



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221  
(360) 293-1918

---

## **Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board**

**May 7, 2026  
6PM**

**In person and virtual meeting options.**

**In Person: City Hall Main Floor Conference Room**

**Zoom Meeting Link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88308344363>

### **Preliminary Agenda**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approve April '26 Minutes**
- 3. Public Comments for any item not on the agenda**
- 4. Friends of the ACFL Update**
- 5. Staff Reports**
- 6. Parks Commission Update**
- 7. Other Business**
  - a. Plan for June Hike with Friends of the ACFL**

**Adjourn**

## **Minutes of the Meeting: April 2, 2026**

**Board members present:** Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Nate Schwarck, Tabb Stringer, Kit Gerwels

**Staff present:** Bob Vaux, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and called to order at 6:01PM

**Minutes:** March minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Public Comments:**

Mark Nihart asked about the status of the year-round fishing at Heart Lake. Bob shared that there was no change at this time and WDFW will be the one to make this decision.

Elka McCartney was in attendance and read the attached statement.

Discussion was had about signs in the ACFL. Bob shared that in his 37 years working in the ACFL, finding the right signs and locations has always been a challenge. Seasonal staff are getting hired at this time and will help with enforcement. Also getting the Plan passed by Council, then items added to the AMC will allow for enforcement by the police.

### **Lapsansky Report:**

Tony Lapsansky was back to present his findings of his study of the effects of cyanotoxins on aquatic invertebrate communities. His report is attached.

### **A Avenue Landfill Update:**

The City and DOE are close to an agreement on the remedial investigation plan. There will be a few test wells drilled around the site in the next couple of months. Bob announced that there may be trail closures while work is being done. Staff will post information online and onsite.

### **Friends of the ACFL Update:**

Ellie shared that they are preparing for April madness! Their youth spring break camp is full. The Wednesday afternoon class has a few spots left. The Naturalist program will be starting next week. Preparations are being made for Earth Day celebrations. The Trail Ambassador applications are open now. A part-time educator has been hired, Angela, and they are very excited about the extra help. They are starting their 3-year strategic planning so if anyone has any thoughts or suggestions, please email them to Josie by April 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Staff Reports:**

Jamie was not in attendance, but Bob shared that he had patrolled all four zones today and encountered a dog off leash in all of them. It is a major problem across all parks and the ACFL. The only thing that will change this trend is to have tickets written.

Bob shared that April is also busy for staff. Opening day of fishing is April 25<sup>th</sup>. April 18<sup>th</sup> will bring divers to Heart Lake for their annual lake clean up. That day is also the Dallas Kloke Mt Erie clean up. The Forest Plan will go before Council again for their feedback and discussion. The matrix of public comments and staff responses will be published in the Council agenda packet. Bob reported that there may be flagging at Heart Lake as part of the shoreline restoration survey. There is nothing new on the Whistle Lake dam. Brian inquired about transparency in the budget and with the quarry and CEP funds. Bob stated that this is all publicly available, but staff will gather the information and report back.

**Parks Commission Report:**

JoAnn reported on the Parks Commission. The last meeting was the open house at the Senior Activity Center for all the current park projects.

**Other Business:**

Bob reminded everyone that the June meeting is the hike with the Friends and suggestions were made to walk the Heart Lake site. July is typically a vacation month.

**Adjourned at 7:17 pm**

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

**APRIL 2026**

**Assistant Director's Highlights**

**Parks & Recreation**

Submitted: April 30, 2026

*Bob Vaux*

---

**ACFL**

*Forest Plan*

Shout out to Libby in Planning for sitting down with us in Parks and providing technical expertise in support of our public comments' matrix, along with her on-going FP update process wisdom. Director Lunsford, Darby and I put in the hours on the 4/20 Council packet.

Council had support for the Plan and not many questions at the 4/20 meeting. Staff now awaiting any written comments from the Legislative Branch.

#### *Maintenance*

Provided ACFL Jamie with some hazard tree falling support along the Whistle Lake access road as well as on trail #22.

Working with COA Planning on trail #115 bridge replacement. Anna has been super helpful.

#### *The ACFL Story*

Attended a great meeting with DNR and City of Issaquah staff on the history of the ACFL. Issaquah looking for inspiration along similar lines.

#### *Friends of the ACFL*

Jamie and I met with Ellie K, prepping for this summer's Trail Ambassador Program training and the expansion of this very successful volunteer effort.

Enjoyed participating in the Friends' Board & Staff retreat. A true partnership forged in the goal of the long-term health and enjoyment of the ACFL.

#### *Earth Day Volunteers*

Special thanks to the 30 climbers and the 7 divers who showed up for the April 18 Dallas Kloke Mt. Erie Clean Up and the Heart Lake trash clean up dive, respectively. Jamie was able to work with the climbers.

We also had Parks Maint Tech Braydn K working an ACFL dogs off leash emphasis patrol that same day. Sadly, he had a handful of dol encounters, most involving mountain bikers.

Jamie and I also continuing to work in similar "patrols" as time allows.

#### *Beaver*

The Whistle Lake / Toot Swamp beaver community is hard at work. Jamie and I have been working the surveillance/hand notch protocol as is consistent with the rest of the ACFL beaver work.

### **BEN ROOT SKATE PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PH II**

We have finally received the design and bid package documents from MacKay Sposito. Review process with Saben/Engineering and Tiffany/Legal now.

#### *RESEAL*

Shout out to Rachel and the BRSP non-profit for covering the cost of resealing the pump track and skate area. Thank you Grindline for the always good work.

## **W. 6<sup>TH</sup> PARK PROJECT**

Working with Mayor Walters, Legal and the private sector on a potential community service contract.

## **SEASONAL STAFF**

Parks Manager Nicole and I have been conducting interviews and getting the jobs filled.

## **TREES**

Met a citizen living near a north end disc golf course hazard tree, that happened to be hanging over a long-time neighborhood access trail into the park. ACFL Jamie and I were able to safely fall the tree and clean up the trail. We also cut down a rope swing just south of the disc golf course.

## **DNR FIRE CREW TRAINING**

Jamie and I were enjoying our monthly outing with Samish Indian Nation staff Denise and Jackie, when we encountered this summer's local DNR fire crew training on Sugarloaf. Great to see the skills and commitment of these young folks and their seasoned DNR leadership.

**James Burroughs**  
ACFL Maintenance technician  
April 28th, 2026

## **ACFL Maintenance Report: April** **2026**

### ***Volunteers and Community projects***

- April 18<sup>th</sup>, we had our annual Dallas Kloke Mount Erie clean up, we had over 30 volunteer climbers come out and help pick up litter around Mount Erie, it was a great effort by all who attended.



- Arbor Day tree planting, I assisted (Parks) Steve Phillips in our annual tree planting for Arbor day, in attendance we had Mayor Walters, city staff and councilmembers with children who helped plant the tree.

### ***Hazard Trees***

- Removed Downed Trees on Trails 300, 302, 204, 100, 21, 22
- Removed hazard trees along Forest Ridge property
- Removed hazard tree near Cap Sante

### ***Beaver rounds***

- Regularly checked Beaver spots and notched dams as needed
- Whistle Lake Beaver Recon with Vaux

### ***ACFL Rounds***

- Collected garbage and cleaned Restrooms
- Off- leash dog emphasis hikes and motorbike trail poaching patrols

### ***Road and Parking lot maintenance***

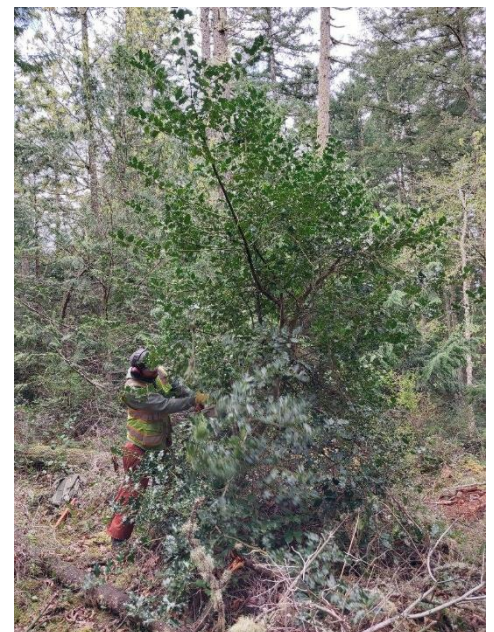
- Filled potholes at both Little Cranberry Road and Heart Lake parking lot

### ***Parks Maintenance***

- Assisted with new bracing for the clear ridge pickle ball fence
- Finished building Dog park gazebo
- Trimmed R ave. and Q ave.

### ***Holly Removal***

- Met with volunteer holly pullers to identify some problem areas, collected berries off holly tree and cut it down off Trail 115
- Removed patches of holly off Little Cranberry Road



Submitted 4-2-2026

Elke Macartney

I walk all zones of the forest lands at least 4 times a week, and consider it a privilege to walk in a biodiverse forest: a rarity these days.

There are two major issues I notice over and over again: both can be mitigated or solved via signs and fines.

The issue of off leash dogs has become more than concerning to me. Generally, I like the dogs I meet on the trails, mostly they are wonderful creatures because they have good owners who know how to keep their dogs in check. That said though, last week, a friend of mine was severely bit by an off leash dog. The puncture wounds were deep enough to bleed! The owners took NO responsibility whatsoever. They even said "They are friendly" as the dogs charged at my friend, snarling and barking.

Admittedly, it used to be that if I saw an off leash dog coming towards me, I would call out to the owner and say, "If the dog's okay, I'm okay." And then greet the dog and wander on. But this recent event, and the fact that I've met other aggressive dogs, as well as seeing ever growing piles of dog poop on the trails means that I will no longer say its ok to owners with dogs off leash. Rather, I will say, "Please leash up your dog." And there will be no exceptions anymore. I hate doing this, frankly. But it has to happen, because the brutal dog bite on my friend could have created a huge health crisis! And the total neglect of responsibility of the dog owners really needs to be addressed. So, large signs that have a stated fine on it would be a good way to help this problem.

Also on my walks, I see major damage to rare plants and moss from motorized bikes on trails that should not be traveling on them—particularly on the 302, which leads up to lil Round Top. On the intersection of upper 300 and 302, there is a sign pointing out which way motor bikes can go, but there is no sign coming from the other direction. There is also no sign on the trailhead of 302 with the accompanying no motor bikes on it. I recommend that large, no motor bike signs be placed there. As well, there needs to be clear signs on the reader boards at the parking lots of Whistle Lake, Heart

Lake and lower Mount Erie stating exactly what seasons allow motorized traffic, as well as stating a significant fine for misuse of the trails.

People who ride motorized vehicles have helmets with visors on that can prevent them from seeing small signs. Or they just totally ignore them of course. but perhaps some incentives, such as a fairly steep fine of a few hundred dollars, could help remind them where they can and cannot go.

Thank you.

# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins

Tony Lapsansky  
SENIOR RESEARCHER  
SALISH SEA RESEARCH CENTER  
NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



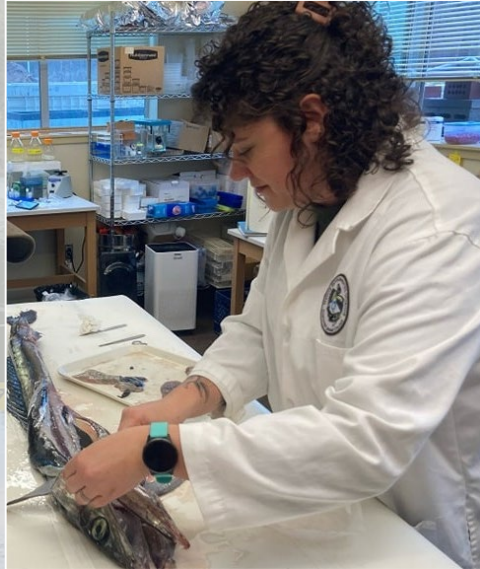
Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes  
Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins

Tony Lapsansky



Steffan Kinley



Megan Schulz



Roberto Kannapell



Misty Peacock



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

➤ Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

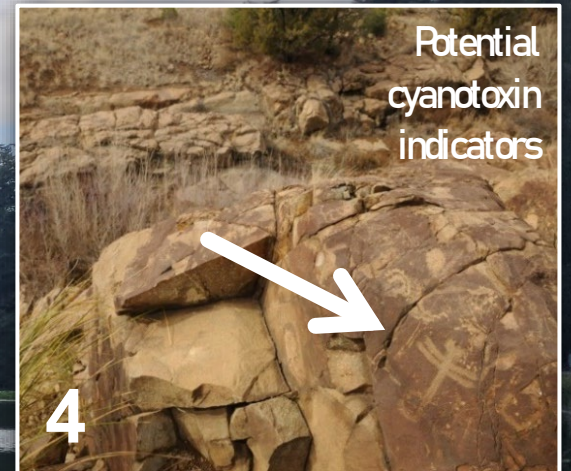
# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program

- Discovery-based research
- Student participation
- Aligned with USDA Strategic Plan Goals:
  - Strategic Goal 1: Combat Climate Change to Support America's Working Lands, Natural Resources and Communities.
  - Strategic Goal 4: Provide All Americans Safe, Nutritious Food.
  - Strategic Goal 5: Expand Opportunities for Economic Development and Improve Quality of Life in Rural and Tribal Communities.



