



Scooper



Utah Airboat Inc.

Fall 2010

President's Message

Once again, fall is approaching! This means many things to many different people, but to us airboaters, it means DUCK HUNTING!! Not only does it mean duck hunting, but it means that we have a valid reason to burn through large quantities of fuel in the pursuit of our quarry. It's no secret that most of us own an airboat in order to go out waterfowl hunting, and it's also no secret (except to a few spouses) that it is a very expensive method of travel. Most airboaters will tell you that when it comes to running their airboat, it can be a serious money drain...but worth every penny! Many of us spend our later summer repairing and improving on the boats we have. A few lucky ones have everything all set up and ready to roll when the season opens. The growing trend is to use our airboats all year round for such things as pleasure cruising, bird watching, bow fishing, ice fishing, and conservation work. This is a great way to get more use out of a boat that was once considered to be only useful from October to January. Fall is also a great time to get out in our boats and see the massive migrations of all kinds of migratory birds. It's a great time to take out a friend or a neighbor and show them what a true wonder the Great Salt Lake really is. The nice thing about airboating on the GSL is that you get to see all this great stuff up close and it turns out to be even better than watching it on the Nature Channel. We are truly lucky to have the opportunity to take our boats out on the Great Salt Lake and enjoy the scenery...oh, and shoot some ducks too!

R. Jefre Hicks

2010 Fall Project- Pintail Flat

On the last weekend in August the Utah Airboat Association completed another ramp improvement project. This project was done at Ogden Bay's Pintail Flat parking lot/airboat ramp. The parking lot has been in steady decline for many years, and the DWR doesn't have the money to improve it to the level that we airboaters feel that it should be. The parking areas were muddy and uneven, the total area allotted for parking was small enough that it was tough to unload your boat and find a parking spot at times. To correct this, we hauled in nearly 300 tons of rock to use as a base as we expanded and improved the parking area. The rock was spread out by the volunteer efforts of Kent Hansen and his skid steer tractor. We also widened the existing boat ramp by about 6 feet and enlarged the launch pool by about 10 feet in order to improve trailer loading capabilities. There were a lot of our members that kept dropping their trailers off the side of the ramp due to its narrow size, so an extra six feet should help keep us all on the ramp and not in the mud when we are launching our boats. Randy Egget supplied the forms and the cement expertise, while a bunch of others chipped in to help wherever necessary. The new ramp improvement turned out very nice!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Fall Project – Pintail Flat
- 2 Memory of Lynn Pace
- 3 Vice President Elections
- 4 UAB Fall Banquet – September 24

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Continued on page 3

Memory of Lynn Pace

It is with a sad heart that I tell you of a good friend and mentor of mine. The first time I met Lynn was early one morning at the bottom ramp at the spur he and his best friend and son Jeff were on their way to hunt their favorite spot out on the spur, I was young and very new to the airboat world, I only had my boat for a couple of months, I will never forget the way Lynn came up to me and said very point blank "Good to meet you, when are you going to join the airboat association?" One thing I always respected about him was he never beat around the bush when he felt he was right or standing up for the right cause. Lynn made many friends in the world of airboats and duck hunters, he and his son were and still are avid supporters of DU, Delta and many other important conservation organizations. Lynn always said "If you care for the marsh it will care for you." I took the opportunity to call some of Lynn's closest friends and asked them to send me their thoughts about him. One quote from Rich Nobel: "Lynn would always help and give to those who needed help he would never ask for anything in return. When Lynn said he would do something, it was done with no strings or expectations". Another of his close friends, Kim Burkinshaw or better known as "Kimbo" said this about Lynn: "One thing about Lynn was he was fun to be around he had a lot of gestures that he always said in fun and joking, and what a chef at home or in the marsh. Lynn was a helper and loved to work on and design things for airboats always very willing to help". I think that this next quote from his best friend and son best describes him: "Dad had 4 airboats in his time, he loved to run them but he loved them to run good, oil and gas leaks were a big no-no, he prided himself on a boat that was "clean" and one that ran good, he never started his boat on the trailer he always said if it won't run in the water why the hell did we bring it?" He always said if you are going to fix something fix it right the first time because when will you have time to fix it again. Lynn truly loved the sound of a good running IO540 Lycoming.

