

March 2006
Volume 9, Issue 1



SPOKANE RIVER ASSOCIATION

River Talk Newsletter



Miscellaneous River Photos
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Membership Dinner & Annual Meeting Notice

By Steve Shamion

Our annual member's meeting will be held at Templin's Red Lion Resort on:

Wednesday, May 17th.

The evening begins with a 5 PM social hour, 6 PM dinner and 7 PM meeting. The cost is \$20.00 per person, which includes tax and gratuity.

The purpose of our annual meeting is two fold: 1) informs members of their association's business and affairs and 2) provides an opportunity to meet and visit with other riverfront home and property owners.

The agenda for this year's meeting will include a report by our President, Wayne Harris. His presentation will address the primary issues and activities of the Board of Directors. We also intend to feature guest speakers, who may comment on

several relevant issues, ranging from property taxes and waterfront developments... to river flows, boating safety and noise levels...to the EPA Superfund and Post Falls Dam Re-licensing.

However, the most important function of the annual meeting is for the Board of Directors to learn and understand your concerns. As your representatives, we must ensure that our efforts are directed to the issues most important to our members.

**Our "Keynote Speaker" is
Kootenai County Sheriff Rocky Watson.**

So mark your calendars and plan to attend. Reservations can be made by calling Wayne at 208.773.3101 or e-mailing Jackie at upscalejackie@icehouse.net.

Inside this issue:

SRA Officers/Board	2
Survey Results	3
New Public Park for Spokane River	4
Water Quality	4
Waterways Improvement Fund	5
Common Boating Violations	5
Advertising	6-7
Interview with Sgt. Matt Street	8-9
Environmental Committee Update	9
Spring 2005 Membership Drive & Contest	10

Boater Registration Fees

By Ross Walkinshaw

What happens to the fees we pay for our boat registration?

The Idaho Parks and Recreation Department collects our registration fees based on a formula that has been in place for several years. We pay \$13.00 for the first twelve feet and \$2.00 per foot for each additional foot in excess of twelve feet. Plus a \$1.50 administration fee. Eighty five percent of this registration fee is sent back to the county that the boat owner designates on their registration application. This assures that your money gets to the waterways you use. If your registration from doesn't designate a county, IDPR will put it into an account that may never get back to your county.

Please check your registration form to be sure it is designating our county; KOOTENAI COUNTY is #28 — BONNER COUNTY is #9. I have noticed that one of my boats was not designated for #28, but #99 UNKNOWN. I have also found this to be the case on other boats. It is very important for us to get all the registration funds we have paid to keep our dollars on our waterways.

If you have any questions about the registration of your vessel, feel free to call me at 208.667.4105.

SRA Officers

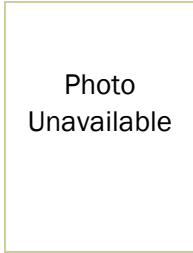


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President,
Wayne Harris
208.773.3101



Vice President,
Jim Aucutt
208.765.4075



Secretary/Treasurer,
Sally Cannon
208.765.4075



SRA Board



Paul Anderson,
Industrial Relations
208.773.0310



Jack Domit,
Citizen Council
208.773.1413



Dave Fair,
Member At Large
208.773.0539



Ed Haglund,
Industrial Relations
208.667.8285



Chris Jessen,
Member At Large
208.777.7109



Bob Kaul,
Member At Large
208.773.2678

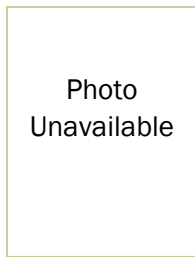


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Diana Klybert,
Member At Large
208.773.1611



Bill McCarty,
Membership
208.765.1437

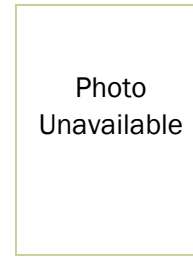


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John Pfau,
EPA Superfund
208.666.1429



Steve Shamion,
Special Events
208.773.3234



Rusty Sheppard,
Environmental
208.773.9254



Ross Walkinshaw,
Safety
208.667.4105



Valerie Watson,
Communications
208.661.3760



Jackie McDaniels,
Admin Assistant
208.664.0681

Survey Results Are In!

