



BLPA Newsletter

Around The Bear Lakes: Asher, Bear, Little Bear, Cub

The Bear Lakes are renowned for their pristine waters, a testament to the collective efforts of our community. Your unwavering support and financial contributions to BLPA help to preserve and sustain the value of our cherished lakefront properties
Go to: www.blpa.net

Bear Lake Preservation Association, Inc.
Spring 2026 Newsletter

March 2026

TRIPLOID GRASS CARP RELEASED INTO BEAR AND CUB LAKES TO NATURALLY CONTROL AQUATIC VEGETATION

The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA), with over 35 years of dedicated efforts, has collaborated with Seminole County Watershed Management Department to conduct vegetation mapping on Bear, Little Bear, and Cub lakes. The collected data is compared to the historical records and earlier vegetation data collected by the county. This invaluable information enables the BLPA to compare the vegetation growth in each of the Bear Lakes. With this data, BLPA can determine the necessity of Triploid Grass Carp to *naturally manage* the excessive growth of aquatic vegetation.



The transport vehicle is equipped with aerated tanks to safely move live Triploid Grass Carp to Bear Lake for stocking. A sedative is used to reduce stress and oxygen consumption of the fish during transport to ensure they remain calm and healthy.



The crew prepares to safely release the Triploid Grass Carp from the live tanks into Bear Lake.

recreational activities such as swimming, boat cruising, water skiing, kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. The adjacent areas, predominately residential, offer picturesque vistas and opportunities for birdwatching for lakefront homeowners. As part of Seminole County's extensive network of lakes, they each contribute to the region's watershed and support local biodiversity. The final lake in the chain, Cub Lake, manages excess water from the entire Bear Lake chain releasing it every 28 days to Lake Lotus, ultimately flowing into the Little Wekiwa, St. Johns River, and gradually, slowly, reaching the Atlantic Ocean.

Triploid Grass Carp are large, herbivorous freshwater fish native to East Asia, are commonly used in aquatic vegetation management. The primary diet consists of various aquatic plants, including algae, hydrilla, and pondweeds, making them effective biological control agents for excessive vegetation in lakes, ponds, and rivers. By consuming excessive plant growth, grass carp contribute to the maintenance of a balanced ecosystem, enhanced water quality over time, and mitigate the reliance on chemical herbicides. Their presence can also support healthy fish habitats by preventing dense plant mats that deplete oxygen levels. For this reason, the Triploid Grass Carp provide an eco-friendly and sustainable solution for managing aquatic environments.

The natural flow of the Bear Lakes is Asher, Bear, Little Bear, and Cub. Each lake is renowned for their tranquil ambiance, surrounded by lush vegetation that serves as a habitat for diverse various wildlife species, including birds, fish, and aquatic plants.

The lakes encompass a substantial area, comprising Asher (over 5 acres), Bear (over 310 acres), Little Bear (over 28 acres), and Cub (over 14 acres). The lakes provide for an enjoyable setting for water-based



*Pictured above:
Hydrilla*

During a routine observation of drainage ditches before expected rains, Nancy Dunn of Bear Lake identified Hydrilla in the Playa Way ditch. She took a photograph and immediately forwarded it to Seminole County Water Quality and Watershed Management Department. The county sent a crew and boat out on Bear

Lake the next day. Hydrilla was affirmatively identified by the crew along the south side of Bear Lake. Since Hydrilla can take over and quickly choke waterways, the crew recommended that BLPA stock Triploid Grass Carp right away. The calculation of vegetation acreage was based on the average depth and water clarity.



Triploid Grass Carp released in Bear Lake. Some still sleepy from the sedative but quickly woke-up and joined the others in their new environment.

Other vegetation identified was eelgrass, road grass, baby's tears, southern naiad, stonewort, and bladderwort along the shorelines of Bear Lake. This vegetation is considered native, except for Hydrilla.

The permitting process for stocking Triploid Grass Carp to control excessive vegetation in the lakes began in September 2025. Rob Wolford from Bear Lake and Margaret Bundy from Cub Lake initiated this process.



Triploid Grass Carp being prepared for release into Cub

The Bear Lake Preservation Association, Seminole County Lake Management, and University of Florida LAKEWATCH provided guidance and support throughout this process. To safeguard the aquatic ecosystem, the Triploid Grass Carp were obtained at a minimum size of 14 inches. To prevent the escape of the Triploid Grass Carp from the designated lakes, a barrier is mandated and maintained at the outfall of Bear and Cub Lakes. The barrier serves as an important measure in ensuring the containment of the species.

