



BEAR LAKE News

Preservation Association

The Newsletter of the Bear Lake Preservation Association, Inc. • November 2014

BLPA Annual Pot Luck and Appreciation Dinner



Thursday, November 20th at
6:00 pm

Pot Luck and Best Dessert Contest

St. Andrews Fellowship Hall

Meet your neighbors for great
conversation, food and fun!



Join the Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) on **Thursday, November 20, 2014, at 6:00 pm, for a Pot Luck Dinner at Saint Andrews Church.** Bring your entire family and enjoy great food. We encourage you to invite a neighbor and meet others in the Bear Lake Community.

BLPA will be providing all the chicken and pulled pork from Keller's Real Smoked Bar-B-Q Restaurant in Altamonte Springs. BLPA will also be providing beverages. If you can bring a side dish or dessert for the Pot Luck dinner, it would be greatly appreciated.

"Best Dessert Contest" for all you bakers — bring your family's favorite dessert to be judged and a chance to win a prize for the best dessert!

RSVP by Thursday, November 13th, so we can order the right amount of chicken and pulled pork. To RSVP, please contact **Catherine Heideman at 407-538-1097** or by email: **cwjclaf-lin@hotmail.com**. Please make sure you let Catherine know what you are bringing and how many will be attending. Don't forget those serving spoons with your dish!

The Pot Luck dinner will be held in the Fellowship Hall at Saint Andrews Church located at 9913 Bear Lake Road in Apopka, where we have all the BLPA General Meetings. We look forward to seeing everyone and meeting new neighbors on **Thursday, November 20th, at 6:00 pm**, for great conversation, food and fun!!

Coast-to-Coast Trail Project Connector Seminole-Wekiwa Trail is Currently Underway in the Bear Lake Community

Construction is well underway in Central Florida on the Coast-to-Coast Trail Project. Eleven Central Florida metropolitan planning organizations have signed a joint resolution making the trail project a regional priority. The Coast-to-Coast project will eventually link all existing portions of trails, and will create a continuous 250-mile route from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico. Currently, 75 percent of the Connector is either developed and open to the public or funded for construction. The

plan is to make the Coast-to-Coast Trail as safe, scenic, and enjoyable as possible so people will not only use it, they will want to come back over and over again.

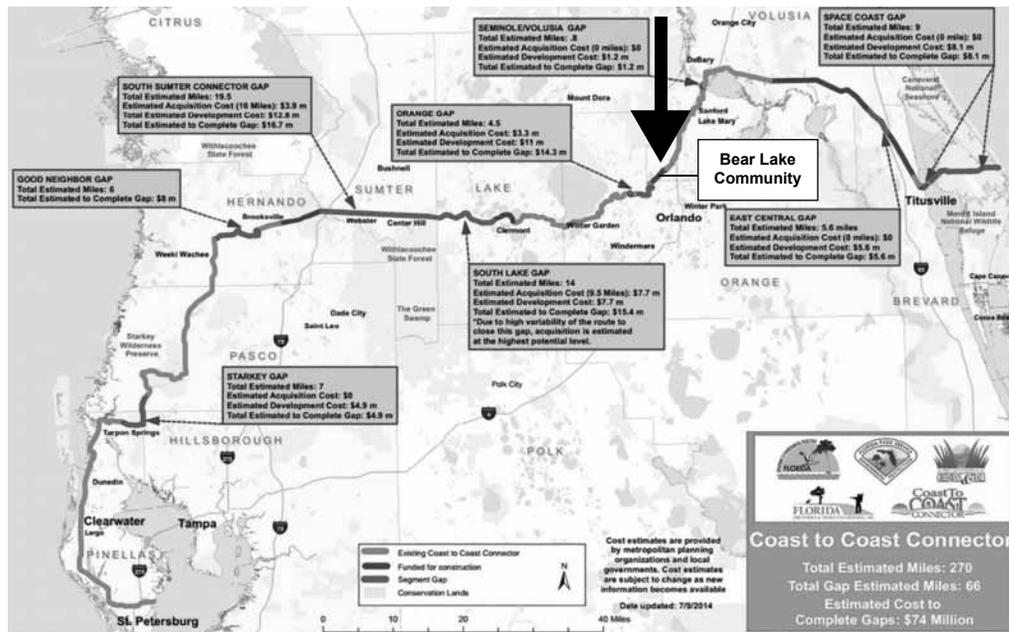
The 14-mile Seminole-Wekiwa Trail runs from Lake Mary south to Altamonte Springs. Seminole County is currently expanding the existing trail an additional 3-miles to the Orange County line. As shown on the Maps, part of the Seminole-Wekiwa Trail Connector is in the Bear Lake Community.