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes  
Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Dragonflies and Damselflies as Sentinels of Cyanotoxins



National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program

- Discovery-based research
- Student participation
- Aligned with USDA Strategic Plan Goals:
  - Strategic Goal 1: Combat Climate Change to Support America's Working Lands, Natural Resources and Communities.
  - Strategic Goal 4: Provide All Americans Safe, Nutritious Food.
  - Strategic Goal 5: Expand Opportunities for Economic Development and Improve Quality of Life in Rural and Tribal Communities.

Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Question 2: How does exposure to cyanotoxins during development affect dragonfly and damselfly adults?

Question 3: How does exposure to cyanotoxins affects juvenile survival, development, and performance through student-led experiments.



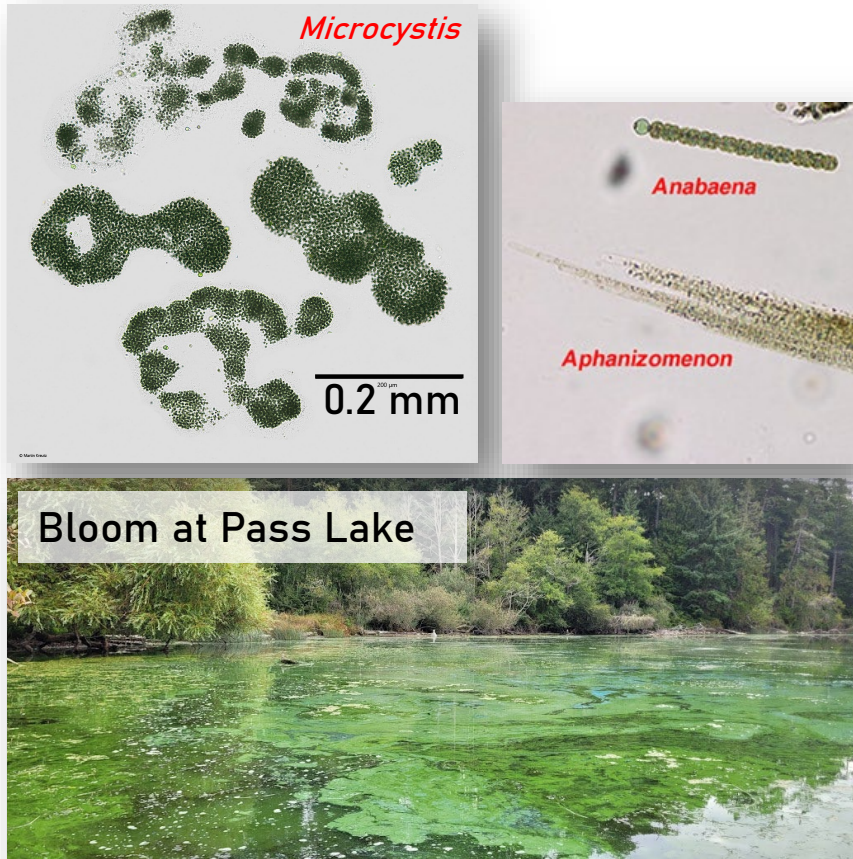
**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

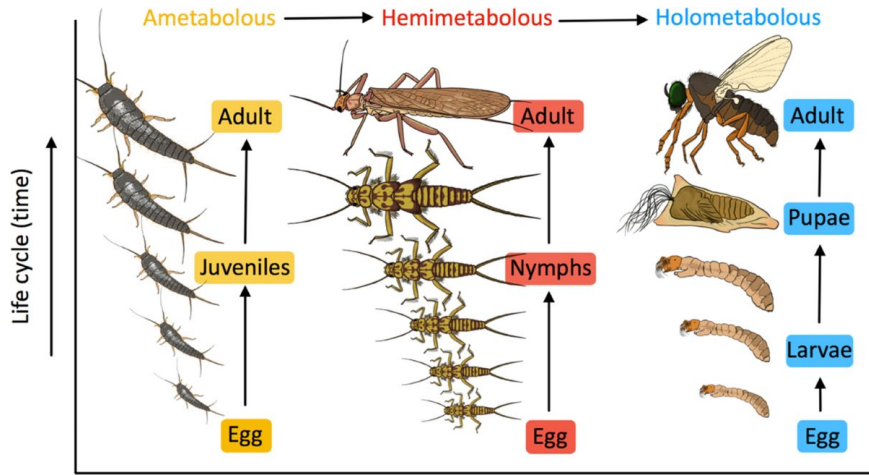


## Cyanotoxins and cyanobacterial blooms

- Cyanobacteria are ancient and ubiquitous
- High nutrients → high risk of cyanobacteria bloom (Anoxic sediment promote nutrient release)
- Some cyanobacteria produce toxins
- Blooms pose risks to human health, recreation, property values, etc. -- and to the ecosystem
- Bloom prevention often involves nutrient management, but “legacy nutrients” slow recovery



Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?



## Freshwater Invertebrates

- Key components of aquatic food webs, connecting primary producers to larger consumers
- Often have aquatic juvenile life stage and terrestrial adult life stage
- Cycle nutrients from aquatic systems



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

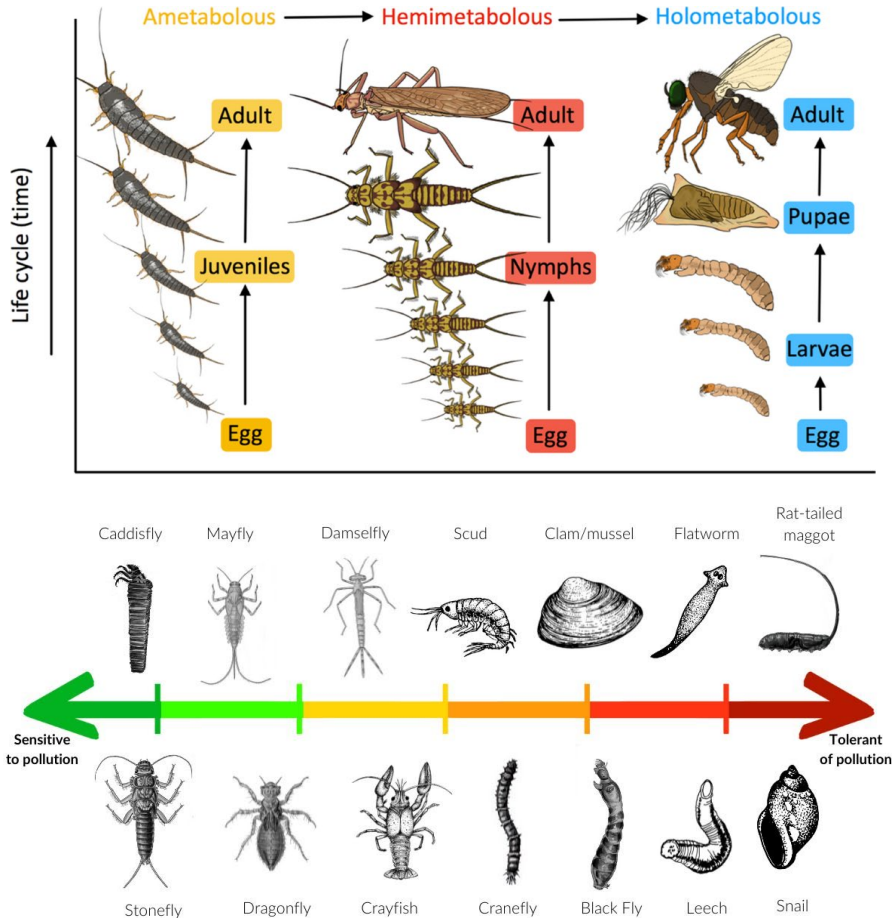


Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

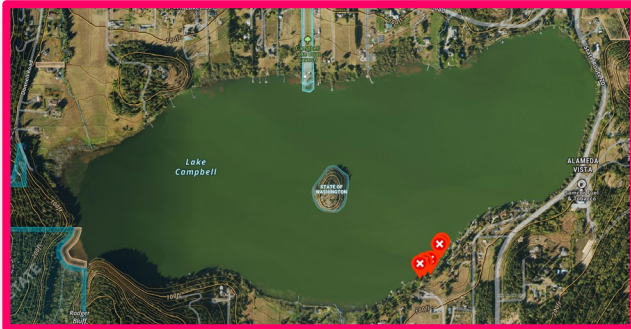
# Freshwater Invertebrates

- Key components of aquatic food webs, connecting primary producers to larger consumers
- Often have aquatic juvenile life stage and terrestrial adult life stage
- Cycle nutrients from aquatic systems
- Can serve as indicators of freshwater health



Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake



## Study Design

- Focus on adjacent lakes that vary in cyanotoxins
- Weekly, sample water and invertebrate community
- Measure water conditions, cyanotoxin concentrations, and invertebrate diversity
- Connect weekly change in cyanotoxins to changes in invertebrate community



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

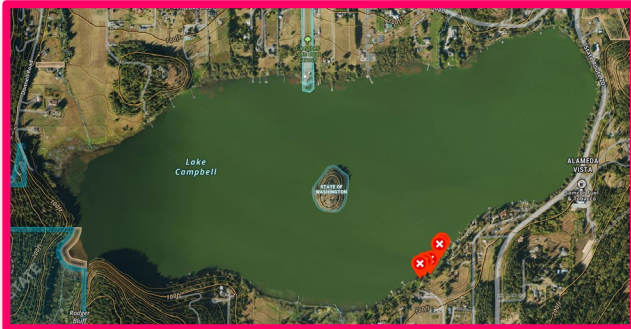
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

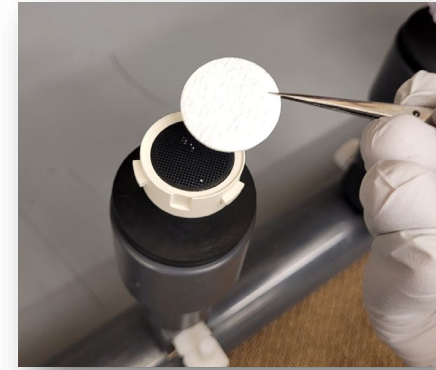
Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake



## Sampling Methods

- Temperature sampling (Onset HOB0 loggers)
  
- Water sampling
  - Grab sample
  - Filtered in lab to measure water conditions, toxin concentrations



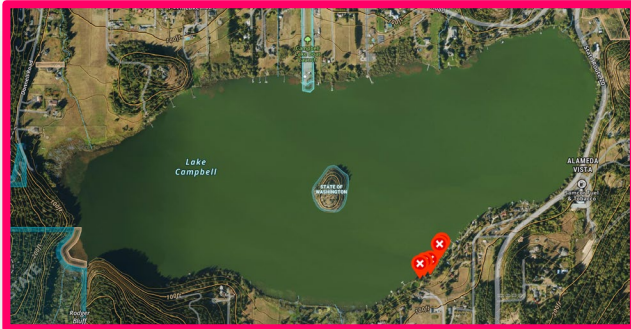
**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

➤ Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

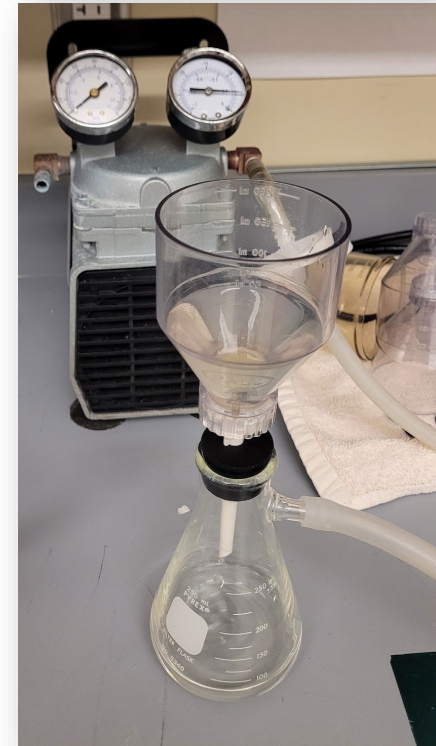
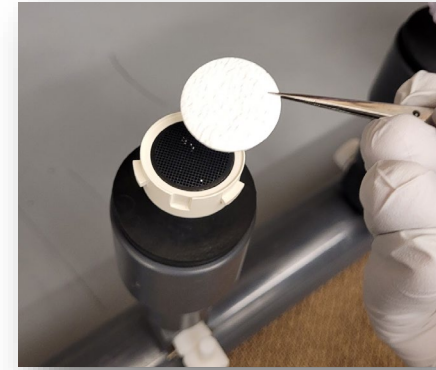
Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake



## Sampling Methods

- Temperature sampling (Onset HOB0 loggers)
  
- Water sampling
  - Grab sample
  - Filtered in lab to measure water conditions, toxin concentrations
  
- Invertebrate Sampling
  1. Funnel traps
  2. Hester-Dendy artificial substrate
  3. Emergence traps



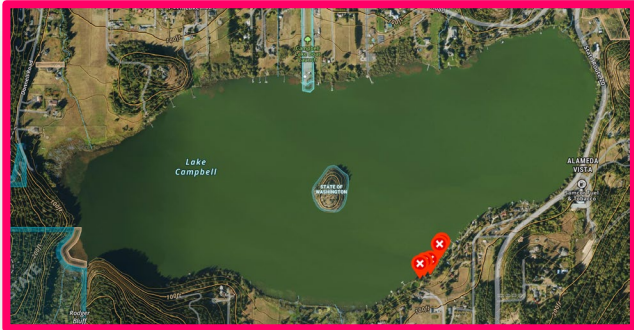
**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

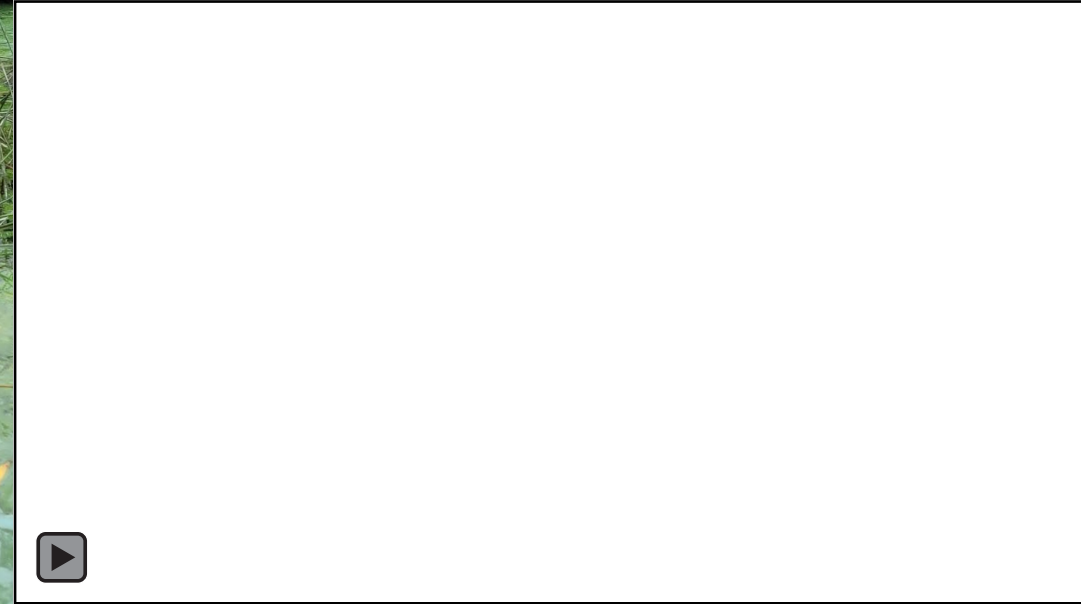
Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake



# Sampling Methods



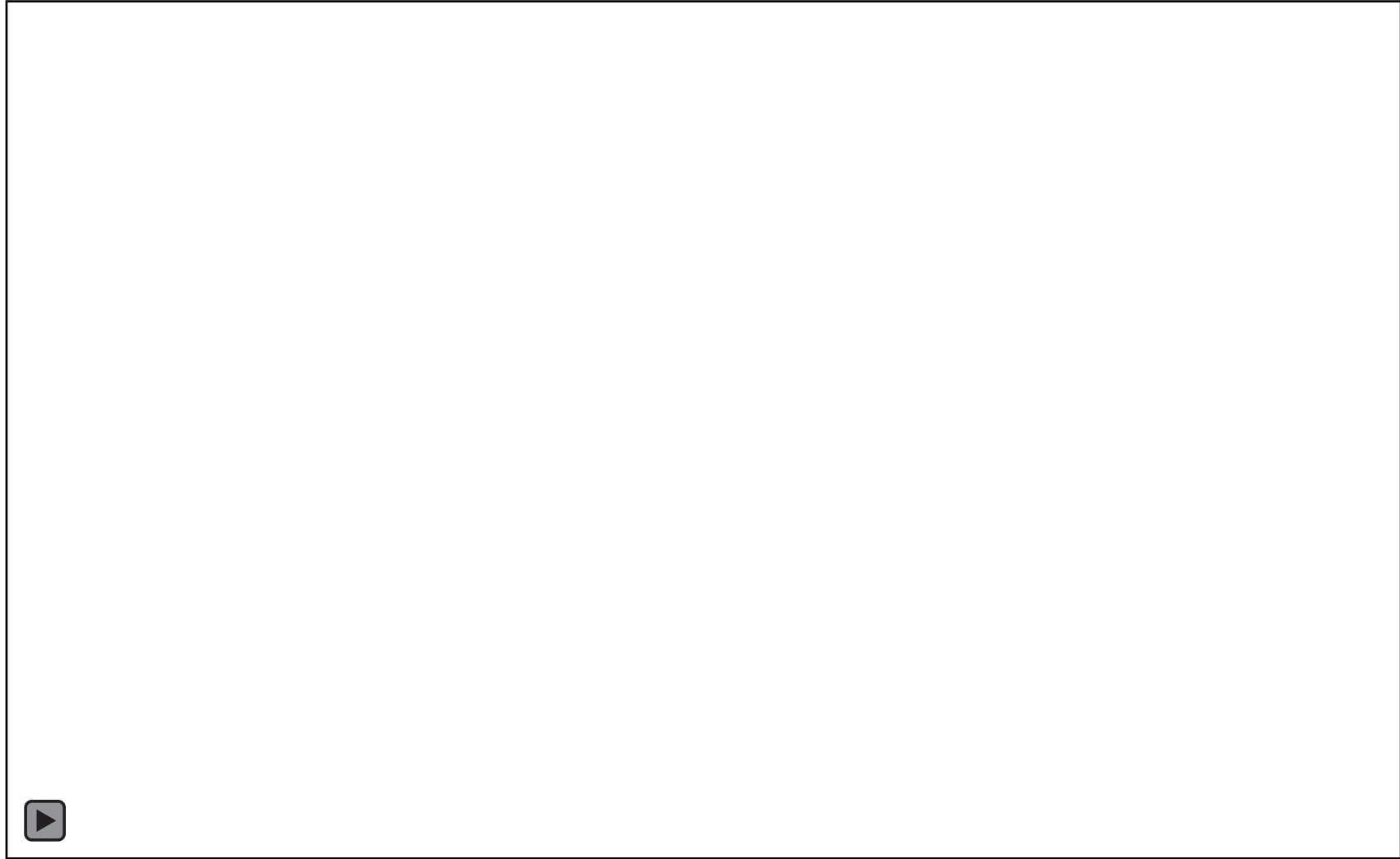
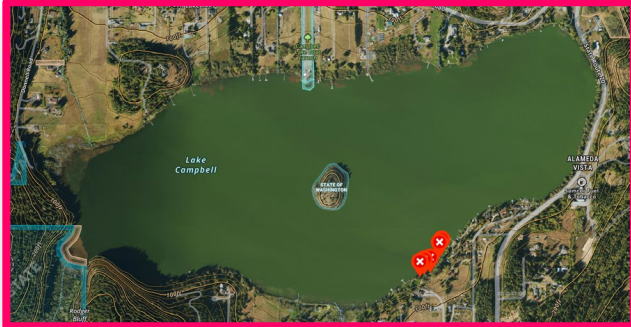
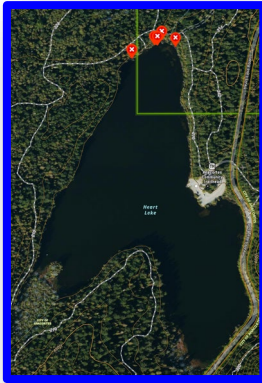
**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

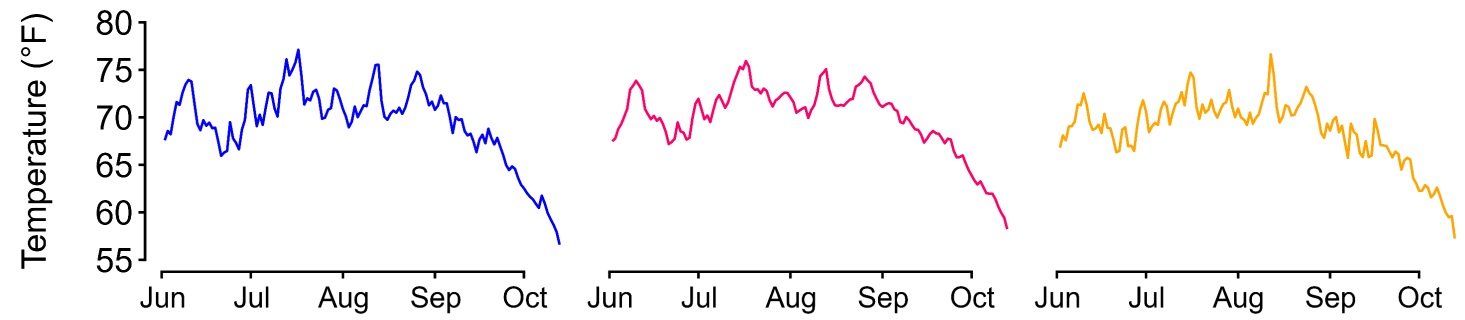
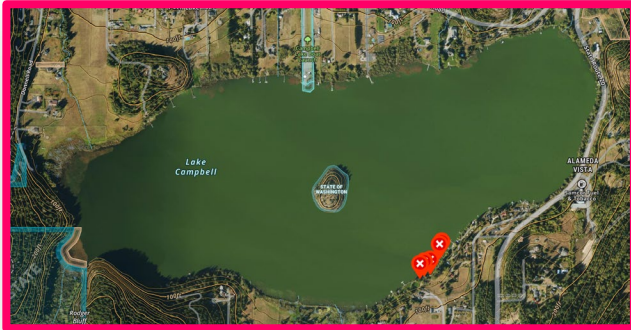
# Sampling Methods

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake



# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake

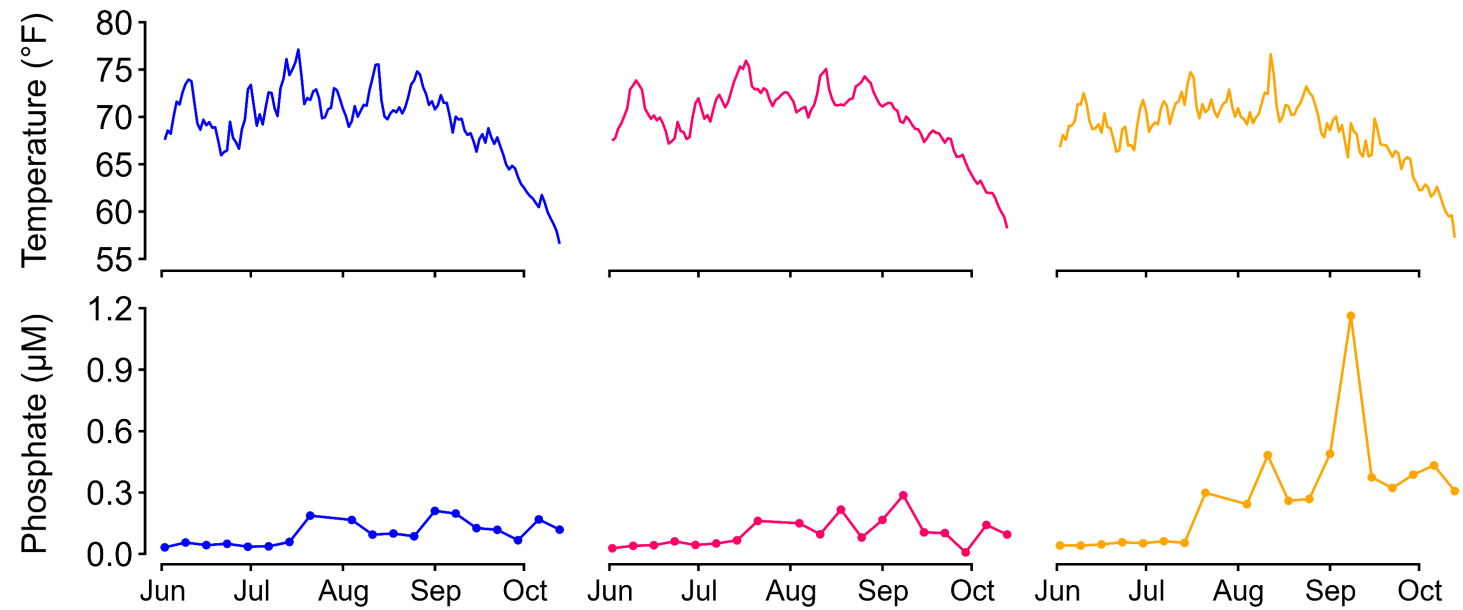
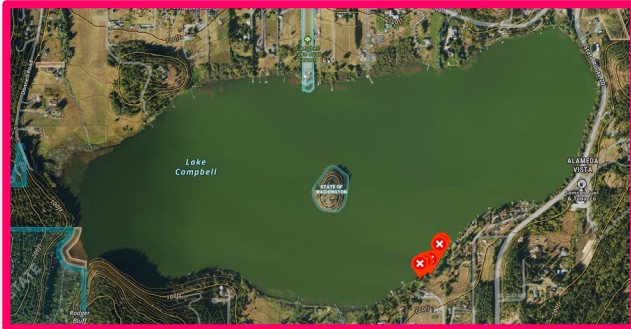