By Valerie Watson

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank everyone who participated in our survey. Hearing from our membership is vital in planning the association's going-forward focus.

We received a total of 85 completed surveys. Seventy-eight of the respondents were members (which equated to 44% of our December paid membership telling us what they think) and 7 non-members. Of the 85 surveys returned, 82% were from residents who live on the river year-round.

We asked respondents to tell us which of 13 conditions they felt were problems on the river by selecting a number between 1 and 5 (1=no problem and 5=a serious problem) that best represented their feelings. The 13 conditions are listed below in the order of respondent importance.

1. Property tax (with a rating value of 392 = 4.61)
2. Post Falls Dam Relicensing issue (379 = 4.46)
3. Noise pollution (321 = 3.78)
4. Motorcraft impacts on shorelines (320 = 3.76)
5. Water level (319 = 3.75)
6. Water traffic (317 = 3.73)
7. Boating speeds (315 = 3.71)
8. Boating safety (303 = 3.56)
9. Water quality (300 = 3.53)
10. Length of boating season (276 = 3.25)
11. EPA Superfund issue (238 = 2.80)
12. Swimming safety (228 = 2.68)
13. Beach and boat launch maintenance (129 = 1.52)
14. Other (30 = 0.35)

When we asked survey respondents to select their top 3 concerns, we saw a few differences; although the top 3 remain the same.

1. Property tax (with 59 = 69% of the respondents)
2. Post Falls Dam Relicensing issue (35 = 41%)
3. Noise pollution (28 = 33%)
4. Water traffic (25 = 29%)
5. Boating safety (22 = 26%)
6. Water level (16 = 19%)
7. Length of boating season (16 = 19%)
8. Boating speeds (14 = 16%)
9. Water quality (13 = 15%)
10. Motorcraft impacts on shorelines (11 = 13%)
11. EPA Superfund issue (7 = 8%)
12. Beach and boat launch maintenance (2 = 2%)
13. Swimming safety (1 = 1%)
14. Other (1 = 1%)

Of the 85 respondents, 86% percent said they have access to the Internet, with 86% saying they use email.

While 48% of the respondents said they wouldn't mind receiving our newsletters via email, due to the size of our editions we will continue to mail them USPS. **Nonetheless**, using a combination of printed mailings and emails, we can better guarantee our memberships knows what's going on. For that reason, PLEASE consider submitting your email address by sending an email entitled "**Sign Me Up**" (and don't forget to include your name) to:

RiverTalkeEditor@verizon.net

We promise not to disclose your email address!!

Meanwhile, some of the themes related to issues that were important to our members but not part of the 13 conditions:

1. Danger from irresponsible jet skis and large wakes caused by large boats.
2. Boats too close to docks.
3. Need for stronger no wake zone violations;
4. Better law enforcement.
5. Concerns regarding the planned marina near the Post Falls dam.
6. Traffic congestion on weekends and holidays.

A few comments regarding how we can retain our members were:

1. Communicate, communicate, communicate!
2. Work on the top issues identified in the survey.
3. You're doing fine—just no apparent results in boat traffic, large boats creating large wakes, jet skis with young kids without boater knowledge, high speed boats with loud motors.
4. I don't think we need any more restrictions as there are a lot of members that have big boats that live near the dam and it would take too long to get to the lake with a no wake.

As the above opposing comments depict, a balancing act is required. As our Membership Chair says, "To be the most effective we need to band together and speak with one voice! The percentage of paid-up SRA members as a proportion of total riverfront property owners must be as high as we can possibly achieve. Only then can we have the clout we need to protect our interests on the river!"

There are 500+ Spokane River property owners. As I write this article we have approximately 190 paid-up members. Help us by talking to your friends, associates, and neighbors who own property on the river. See page 10 for more info.

New Public Park for Spokane River

By Chris Jessen

The City of Post Falls is planning to add a new public park/beach on the Spokane River.

Encompassing approximately two acres, the park will be located just to the east of the Riverside Harbor Homeowners area in Post Falls. The land has been known as the "Ross Point Pump Station" area and is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This area is bordered on the south by the Spokane River and to the north by Maplewood Road.