The primary objective of this process is to regulate the introduction of the permitted Triploid Grass Carp into the lakes.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission approved the permitting process for both lakes. On November 13, 2025, 1,200 Triploid Grass Carp were released in Bear, while 200 were released in Cub Lake. These carp have large appetites as juveniles, and their food intake goes up as they grow. However, their growth eventually slows, and their feeding rate levels off as adults. As of January 2026, the Bear Lakes' residents have noticed a decrease of excessive plant growth. Introducing these carp will maintain a healthy balance of aquatic vegetation, which is important for the well-being of our lakes. This balance enables wildlife and water sports enthusiasts to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational opportunities our lakes offer.

The Triploid Grass Carp will eat the hydrilla first and will eventually eat the eelgrass roots after they have finished their other vegetation favorites. When the carp eat the eelgrass roots, it causes the rest of the plant to break off and float to the surface of the lake. Vegetation may also break off from strong winds and boating activity. Once the eelgrass and other vegetation floats to the surface, the wind and waves bring it to the shoreline. It is then up to the lakefront residents to rake and remove it from the lakes. Regular raking of dead and decaying vegetation prevents excessive decomposition. This is crucial to help manage nutrient levels in the water and reduce the risk of algal blooms.



Triploid Grass Carp released into Cub Lake.

The Bear Lake Preservation Association will ask for a routine mapping of the lakes' bottom vegetation by the county to determine if more Triploid Grass Carp will be needed to be stocked in about one-year. To access the most recent and earlier vegetation data and map comparison, please visit: www.blpa.net and select archived Newsletters.

The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) acknowledges the unwavering membership support and financial contributions, including the carp fund, that have helped us to achieve the distinction of being called some of the cleanest lakes in the state. A clean and healthy lake significantly contributes to the preservation of property values.

BLPA members and supporters watch the release of Triploid Grass Carp into Bear Lake.



WHAT IS THE BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION (BLPA)?

The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and water quality of the Bear Lakes' watershed in Seminole County, Florida. Established in 1991, BLPA focuses on water quality monitoring, scientific research, public education, and governmental advocacy to ensure the lakes remain clean and biologically diverse. The association oversees four lakes: Lake Asher, Bear Lake, Little Bear Lake, Cub Lake, and engages with local residents and authorities to address environmental concerns. The University of Florida and Seminole County have worked with BLPA on many projects and studies to maintain our watershed.

Water inflows to our lakes come from groundwater seepage, overland flow, runoff, and precipitation, with varying contributions across the lakes. For instance, Bear Lake receives about 26% of its annual water from groundwater seepage, 16% from stormwater runoff, and 52% from precipitation. The remaining 6% comes from surface water inflow from the connecting chain of Bear Lakes and small tributaries. Stormwater runoff can significantly affect the lakes, as it can lead to excessive pollution in the environment. The fast-moving storm water runoffs can erode the shoreline and banks of our ditches that flush excess nutrients from fertilizers, pet waste, and other sources into the lakes. This activity, if not monitored, can lead to the growth of algae blooms and the creation of low-oxygen dead zones that would suffocate aquatic life. For 34 years, BLPA has diligently monitored

and educated its lakefront property owners on ways to reduce stormwater runoff and other pollutants. This proactive approach has helped to maintain the cleanliness and health of our lakes and its property values.

The mission of the Bear Lake Preservation Association is to provide environmental stewardship for the Bear Lake Watershed. This is achieved through water quality monitoring, scientific understanding, public education, governmental intervention, and watershed improvements for the enhancement and preservation of the water quality and biological integrity of clean lakes.

BLPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All financial contributions to BLPA may be tax deductible. BLPA will provide a receipt upon request of any donation. See the registration form in this newsletter or go to: www.blpa.net for more information.

WHAT IS LAKEWATCH?

Florida LAKEWATCH is one of the Nation's largest and most successful citizen science programs, dedicated to water quality monitoring. Since 1986, it has empowered everyday Floridians to actively participate in monitoring and managing the state's precious water resources, including lakes, rivers, estuaries, springs, and coastal dune lakes. Coordinated through the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and the Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Program, LAKEWATCH trains volunteers to collect monthly water samples and data. These efforts provide crucial, long-term insights into the health of Florida's aquatic ecosystem.

