



## Clear Lake ~ The Healing Begins

### A Metaphor for America

The question has been raised for many years in one way or another:” Why is California so different from the rest of the country?” Responses span both ridicule and praise.

Remember when a man was searching for Self, and Indiana newspaper writer, John Soule's, 1851, advice was, “Go west, young man, go West!”

Up and down the West Coast would seem to be a place, which some would call, “The Last Frontier”, and still others call it the land of fruits and nuts. With a long line of volcanic hot spots and earth-moving earthquakes, comes a deeper explanation that is simple but may make perfect sense: “It’s in the water”.

Aquifers, the way the earth stores water under ground, are showing us why certain ranges in the world have continued to serve to feed the **hearts and minds** of its people for thousands of years.

These ranges of California have abundant healing mineral waters and exceptionally rich soil known worldwide for agriculture. The people in these areas have been blessed for thousands of years with well-balanced bodies and minds that have brought deep, compassionate, and integrative thinking. People like John Muir and Luther Burbank, and places like Marin and Sonoma Counties, are home of these recognizably acclaimed naturalists and authors. California is the place where organic food got its name.

Despite all of California's struggles and growing pains, it could be an important place to help on insure our survival and to assist significantly other countries with their survival. California is known by the rest of the United States, even internationally at this time in history, as a discerning trendsetter in law, fashion, environment, plus many other viable alternative approaches to mental, physical, and spiritual shifts in awareness and methodologies, being acclaimed now for many years. It may not be so far fetched to understand that the oldest lake in the Northern Hemisphere has an enormous effect on the healing potential that continues to be identified with California.

Nowhere in our great country is this more evident than at Clear Lake in northern California. There is substantial evidence that Clear Lake is the oldest lake in the northern hemisphere and the home of an immense source for blue green algae, a primary foundation of the organic material. It is also one of the oldest and most simple food sources on the planet, and most importantly, the beginning of the food chain. The lake lies about 100 miles northeast of San Francisco, adjacent to the extinct volcano, Mt. Konocti. With only an average depth of twenty-three feet, the lake has a sediment level that extends to around four miles deep. The sediment has been accumulating for over four million years. Layer upon layer of blue green algae growth continues along with the accumulation of natural sediment runoff from the surrounding hills and mountains. Like a giant circulatory system, its aquifers feed into streams and rivers that eventually flow into the Sacramento Valley, Napa Valley, and the San Francisco Bay.

There is, however, a threat to this eco-system. It is the same issue that affected the Roman Empire at the time of its fall: heavy metals. Historians say that the people of that geographic region suffered lead exposure from pots and other vessels, which in turn, concertedly contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire. "Mad as a Hatter", had its roots from the effects of mercury in the old hat making industry. Unintentional though it was then, the evidence of heavy metal's damaging effects on people is now widely accepted and we can no longer claim ignorance.

Although there is some stirring of the pot in the region around Clear Lake, it is a sorry bit, "too little, too late!" As a result of mining in the surrounding Clear Lake area, mercury and sulfur have been leeching into the lake with a devastating effect on the local food chain.

An example of this at Clear Lake is an old mercury mine, privately owned, which has been leeching into the lake for many years. In addition, methyl mercury, an even more toxic substance, has formed from a combination of mercury, organic material, and sulfates. The consensus is that long-term exposure to methyl mercury can result in severe health problems - **to all life forms**. Clear Lake's exceptional organic sediment is deeper than most all other lakes. Unfortunately, it also contains an abundance of sulfur and mercury that has settled deeper into that sediment.

This mercury will affect the neurological system of any organism and has the potential to devastate civilization. Cancer, brain tumors, mental retardation, and autoimmune disorders are all being strongly connected to heavy metals. When they enter the fatty acids of the body, they become trapped. The metals vibrate at a lower level than the body when they are caught in the body's fatty acid; as a result, the body's water system will not hold a critical charge. Because the body is created to have its own electrical system, understand without that charge, the body will go haywire and die. The body becomes much more susceptible to bacteria, viruses, and cancers as a result. More shocking is what it does to our children and our unborn children. The health of our children is of the utmost importance.