It is southeast of Cub Lake and runs along-side parts of Don Mar Road (see black arrow on Map). The paved trail will run through the former Orange Belt Railway from Bear Lake Road to Bunnell Road. The Initial construction preparation has also begun on the connection phase which is parallel to Bunnell Road to West Town Parkway. Finally, the trail will be connected to highway 436. Presently, however, there are no plans for an overpass so

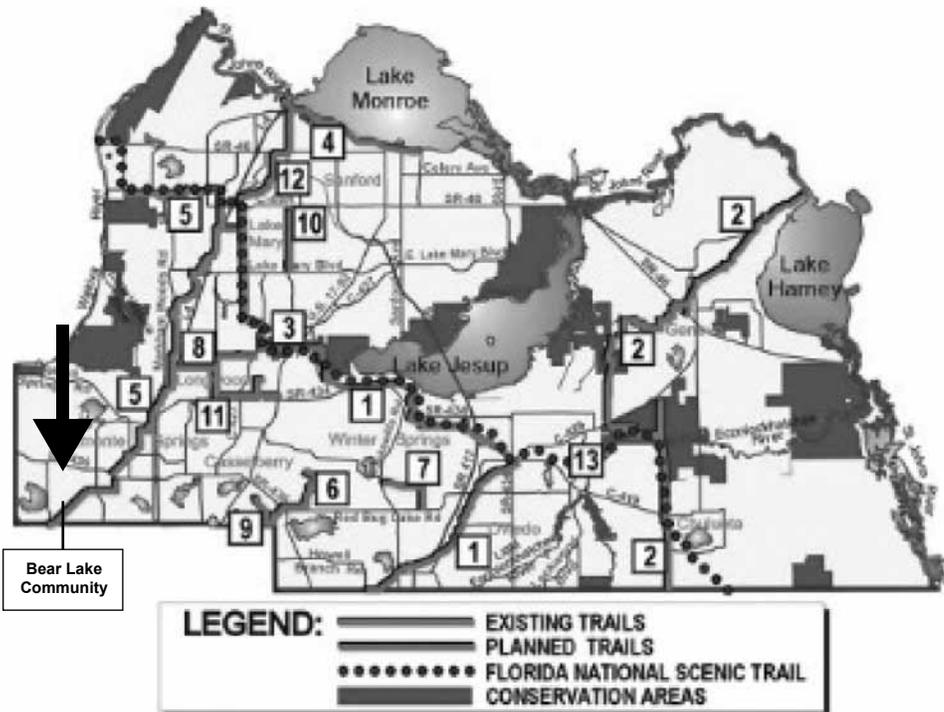
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Coast-to-Coast Trail Project Connector

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This map shows the path of a completed Coast-to-Coast Connector. The black arrow above depicts the area currently underway in the Bear Lake Community.



users will have to cross six lanes of traffic to connect to the trail on the other side. The 3-mile trail extension project commenced in the summer of 2014, and is expected to be completed sometime in 2015.

According to Seminole County's website, the current 14-mile Seminole-Wekiwa Trail is a paved recreational trail that has been designated as one

of Seminole County's Showcase Trails because of its length, beauty, and accommodation of many users. The section of the trail that runs west of the I-4 trail overpass to the county line at the Wekiwa River is also a designated part of the Florida National Scenic Trail.

To review a detailed map of this project, visit www.seminolecountyfl.gov/trails.



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BLPA Youth Ecology Group Member Hard at Work Clearing Storm Drain



Daniel Walls of the BLPA Youth Ecology Group worked hard to clear the overgrown grass and weeds which were blocking the storm drain grate off Bear Lake Road and Holiday Avenue. It wasn't long after Daniel started this project before he realized he needed to call Seminole County for reinforcement and special heavy equipment to finish the job! As Daniel and others in his group have

recently learned, nutrient rich grass clippings release heavy loads of nitrogen and phosphorus. Phosphorus and nitrogen are the primary nutrients that, in excessive amounts, pollute our lakes, streams, and wetlands. Phosphorus contributed by human activity is a major cause of excessive algae growth and degrades the lakes' water quality. Thanks to Daniel's hard work, together with the heavy assis-

tance and support of Seminole County, the nutrient rich grass and weed clippings were all cleared away to prevent them from entering the lakes. BLPA is proud the Youth Ecology Group has taken such an active role with the association in protecting all the delightful Bear Lakes for generations to come!

Warning — High Waters!!