The Florida LAKEWATCH Program, has achieved remarkable success and has been featured in the scientific journal Florida Scientist as a model for citizen science. The article derives into the program's journey, highlighting how it overcame significant challenges, such as establishing credibility of volunteer-collected data and securing long-term funding, to become a trusted source of water quality information used in lake management decisions across the state.

In 1991, the Florida Legislature formally recognized the program's value by establishing it in State Law (Florida Statue section 1004.49).

The Bear Lake Preservation Association is proud to have scientific volunteers in this program. Florida waterways volunteers on the lakes are Nancy Dunn, Bear Lake, Jan Brown, and Rosemary/Jeff George, Little Bear Lake (for over 34 years), Michael/Margaret Bundy, Cub Lake (for over 20 years). Each LAKEWATCH science volunteer collects monthly samples of our lakes for the University of Florida LAKEWATCH Program. The data collected for this program is used worldwide. Go to: fl-LAKEWATCH@ufl.edu for Newsletters and more information.

Happy Oropeza, REALTOR®



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**REAL ESTATE MARKET
 FOR BEAR LAKES
 ASHER, BEAR, LITTLE
 BEAR, AND CUB**

**PROVIDED BY:
 HAPPY OROPEZA**



2026-27 BLPA Board

OFFICERS

Rob Wolford, President 407-492-1788
 Tim Clifford, Treasurer 407-341-4222
 George Helm, Secretary 407-808-2089

DIRECTORS

John Brownlow 407-357-1915
 Margaret Bundy 407-497-0295
 Nancy Dunn 407-920-4975
 Meghan Enger 689-308-6426
 Bill Houston 407-721-0219
 Judy Ihrig 407-292-4632
 Valarie Kenski 407-869-5637
 Bob Shields 321-354-4449
 Ken West 407-782-0431

COMMITTEES

EMAIL/REAL ESTATE:
 Happy Oropeza 407-446-5859

ECOLOGY:
 Nancy Dunn 407-920-4975
 Dr. Jay Goebel 407-497-5282
 Bill Houston 407-721-0219
 Bob Shields 321-354-4449

LAKEWATCH:
 Nancy Dunn (Bear) 407-920-4975
 Jan Brown (Little Bear) 407-295-6739
 Rosemary/Jeff George 407-929-2499
 Margaret Bundy (Cub) 407-497-0295

MEMBERSHIP:
 All Board of Directors

NEWSLETTER:
 Margaret Bundy (Editor) 407-497-0295
 Judy Ihrig (Advertising) 407-292-4632

BOARD SUPPORTERS

Brian Allen 407-580-6979
 Jan Brown 407-295-6739
 Michael Bundy 407-399-5605
 Denise Fitzgerald 407-296-0079
 Buddy Hutson 407-298-3681
 Anne/Walt Juergensen 407-299-7147
 Mark Leavitt 407-578-9993
 Happy Oropeza 407-446-5859
 Susan Parker 407-294-6026
 Matt Rayl 765-437-5118
 Sherri Walls 407-928-8877

SOLD LAKEFRONT LISTINGS

BEAR LAKE:

3045 Ceceila Drive..... \$ 1,065,000
 6115 Linneal Beach Drive.....1,275,000
 1322 Palm Drive.....1,355,000
 6019 Linneal Beach Drive.....1,375,000

LITTLE BEAR:

9551 Bear Lake Circle.....699,900
 5608 Bear Lake Circle.....995,000

CUB LAKE:

5203 Pineview Way.....1,200,000
 5301 Pineview Way.....463,500
 9744 Cub Cove.....539,000

BERMS AND SWALES: Swales, or shallow dips in the yard, help manage stormwater by directing runoff away from the shoreline, reducing flooding and protecting water quality. Professional landscaping and swales improve aesthetics, environmental health, and shoreline stability.



407-718-6178

Ready to Buy or Sell a business?
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Paul N. Ihrig
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 VETERINARY
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 833 State Road 434 • Altamonte Springs, FL 32714



St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

9913 Bear Lake Road • Apopka, FL
 407-293-6802 • Worship: 9:30 am
 Sunday School: 10:30 am

**HELP SUPPORT BLPA ADVERTISE IN
 THE UPCOMING NEWSLETTER!**

Support the Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) by placing a full-page, half-page, or business card advertisement in the upcoming newsletter. The newsletter will be distributed to over 300 households within our community! Please contact Judy Ihrig, Advertising Manager, at 407-729-6955 for further details.

