, 2011

Newly Released Capitol Lake Management Plan Better for Water Quality and Pocket-Book

Today an action plan for the restoration and long-range management of Capitol Lake was released. The plan's 50 year cost estimates are less than a third of the cost of converting the lake to an estuary.

The comprehensive approach benefits water quality, existing fisheries, and sediment management objectives for Puget Sound and the Deschutes Watershed. It also supports the community's economic, social, aesthetic, recreational and historic values. It was created by the private, citizen-based, non-profit Capitol Lake Improvement and Protection Association (CLIPA).

Based on existing state law, the 50 year plan for managing Capitol Lake is less than \$48 million and includes a public-private partnership to ensure a watershed-wide coordinated, sustainable management solution. This is in contrast to an estuary option of approximately \$150 million which does not include stakeholder cooperation or Deschutes watershed management needs. It also does not consider the long-term costs of dredging the entire lower Budd Inlet once the 5th Avenue dam is removed and large amounts of sediment from the Deschutes River fill the most southern tip of Puget Sound.

Capitol Lake is part of the award-winning State Capitol campus design created by renowned architects Wilder and White. CLIPA's action plan outlines how the lake can continue to be managed as a central part of our state's Capitol Campus and the greater Olympia community, while also reflecting the water quality and habitat needs of the Deschutes watershed.

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CLIPA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

People marvel at our State's unique ability to blend natural systems with human systems. Capitol Lake has become a centerpiece of downtown Olympia with community planning and infrastructure investment, funded by both the city and state, of over \$80 million over the last 10 years.

Intermittent dredging of Capitol Lake is needed to maintain the lake and protect lower Budd Inlet. Since 1986 Capitol Lake has been neglected and is filling up with sediment.

The CLIPA plan allows for phased implementation to accommodate the current economic uncertainties. Priority is given to dredging the northern-most basin to more efficiently serve as a sediment catch-basin and to help improve the salmon rearing conditions for the Chinook run. This managed fishery was introduced after Capitol Lake was created. The annual returns of over 50 generations are specifically adapted to Capitol Lake's unique features which serve as a rearing area, feeding ground and transition zone. The distinct population should benefit from restoring and rehabilitating the lake through maintenance dredging and planting of native vegetation.

In a strong bi-partisan endorsement of maintaining Capitol Lake as a lake, House Bill 1938 was introduced this session by all six area legislators, including Representatives Chris Reykdal, Richard DeBolt, Sam Hunt, Gary Alexander, Fred Finn, and Kathy Haigh. This bill would require Capitol Lake to be "managed and maintained as a lake environment, in coordination with interests within the Deschutes watershed and Budd Inlet, to ensure that overall aesthetic, recreational, sediment management and environmental benefits are achieved."

In his testimony on the bill, Rep. Reykdal stated: "I wish this bill were not necessary. [Capitol Lake] should have been maintained over the last several decades, and the state of Washington walked away from that commitment. We are at a near crisis. We have a risk to our downtown, we have a risk to our entire management of that lake, and with that comes tremendous environmental impacts." He continued: "If we focus on interests, with the supreme interests being environmental protection, economic development downtown, respecting the fact that we have sunk costs already into a tremendous landscape, and the overall aesthetics of the capitol campus, I believe we can get to a place where we can maintain it as a lake and meet the highest standard of environmental protection."

CLIPA is dedicated to protecting and improving Capitol Lake as part of Washington State's Capitol Campus, as well as the Deschutes Watershed as a whole. CLIPA Chair Jack Havens noted, "CLIPA's plan presents a reasoned, science-based, holistic approach to a complex problem. Region-wide, the vast majority of citizens support maintaining the lake. A properly maintained lake can play a positive role in the overall ecosystem, provide for recreational and educational opportunities, and preserve the aesthetics of the capitol campus."

It is anticipated that steps toward Deschutes Watershed planning and management will be initiated this summer. This work would include public and private stakeholders, and work in cooperation with General Administration as the lead agency for Capitol Lake.

For more information on CLIPA's Action Plan, visit www.SaveCapitolLake.org. For additional questions, contact us at Friends@SaveCapitolLake.org or Jack Havens at (360) 866-0810.

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