**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
Lake Campbell  
Pass Lake

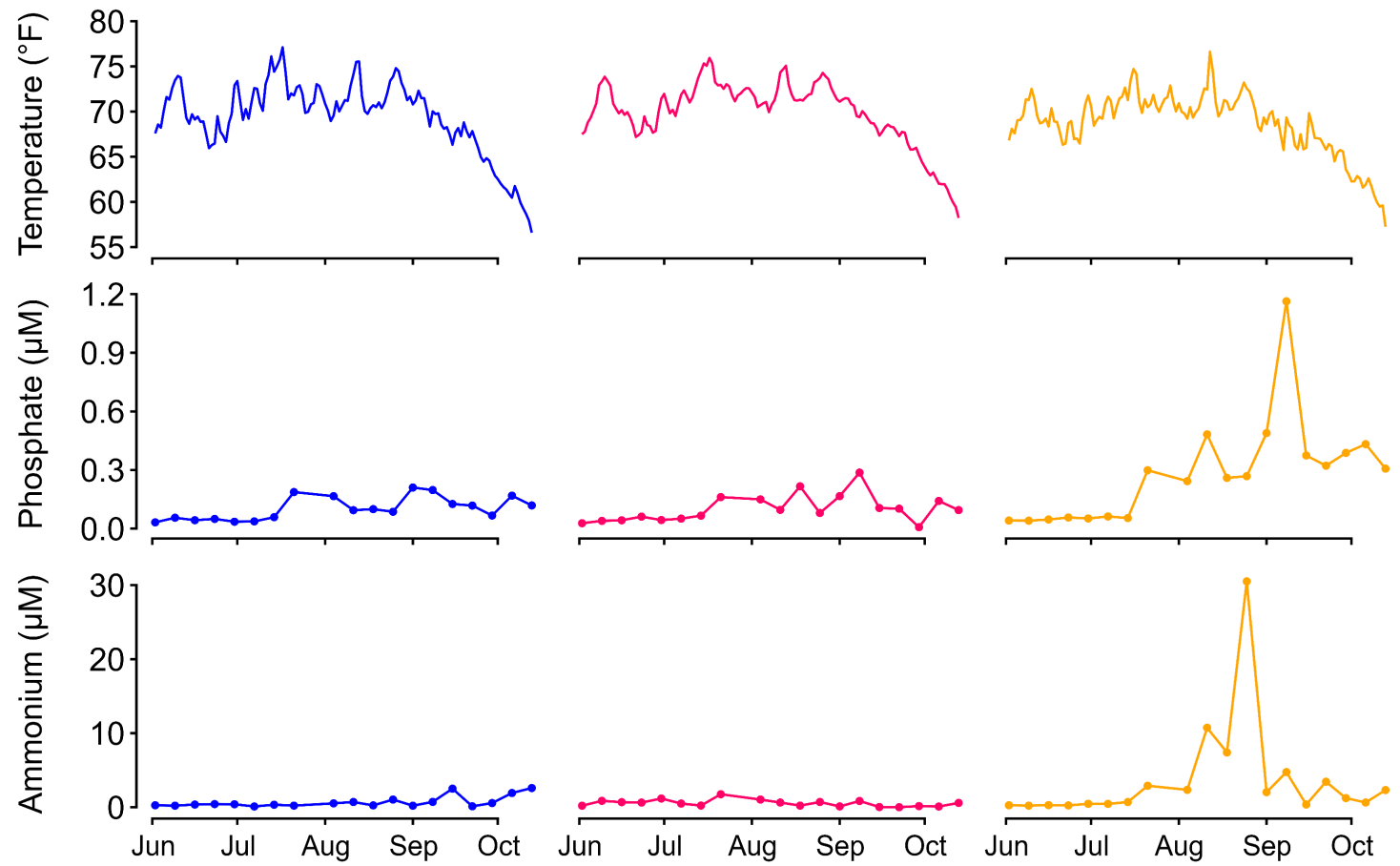
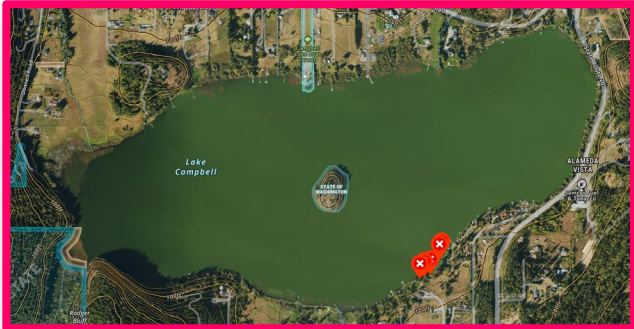


**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

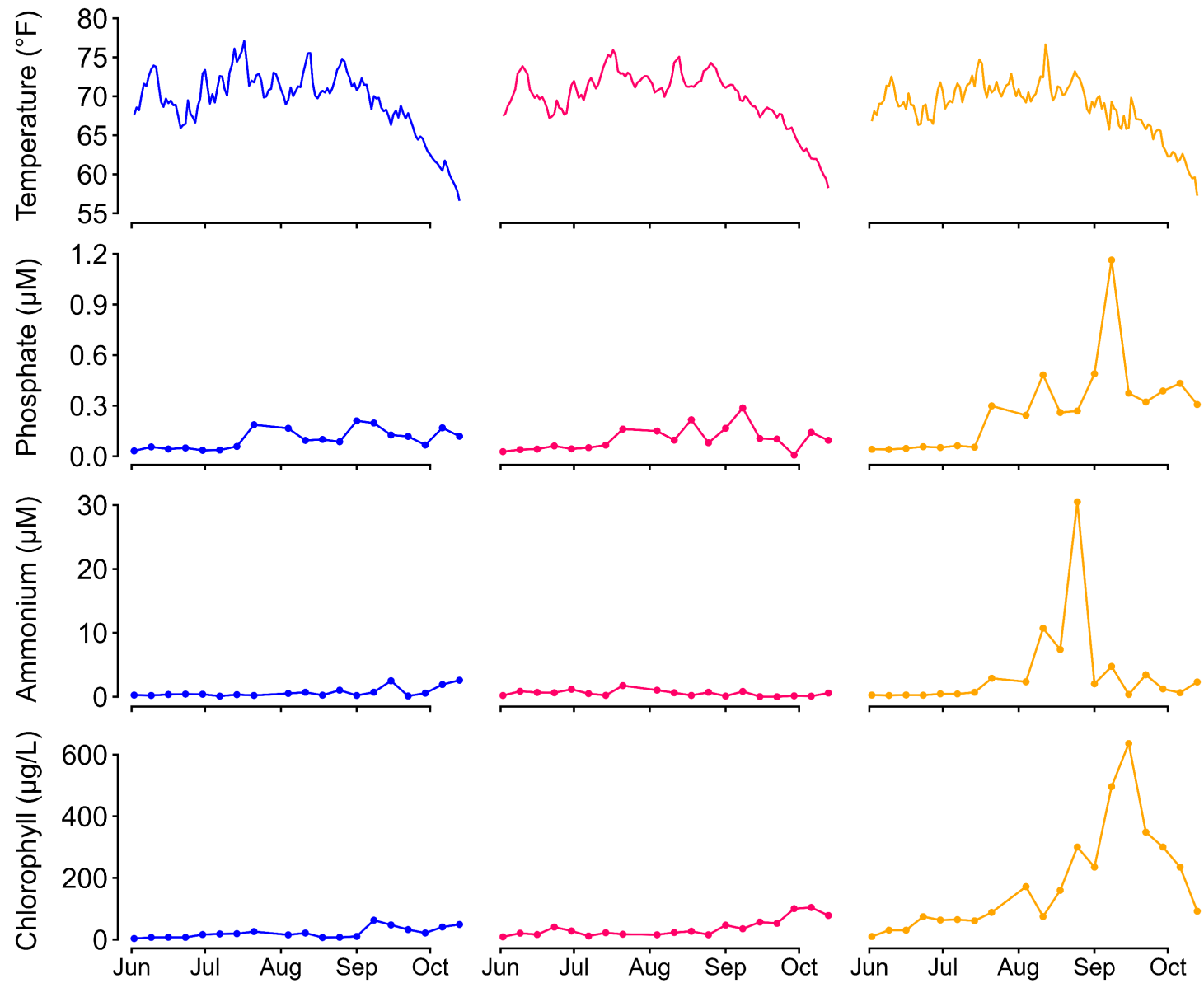
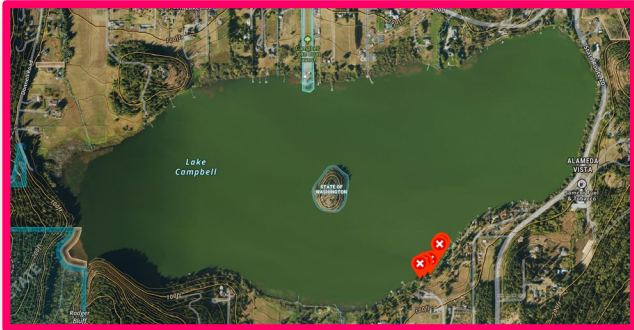
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake



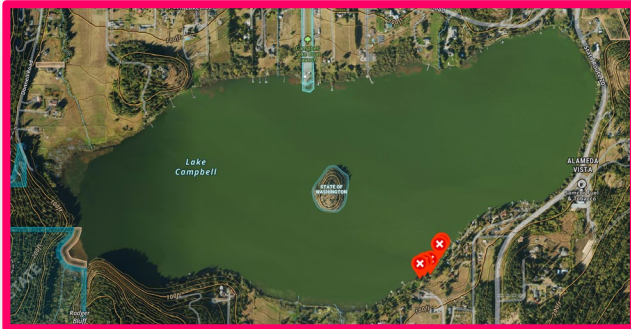
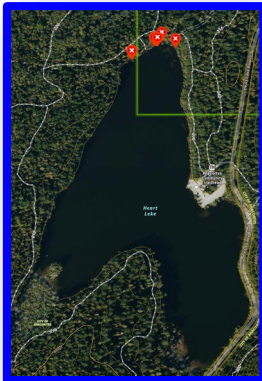
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake



Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake

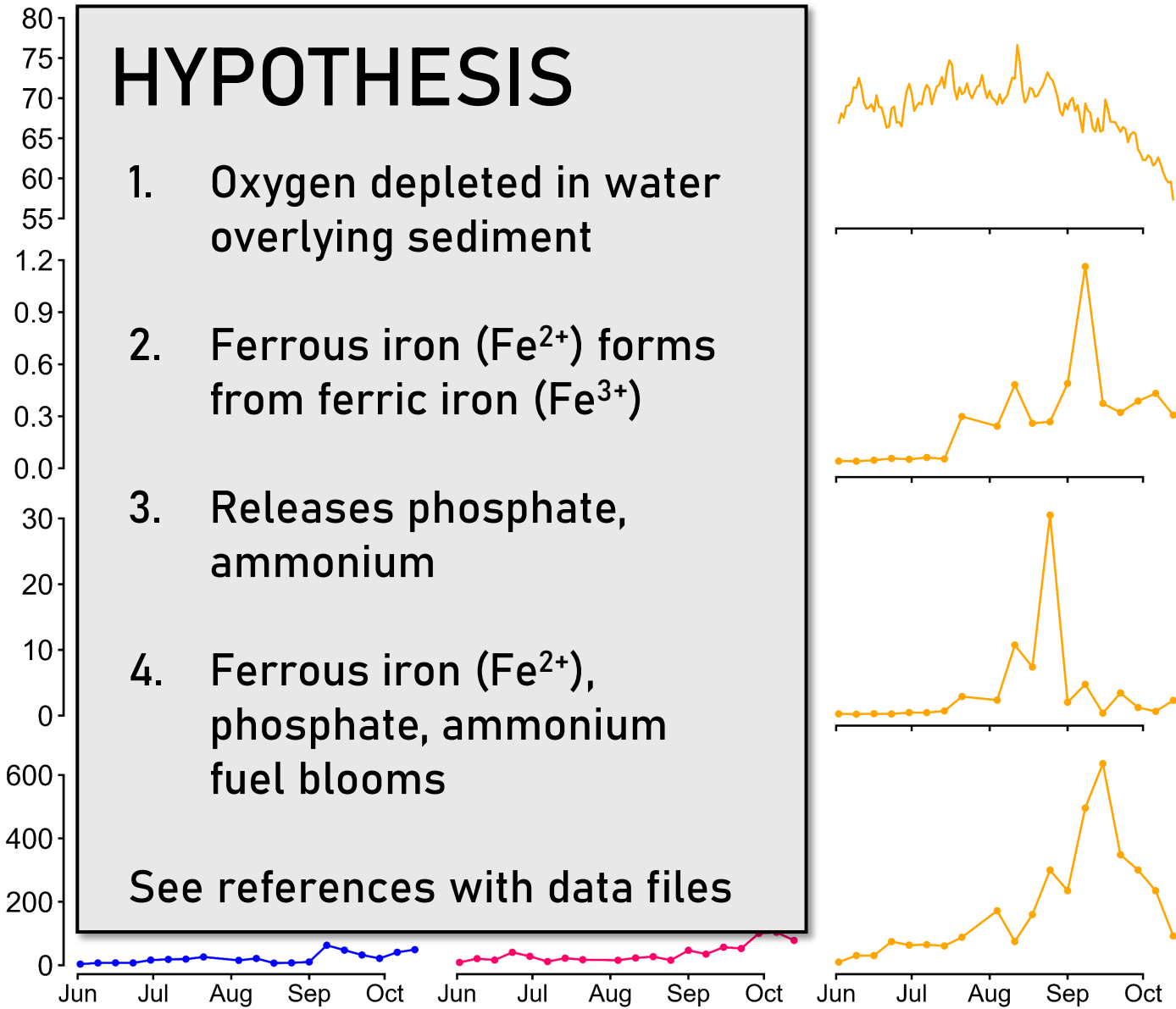


Temperature (°F)  
 Phosphate (µM)  
 Ammonium (µM)  
 Chlorophyll (µg/L)

# HYPOTHESIS

1. Oxygen depleted in water overlying sediment
2. Ferrous iron ( $Fe^{2+}$ ) forms from ferric iron ( $Fe^{3+}$ )
3. Releases phosphate, ammonium
4. Ferrous iron ( $Fe^{2+}$ ), phosphate, ammonium fuel blooms

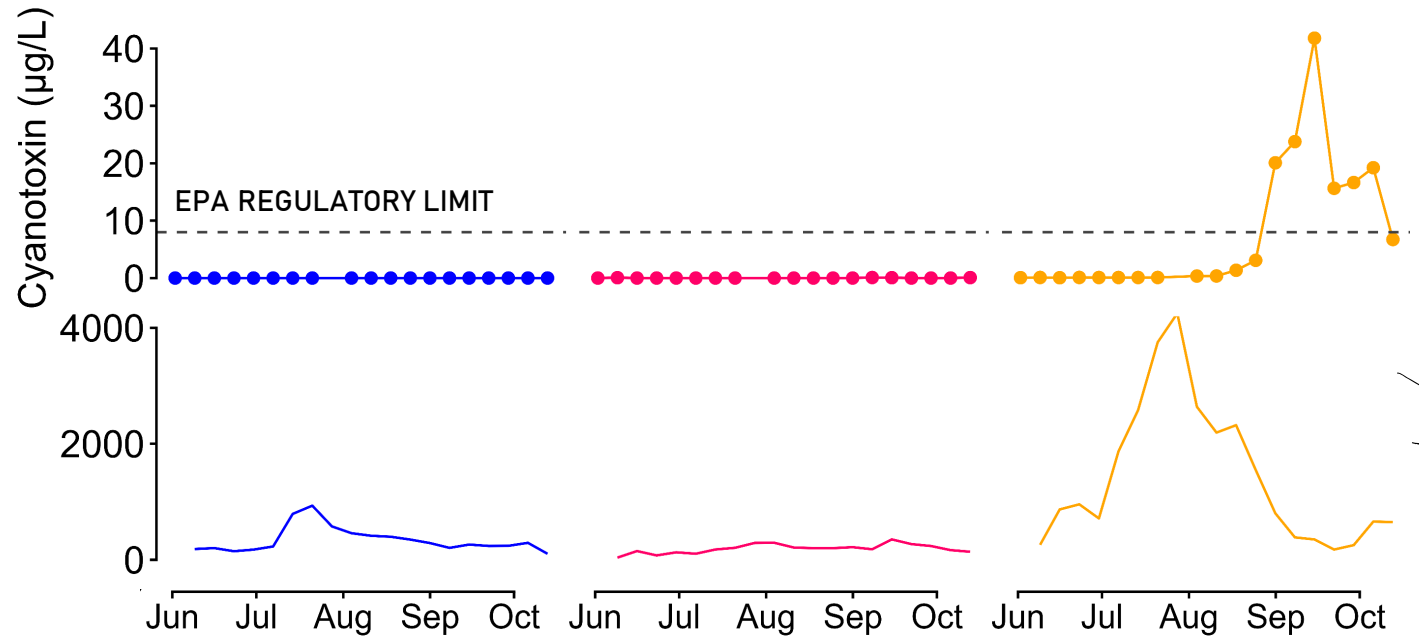
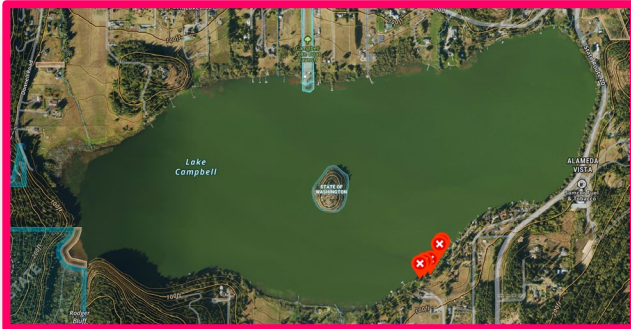
See references with data files





# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake



MIDGES



HYALELLA SP.



DRAGONFLIES

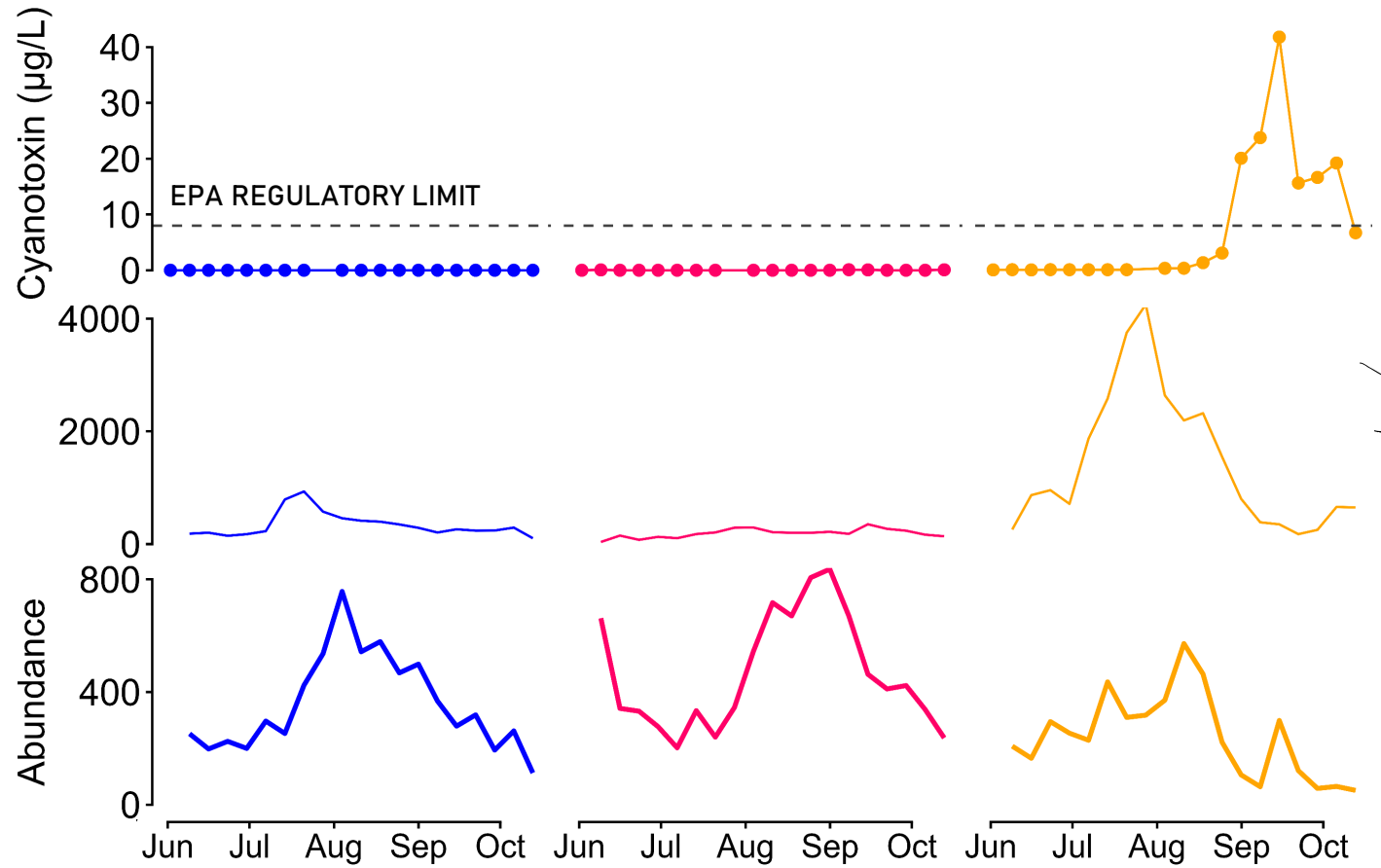
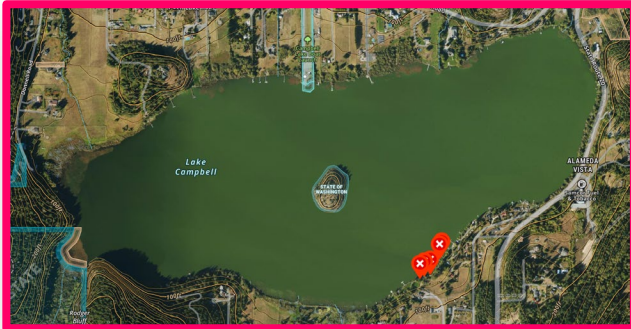