BE PRO-ACTIVE!

LAKEWATCH science volunteers carefully monitor lake elevation in collaboration with Seminole County during periods of heavy rainfall, tropical storms, and hurricanes. The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) ensures that drains are free from debris *before* expected storms. Kindly report any flow issues or excessive storm water runoff to Nancy Dunn 407-920-4975.



Janet Brown (L/ Little Bear) and Nancy Dunn (R/Bear Lake) are being honored for more than 30 years contribution to the LAKEWATCH program.

RAISE THE BLADE!

Allowing the grass to grow longer can improve clean water. By raising your lawnmower blade to 3 inches, you can help retain moisture in the soil, which promotes deeper root growth. This deeper root system aerates the soil and enhances its ability to retain rainwater. As a result, pollutants entering the Bear Lakes are slowed down and filtered more effectively.

Michael and Margaret Bundy have been collecting monthly LAKEWATCH data on Cub Lake for more than 20 years.



LAKEWATCH			
LAKE	AREA RAINFALL (Inches)	WATER LEVEL (Above Sea Level)	Lake's Visibility (Feet)
February 2026			
ASHER	1.6"	--	--
BEAR	1.6"	103.4	15'
LITTLE BEAR	1.6"	--	--
CUB	1.6"	100.3	12'
January 2026			
ASHER	1.5"	--	--
BEAR	1.5"	103.64	14.5'
LITTLE BEAR	1.5"	--	--
CUB	1.5"	100	12'
December 2025			
ASHER	2.4"	--	--
BEAR	2.4"	103.71	14'
LITTLE BEAR	2.4"	102.62	12'
CUB	2.4"	100.1	12'
November 2025			
ASHER	1.2"	--	--
BEAR	1.2"	103.72	13.5'
LITTLE BEAR	1.2"	--	--
CUB	1.2"	100.2	10'
October 2025			
ASHER	5.75"	--	--
BEAR	5.75"	103.64	13'
LITTLE BEAR	5.75"	102.71	9'
CUB	5.75"	100.7	10'
September 2025			
ASHER	9.3"	--	--
BEAR	9.3"	103.69	13'
LITTLE BEAR	9.3"	102.64	10'
CUB	9.3"	100.8	9'
August 2025			
ASHER	11.9"	--	--
BEAR	11.9"	103.92	13.5'
LITTLE BEAR	11.9"	102.73	12'
CUB	11.9"	101.8	9'
July 2025			
ASHER	11.44"	--	--
BEAR	11.44"	103.89	12.5'
LITTLE BEAR	11.44"	--	--
CUB	11.44"	100.1	10'
June 2025			
ASHER	3.73"	--	--
BEAR	3.73"	103.29	13.5'
LITTLE BEAR	3.73"	102.72	10'
CUB	3.73"	110.2	8'
May 2025			
ASHER	12.1"	--	--
BEAR	12.1"	103.35	14'
LITTLE BEAR	12.1"	102.7	12'
CUB	12.1"	100.1	8'
April 2025			
ASHER	1"	--	--
BEAR	1"	102.7	15'
LITTLE BEAR	1"	101.91	13'
CUB	1"	99.6	8'
March 2025			
ASHER	1.4"	--	--
BEAR	1.4"	103.14	15'
LITTLE BEAR	1.4"	102.4	14'
CUB	1.4"	99.9	8'



THE BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION'S COMMUNITY BBQ AND POT LUCK DINNER

You are cordially Invited to Join us
for the annual neighborhood
community BBQ Pot Luck Dinner

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026
5:30PM – 8:30PM
FLORIDA POWER CLUBHOUSE
3324 HOLLIDAY AVENUE

We encourage you to bring a side dish or dessert to share with the Bear Lake community. Don't forget those serving spoons with your dish! If you are a baker, we would love for you to share your family's favorite dessert, which will be entered in the "Best Dessert Contest" to be judged for a prize!

If you are new to the Bear Lakes, we welcome you to join us! Bring your entire family and enjoy a delicious meal together. We encourage you also to bring a neighbor and meet others in the Bear Lakes' Community.

The Bear Lake Preservation Association will provide all the BBQ chicken, pulled pork, and beverages for the event. While we appreciate the side dishes and desserts, please do not feel obligated to bring anything to attend. By RSVPing, you help us determine the amount of BBQ to order and make sure we have enough food for everyone.



PLEASE RSVP BY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22ND
TO JUDY IHRIG 407 729-6955.