The Central Florida area has experienced a large amount of rain recently. The Bear Lake Community area has seen approximately 20 inches just in the months of August and September! Although Florida's sandy soils are capable of absorbing water rapidly, their ability to soak up large amounts of water is limited. One reason is because the water table is normally very close to the surface. Since Florida is low and flat, it takes time for water to seep vertically and move horizontally through the different types of soil.

Contrary to popular belief, not all of the rain will reach Florida's Aquifer. According to the St. Johns River Management website, on average, Florida receives 51 inches of rain each year. About 38 inches evaporates or runs off the land into surface waters, like lakes, rivers, and streams before it has a chance to soak into the ground. This leaves, on average, 13 inches annually

to recharge the aquifer in limited areas (www.floridawaters.com).

Because the area watersheds have all experienced the same amount of steady rain recently, our lake levels will likely remain high. Although no significant rain is forecasted, we will continue to see the water levels on the St. Johns and other waterways continue to rise. Therefore, the Bear Lakes normal flow out to the Little Wekiwa River will be slow.

As of September/October 2014, the Bear Lakes' levels are as follows: Asher 105.78, Bear 103.50, Little Bear 102.78, and Cub 101.8. These high lake levels have submerged some docks and are over some seawalls. The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) would like to remind its members that high water levels may hide submerged docks, tree limbs, and other



BLPA Members and residents volunteer to clear the drain so the elevated water can flow out to Cub Lake.

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Information on Lakewatch...Rainfall Data

The following data collected for the University of Florida LAKEWATCH program covers the last 8 months on the 3 Bear Lakes sampled. The ground in the Bear Lakes' Watershed is saturated from approximately 20 inches of rainfall in August and September. Frequent downpours from the steady rains flushed many pollutants and sediments into the lakes, and the lakes could not flow fast enough since the ground was so drenched. The most damaging source of pollutant was fertilizer. Bear Lake's high water was slow flowing out to Cub Lake due to floating eelgrass plugging the outfall

manhole.

When the ground is saturated, our Bear Lakes' residents should be good stewards and minimize the use of septic tanks by reducing water used in showers, dishwasher, washing machine, sinks, disposals, and toilets. We should also turn off lawn sprinkler timers or install a sprinkler rain sensor. A rain sensor on your sprinkler system will determine whether or not enough rainfall has occurred in order to skip an irrigation cycle.

Overflow elevation is the amount measured when each of the Bear Lakes flow into the other. It is mea-

sured in feet above sea level. The overflow elevation occurs when Lake Asher reaches 105.78'. When it does, it flows into Bear Lake. When Bear Lake reaches 103.50' and Little Bear Lake reaches 102.78', the lakes flow into Cub Lake. At 100.19' Cub Lake will flow into Lake Lotus.

To report activities in the watershed affecting a lake's water quality, contact your LAKEWATCH Volunteer: Bear Lake and Lake Asher, Nancy Dunn 407-920-4975; Little Bear, Janet Brown 407-295-6739, and Cub Lake, Margaret Bundy 407- 497-0295.

Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	3/14	0.9"	16'	103.74
	4/14	7.05"	12'	103.79
	5/14	8.25"	13'	103.68
	6/14	10.5"	12'	103.82
	7/14	7"	11'	104.09
	8/14	3.1"	10'	103.88
	9/14	17"	8'	104.55
	10/14	3"	10'	104.14

Little Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	3/14	0.9"	5'	103.93
	4/14	7.05"	5'	103.82
	5/14	8.25"	7'	103.81
	6/14	10.5"	n/a	103.92
	7/14	7"	6.5'	103.83
	8/14	3.1"	7'	103.72
	9/14	17"	6-1/2'	103.90
	10/14	3"	4-1/2'	103.80

Cub Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	3/14	0.9"	8'	100.2
	4/14	7.05"	7'	100
	5/14	8.25"	8'	100.3
	6/14	10.5"	7'	100.6
	7/14	7"	8'	100.6
	8/14	3.1"	9'	100.00
	9/14	17"	8'	101.80
	10/14	3"	8'	100.60

Procedural Improvements by Seminole County Help Protect the Bear Lakes by Performing Routine Maintenance



The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA), has hundreds of photographs taken over the years documenting routine maintenance by Seminole County to the Bear Lake watershed. Since its inception more than 20 years ago, BLPA Members have always taken an active role to immediately report to the County:

When stormwater drains were being filled with grass clippings, overgrown weeds, pine needles, and other debris, which causes clogging of the natural flow into all the Bear Lakes to prevent flooding of property and streets;

A lack of proper barriers to prevent erosion, which causes mud and other additional stormwater runoff from entering the surrounding Bear Lakes;

Lack of maintenance to area ditches, stormwater drains, and surrounding streets to prevent additional storm water runoff and unnecessary debris entering the Bear Lakes.

