

AWAKE UTAH LAKE

Name _____

Period _____

UTAH STUDIES WORKSHEET – AWAKE UTAH LAKE!

UTAH LAKE is unique! It is different from from other Utah lakes. It is Utah’s largest freshwater lake and west of the Mississippi, it is the third largest fresh water lake in the United States. Many people know little about Utah Lake or have misperceptions about it.

Attached are some short facts concerning the lake. Your job is to share this information with up to three other people (**not** current Utah Studies students) like your family (parents, siblings, etc.) and friends. Read or explained at least five of the facts to each of the three people with whom you choose to talk. Have the people you share the facts about the lake with sign their names on one of the following lines.

Name

Date

Name

Date

Name

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Vital Statistics Utah Lake covers an average surface area of 96,000 acres. The lake is generally 24 miles long and 12 miles wide. The average depth of the lake is 9 feet, the deepest 14. It is possible to walk across the lake in certain locations. The average temperature of the lake is 73 F, though has risen into the 1980s. The elevation of the lake is generally 4,489 feet. Forty-one percent of the lake's water is lost yearly to evaporation.

The **June Sucker** is a native fish of Utah Lake and in 1986 was placed on the endangered species list. Government funding has resulted in an increase of the June Sucker population from an estimated 300 in 1986 to about 10,000 in 2011. The fish have been raised in hatcheries and planted in the lake and natural spawning waters are being restored in Hobbie Creek and Provo River. The June Sucker lives an average of 40 years.

In and Out, Utah Lake receives the majority of its water from the Provo River, Spanish Fork River, American Fork River, and Hobbie Creek. Water also enters the lake from below surface natural springs, both hot and cold. The only river leading out of the lake is the Jordan River, on its North end. The lake's elevation is regulated by controlling the water flow of the Jordan River. In the past, Utah Lake has fluctuated widely, but has never completely dried-up.

You can't see your toes, when standing in the waters of Utah Lake because of the murky waters. The murk does not mean the waters are polluted, but simply contains lots of sediment. Sediment is mixture of organic (plant material) and inorganic (dust and dirt) which enter the lake from runoff and wind. Naturally, sediment settles to the bottom, but not in Utah Lake. Carp stir-up sediment while feeding. The wind, moving the water of the shallow lake stirs up sediment. The murky water is called turbid waters by the scientific community.

Carp were introduced into Utah Lake in the 1890s as a replacement for the depleted lake trout population. They have never become a meal favorite. Today, carp make up 75% of the lake's fish population and 90% of the lake's biomass. Carp have been blamed for making the waters of the lake murky by churning the bottom to feed. Carp are also blamed for eating aquatic vegetation, which provide protection to fries (small fish) from their natural predators. Efforts are underway to reduce the carp population to a healthy balance by 2017.

Thunderstorm Danger You could be hit by lightning while boating on Utah Lake, but real danger comes from the wind. Utah Lake, being shallow, rapidly generates large waves from thunderstorm winds. The waves commonly reach a height of three feet, but reduce near the shore. Waves, driven by strong thunderstorm winds can easily swamp or capsize a boat. If a thunderstorm approaches, get off the lake, If you get caught on the water, stay with your boat. Always wear a life jacket.