

Lacamas Park Urban Fringe Site

Domain name: PNW NEON – Domain 16

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Web page: http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/parksrecreation/parks_trails/parks/camas_washougal/lacamas.htm

Location: 45.61 N; -122.38 W

Ecological Themes: Climate; Land Use (urbanization, land use change); Pollution; Invasives (plant, animal); Aquatic (stream, lake).

Site History and Characteristics. Encompasses a 225 ha area on the eastern edge of the city of Camas, Washington, and located 25 km east of downtown Vancouver. The site is composed of mature upland conifer forest, streams and a lake, and is located just over 1 km from the Columbia River. The upland forested areas of Lacamas Park support a variety of wildlife, including deer, raccoon and beaver, and the water features in the area support bald eagles and osprey, among many other bird species. Lacamas Creek is the primary stream draining the area, which flows from Lacamas Lake via Round Lake to the northwest of the area. Lacamas Lake has been the focus of extensive water quality monitoring by Clark County personnel since 1984, due to the state of eutrophication in the lake. In a recent 20 year review, Clark County scientists concluded that while total P loading had been reduced by more than half, the lake remained eutrophic, and voiced concern that further human impacts in the area would further exacerbate this condition. More information is available at: <http://www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources/documents/Monitoring/focus%20-%20lacamas.pdf>



Gradients and Themes. In contrast to Oregon's stringent land use laws, Washington's growth management regulations allow a greater degree of sprawl, more consistent with most other areas in the US. Additionally, population growth in Clark County has increased greatly over the past decade, a trend that will likely continue. The urban and suburban development in and around Camas will likely put increased environmental stresses on natural areas such as Lacamas Park as well as Lacamas Lake downstream.

Existing facilities. Clark County officials continue water quality monitoring efforts of Lacamas Lake. Both Lacamas Lake and Lacamas Park have park facilities on site, as well as an onsite park caretaker for Lacamas Park.