

# Coeur d'Alene Parkway State Park

**Introduction:** The scenic Coeur d'Alene Lake Parkway State Park is a five mile long linear park extending east from the City of Coeur d'Alene to Higgins Point along the north shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene. The parkway includes about 1,000 feet of public shoreline. That doesn't sound like much, but Lake Coeur d'Alene is second largest and certainly most popular lake in Idaho. Yet, only a small fraction of the lake's shoreline is in public ownership. Other than this parkway, public ownership of the shoreline is only at the southern end at Heyburn State Park or in just a handful of small Bureau of Land Management properties. So this 1,000 feet of shoreline at the Coeur d'Alene Parkway is a very significant recreational resource.

Located along the Parkway are four roadside picnic areas, numerous scenic viewpoints and over a mile long exercise course. Then at the east end of the Parkway is Higgins Point. This area has one of the most active boat launches in Idaho, overnight moorage docks and group day use area. In the winter, during the months of November to January, migrating bald eagles stop in this area on their flight south. During the summer, beaver, osprey, great blue herons and mergansers are commonly seen. There are significant views to take in such as viewing Lake Coeur d'Alene and the spectacular Veterans Memorial Bridge on Interstate 90. The Parkway also commemorates the history of steamboats that once plied the lake at the Steamboat Trailhead.

Running the length of the parkway is the North Idaho Centennial Trail, a non-motorized multi-use trail. This trail was chosen as Idaho's Millennium Legacy Trail, representing the heritage of the State of Idaho and reflecting on its bright future. The North Idaho Centennial Trail continues west through the cities of Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls to the Washington State Line. Here it joins the Washington Centennial Trail ending in Spokane, WA.

**Getting There:** The primary entrance to the parkway is via the Sherman Avenue off-ramp on Interstate 90 on the east side of Coeur d'Alene. Take Sherman Avenue west for about 500 feet and turn right onto East Coeur d'Alene Lake Drive. Follow East Coeur d'Alene Lake Drive for about 3/4 of a mile and you will have arrived at the entrance to the parkway at the Rutledge day use area. East Coeur d'Alene Lake Drive functions as the park access road. Follow it for another 5 miles to access the other day use areas and it will end at the Higgins Point boat launch.

## Major Features:

The Landscape: The the Coeur d'Alene Parkway State Park owns just a narrow strip of land that includes the access road and the land between the access road and the shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene. The parkway ends with a piece of land that juts out into the lake called Higgins Point. The surrounding lands are well forested with views of the lake and surrounding mountains. The park is somewhat of an "urban park" as there are numerous private developments adjacent and along the access road.

### **Nearby Public Land Recreation Sites**

The following recreation sites located near Lake Coeur d'Alene are operated by the Bureau of Land Management.

**Blue Creek Bay:** This is in the 736 acre Wallace Forest Conservation Area. There are 3 picnic sites, a small boat launch ramp, a vault toilet, and 5 miles of hiking trails. This site is just east of the Coeur d'Alene Parkway State Park

**Blackwell Island:** This site has a 4 lane boat launch ramp, extensive mooring docks, large paved parking lots, improved walking trails and a restroom.

**Mineral Ridge:** This site has a boat launch ramp, paved parking lot, a vault toilet, and a National Recreation Trail.

**Beauty Bay:** This site has a 7 unit picnic area, a view deck, and short trails.

The Lake: Lake Coeur d'Alene is the second largest lake in the state with a surface area of 31,475 acres or about 50 sq. miles. It is 24 miles long and has a shoreline length (at normal pool elevation) of 109 miles. The mean depth is 79 feet and maximum recorded depth is 200 feet. The major tributaries, the St. Joe and Coeur d'Alene Rivers, enter in the southern portion of the lake. The Spokane River on the north is the only outlet. Development in the drainage basin and along the lakeshore has been extensive and cultural eutrophication of the lake has been obvious. Phosphorous loadings are high and the lake has generally been considered mesotrophic. This means the lake has commonly clear water with beds of submerged aquatic plants and medium levels of nutrients. But, heavy metal pollution from the Coeur d'Alene mining district on the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River has been present since the late 1800's. High zinc concentrations have been found in the water, but much of the metal pollution is believed to be absorbed by suspended inorganic material and transported to the lake sediments.

The Park: The park elevation is about 2,128 feet at the Lake Coeur d'Alene high water mark. It receives about 455,377 visitors per year, making it the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular Idaho state park despite that it is only 42 acres in size. An Economic Impact Study done by Boise State University estimates that the park has an economic impact of about \$2,709,000 . The parkway access road is about 5.7 miles long as is the paved trail that runs parallel to it. There are 8 day use areas along the parkway and are described below from west to east.