Past problems with area construction and the county's maintenance workers were due to uneducated crew and maintenance workers. However, we have experienced enormous improvements in this area by the County.

Seminole County has done an amazing job providing the appropriate education and training to their crew and maintenance workers on the proper procedures and measures in maintaining ditches and storm drains. Bob Ballerino, who is the Senior Team Leader for the Seminole County Public Works Department, is also keeping BLPA informed of their scheduled procedural improvement. Seminole County has scheduled the clearing and cleaning of the pipes which currently run under the road from Bear to Little Bear.

BLPA would like to remind its members and residents not to fill in swales located in your yard or the County Right of Ways and Easements. Swales slow down and filter the stormwater runoff containing pollutant, *before* they enter the lakes. This is unlike stormwater drainage systems which directly flushes pollutants from the roads into the lakes.

BLPA appreciates the County working together with us on a mutual goal to protect all the Bear Lakes and the surrounding watershed. To report a maintenance issue to the County, you can reach Bob Ballerino at 407-665-5632 or BBallerino@seminolecounty.org



Grass mats protect the lakes from mud, sediments and pollutants washing in.

Warning — High Waters!!

Continued from page 3



The drain located on the southeast corner of Bear Lake collects floating eelgrass and plugs the flow of elevated water out to Cub Lake.



High water elevation able to flow out to Cub Lake after volunteers worked so hard and cleared the way!

debris, thereby creating dangerous swimming and boating conditions. In addition, you should always be on the lookout for any floating debris, normally found on shorelines or on docks around the Bear Lakes.

High waters will also create destruction of surrounding wildlife habitats. BLPA asks its members to be cautious of possible snakes, alligators, fire ants, and other insects to wonder outside their usual territories. Until the lakes recede to a safe and normal level, please try and refrain from your usual recreational use. Also, please keep in mind if you must use your boat or Jet Ski, you remain at a safe distance from the shore to avoid property damage to docks, or erosion to the shorelines caused by wakes. Always be safe and courteous of others!

Many thanks to Nancy Dunn, Daniel Walls, Jim Maki, Bruce Fitzgerald, Jon Albert, Rob Dominica, Jim Seay, Ren Werrenrath, June Staggs, Jay Goebel, Michael Ihrig, and many others who have volunteered to keep the drain clear or haul away the eelgrass removed from the area.

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BLPA NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2015 BLPA MEMBER(S) DUE PAYMENT FORM BLPA MEMBER(S) CHANGE OF CONTACT INFO FORM

New Option - pay by Paypal! To sign up or renew your membership go to www.blpa.net and click on Join BLPA.

Please make your check payable to “BLPA”:
\$85.00.....BLPA Membership \$50.00.....BLPA Senior Membership (62+)
Mail to: BLPA, Post Office Box 162605, Altamonte Springs, Florida 32716
Alternatively, you can go to: www.blpa.net and pay online.

Thank you for continuing to support to help keep our lakes clean!

PLEASE CHECK: New Member(s) Current Member(s) Change of Member(s) Contact Info

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address 1 _____ City _____ State/Zip _____

Address 2 _____ City _____ State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell 1 _____ Cell 2 _____

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BLPA is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. All financial contributions to BLPA are tax deductible. BLPA will provide a receipt upon request for your donation.

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!

BLPA ANNUAL POT LUCK BBQ AND APPRECIATION DINNER

Thursday, November 20, 2014 • 6:00 p.m.
St. Andrews Church Fellowship Hall
9913 Bear Lake Road

Bring your entire family, a covered side dish, and a neighbor! Bring your family's favorite dessert for a chance to win the Best Dessert Contest!

Please rsvp to: Catherine Heideman,
cwjclafin@hotmail.com or call: 407-538-1097



BLPA ANNUAL HOLIDAY BOAT PARADE



The Bear Lake Preservation Association is hosting its Annual Holiday Boat Parade on **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2014**, at sunset. We invite you to decorate your boat and join us in the parade

around Bear Lake. Prizes will be awarded for the best decorated boat, dock/shoreline! If you are not entering your boat in the parade, gather your family and friends around your decorated docks or shore line — bring your flashlights to wave as the boat parade goes by to join in the holiday fun! Please contact Brenda Vallancourt at 407-291-6808 to register, and for the sign-in meeting location and time prior to sunset. In case of rain or other bad weather, the "Rain Date" will be Sunday, December 14th.

The boat parade will move clockwise around the lake. \$50 PRIZE TO THE BEST DECORATED BOAT; \$25 RUNNER-UP BOAT; \$50 PRIZE TO BEST BACKYARD/DOCK.



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