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Progress made in removal of carp from Utah Lake

PROVO — Fourth-generation fisherman Bill Loy Jr. and his crew have the daunting task of removing millions of unwanted carp from Utah Lake.

"I think we are starting to get a little bit of control," Loy said. "I mean, it's a long way from done, but people are noticing a difference in the lake and the quality of the water."

Every day, thousands of carp are removed from the lake in the effort to reduce the carp population as part of the June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program.

Over the past three years, 2.5 million carp have been removed from the lake, but another 3.5 million need to go before biologists believe the lake can return to its natural state, allowing native fish to thrive and aquatic plants to blossom.

"They have a major effect on everything in the lake, and they dominate the lake pretty much to the detriment of everything but carp," Chris Keleher, with the Utah Department of Natural Resources Recovery Program.

Carp was introduced in the lake in the late 1800s and is being blamed for destroying the habitat of the June sucker, which is only found in Utah Lake.

A state report in 1979 showed June sucker numbers were seriously in decline, and by 1986 the June sucker made the endangered species list.

Federal and state dollars are paying for initiatives to increase the numbers of June sucker and get it off the endangered list. Ridding

Not everyone believes in the carp control, however. "I have long expressed my personal opinion that carp removal will likely hurt future fishing and endangered species efforts," says local fisherman Dan Potts. "It's a complete waste of millions of taxpayer dollars."

Potts' thinking is partly why funding has not been approved for the entire removal period. In light of this, even Keleher admits it's not an exact science. "One cannot be certain how an ecosystem will respond to managed activities."

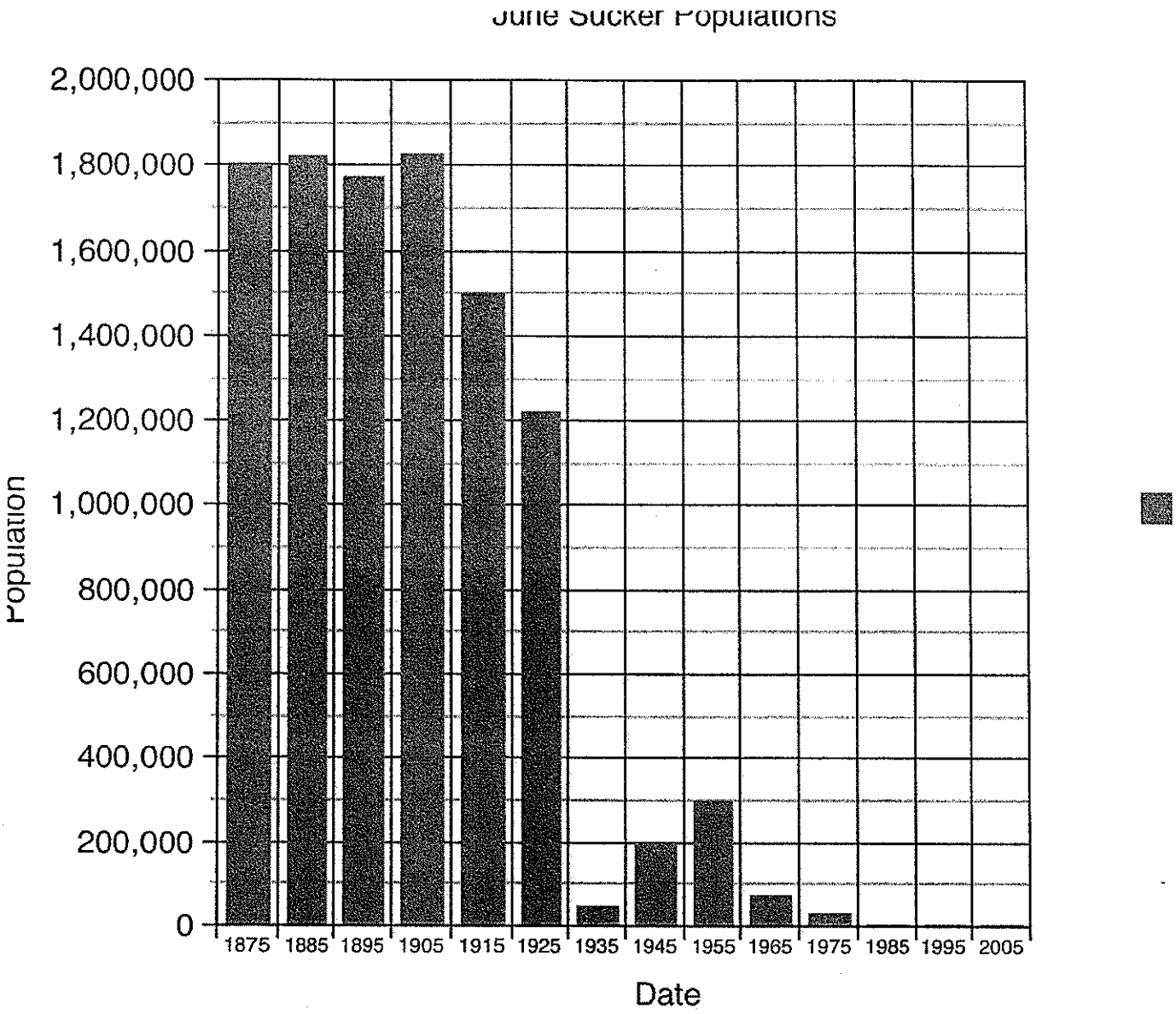
http://utahlake.gov/so-long-carp-here%e2%80%99s-how-utah-lake-could-have-clear-water-by-2017/