**Rutledge:** This area could be considered the entrance to the parkway. There is a paved parking lot here with a vault toilet. There are 8 picnic tables and 9 benches available for use. This is also the location of the exercise course.

**Silver Beach:** The Silver Beach marina is along the parkway, but it is privately owned and operated by the Hagadone Marine Group. It is a big facility with a very large parking lot. The marina offers gas dock and potable water, as well as restroom and shower facilities. The marina store has provisions, cold drinks and marine supplies. There is a small beach on the lake just east of the marina.

**Steamboat:** This area has a paved parking lot and a vault toilet. There are 3 picnic tables and 8 benches available for use. A sign has been placed here by the Idaho State Historical Society commemorating the history of the steamboats that once plied the lake.

**Veterans Memorial Bridge pullout:** This is a paved pullout along the parkway access road that enables visitors to park and view or take pictures of the spectacular Veterans Memorial Bridge on Interstate 90 that rises above the site. There is one bench here.

**Wayside:** This is a small site surrounded by some residential developments along the paved trail that has a vault toilet, one picnic table and 3 benches. It is not located on the shoreline.

**Beacon Point:** This area has a small parking lot with a vault toilet and 3 benches.

**Osprey Point:** This area has a paved parking lot with a vault toilet. There are 4 picnic tables and 3 benches available.

**Boat Launch:** The three large paved parking lots here can accommodate several vehicles with boat trailers attached. The boat launch ramp has 2 lanes and 2 courtesy docks. There is also a vault toilet here. As this area is meant primarily to be a boat launch facility, there are no picnic tables here.

**Higgins Point:** This is the most spacious and perhaps the most scenic portion of the park. As its name implies it is a forested point of land that sticks out into Lake Coeur d'Alene. Accessing the place requires walking or cycling from the boat launch area. There is a vault toilet here and a group picnic shelter with 6 tables and grills. There are 9 picnic tables and 2 benches available. There are also 2 mooring docks here for boat camping.

**Geology:** Much of Kootenai County is mountainous and is contained in the Northern Rocky Mountain physiographic province. The mountains are the kind commonly characterized as dissected uplands and composed of two well defined groups, the Selkirks and the Coeur d'Alene, which are separated by a broad, intermountain depression, the Purcell Trench, which extends southward from Canada.

The Selkirks are the more imposing of the two mountain groups and lie along the middle western and northwestern border of the county and spread over a much larger area in Washington. Near the mid-point of the county, the group is crossed by the Purcell Trench. The south end of the range (which extends to within a few miles of the south border of the county) is separated and, therefore, more or less isolated from the main mass. The detached group is not as high as the remainder and its culminating point, Mica Peak, only rises to 5,250 feet, or about 2,600 feet above the plateau surface. The south end of this detached group is partly encircled by the Columbia Plateau and its border is determined by irregularities of the plateau margin versus borders that are steeper and more regular in which the lower slopes show the effect of glacial scour (this occurs where the mountains lie along the Purcell Trench).

The Coeur d'Alene Mountains form an intricately dissected mass east of the Purcell Trench and Coeur d'Alene Lake. These mountains cover more than half the county, and spread eastward and southward into and across Shoshone County. They appear as a submaturely

dissected upland with ridges rising to different levels. These ridge levels indicate several epochs of accelerated erosion corresponding with as many uplifts. The lowest level outlines a broad, old valley surface, in part gravel-capped. The ridge slopes are generally steep, and the crests are sharp without remnant flats. Only where the mountains border the Purcell Trench do they show evidence of glacial erosion.

As noted above, the Columbia Plateau forms a deep embayment in the southwestern part of the county. It extends around the south end of the Selkirk Mountains and spreads eastward and southward against the Coeur d'Alene Mountains and its outlines. Its surface is coextensive with the flows of Columbia River Basalt. East of Coeur d'Alene Lake and along the Coeur d'Alene River, the surface of the plateau had been largely destroyed by erosion, or is retained as broad, basaltic terraces on the lower flank of the mountains. West of the lake to the state line, the surface has been dissected little so that it preserves the plateau character. Most of the plateau surface has an altitude of about 2,500 feet, but in places it appears to be carried to some levels of 2,700 feet.

Coeur d'Alene Lake extends southward between the two mountain groups and along the edge of the Coeur d'Alene Mountains and the Columbia Plateau. It is dammed by the glacial outwash which has built up the floor of the Purcell Trench to its present level. Only Coeur d'Alene and Fernan Lakes in Kootenai County have surface outlets, the others drain through the gravels of the trench.