This pollution goes beyond the normal known sources such as pesticides, industrial hydrocarbons, and old abandoned mines. A large percentage of mercury is naturally occurring as a byproduct of the de-gassing of the earth's crust. In addition, again remember at Clearlake, there is an old Sulfur Bank mercury mine, privately owned, which has been leeching into the lake for many years.

At the heart of the problem lies the **polluted** blue-green algae, that **is** the bottom of the food chain. The fish eat the mercury containing algae, and then by moving up the food chain, the fish are eventually eaten by the people around the lake. Clearlake is also home to the ancient tribe of the Elam. According to recent archaeological research, this tribe is a one of the oldest civilizations known to the northern hemisphere. Their plight is that of an ancient people, swept aside by the path of industrialization, progress, and population and they are being affected every moment by the high levels of mercury, as their reservation is adjacent to the property that houses the abandoned mercury mine, producing the hottest spots of methyl mercury pollution at Clearlake. They, of course, are the least equipped to battle such a scourge.

The problem also extends to birds and other predators that consume the water's bounty, and the cycle continues from there. This area is so high in pollutants that the EPA has issued advisories about the consumption of fish that includes Clearlake, Cache Creek, and Bear Creek. In the case of Bear Creek, there is a **complete** ban on the eating that of fish.

In 2003, the Sacramento Bee reported a growing amount of methyl mercury in the Sacramento Valley and a study was done to expanding our population's understanding, and brings some awareness to

the problem. Heavy amounts of this deadly gas, methyl mercury, were reported coming from Cache Creek, Bear Creek, and Anderson Creek. All of which are close to Clearlake and are strongly suspected of being connected to Clearlake's four miles of sediment and its aquifers. Although various committees met to discuss this ecological hazard, nothing has been done to abate the situation. The reports show that the methyl mercury is spread out over the valley and when rains come, it is swept into the Sacramento River and into the San Francisco Bay. There is an extremely high amount of mercury reported in the fish.

There are many theories about why the swaying arm of the current from the Sacramento River, which runs into Marin County, is now reporting the highest breast cancer rate in the country. There is strong indication that the primary cause is heavy metals in the water. Reports of health problems at Clearlake have been underestimated by the governing agencies. One has only to talk to the local indigenous people or other long-term resident's of the area, to hear about major health issues that are alarmingly occurring in higher and higher rates. Cancer and bacterial infections are among some of the most common complaints with whole neighborhoods of people now reportedly victims of cancer, including high school children with breast cancer. In addition, two years ago we saw the demise of over seven thousand sediment-diving ducks that contracted aviary cholera, possibly due to their compromised immune systems, a main result of mercury poisoning.

Clearlake has been the subject of intense testing research begun by the EPA in conjunction with U.C. Davis over a decade ago. The results confirmed excessively high concentrations of mercury and that the process is bio-accumulative which means the concentration elevates with time. The public reports are clearly indicative that the governing agencies recognize a clear and present danger, as proven by the establishment of a "Superfund" designed to deal with cleanup. Since the Superfund was established in the early 1990s, between twenty and forty million dollars have been spent by the EPA and U.C. Davis to study the effects of mercury on the lake. This Superfund was created to clean up what is called the abandoned Sulfur Bank Mercury mine on the far eastern part of the lake. The studies show a 24% increase of mercury in the last ten years. There is now a relocation program that was established by the EPA. This program is now, finally after all these years, moving the tailings that have come from the mercury mine and capping it with bentonite. According to some scientists, this is a temporary solution as there are new technologies available to solve the problem. It does not address the cause.

The reason this lack of awareness is occurring without much press attention, can only be explained through speculation. Possibly, concerns about reduction of property values, the financial implications for the many resort owners, lack of compassion for reservation people, and lack of priority for funding are likely candidates to this explanation. However, one thing is certain. The problem is increasing with time and is proving to be one of California's greatest ecological disasters. An aspect of human nature that we know about is that people do not respond to a situation until there is some sort of detectable disaster. We seem to continue to believe it is natural for our loved ones to die or are being afflicted by a disease. Like 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina or the Erin Brockovich story; people were slow to defend themselves, until someone proved the obvious, but then, the solution was money awards given to the families of the dead and dying. Money could not restore their family's lives.