Rich LaRocco says:

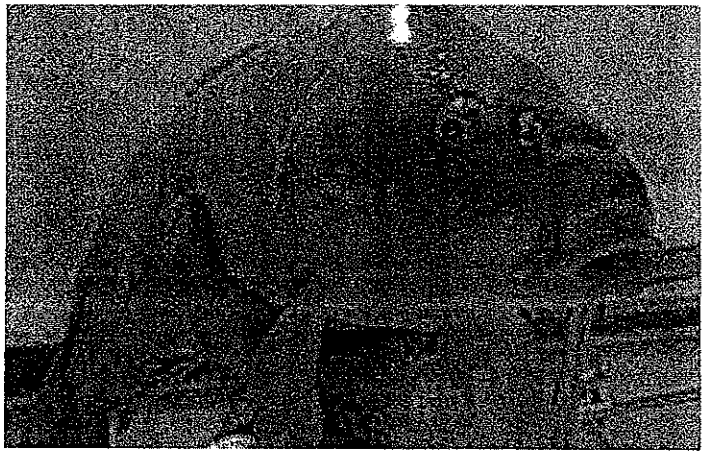
July 9, 2012 at 9:56 pm

In college I did a paper on Utah Lake while working on my environmental science degree. The lake has an average of 13 feet of silt on the bottom, which was deposited there when overlogging and overgrazing on the land around the lake led to erosion. If I recall, the drainages into Utah Lake lost an average of four inches of topsoil, which ended up in the lake. When the pioneers arrived, Utah Lake used to be deep, probably about 25 feet deep or so, which was one reason it contained 20 to even 40-pound cutthroat trout, and now it's full of mud. Storms in shallow lakes constantly move the silt and make the water turgid. Even without carp, Utah Lake will never be clear again unless we get rid of the silt, and that probably won't happen unless someone finds a market for the silt and dredges the lake. The Spanish Fork River still deposits tons and tons of silt in the lake every year. I

view the efforts to bring back June suckers about as pointless and fruitless as getting the silt out of the lake. As for carp, they reproduce so quickly that we will never rid the lake of them though it certainly could be possible to reduce their numbers if a massive netting operation were to take place every single year. I would like to see predators big enough to eat young carp introduced to the lake. Because of the June suckers, I doubt the state will ever stock tiger muskies, but they could do a number on those small carp. I certainly don't see as many carp in Newton or Pineview reservoirs as I used to see, and I suspect the tiger muskies have something to do with that.


June Sucker Populations
2,000,000
1,800,000
1,600,000
1,400,000
1,200,000
1,000,000
800,000
600,000
400,000
200,000
0
Population
1875
1885
1895
1905
1915
1925
1935
1945
1955
1965
1975
1985
1995
2005
Date

4th Grade
Science Core/Standard V
Objective 2: Describe the common plants and animals found in Utah environments and how these organisms have adapted to the environment in which they live. •
Objective 4: Observe and record the behavior of Utah animals.



Where Have the June Suckers Gone?

Step 1: The Problem

Fish populations have changed over time in Utah Lake. Native fish have become extinct or reduced in number and non-native fish populations have grown. Why have fish populations changed?

Estimates of Fish Counts (based on samples)

Year	June Sucker	Utah sucker	Utah chub	Bonneville cutthroat trout	White bass	Walleye	Common Carp
1875	1,800,000	775,000	450,000	580,000	0	0	0
1885	1,825,000	815,000	425,000	525,000	0	0	2,000
1895	1,775,000	760,000	350,000	400,000	0	0	21,000
1905	1,830,000	780,000	380,000	390,000	0	0	435,000
1915	1,500,000	600,00	410,000	210,00	0	0	810,000
1925	1,220,000	500,000	390,000	0	0	0	720,000
1935	50,000	60,000	300,00	0	0	0	700,000
1945	200,000	300,000	275,000	0	0	0	2,400,000
1955	300,000	475,000	250,000	0	425	200	7,200,00
1965	73,200	86,000	10,000	0	138,000	12,000	7,900,000
1975	32,000	42,000	1,000	0	228,000	48,000	7,500,000
1985	1,000	5,238	0	0	123,000	115,000	8,100,00
1995	535	638	0	0	278,000	225,000	8,000,000
2005	3,000	1,000	0	0	350,000	300,00	7,500,00

Write down your thinking:

Discuss your thinking with another student.