The Columbia Plateau is underlain by Columbia River basalt. This is the only extrusive rock in Kootenai County and also forms the terraces on both sides of Coeur d'Alene Lake and the Coeur d'Alene River. These flows formerly extended far up the Coeur d'Alene River and the Purcell Trench, but erosion has removed them. The number of flows is not known, but flow followed flow until the lower foothills were covered and the lava had flooded far back into the mountains to the present 2,500 - 2,700 ft. contour.

The basalt has a very uniform composition and differences between flows are no more than differences within individual flows. The tops and bottoms of the flows are generally more vesicular than the middles, and the vesicles are usually larger. About the only difference is that the rock near the top and bottom generally has more glass than the rock farther within. The glass apparently consists of uncrystallized Augite, Magnetite, and Limonite. The augite has the brownish color generally accorded to the presence of titanium. Glass occurs through the rock of each of the flows, but is most abundant near the top where it may form from 25 to 50 percent of the rock. The topography of Mowry State Park is a result of sequential lava flows of the Columbia Plateau and the erosion process which follows. The terrain rises abruptly on most of the shoreline with benches of various elevations and sizes.

**Ecosystems and Plant Communities:** The small 42 acre parkway actually encompasses three habitats: Douglas fir forest, lake, and riparian.

Ponderosa Pine Forest: Upland areas are covered primarily by conifers such as ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, grand fir, western larch, western white pine, western red cedar, and western hemlock. The understory also includes common snowberry, Idaho fescue, kinnikinnick, mallow leaf ninebark, huckleberry, and western trumpet honeysuckle.

The western trumpet honeysuckle is the keynote species. Its bright orange trumpet shaped flowers are very showy around the end of May and early June at the parkway. The western trumpet honeysuckle or orange honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*), is a honeysuckle native to forests

of western North America. It is a deciduous shrub growing to 20 feet tall with hollow twigs. The leaves are opposite and oval, up to 3 inches long with the last pair on each twig merged to form a disk. The flowers are orange-yellow, about 1 ½ inches long, with five lobes and trumpet shaped. They are arranged in whorls above the disk-leaf on the ends of shoots. This attractive plant is often seen growing along roadsides and trails to montane elevations. The plant was unknown to science until Lewis and Clark returned from their journey with a dried specimen they had collected on June 5, 1806. The plant is quite prolific in the panhandle area of Idaho.

The Lake: Lake Coeur d'Alene is the headwaters of the Spokane River. While it has all the appearances of a pristine lake, unfortunately, it is anything but. The biggest problem of all is invisible. The lake is a repository for 75 million tons of sediment polluted with lead, cadmium, arsenic and zinc. In the early days of mining, tailings were deposited directly into the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. These metals have washed downstream after more than a century of mining in Idaho's Silver Valley. Due to the Clean Water Act and because mining operations have become more efficient, much less pollution is being deposited than in the past. But because of the huge amount of mine tailings in the Silver Valley, the toxic legacy will be with us for many years to come, likely forever. The toxic metals are sequestered at or near the bottom of the lake. If oxygen levels are high enough, metals remain trapped in this area, because the sediments act as a sink for metals. This is where the decrease in oxygen is concerning: as oxygen levels near the bottom of the lake decrease, the solubility of metals in the lake's sediment are affected, releasing metals into the water column. For this reason, the overall goal is to try to maintain the lake in a low-nutrient status, with high levels of oxygen in the lake's bottom waters.

Another concern is the problem of private developments along the lake shore. The problems caused by these developments are many, but disruption of the phosphorus cycle is most concerning. Phosphorus pollution flowing into Lake Coeur d'Alene has greatly increased since the 1990s. Phosphorus is a naturally-occurring mineral, found in soil and rocks. In a forested ecosystem, it is absorbed and constantly recycled by plants and soil microorganisms. Once vegetation and topsoil are removed, phosphorus reaches the lake water by erosion and runoff. In the water, it acts as a nutrient, increasing growth of aquatic plants. Interestingly, plants and plant parts can also be a source of phosphorus. Phosphorus is readily taken up by aquatic invasive weedy species. When the plants die off in the fall, oxygen is removed from the water during the decomposition process. When this happens, oxygen is no longer available for fish and other aquatic life that depend on it. Excess growth of these plants also blocks available sunlight to bottom-dwelling species, and this combination of processes speeds the problem of lake eutrophication. Eutrophication, or hypertrophication, is when a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients that induce excessive growth of plants and algae. This process may result in oxygen depletion of the water body.

