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### **Grant helps Vancouver Lake Partnership efforts to improve water health**

VANCOUVER, WA– The Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership has been awarded a nearly \$50,000 grant by the Washington Department of Ecology, marking another advance in local efforts to improve and protect the health of the regional water resource and all who use it..

The \$48,137 grant will allow the Partnership – an organization of citizen stakeholders and government agencies with interest and jurisdiction over Vancouver Lake -- to team with Washington State University Vancouver in investigating cyanobacteria blooms, frequently referred to as bluegreen algae blooms.

The grant-funded investigation will focus on growth and death rates of cyanobacteria, as well as their relationship with predators such as microscopic zooplankton. Understanding these complex food-chain interactions is critical to identifying appropriate strategies for improving Vancouver Lake, a community resource for swimming, sailing, rowing, bird-watching, hiking and other recreational activities.

Since the late 1960s, public use of the large, relatively shallow Vancouver Lake west of downtown Vancouver, has been frequently limited in late, hot summer months due to toxic bluegreen algal blooms.

Such closures led to the 2004 formation of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership by the Port of Vancouver, City of Vancouver Public Works, Clark County Public Works, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation and the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association. Clark County Public Works serves as the lead agency in securing and overseeing the Ecology grant.

Funding for Ecology's Freshwater Algae Control Program was established by the 2005 Washington Legislature through an annual \$1 license fee assessed to the owners of boats. The program boosts local efforts to reduce the occurrence of toxic cyanobacteria blooms in lakes by investigating nutrient sources, performing education projects, and conducting monitoring and treatments to affected lakes.

Members of the Partnership include nine citizens and the Port of Vancouver, City of Vancouver Public Works, Clark County Public Works, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, Port of Ridgefield, Clark County Health Department, Clark Public Utilities, Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Natural Resources, Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. More Partnership information is available at [www.vancouverlakepartnership.org](http://www.vancouverlakepartnership.org).

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