

# The Lake Merritt Institute

LAKE TRASH REMOVAL, FOUNTAINS, EDUCATION, LAKE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE

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VOLUME VIII

"TIDINGS" - MAY, 2003

ISSUE V

**WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL?** Paper costs money, postage isn't cheap and the mailman has enough to carry. So, those of you who would like to receive this newsletter by Email in .pdf format (open using Acrobat Reader) instead of a paper copy, please send an Email to [lmi@netwiz.net](mailto:lmi@netwiz.net). You will save the Institute both money and time, which we can then devote to the Lake.

**COUNTY PAINT DUMPING CASE DRAGS:** The Alameda County District Attorney's office still has not filed suit against the Five Star Painting Company who dumped gallons of paint into Glen Echo Creek on August 26, 2002 (and perhaps several times before that). This is the case where the dumping was videotaped and photos were posted on the internet.

According to a neighborhood Email regarding information received from the County, problems in the case include: That the contractor hasn't named the painters (why can't they sue the contractor?); no police officer was on the scene to take a report (but one neighbor spent over an hour making a statement and a detective came by for identification of a photo from a lineup, and another neighbor stated that there were several officers on the scene including Tom Viglianzano); an OPD officer who used to be in Hazmat has been reassigned and the district attorney is waiting for OPD to give permission for this officer to travel to Los Angeles to question the contractor (can't it be done by phone or letter?). The neighbors were told that when the case is put together, the County will ask them for their notes, pictures, remembrances etc. When someone asked if they could pay the fare to Los Angeles, or ask the police supervisor to allow the officer to go, the County spokesperson frowned on the ideas. Really! Apparently they have 3 years to bring it to court, but given that people move away and memories fade, why wait? Someone should light a fire under this case. Hmm... Perhaps Waterkeepers of San Francisco would like to get involved.



Glen Echo Creek, August 26, 2002

**DD UPDATE: No Funds For Equipment:** As a general obligation bond, DD funds cannot be used to fund equipment (it has to be permanently attached). !xjix-\*\$^&#@ ! Capital improvement projects however, can be funded, and the fine points of distinction between these two categories will hopefully be discussed at the next DD citizens coalition meeting in May.

**Lake / Creek Briefing:** Meanwhile, the Environmental Services Division of the Public Works Agency hosted a briefing and discussion on implementation of the creek restoration, creek acquisition and Lake Merritt water quality elements of DD. Most attendees were there for the Lake projects. Two million dollars are proposed for the first round of Lake water quality improvement work, and 2.5 million for the second round, plus any funds that could be generated by matching grants. Possible implementation approaches/tasks were listed as:

- Immediately install several structural treatment control devices in key storm drains around the Lake
- Immediately install aeration devices to improve levels of dissolved oxygen
- Re-establish Lake Merritt Water Quality Task Force to update and develop water quality improvement plan
- Hold public meetings for input on Plan
- Develop and prioritize options
- Research, assemble/coordinate, locate outside funding opportunities, write and administer grants.

Unfortunately, the ES division does not have staff available to write grant proposals. As for the next meeting of the coalition, it won't be in May. Maybe June?

**Federal Funds Requested:** Letters from coalition members were sent to Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Congresswoman Lee, requesting federal matching funds for: Replacement of the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Flood Control Station; Replacement of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street culverts with a bridge and for the Union Point park along the waterfront. If approved, funds would be in the FY 2004 budget.

**POTENTIAL WATER QUALITY PROJECTS FOR LAKE MERRITT:** What capital improvements would help the most in getting our Lake off the list of impaired bodies of water? In order of priority, we think they should be as follows. The total cost would be \$4,487,600.

1. Install Storm Drain Screens (or filters as appropriate) on small to mid-size inlets at the Lake (\$569,100) and on larger drains within the watershed (~\$3,500,000).
2. Obtain a portable dredge boat and dredge portions of the Lake annually (\$143,500).
3. Document a nitrogen budget for the Lake and its watershed (~\$75,000).
4. Install two additional water quality monitoring stations (\$35,000).
5. Install solar powered pumps to prevent stratification and improve water quality (this assumes that maintenance concerns can be solved) (\$150,000).
6. Install an aeration fountain and bubbler aeration system in the 18<sup>th</sup> Street cove (\$15,000).



*Many fish, such as these sticklebacks with eggs, and the larger topsmelt are spawning now in Lake Merritt. Their populations will continue to increase throughout the spring and early summer.*

**DOCK RENOVATION:** The City attorney's office has delivered a proposed contract to the Breakfast Club, but the two sides have not yet reached an agreement. So, sadly, the dock remains dilapidated, as it has for many years (it took less time to build the adjacent high-rise)!

**WETLANDS:** The wetland project is in a coma. The advisory committee has not met since 3/02, and the Institute has recommended that the project be canceled unless 4 conditions can be met.