Riparian: The riparian ecosystem is along the edges of the lakeshore. Typical tree and shrub species include black cottonwood, aspen, alders, birch, pink spirea, willows, red-osier dogwood, and red alder. Common grasses include reed canary grass and red top.

### **Wildlife:**

Mammals: The mammals present in the park include: moose, bobcat, mink, otter, beaver, muskrat, raccoon, weasel, striped skunk, black bear, mule deer, mountain lion, snowshoe hare,

whitetail deer, elk, coyote, western red squirrel, chipmunk, and Columbian ground squirrel

Birds: The birds present in the park include: ruffed grouse, osprey, turkey, American coot, Canada geese, mallard, great blue heron, merganser, bald eagle, American kestrel, red-tailed hawk, belted kingfisher, pied-billed grebe, wood duck, American wigeon, ruddy duck, tundra swan, Canada goose, pintail, common snipe, mourning dove, northern harrier, common raven, northern flicker, song sparrow, broad tailed hummingbird, purple finch, junco, chickadee, nuthatch, and hairy woodpecker.

The keynote species is the bald eagle. The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is a bird of prey found in North America. Bald eagles are not actually bald; the name derives from an older meaning of the word, "white headed". The adult is mainly brown with a white head and tail. The sexes are identical in plumage, but females are about 25 percent larger than males. The beak is large and hooked. The plumage of the immature eagle is brown. They are very large birds. Bald eagles often have a body length of 28 to 40 inches and weigh up to 12 pounds. Typical wingspan is between 5 and 7 feet. Flocks of bald eagles make their appearance at the parkway during the kokanee salmon spawning season (November to January).

Adult females lay one to three eggs in the spring. Both adults incubate the eggs for 35 days. Once eaglets hatch, they are cared for by the female. The male is only allowed at the nest to bring food. Eaglets weigh four ounces at birth. After two months they take practice flights across the width of the nest. Eagles reach adult size and are ready to leave the nest three months after they hatch. Young eagles become independent in time to join other eagles migrating to winter feeding grounds.

Female and male juvenile eagles are mottled brown in color. By their fifth year, they assume the distinctive adult plumage characterized by a dark body with white head and tail.

Mature eagles form long-term relationships that often last until one of the birds dies. Sometimes these relationships are abandoned after a non-productive nesting season, and new mates are found the following year. Eagles are able to live 40 years in the wild.

Eagles build nests in tall trees near water sources where food is plentiful. This conspicuous location serves to warn other birds of the nesting site and allows eagles to overlook their territory.

Late autumn makes the annual spawning run of kokanee salmon in Idaho lakes. Migrating eagles stop at the lakes as the salmon are spawning and dying. Eagles perch in trees around the shoreline to search for easy pickings in the waters. Eagles may eat the entire fish or just part of it, dropping the rest to the ground. An eagle's leftovers may feed a raven, fox, coyote, or any other animal that finds them. After the spawning run ends in mid-January, the eagles have eaten their fill. Although most of the eagles will fly south to other open waters to find meals of fish or waterfowl, a few eagles will remain in the area until spring weather beckons them northward to nesting areas.

While raising their young, eagle pairs set and defend a territory for hunting and nesting, otherwise eagles are social in behavior, often congregating in large groups where there are good food sources, perch trees and sheltered roosting areas. On Lake Coeur d'Alene look for these various behaviors:

- Mock battles occur when two eagles lock talons and tumble toward the ground or lake surface.
- Piracy is when one or more eagles will fly in below a bird who has caught a fish, then

- comes up sharply from below in an attempt to steal it.
- Eagles practice hunting techniques even after they have caught their fill for the day.
  - “Mobbing” of eagles occurs when other smaller birds attempt to chase them from an area.
  - Soaring is most often seen during windy conditions. Using their broad wings, gliding on thermals or strong winds allow eagles almost effortless flight.

Reptiles and Amphibians: The reptiles and amphibians in the park include: painted turtle, western garter snake, and spotted frog.

Fish: The fish present in the park include: brook trout, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, west slope cutthroat trout, chinook salmon, kokanee salmon, bull trout, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, black crappie, yellow perch, pumpkinseed sunfish, northern pike, and bullhead.