As you can see for those of you who did not get the chance to meet him, Lynn was a great man and a huge asset to the airboat association, he was a member for 39 years and will be missed by those of us who knew him best, so I will ask a favor to all of you this year when you are out on the marsh take a few minutes and look around at the marsh, the people you are with, and all the memories you have of this great sport we call airboating, and cherish each and every one of them. Life is short; enjoy it to the fullest like my good friend and mentor did. In loving memory of Lynn Pace.
By: Troy Thompson



Willard/Perry Sewage Plant update

This spring, the new Willard/Perry Sewage Treatment Facility, located just north of the Willard Spur airboat launch, was nearly ready to begin operations. Before they could do that, they needed to allow for comments about the water quality issues that would be produced as a byproduct of their operations. The Utah Airboat Association joined several other groups in an effort to address problems with water pollution before they began operating. The main issue is with phosphates and nitrogen levels that are usually in high quantities with any sewage treatment plant. The solution to phosphate-loading of a sewer outflow is to install the proper equipment to filter this out and remove it. The problem is that this type of equipment is expensive, and the sewer plant didn't want to install it, so they skipped it by classifying the wetlands of Willard Spur as a mudflat and not deserving of water quality protections. We found out about it and made our voices known to the Division of Water Quality. The insidious thing about high phosphate levels in wetlands is that it creates algal blooms that spread across the water and use up all the oxygen in the water. Without oxygen, the plants that are beneficial to waterfowl and other migratory birds can't survive. This is an unacceptable condition for the Willard Spur, which is home to some of the highest concentrations of Sago Pondweed in the nation. The Spur is necessary for the re-fueling of millions of migrating birds each year, and many of these birds are the target of our hunting. The Utah Airboat Association is committed to protecting the Willard Spur and the Bear River Bay from these kinds of threats. We have a duty to the ecosystem that we all use and enjoy to do all we can to protect it, whether these threats come from mineral extraction expansions or from water pollutants. The end result of our efforts was for the Division of Water Quality to rescind the permit and they are now working on reclassifying the Willard Spur wetlands. The sewer plant will have to make adjustments based on further testing of their outflows, and you can bet we will be watching. Our wetlands deserve no less.

Delta Waterfowl Youth Fair

On September 11th, the annual Delta Waterfowl Youth fair will be held at Farmington Bay. Each year the Utah Airboat Association members volunteer to give rides to kids that attend the Youth Fair. This year we will be starting at 9:00 AM for rides, and going until 12:00 noon. We hope the extended time slot will help alleviate the long lines and hectic conditions that have occurred in the past. Please come to Farmington Bay on Saturday September 11th if you can offer a ride or two to some youngsters. The kids really like this event, and it enhances the public image of the Utah Airboat Association. This year the airboat rides will be held within the interior Turpin unit, access to the Great Salt Lake will not be available until just before the Youth Hunt. Please do not launch at the main airboat ramps. Try to get to the Turpin boat ramp by about 8:30 in order to be ready to give some rides to kids.

Phragmites Report

The only thing that you can depend on with Phragmites along the Great Salt Lake Shoreline marshes is that it will continue to get taller and spread faster. As of June 2010, Google Maps has updated the latest satellite imagery of our hunting grounds. After looking at them, you will see that nearly all of the ponds that existed from Brigham City to Tooele have been lost to phragmites. The shallow ponds, bulrush edges, and salicornia flats that migrating birds depend on have mostly disappeared over the last 10 years or so. This loss of habitat has the effect of forcing migrating birds to shorten their stay on the GSL, and move on to better areas. This also has the effect of having wildly fluctuating success while hunting ducks due to migration and feeding patterns. The GSL marshes used to hold hundreds of thousands of birds for weeks and months at a time, but with most of their forage lost to phragmites there is nothing to hold birds for extended periods. This makes it tough to have good consistent hunting. Needless to say, phragmites is the absolute most important factor in our hunting success on the Great Salt Lake. The Airboat Association has been spraying some of our flows in an effort to keep them from overgrowing and blocking our access to the lake, but nearly all of the flows are under the jurisdiction of the Division of Fire, Forestry and State Lands (FFSL). The FFSL has a mandate to protect the public trust on our sovereign lands which include the GSL marshes, but as we know, this mandate has been ignored for too long and the result is wetland devastation. The Airboat Association has been very active in the fight against phragmites on our state sovereign lands. We will continue to write letters to our legislators, attend meetings with land managers, and push for some real action from our elected officials on the loss of our wetlands. The state receives many millions of dollars each year in royalties and leases on the Great Salt Lake. This money is paid by companies using the lake for profit, while paying the state for the use of the lake's limited resources. We feel that some of this money should be used to protect and reclaim our lost marshes along the Great Salt Lake shoreline. It only seems fair that the FFSL should protect the lake with money collected from the exploitation of the lake's resources. As we progress in this fight, we may need to have our members attend a few meetings or send an email to a few legislators. This seems like a small effort, but our locally elected legislator's control where these royalties are spent...and they are NOT being spent to protect the lake that provides these funds. If our airboating pastime is to continue, we really must convince our elected officials that the lake is worth saving!