In order for the public to have a pragmatic and attractive access to the River, the City of Post Falls has been negotiating with BLM and is planning on making the following improvements:

1. Correcting soil erosion problems on the beach front.
2. Creating a safe swim area marked by buoys.
3. Thinning hazardous trees.
4. Adding trees for beautification, and mitigation of noise for the parks neighbors.
5. Building a picnic area.
6. Constructing a 15 to 18 auto parking lot with "one way in and one way out" access and egress.

According to Dave Fair, Director of Parks and Recreation for Post Falls, it is anticipated that the process will take two years. This may be attributed to the lengthy permitting process, present financial constraints and "doing it right".

A public meeting regarding this issue has already taken place, with more to follow as the proposal moves toward fruition.



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Water Quality

By Clyde Sheppard

In the last edition of River Talk, Ross Walkinshaw described the Spokane River Association's participation in the Citizens Monitoring Program (CMP) sponsored by Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). As part of the CMP, members of the association obtain water quality samples from the Spokane River during the summer months. It is during this time period when Coeur d'Alene Lake establishes its yearly thermal barrier. It is also when the lake is subject to its poorest water quality. EPA monitors the water quality in CDA Lake during the year at five deep water monitoring sites and the data obtained are used to determine the success of the superfund clean-up in the upper CDA Basin.

Results obtained by EPA during recent years show the water quality in the lake to continue its improvement over the early 1990's, based on the metal loading (especially Zn, water clarity, phosphate levels, oxygen and temperature values).

In the Spokane River, the metal loading (Zn) was among the lowest values measured in the past few years. For a couple of months the water samples showed the Zn loading as measured at the Cedars to be within the values specified ID DEQ in the Clean Water Act. The oxygen values and temperatures during the summer again met the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The only area of concern in the Spokane River are the Phosphate levels, which are higher than those measured in CDA Lake. The main cause for this behavior is the CDA Sewage Treatment plant. Nevertheless, the Phosphate levels measured in the Spokane River at the State line are still within the commitments made by CDA in their EPA granted permit, and significantly lower than the Phosphate levels being measured below the water treatment facility in Spokane.

Waterways Improvement Fund

By Ross Walkinshaw

This is a program that Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation has developed to provide improvements to motorized boating facilities around the state of Idaho through a competitive grant process.

Each year about 1.2 million dollars are available to public agencies to put into the things we boaters need for access to our water playground. This money comes from the gasoline taxes that we pay in Idaho.

Some of the facilities that have WIF funds nearby are: Blackwell Island BLM boat launch facility, Coeur d'Alene Third Street docks, ramps, mooring docks and breakwater. Harrison boat docks. Mowery State Park docks. Windy Bay boaters part. Loffs Bay ramp, docks and mooring buoys. Carlin Bay docks. Higgens Point ramp, docks, camping docks. Mooring buoys in Beauty Bay. Docks, ramp at Post Falls Qmelin Park. Other things the fund helps provide are boats for the Sheriffs department and Waterways Department. Navigation Lights on the lake and river.

I have been a volunteer member of the WIF Committee since 2001. The committee of six members consists of one from each region around the state. The committee meets once each year in Boise to rate the grant requests from around the state of Idaho. Usually in mid March to rate the 53 requests for this year.



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Common Boating Violations

By Kootenai County Sheriff Office

The navigable waterways in Kootenai County continue to experience an increased level of activity from multiple user groups. The 2005 season was no different and the KCSD Recreation Safety Section would like to remind all boaters of the following laws that will be strictly enforced.

No wake zone (C.O. 6-2-4(B1)) – The current Kootenai County ordinance identifies a no wake zone as being within 200' of any shoreline, dock, pier, structure or any person in the water. An exception to that is on Lower Twin Lakes, Spokane and CDA Rivers where the no wake zone is 100'. These are general restrictions and there are other exceptions to this ordinance.

Muffler and noise restrictions (I.C. 67-7038) – It is unlawful for any person to operate or permit the operation of any motorboat on the waters of the state unless the motorboat shall at all times be equipped with a muffler or a muffler system in good working order and in constant operation and effectively installed to prevent any excessive or unusual noise.

- Boats manufactured after Jan. 1st 1995 shall not exceed 88 dB(A).
- Boats manufactured before Jan. 1st 1995 shall not exceed 90 dB(A).
- Cut-outs and bypass's are not legal.

Any modification to a muffler system that prevents it from being in compliance with the listed decibel levels is in violation.