**Cultural History:** Before the arrival of the Euro-Americans in the area, the Schitsu’umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Tribe traditionally inhabited a landscape comprising about 5 million acres of land centered around Lake Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, including much of the Panhandle and stretching into parts of Montana and Washington. The tribe had many permanent settlements around the lake and also in the surrounding areas. They hunted in the mountains filled with elk, deer, black bear, and fished in the lakes and streams which were filled with various species of fish. Before the arrival of Europeans, it is estimated that there were about 2,500 to 4,000 people in the tribe.

Through the millennia, mother Earth was the employer. Coeur d’Alene Indians earned their livelihood through what was provided in nature: lakes and streams churning with trout and salmon; forests complete with elk, moose and deer; mountains and meadows with huckleberries and camas roots; wetlands and waterfowl and water potatoes. These and many more natural resources remained at close reach and all, along with human beings, part of one life on earth.

One of their best food sources were water potatoes. Water potatoes, *sqigwts*, grow in the marshy edges of the lakes. They were regularly harvested by women in the late fall using digging sticks, or, when the water levels rose, by loosening the tubers and letting their single leaves and long stalks float the potatoes to the surface. Prepared, stored, or cooked in the manner of other such tubers and root crops, they provided a staple food for the winter. It was only in desperate times, when hunger demanded it, that winter campers might raid the water potatoes stored by other lake inhabitants, the muskrats, or *chch’likhw*. The availability of this food source influenced their choice of the area around the Lake Coeur d’Alene as their homeland.

Modern Coeur d’Alenes still refer to the those places as their homelands. Large tribal families near here until the 1900s, hunted, fished, and gathered food in the nearby mountains and on the western plains. Their lives were centered on the lake and its tributaries. They practiced gardening skills on the grounds above the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes. Those large gardens and hay fields were the beginning of the tribal farms later established on the Palouse.

In the early 1800s. The Schitsu’umsh came into contact with French-Canadian trappers and traders. It has been said that these traders were very skillful in manipulating the Indians. But it seems that the Schitsu’umsh were not that easy to warm up to and hence the traders never dared to settle among them. This lead to the traders giving them the nickname Coeur d’Alene (heart of awl) meaning they were hard or small or sharp hearted.

The natural wealth of the forests, rivers, and lakes sustained their existence for countless generations on five million acres of ancestral land. The Coeur d’Alene had abundant living. Their lifestyle was forever altered with the discovery of gold in the Idaho panhandle in 1860.

The Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation was created in 1873 and today spans 345,000 acres, which is a small portion of the Coeur d'Alene Tribes original homeland that was about five million acres. Tribal families moved within their reservation boundaries before large-scale farming, mining, and timber development of their homelands. T'nt'nmi, was one of the last Coeur d'Alenes to leave permanently residence along the lake, after tribal members were assigned farm homes under the Allotment Act. At Hnpetptqwe'n, he hosted regular gatherings and celebrations, where guests participated in races toward the lake, on foot or on horseback.

With the establishment of the Union Pacific Railroad from Plummer to Mullan in 1888, tribal members would take advantage of this new form of transportation. Coeur d'Alene women, would ride the trains after the turn of the century, conversing in their native language, impressing their non-Indian neighbors. These women often traveled to the lakes to fish year around. In the winter they carried gunnysacks, or canvas bags. The caught fish would be placed in the bags, dipped in the water, then hung in the cold air; frozen for the trip home, and storage. At the "stopping place," Hntsaqan, riders from the south and west could transfer to the steamboat landing, where Coeur d'Alene men worked skidding logs for the boats and trains.

After 1909 the reservation was opened to homesteading. Nevertheless, the Coeur d'Alene people continued to sustain themselves spiritually by visiting and staying in the distant mountains and along the near lake shores. "We are here because this is where the Creator put us," said the late Henry SiJohn, Tribal elder. "We will always have a responsibility to take care of our homeland, not just for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, but for everyone."

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is a sovereign government. Tribal sovereignty is inherent in the Constitution of the United States. As of 2004, Tribal enrollment stands at 1,922 and growing. Coeur d'Alene Indians are, in their language, The Schitsu'umsh, "The Discovered People."

**History:** In 1878, General William T. Sherman established a military fort on the northern shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene, which he named Fort Coeur d'Alene. While the fort was under construction, a small village began to develop along its eastern edge. That was the beginning of Coeur d'Alene, the city by the lake. The name of the fort was later changed to Fort Sherman in 1891. Soon, the soldiers' families started arriving in the area. People were coming by train to the nearest train station up in Rathdrum. Then they would catch a horse-and-carriage down to Coeur d'Alene for some lake time fun. Before long, people got tired of the long horse and carriage rides and in 1886, train tracks were built that led directly to Coeur d'Alene Lake from Rathdrum near what is now Independence Point.

