

Our Scenic Lake

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Our scenic lake has a long maintenance history. One must learn how much work is put into the lake to truly appreciate it.

Forest Lake is a manmade lake which was built in the 1930's by damming a stream to be used for irrigation and for fishing. The lake was dredged in 1950 because it became clogged with silt. The people dredged the lake again in 1994 for the same reasons. Then they put in aerators to help the fish and bacteria.

The purpose of the lake is for four things: swimming, boating, fishing, and property value. For swimming, the FLCA put sand on the bottom at the beach and put in carp to kill the seaweed. For boating, they made it at least five feet deep in places beyond the swimming areas so the boats won't run aground. They also encourage fishing by stocking it and having fishing contests each year. The real-estate value around the lake is extremely high and it provides a scenic view.

To maintain the lake the FLCA put the aerators in to make air for the fish and the aerobic bacteria. If there were no aerobic bacteria, the lake would stink because anaerobic bacteria would take over the decomposition process and it would become a health hazard. The Health department also tests the levels of substances in the lake like water hardness, nutrients, solids, clarity, and salts. They also check for heavy metals such as mercury which there are only insignificant traces of.

These tests show that we have problems with silt build up, too many nutrients, and lots of salt. You must also realize that we contribute to the problems. Construction brings silt to the lake. Our oil and road salts kill the fish. Fertilizer accelerates the lake's aging. The Health Department is sending out a full report on the health of the lake in April.

The fishers probably want to know about the fish in the lake. Yes, the lake is stocked. They put in a mix of two hundred minnows, one hundred northern, and three hundred small mouth bass. You may have noticed that a lot of fish are dying. This begins to happen in the fall because of the stress they are feeling. It causes a virus which is killing them. Don't worry these viruses aren't contagious.

You may wonder how safe the lake really is for swimming. The Health Department checks the lake for fecal Coloform which indicates a high bacteria count. When there are too many bacteria they can cause us to get sick. Our lake has a low level bacteria count.

I must say thanks for the work put into this lake to make it usable. The lake means a lot to us and it is great to live in a place like this.