**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake

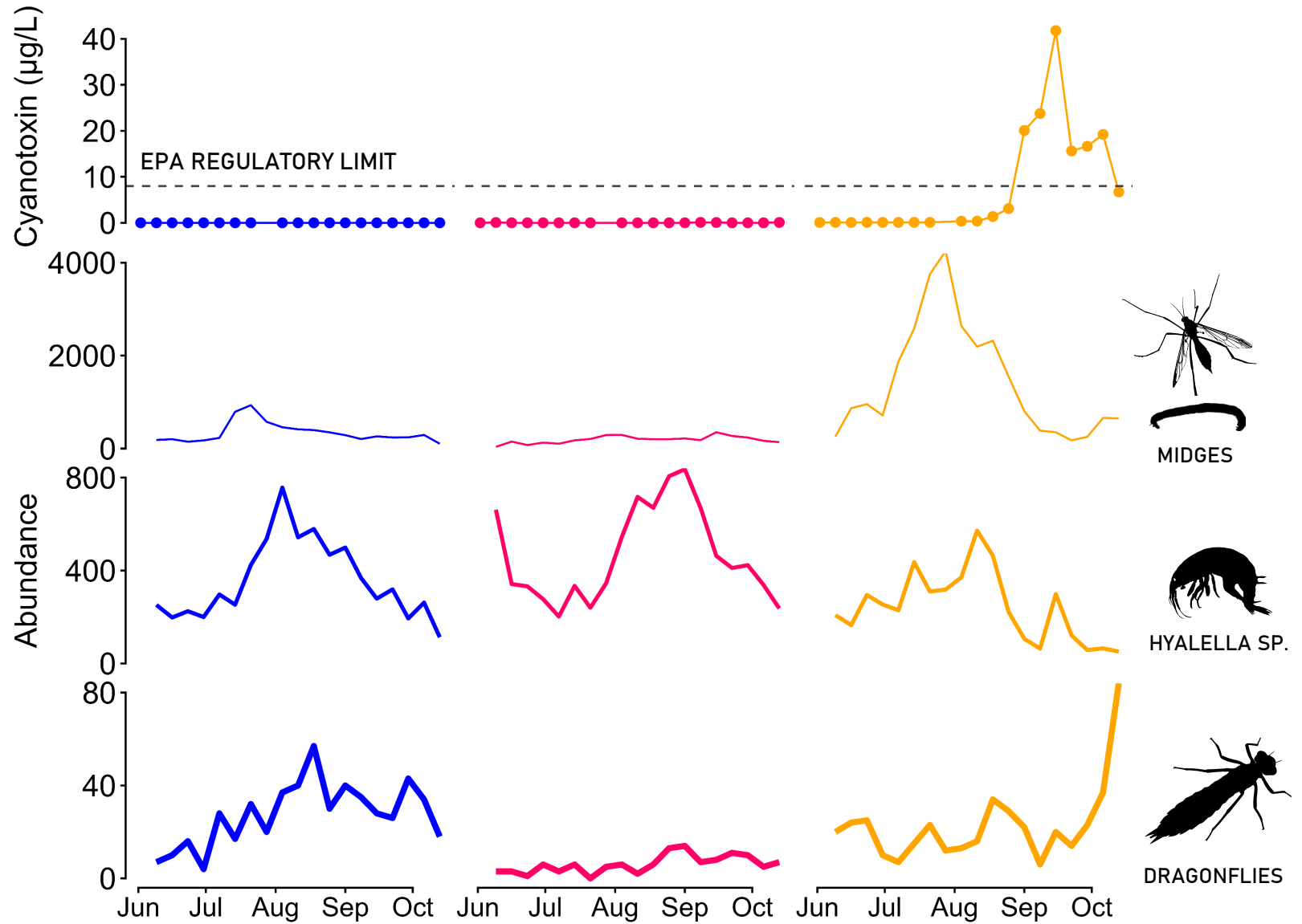
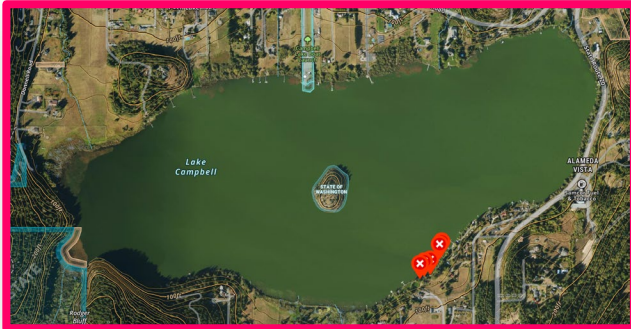


**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

Heart Lake  
 Lake Campbell  
 Pass Lake

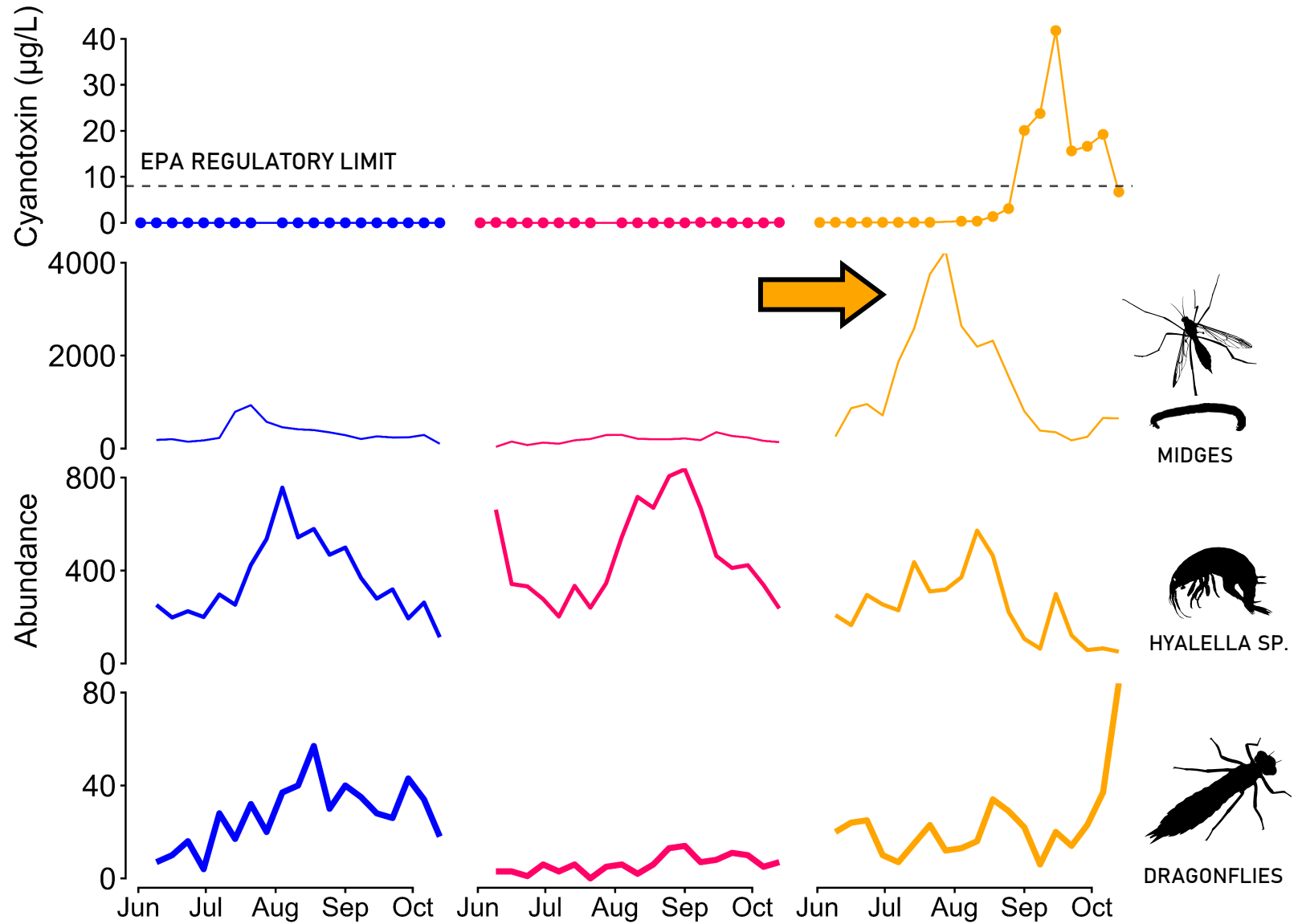


**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**  
*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

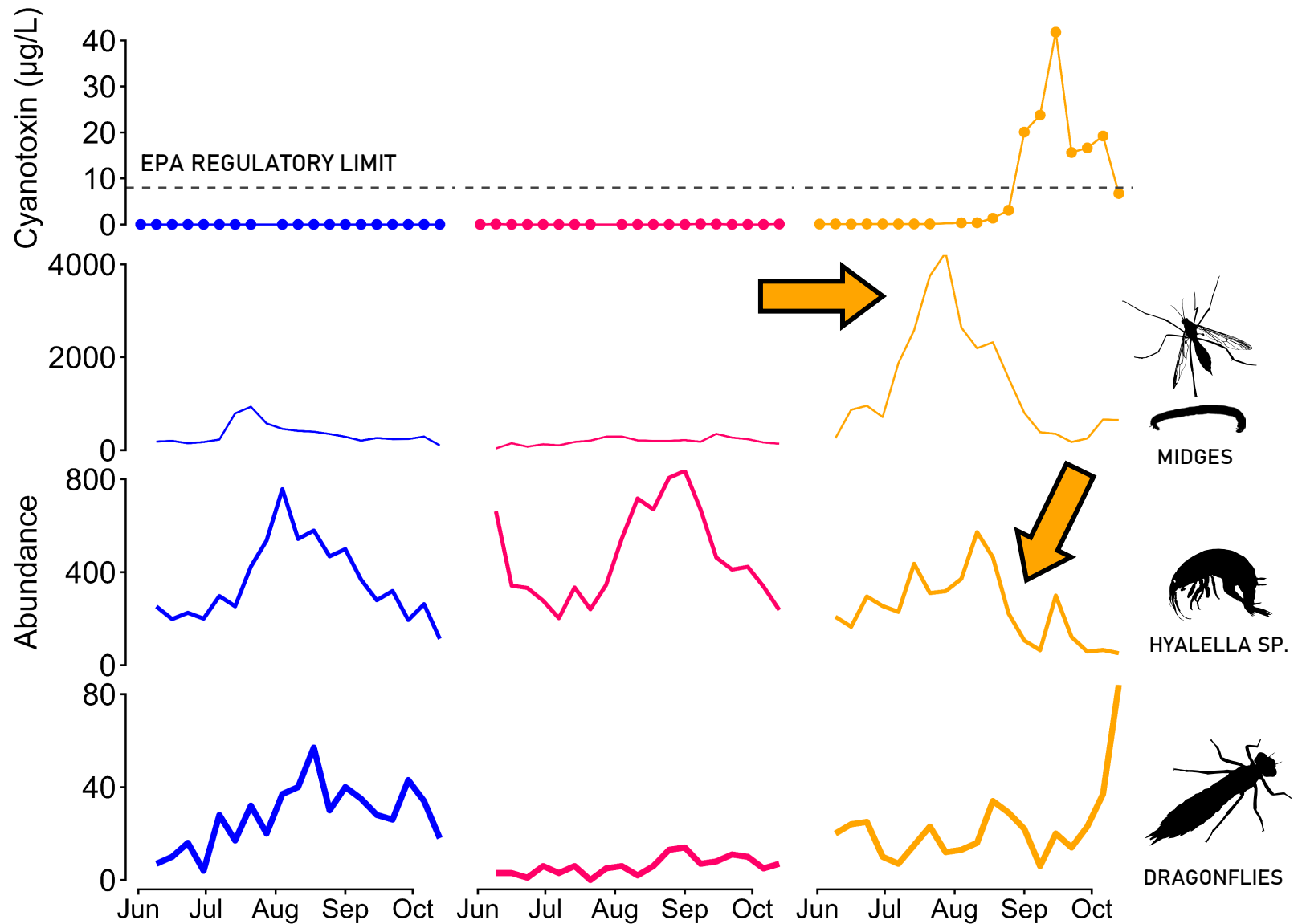
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