The city of Coeur d'Alene was incorporated in 1887 and only around 40 people took residence within city limits. This same year Coeur d'Alene constructed some important new buildings. Coeur d'Alene's first church was the Fort Sherman Chapel. In the back of the first chapel was Coeur d'Alene's first school.

The cities first sawmill was also constructed in 1887 called Saginaw Mill, where the Coeur d'Alene Resort is located today. The Saginaw Mill burned down after just two years and was soon replaced by the Coeur d'Alene Mill, which also burned down after two years, and was replaced by another mill which also went up in flames.

In 1880 the Fort Coeur d'Alene's commander hired Norwegian, Peter Sorensen, to build an 85-foot steamboat, the *Amelia Wheaton*, to haul supplies. The *Amelia Wheaton* was a stern-wheel driven steamboat that operated on Lake Coeur d'Alene and the St. Joe River from 1880 to 1892. It also served the place known as Farmington Landing which is now located in Mowry State Park. As the first steam-powered vessel to operate on the lake, it proved the



viability of steamboat transportation. Other steamboats were quickly built for commercial and pleasure purposes. By 1910, there were more steamboats on Lake Coeur d'Alene than any other body of water west of the Mississippi River. A few of these steamships are described as follows.

The *Georgie Oaks* was a large covered sternwheeler and was the longest boat on the lake. In 1890 the old steamer *Coeur d'Alene*, which could haul about fifty tons of ore, was abandoned and part of her cabins and superstructure were placed on a new hull with a carrying capacity of one hundred tons. This newly reconstructed boat would be called the *Georgie Oaks*. It was built by Sorensen and Johnson on Sanders Beach. It was named after a daughter of the president of the Northern Pacific Railroad. It was put on the *Coeur d'Alene's* old run to the Old Mission, and for a short time hauled out prodigious quantities of ore from the Coeur d'Alene mining region. The *Georgie Oaks* was the "First Lady" of the lake for thirty years. The *Georgie Oaks* made daily runs until 1917 when the *Miss Spokane* was built. Then until 1920 she was used only intermittently. As part of the Fourth-of-July celebration in 1927 she was burned on the Coeur d'Alene water front.

The *General Sherman* would be stripped of its machinery to build the *Schely* in 1899. The *Sherman* was then towed out into the lake and sunk. The *Schley* was named for a Spanish-American war hero.

The *Idaho* was a side-wheeler capable of carrying one thousand passengers. Her two wheels were each twenty-one feet in diameter and she had an eight-hundred horsepower dynamo which gave power for one hundred and twenty-five lights. On the first deck was a buffet; on the middle deck were the restrooms, purser's office, two cabins; on the upper deck were two cabins and a wheelhouse. The *Idaho* was now the most palatial steamboat on the lake and had the greatest carrying capacity. She made her first run to St. Maries with two hundred and fifty passengers, and immediately became the most popular boat on the lake. Later, it was retired from active use and taken to Blackrock, a bay on the lake where a big apple orchard was located. The hull was used as a sorting and storage shed during apple harvest. In 1915, with a cargo of apples aboard, it burned to the water line and sank in the bay.

The 600-passenger stern wheeler, *Harrison*, was built at Lacon by the Oregon Washington Railway & Navigation Company in 1912. The *Harrison*, named for the City of Harrison. It met the trains from the mines at Harrison, made a picturesque trip down the lake to Amwaco, and there connected with special trains taking passengers directly to Spokane. It was soon the most popular route in and out of the mining country. The big *Harrison* ran until the early twenties, then burned at Brautigam's dock in Coeur d'Alene.

In 1906 the White Star Navigation Company added the one-hundred-and-thirty-foot *Flyer*. The *Flyer* continued to run to St. Maries until 1935. For some years she made two trips weekly and a Sunday excursion trip. Finally she made Sunday trips only. In 1938, Potlatch forests, owners of both the *Flyer* and the *Clipper*, decided they had no further use for the two boats and deliberately burned them on the lake

There were many other steamboat not mentioned here. Lake Coeur d'Alene would be the graveyard for many of the old steamboats when they outlived their usefulness. In the "steamboat graveyard" at Three-Mile Point are the hulls of the *Colfax*, *Harrison*, and the guts of the *Samson*, *St. Maries*, and *Bonanza*. Three mile point is directly across the lake from the Lake Steamers Marker in the Coeur d'Alene Parkway State Park.