PLEASE LET JUDY KNOW WHAT YOU ARE BRINGING
AND HOW MANY IN YOUR PARTY WILL BE ATTENDING.

We welcome you to meet your neighbors!
You do not need to be a member of BLPA to attend.

2026-2027 VOTING BALLOT

The general meeting for the Bear Lake Preservation Association will be held **Thursday, April 23, 2026 at 5:30 pm at the Florida Power Clubhouse, located 3324 Holliday Avenue.** During this meeting, an election of Board Representatives and Directors for the Bear Lake Preservation Association will be conducted. Only active members may vote and attendance is encouraged. Your continued support and interest in our lakes help to maintain the Bear Lake Preservation Association’s status as a strong and effective advocate for clean water and healthy lakes within our community.

The individuals listed below have volunteered to serve a two-year term as a Board Representative or Director for the Bear Lake Preservation Association. To cast your vote, please indicate your preference for one or all individuals by placing a mark on the line next to their name:

Board of Representatives:

- Rob Wolford, President
- Tim Clifford, Treasurer
- George Helm, Secretary

Board of Directors:

- Nancy Dunn
- Margaret Bundy
- Judy Ihrig
- Bill Houston
- Meghan Enger
- John Brownlow
- Ken West
- Bob Shields
- Valarie Kenski

You may also write in the name of one or more candidates, including yourself, on the blank line below. To add a write-in vote, please print the name(s) of any candidate(s):

One ballot per household (e.g., husband and wife will vote together as a current BLPA participant). Additionally, if a BLPA participant owns one or more homes, please vote only once). The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) seeks a maximum of 11 board representatives, with at least 7 active and interested individuals, to collectively uphold the association’s integrity. The board’s time commitment is not substantial when shared among a larger pool of volunteers. To be eligible to vote, individuals must be a current 2026 paid contributor to the Bear Lake Preservation Association. For those voting by mail, their absentee ballot must be postmarked by Thursday, April 30, 2026.



2026 BLPA MEMBERSHIP AND SPECIAL PROJECT CONTRIBUTION FORM ASHER, BEAR, LITTLE BEAR AND CUB LAKES



BLPA Membership for January 1, 2026 – December 30, 2027 Calendar Year:

\$85 or \$50 for Seniors-62+, please make checks payable to "BLPA"

Special Project Contributions are separate from annual membership and may include: Carp or Alum Fund. Special project donations are exclusively assigned to the designated projects for the Bear Lakes, unless otherwise specified by the donor to be used for alternative future projects.

Mail this form with your check to BLPA, 522 Hunt Club Boulevard, #561, Apopka, Florida 32703-4960. Contribute or make donations online using a credit card, your checking account, or pay pal. Go to: www.blpa.net Or, scan the QR Code above using your phone camera.

Please check one: _____ New Member/ _____ Current or Returning Member/ _____ Change of Information (specify change below)

Please complete one or more: Membership Amount \$_____/ Alum Donation Amount \$_____/ Carp Donation Amount \$_____/

Specific Request for Special Project Donation, if any: _____

Below Instructions: If New Member, please complete ALL of the following information. Current/Returning Member with changes to contact information, please include name and specific changes. For Current/Returning Members with no changes, please include full name:

Form with fields for Name 1, Name 2, Address 1, City, State/Zip, Address 2, Home Phone, Cell 1, Cell 2, Lake (specify), Email 1, Email 2.

Check option below for a board member to contact you about this organization or if you are interested in volunteering for BLPA.

Form with checkboxes for More information, Serve as Board Member, Serve as Board Supporter, Serve on Committee.

BLPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All financial contributions to BLPA may be tax deductible. BLPA will provide a receipt upon request of any donation. Under the Obama Administration Ruling for 501(c)(3), social security or personal information will not be given to the IRS for any past or future contributions made to this organization. Refer to: CH32281 - a copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free (800-435-7352) within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS!

JOIN THE BEAR LAKES ASHER, BEAR, LITTLE BEAR, CUB FOR A COMMUNITY EVENT!

THE BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION'S COMMUNITY BBQ AND POT LUCK DINNER

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026 5:30 - 8:30 PM

THE FLORIDA POWER CLUBHOUSE 3324 HOLLIDAY AVENUE

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A MEMBER OF BLPA TO ATTEND

REFER TO THE INSIDE OF THIS NEWSLETTER FOR RSVP AND MORE DETAILS!