Bend company awarded Diamond Lake monitoring contract

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife officials announced earlier this week the agency has awarded a monitoring contract to MaxDepth Aquatics, Inc. of Bend, Oregon to oversee monitoring of Diamond Lake throughout the year.

Joseph Eilers, principal scientist for this project and owner of MaxDepth Aquatics, and a team of engineers and scientists will monitor water quality and document recovery of zooplankton and bottom-dwelling organisms that will support the future trout fishery. A hydrodynamic model that was used to explore water movements in and out of Diamond Lake will be expanded to provide a more complete view of the workings of the lake.

The monitoring of Diamond Lake is in response to a September 2006 rotenone treatment that ridded the lake of 98 million tui chub that destroyed the recreational fishery and degraded water quality.

Eilers has studied and monitored Diamond Lake since 1996 and will oversee a team of engineers and scientists including Dr. Kellie Vache, University of Giessen; Dr. Jacob Kann of Aquatic Ecosystems Sciences; and Dr. Allan Vogel, ZP Taxonomic Services.

â€œWeâ€™re going to expand the hydrodynamic model to include water chemistry, plants, bottom-dwelling organisms and fisheries, and develop a more complete understanding of the recovery process in Diamond Lake,â€• Eilers said. â€œWeâ€™re looking forward to working with ODFWâ€™s fish biologists to develop tools that will help them manage the fisheries in Diamond Lake and in lakes throughout Oregon.â€•

According to Mari Brick, Diamond Lake restoration biologist, monitoring Diamond Lake is critical to the restoration projectâ€™s success.

â€œTracking the lakeâ€™s water quality and insect population, along with other environmental and biological indicators, will help fishery managers determine future fish stocking levels,â€• Brick said. â€œMonitoring is key to ensuring we have a healthy lake and provide a good trout fishery for future generations of anglers. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlifeâ€™s (ODFW) monitoring partnership developed in cooperation with the Umpqua National Forest and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is important to all recreational activities at Diamond Lake.â€•

Brick emphasized that all visitors to Diamond Lake can help ensure its integrity by not releasing live fish into the lake or using live fish for bait. Boaters can help by emptying their bilge water and checking their boats and trailers for invasive species before launching.

MaxDepthâ€™s contract work is expected to begin this month and will continue throughout the year. ODFW will monitor the lakeâ€™s health and fish species composition for years to come.

ODFW plans to stock Diamond Lake with rainbow trout in spring 2007. For more information on the restoration project, check the agencyâ€™s web site at http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/diamond_lake/index.asp

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