The first parcels of public domain land in the area of the Coeur d'Alene Parkway would be patented into private hands starting in 1896. Parcels in sections 28, 29, and 33 of Township 50 North, Range 3 West (the western end of the parkway) would be granted to the Northern Pacific

Railroad on September 30, 1896. Then section 19 of the same Township would be granted to Northern Pacific on November 3, 1897. These parcels would be further subdivided and result in such real estate projects as the Silver Beach development. Public domain land on the eastern end of the parkway in Section 2 of Township 49 North, Range 3 West and Section 34 of Township 50 North, Range 3 West would primarily be granted to Norman A. Pearson as a homestead entry on November 14, 1907.

Based in Coeur d'Alene, the Rutledge Timber Company, was organized in 1902 with Edward Rutledge as president. In 1917 Huntington Taylor became general manager. The company owned shares in both the St. Joe Boom Company and Red Collar lines. Never very profitable, the company paid no dividends from its founding until its merger with the Clearwater and Potlatch Companies in 1931. The Rutledge Mill closed in 1986 and the Rutledge day use area is named for this site.

A rudimentary road along the shoreline from Coeur d'Alene to Silver Beach was in existence as early as 1910.

In 1912 the idea for the Yellowstone Trail Road was inspired by J.W. Parmley of Ipswich South Dakota. Soon the road would extend to the next town, then to North Dakota, then on to Yellowstone National Park. Eventually, Parmley envisioned "a good road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound." This was the first highway through North Idaho and was built between 1914 and 1916. It followed much of the same route as the Mullan Road. In 1926 the Yellowstone Trail was renamed U.S. Highway 10. The parkway access road today follows the route of the Yellowstone Trail. The Yellowstone Trail (park access road - East Coeur d'Alene Lake Drive) became U.S. Highway 10 by 1945.

By 1959, the shoreline lands in the west end of the parkway were under the ownership of perhaps hundreds of individuals. A 1959 plat map showed the existence of a Silver Beach Park. That plat map showed the owners of the eastern end of the parkway as Agnes Barclay, B. Davey, E.V. Miller and Dr. M. Higgins.

Milton Higgins was born on May 6, 1904 in St. Hilaire, Minnesota. In 1924, he was living in Coeur d'Alene in the household of his parents, A.J. Higgins and Amelia Wistie. He went to Great Falls, Montana in October of that year where he married Maybelle Bailor. He and his wife were living in the household of his mother in Coeur d'Alene in the 1930 census where he reported not having an occupation at the time. Higgins bought 47.85 acres that included a point of land that juts out into Lake Coeur d'Alene (formerly McGowan Point) on April 28, 1939. In the 1940 census, Milton Higgins and his wife Maybelle were living in Coeur d'Alene. In that census, his occupation was shown as a chiropractor. In 1942, his address was shown as 1107 4<sup>th</sup> St. in Coeur d'Alene.

Dr. Milton Higgins was identified as the owner of the 47.85 acres at the point in a 1959 plat map. He and his wife Maybelle had a gorgeous home on the point with several cottages. Higgins would later sell the point to a group of 10 Coeur d'Alene investors. The Higgins Point Investors then sold 31 acres and 2,600 feet of Lake Coeur d'Alene shoreline to the Idaho Department of Highways for \$275,000. The Department of Highways planned to use Higgins Point for building a bridge and a full interchange with rest stop for Interstate 90, which once ran along the lake. They never did build the bridge and interchange there.

By the 1960s and 1970s old Highway 10 had been redesignated in various sections as I-90. In those days it was a two-lane road past Silver Beach. Restaurants and motels dotted the lakeside landscape on that scenic and winding highway. Sometime in that era "Higgins" Point began to be referred to as "Higgens" Point, even though most documents spelled the name as

“Higgins.” In the early 1990s, the Idaho Department of Transportation decided to re-route the new Interstate 90 significantly above the lake shoreline and completely by-passed the Higgins Point property.

The Silver Beach Marina was stated in 1974. Duane Hagadone and Jerry Jaeger built the Coeur d’Alene Resort in 1986. It included a luxury hotel, gold course, and other facilities. The Hagadone Marian Group eventual acquired the Silver Beach Marina.

**Park History:** In 1996, IDPR entered into a management agreement with the Department of Transportation to manage and operate the Coeur d’Alene Parkway.

**Recreation Activities:**

Cycling: The paved parkway trail runs along the north shore of Lake Coeur d’ Alene for 5.7 miles. The parkway trail segment is part of the nationally famous North Idaho Centennial Trail, a multi-use recreational trail system that meanders for 24 miles from the Idaho/Washington state line. The parkway is the eastern terminus of the North Idaho Centennial Trail

Hiking: The trail can also be used for walking, hiking, or in-line skating. Along the trail there are 30 benches where you can sit and rest and take in the scenery.