Visit the Utah Airboat web site for all the latest updates. www.utairboat.com

To ensure you receive e-mail updates from the Airboat Association, register on the Utah Airboat forum.

After freeze-up, it can be difficult to get your airboat off the trailer and out on the ice, so we installed a pull-off pole. This pole will allow our members to attach a strap from their boat to the pole, pull forward, and drop their boat on the ground. Chuck Moon supplied the pole and welded on some hooks for us. Also, when it is time to re-load your boat in the winter (after freeze-up) you will enjoy the new boat loading ramp that we built. You will now be able to back your trailer up to the ramp/loading dock, and drive right on to your trailer.



The west flow was starting to get crowded with Phragmites, so we took some tractors down the dry flow and cut out the path. Thanks to Troy Thompson and Kerry McCloud for the tractor work. This was a fairly expensive project, but many of our members came through to help out with man-power and financial help. Darin Dewsnup and Jody Harris both donated very generously to help with the expenses. Our friends in the Utah Mudmotor Association donated as well. Staker/Parson gave us a discounted rate on the rocks and the cement. There are many additional members of the Airboat Association that donated and helped with this project, and with friends like these, we can really get some great things done! Thanks to all that helped out!!

Vice President Elections

This fall, both Todd Bangerter and Jon Gailey will have fulfilled their terms as vice presidents. They have been a great help and a source of strong support for our banquets and other activities. They deserve a big slap on the back for a job well done!

Along that same topic, the vacancies created by Todd and Jon will need to be filled at the fall banquet. Please consider helping us out by offering to serve as an officer of the Utah Airboat Association...we will be taking nominations at the banquet on September 24th. These positions don't take up a lot of time, but they are very important to the association in terms of helping to keep things rolling along. Also, the office of president will be open at the fall banquet of 2011, so that gives us all about a year to think that one over! Please think about serving as an officer of your Airboat Association.

UAB Fall Banquet

The annual Fall Banquet will be held on Friday, September 24th at the Golden Spike Trap Club in west Brigham City. To get to the trap club, take the Forest Street Exit off I-15, go east one block and turn right on 1300 West. Doors open at 5:00 PM and food will be served by 7:00 PM. We will be giving away prizes, guns, decoys, and lots of other fun stuff. Last year we asked our members to bring a side dish to compliment the main course of BBQ chicken or beef, and it worked out really well. This year will be more of the same, please bring any side dish to share with the others attending. The UAB will provide the main course (steak, chicken, duck kabobs, etc) Ice Cream Sandwiches and drinks. In addition to food and prizes, there is also the opportunity to shoot your guns. The trap club requests that we only shoot low brass lead shot. The price for a round of trap is \$6.25 per 25 targets. Remember, just because you hit a few targets at the fall banquet, it doesn't mean that you will be a dead-eye shooter on the duck opener...we all know that ducks have a way of humbling even the most experienced airboaters!! See you all at the FALL BANQUET!

How an Addiction is Started

As we pulled up to the Farmington bay airboat ramp my heart was pumping! As I got out of the truck, I could smell that sweet smell of the lake, and I knew it was going to be a

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great day. We got the boat started and the gear put in its place, and then gently slid the boat off the trailer into the muddy water. In that moment my air boating addiction had begun! I was a 13 year old boy dreaming of an airboat ride. Luckily, I had a persistent mother who nagged the neighbor with the "noisy boat" to take her son on a ride. After months of begging, Tad Cannon finally gave in and set the day for the ride.

As we drove out on the lake, I couldn't believe how many ducks there were in huge rafts. We followed closely to the Turpin Dike, passed the smell of "Stinky", and up the left fork of Crystal. As we busted through bull rush and the salicornia flats, my eyes were as big as baseballs. I was actually on an airboat! Ducks would flutter up in front of us around every bend, and we finally came to a stop at the Crystal Dike.

I was ready to get out and start hunting. But Tad, a veteran of airboat duck hunting, said, "Where have all the birds gone? There's none left. Let's go." I will admit I was a little disappointed. We didn't even set a decoy out, but I couldn't be sad. My dreams were fulfilled. I was on an airboat!! We turned around and headed for home. The whole ride took maybe 30 minutes, but I had a big ol' smile on my face the whole way back! Thanks to Tad for letting the annoying little neighbor boy tag along on his first airboat ride and for starting my addiction to air boating, I will never be the same!!

Todd Bangerter