We are experiencing other ecological disasters, not just at Clearlake, but a large number of aqueous environments in the state of California. Nine Bay Area reservoirs, besides Clearlake have recently been identified as having excessive amounts of mercury. This pollution goes beyond the normal known sources such as pesticides, industrial hydrocarbons, and old abandoned mines. Important to note, also, is that a large percentage of mercury is naturally occurring as a byproduct of the degassing of the earth's crust. We want to concentrate on disasters we think are more important than this. We are now finding out that many "natural" disasters are a result of the exploitation of the earth, as in global warming, and severe weather. It would seem better to understand more deeply an

imminent and obvious threat to the very lifeblood of humanity, the water we drink. This is a much more urgent disaster that is preventable, **if** we are true to ourselves enough to heed the signs.

Our goal is neither to stop industrialization nor to shut down capitalistic endeavors, but instead to find solutions to this problem that will allow commerce and the environment to coexist. Solutions are needed. There are solutions to this problem but first we have to understand and accept that there is a problem.

On that note, all of the studies have been essential. As previously stated, large amounts of money, time and energy have been expended to seek answers by many people who have been diligent in their efforts. However, the time has come for action. It is time to start the true cleanup. We need to identify and support new technologies, (not old antiquated technologies) which can begin to address the cleanup of these superfund areas.

All is not lost. We now **know** that the technology is out there. One technology that offers hope is capable of cleaning and removing mercury at the rate of three thousand gallons per minute. This is far more efficient and less costly than the current technology under consideration by the EPA. Innovations may also be needed involving "chelating" which is a "lock-and-key" type technology that causes the mercury molecules to bind to other molecules more easily and then can be efficiently removed from the environment and even from human tissue.

When traveling to Nepal, India, and Thailand, I visited scientists that have studied the properties of mercury and they explained that they have the ability to turn mercury into a medicine. In fact the very doctors around the Dali Lama consider mercury "the semen of the earth", which will be proven to be the most powerful neurological medicine in the world when we learn to harvest its potential. In the most powerful countries in the world these kinds of statements are regarded as ridiculous. Why? The answer seems to come from the age-old repetition of history in the stories given to us by our ancestors. An example would be the story of Cain and Abel where one says to the other "I'm smarter than you," hits the other on the head and goes on his merry way only to find out he really wasn't so smart after all, knowing finally he needed his brothers wisdom. To now bring the Eastern wisdom to Western expertise is not only important in cultivating our lives with dignity, it is so essential for the very survival of the human race. At the same time scientists are working in other countries, with other scientists and inventors working in this country to magnify that wisdom where there is hope in compensating for all of the pollution derived from thousands of years of exploiting this earth.

If these sciences and inventors exist, then why haven't they been able to sway the proper agencies to put these very important technologies into action? The answer is simple; **they need our help**. What we usually assume as being a matter of fact is usually lost to the wind when we only **think** it on a cerebral level. The general public's attitude concerning inventors is, "They walk into walls and they get in the wrong cars". When common sense is present there is usually a flaw of character that is exploited by those who easily lobby against them in defending older polluting technologies. Then there are the inventors themselves. Many say, "I can do it myself". On the other hand, they get so angry by constant criticism they stop what they are doing to avoid being hurt. Things would be surprisingly different if a sense of community is built around the inventor and visionaries who can see things more globally.

This research and development is essential and we have formed a non-profit corporation called, "**Clearlake Water Vision**" to explore the planet, if necessary, and uncover solutions for Clearlake which can then be extended to include other troubled waterways. Where better than to start by assisting in the recovery of an ancient food source, lake and people which returns us all to the roots of our humanity? This research is expensive and time consuming. We need to obtain funds from grants, federal programs, the private sector, and any other sources available. We need human

resources, too. We feel there is no choice except to pursue these solutions for the preservation of a quality of life for our children, the generations, and us to come.

This is a story about Clearlake. I would be the first to tell you that I am not the one who should be telling you this story. To me it started when a very holy man explained to me that I should continue what I was doing some 13 years ago. Without that tutoring I would have walked away from any of this truth. To this day, I continue to look for those that will help with this project or prove me wrong. Even so, I have done my best with the resources I have, to make sure all that I have found is true. The bases of these findings I have to admit come from a more intuitive or spiritual level. It is from that level that I firmly believe the studies on this region will become even more evident to the public and will reach the hearts of Americans as a metaphor of who we are....

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