Picnicking: There are about 25 picnic tables available along the parkway and trail. Most of the picnic areas have vault toilets available nearby.

Boating: The boat launch ramp has 2 lanes and 2 courtesy docks. There are three large paved parking lots that can accommodate several vehicles with boat trailers attached.. There is also a vault toilet here. There is a \$5.00 fee for boat launching.

History Study: History study can be done at the Steamboats day use area or the statue of Milton Higgins at Higgins Point.

Exercise Course: An exercise course is located at the Rutledge day use area.

Wildlife Watching: The parkway has an abundance of wildlife to observe. The most noteworthy of these is the gathering of bald eagles in the parkway from November to January.

Boat Camping: Mooring docks are available at Higgins Point. There is a \$10.00 per night fee for tying up here. A vault toilet is available at the Higgins Point group shelter.

Fishing: Fishing is allowed along the Coeur d’Alene Parkway. The fish that can be caught

| <b>Please Remember</b> |   |
|------------------------|---|
| •                      | Day-use only, no camping is allowed.  |
| •                      | No motorized vehicles are allowed on the trail except class 1 and 2 e-bikes . |
| •                      | No horses or livestock allowed.   |
| •                      | Dogs must be on a leash at all times, and are not permitted in the buildings. |
| •                      | Bikers yield to pedestrians and keep right except to pass.                    |
| •                      | Respect private property.   |
| •                      | Speed Limit is 15 MPH on the trail.   |
| •                      | Carry water for drinking.   |
| •                      | Do not litter (pack in/pack out)  |

include: brook trout, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, west slope cutthroat trout, chinook salmon, and kokanee salmon. But because of the contamination in the lake anglers should consult the Idaho Fish Consumption Advisory for Lake Coeur d'Alene.

### **Resource Management Issues:**

Noxious Weeds: Noxious weeds that may be present along in the park include: common tansy, orange hawkweed, Dalmation toadflax, purple loosestrife, leafy spurge, spotted knapweed.

Shoreline Erosion: Severe erosion points along the parkway have been threatening the paved trail and one shoreline bench placement. One area by Silver Beach is now eroded to the point where asphalt has broken down and is encroaching farther into the trail surface. At Beacon Point one bench now has erosion up to the front of the concrete base. A section west of the boat launch continues to erode closer to the trail and is now impacting the safety cable posts, and a one thousand foot long section is creating hazardous conditions at the Osprey Trailhead site.

**Future Improvements Planned:** There appears to be no master plan or general development plan available for this park.

**Suggestions for the Future:** The following are suggested improvements to the park:

- The parkway is the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular park in the Idaho State Park System, receiving about 455,377 visitors per year. About 145,000 of those are out of state visitors primarily from the Spokane area. The parkway does collect a \$5.00 fee for boat launching, but it does not make application of the \$5.00 motor vehicle entry fee (MVEF) for day use in the park. Depending upon how many of the visitors are boat launch users and considering that each vehicle may include about 3 persons, this amounts to possibly a loss of \$500,000 in park revenue. Since out of state users do not pay taxes in Idaho, they are literally getting a “free ride.” The facilities at the day use areas have for the most part the same amenities as those found in other state parks where the MVEF is applicable. Therefore, the IDPR should consider starting to apply the MVEF requirement to the parkway. This represents some difficulties as there are multiple access points and a numerous private developments and dwellings along the parkway. But it seems it would not be all that difficult to collect the MVEF at the developed day use parking lots in the same manner as the fee is collected at the boat ramp. This would require installation of self-serve fee stations at each of the parking lots. Then periodic compliance patrols must be conducted. Requiring the MVEF at the parkway day use areas will also be an incentive for local Idaho residents to purchase an annual state park passport and Washington residents to purchase the IDPR annual pass. The funds generated by this fee requirement could then be applied to erosion control projects and improvements and maintenance in the parkway.
- Consideration should be given to starting a project to extend the parkway trail (and also the North Idaho Centennial Trail) to the Blue Creek Bay Recreation Site operated by the Bureau of Land Management. This would require linking the trail from Higgens Point under the Interstate 90 bridge to the end of South Molstead Lane. Then the trail could parallel South Molstead Lane and then along the East Yellowstone Trail to the access road for the Blue Creek Bay Recreation Site. This would add about 2 miles to the North

Centennial Trail It would also create a future opportunity to extending the trail further up the north side of Wolf Lodge Bay.