- Pass Lake remains productive despite yearly toxic blooms



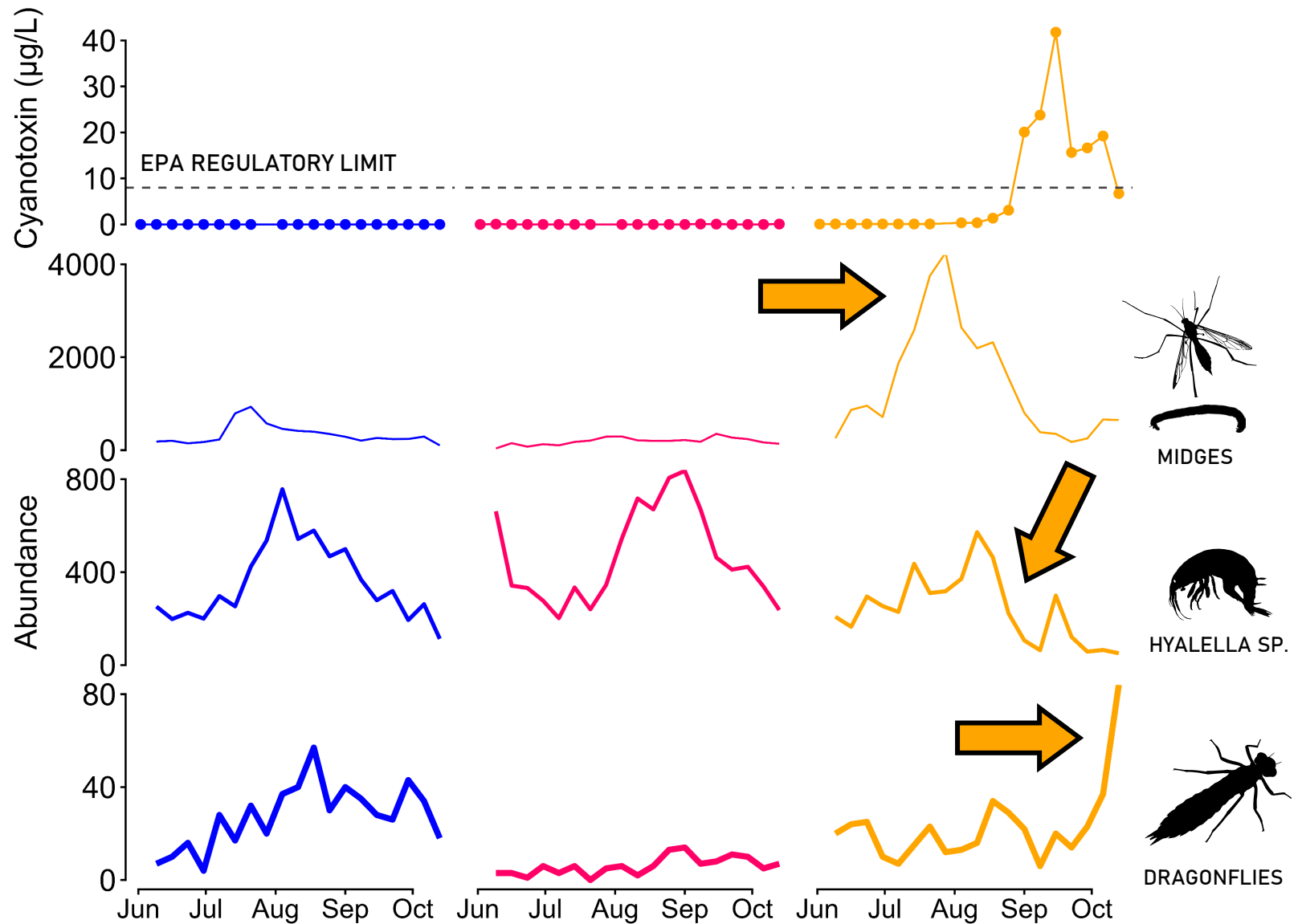
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

- Pass Lake remains productive despite yearly toxic blooms
- Blooms may limit mobility, leading to sampling bias



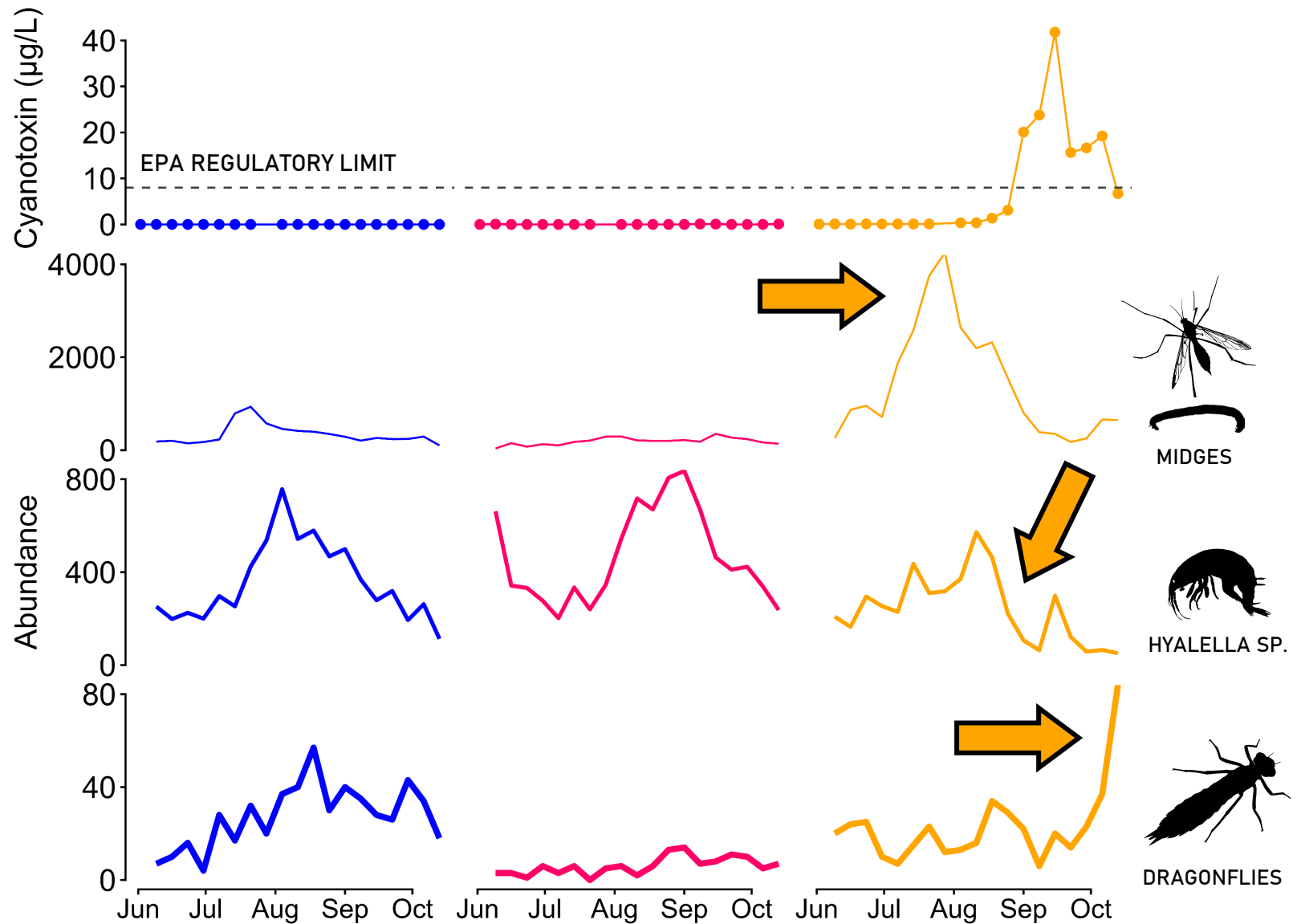
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

- Pass Lake remains productive despite yearly toxic blooms
- Blooms may limit mobility, leading to sampling bias
- Dragonflies continue to lay eggs despite toxins



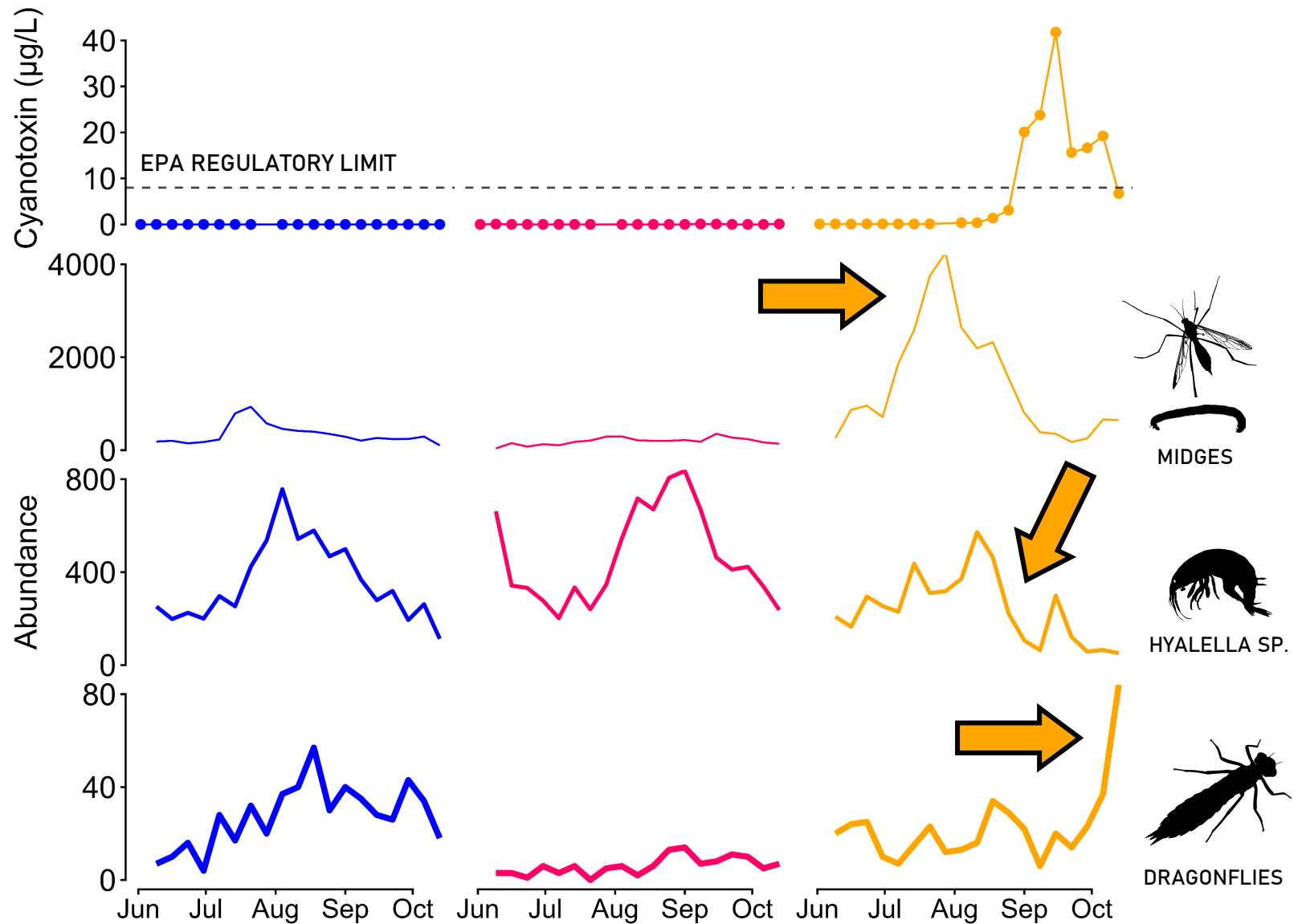
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

- Pass Lake remains productive despite yearly toxic blooms
- Blooms may limit mobility, leading to sampling bias
- Dragonflies continue to lay eggs despite toxins
- No obvious mortality across broad groups



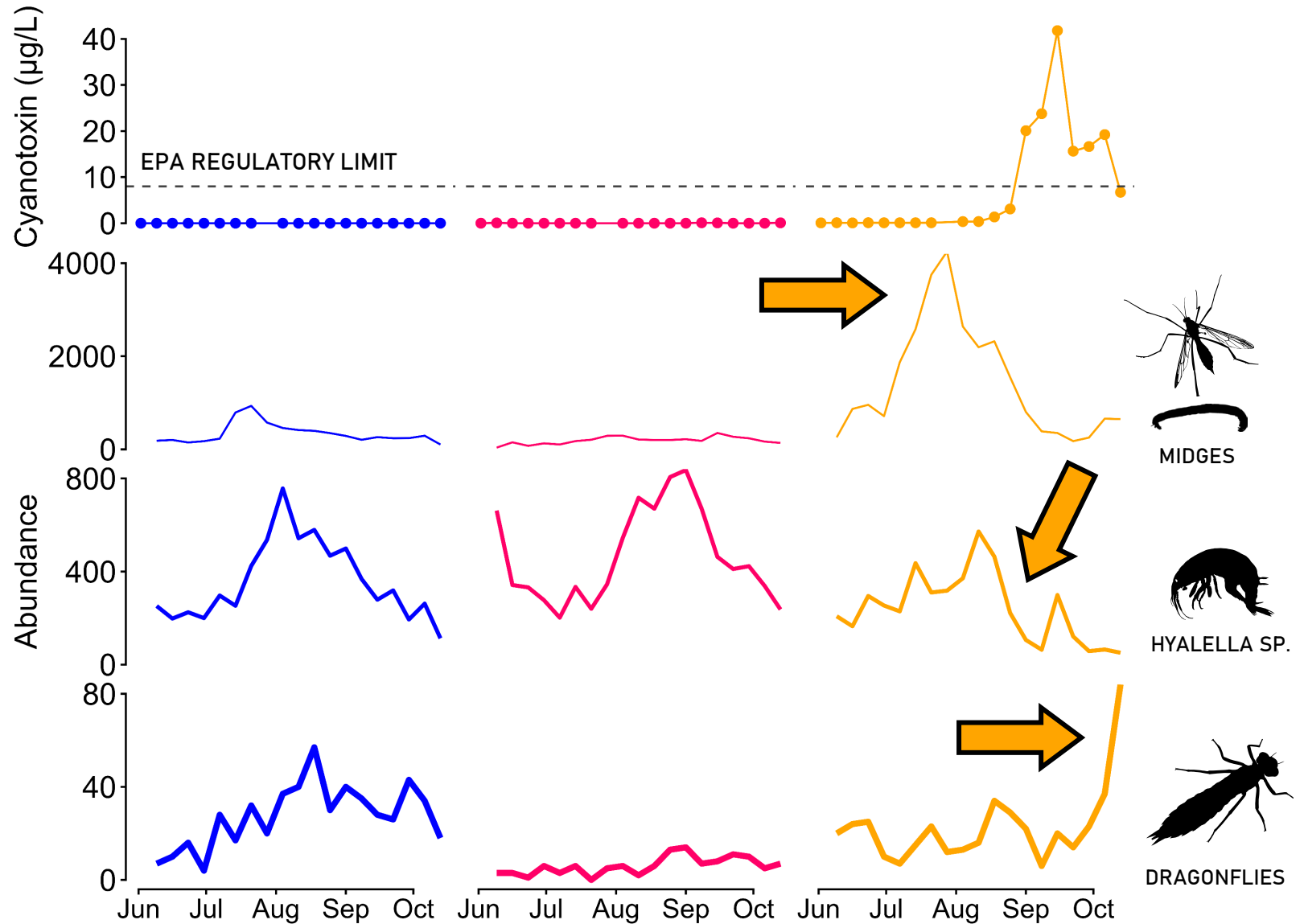
# Question 1: How do cyanotoxins affect freshwater invertebrate communities?

