

People for Lake Padden

Project Description



People for Lake Padden (P4LP) was formed in April 2011 by a citizen's group whose love for Lake Padden inspired us to commit to our mission to protect and improve its water quality.

P4LP is conducting a series of studies to learn about the lake and its watershed. We hope this information will guide local leaders who make decisions about development in the Lake Padden watershed and about how the lake is managed.

The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) is our official project sponsor. Other institutional partners are: WWU Huxley College of the Environment's Institute for Watershed Studies (IWS)

and the Institute of Spatial Information and Analysis (ISIA); the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County. Several neighbors who live in the Lake Padden watershed are volunteering their time to assist with water sampling and other supports.

Our research study has three components:

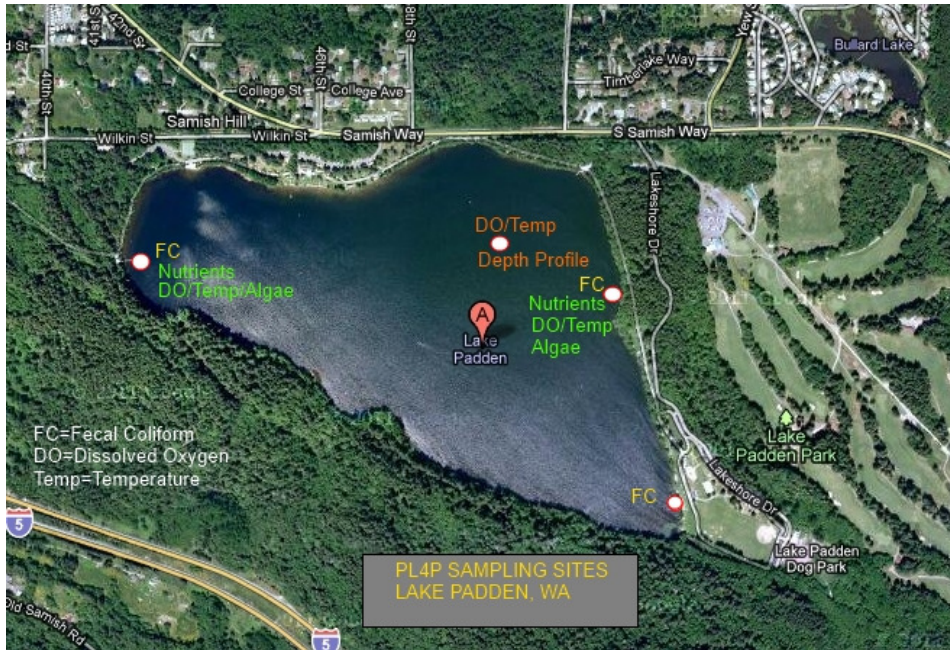
- Two water quality studies began last summer and are currently underway. They provide information regarding the health of Lake Padden by measuring nutrients, algae, dissolved oxygen, and fecal coliform in the water. Water samples are being collected on a bi-weekly basis and analyzed either at the IWS lab or at the Post Point's wastewater treatment plant lab.
- A third study focuses on land use in the Lake Padden watershed. It will provide us information regarding the relationship between land development and the lake's water quality. This particular component of our Lake Padden study has two phases, the first of which involves creating a variety of GIS products and data on the Lake Padden watershed under current conditions. We will make maps and key statistics about the watershed available, to help educate the public and to engage local managers and elected officials in land use discussions.

The second phase of the land use study will utilize predictive models to quantify the relationship between current land use, runoff and water quality. Our goal is to improve understanding of the risks associated with building in the watershed. We also hope to run the model for various development scenarios to help us understand the effects new development will have under normal development regulations and Low Impact Development approaches. Finally, we intend to provide runoff information about each development in the watershed and how it influences water quality in Lake Padden.

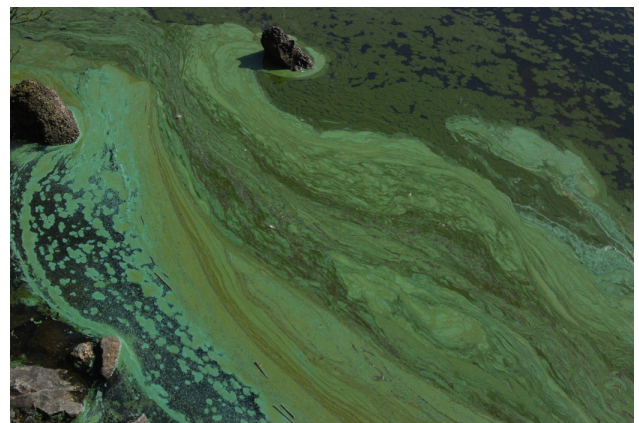
The ultimate goal for this scientific study of Lake Padden is to create an educational resource for decision makers and citizens regarding development scenarios in the Lake Padden watershed. If the lake's watershed is to be further developed, the information gleaned from this study will aid with developing it wisely, with knowledge aforethought. Additionally, it will help the local citizenry to be good lake stewards by becoming more knowledgeable about residing within the Lake Padden watershed and/or enjoying its many recreational uses without degrading its waters.

We anticipate that a full report with an analysis of the data collected will be published and distributed by fall of 2012. Meanwhile, if you wish to know more about this study and/or to view the data collected so far, we invite you to visit our website – www.p4lp.org.

People for Lake Padden is collecting water samples and analyzing data from the following locations around the lake:



Fall algae bloom on the west shore of Lake Padden.



Andrew Majeske from WWU helps us with sampling, measures pH and temperature and analyses our samples for nutrients and dissolved oxygen as seen here.