- Pass Lake remains productive despite yearly toxic blooms
- Blooms may limit mobility, leading to sampling bias
- Dragonflies continue to lay eggs despite toxins
- No obvious mortality across broad groups
- Toxins can move up food chain



# What's next?

- Repeat toxin monitoring throughout winter
- Include nutrients + dissolved oxygen (probes and profiles)
- Switch to occasional invert. sampling using sweep net



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

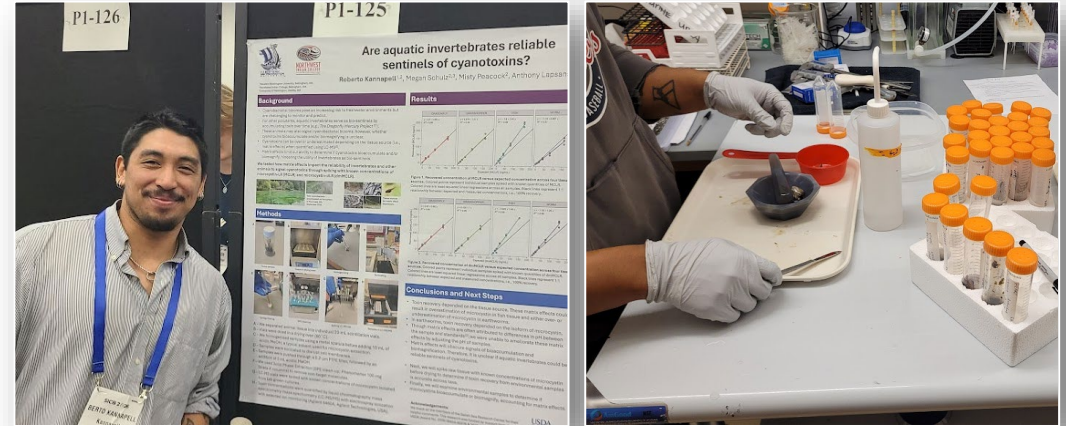


Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

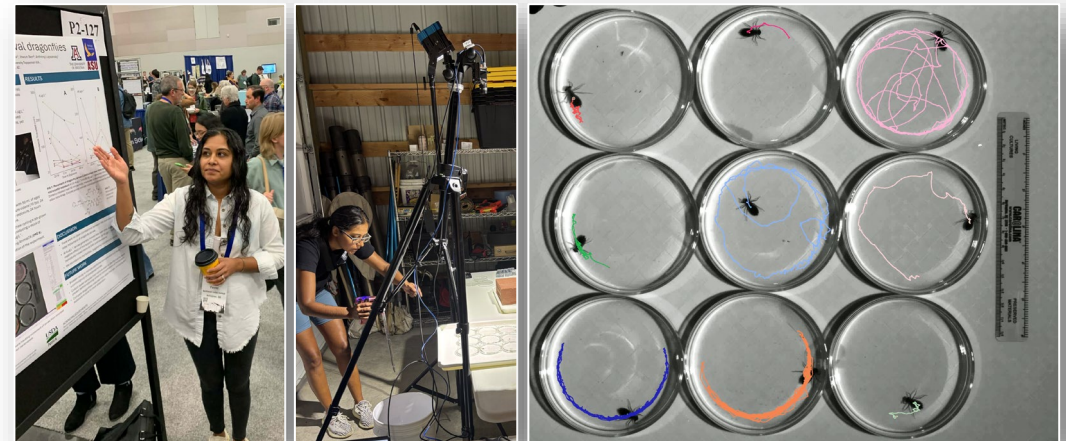
# What's next?

- ❑ Repeat toxin monitoring throughout winter
- ❑ Include nutrients + dissolved oxygen (probes and profiles)
- ❑ Switch to occasional invert. sampling using sweep net

Roberto Kannapell



Ronika Ferrier



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*

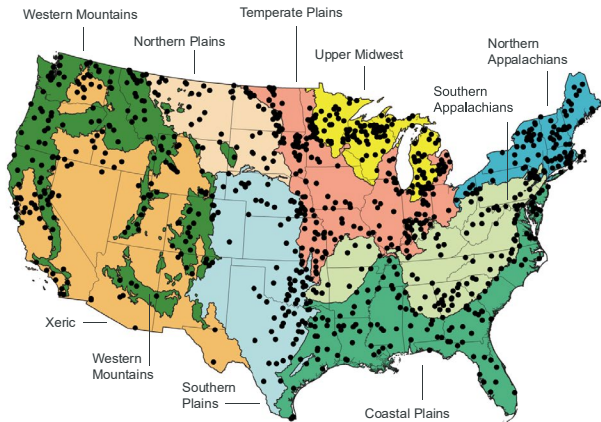


Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge

# What's next?

- ❑ Repeat toxin monitoring throughout winter
- ❑ Include nutrients + dissolved oxygen (probes and profiles)
- ❑ Switch to occasional invert. sampling using sweep net

EPA Invertebrate Data



+

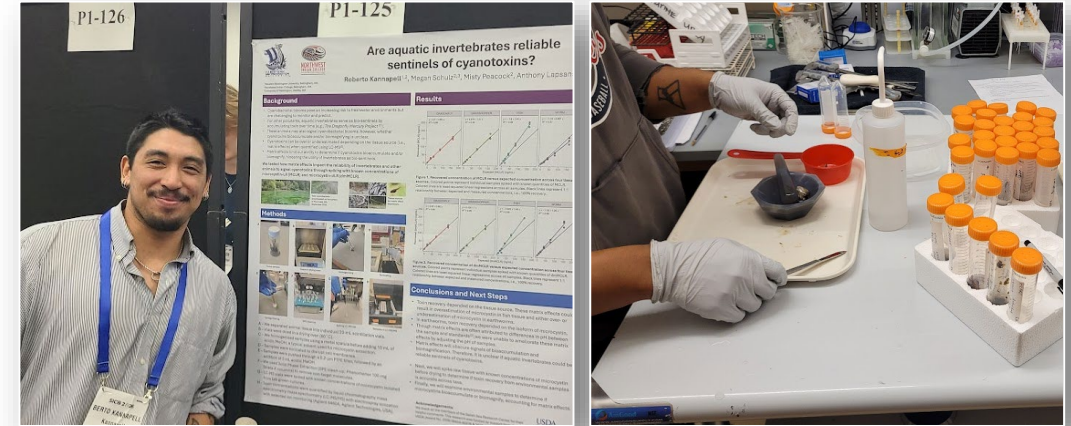
NASA Sat. Data



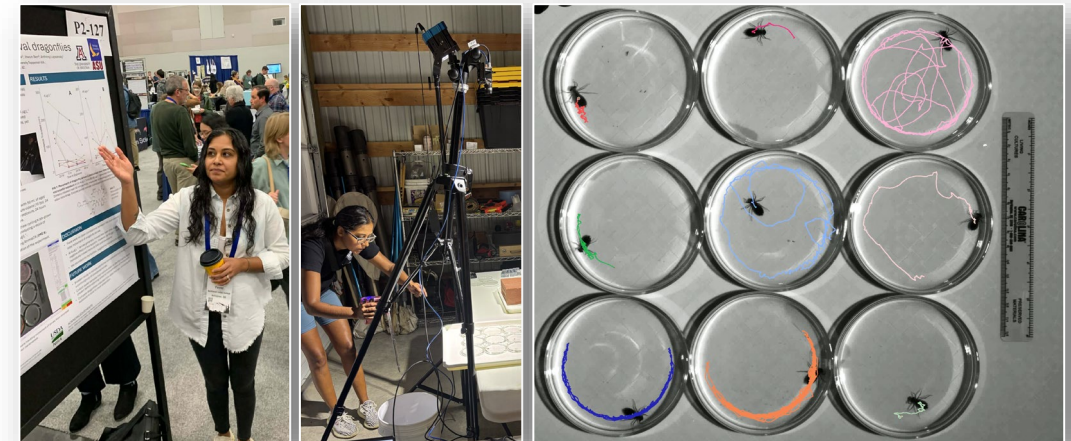
Sylvie Arques



Roberto Kannapell



Ronika Ferrier



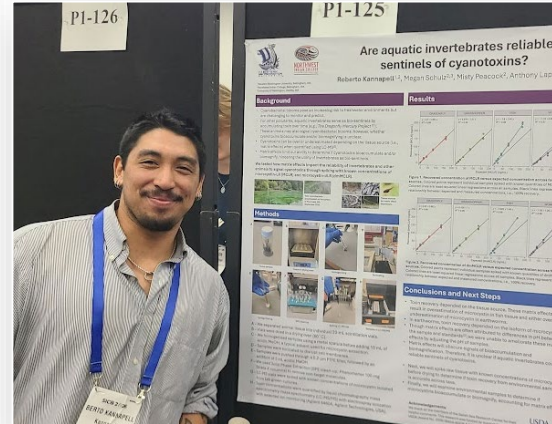
# What's next?

- ❑ Repeat toxin monitoring throughout winter
- ❑ Include nutrients + dissolved oxygen (probes and profiles)
- ❑ Switch to occasional invert. sampling using sweep net

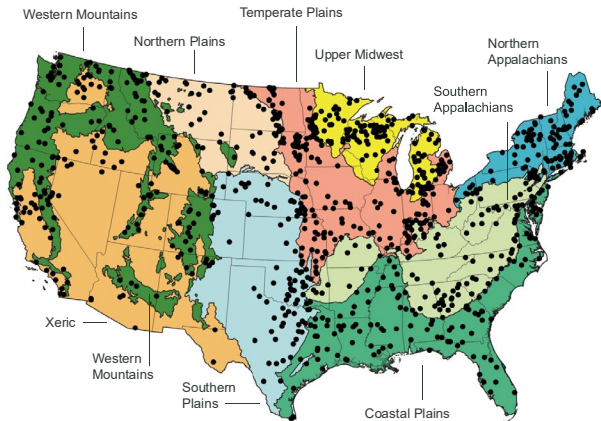
Experiments at MSU



Roberto Kannapell



EPA Invertebrate Data



+

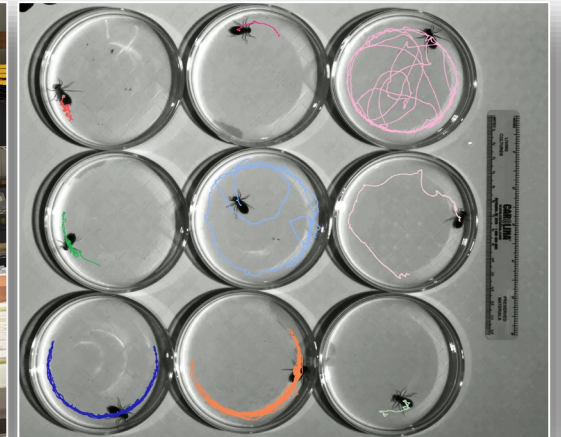
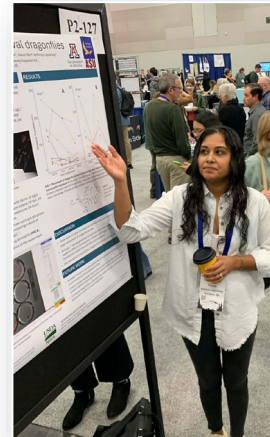
NASA Sat. Data



Sylvie Arques



Ronika Ferrier



# Questions?



**NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE**

*Xwlemi Elh > Tal > Nexw > Squl*



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes  
Indigenous self-determination and knowledge