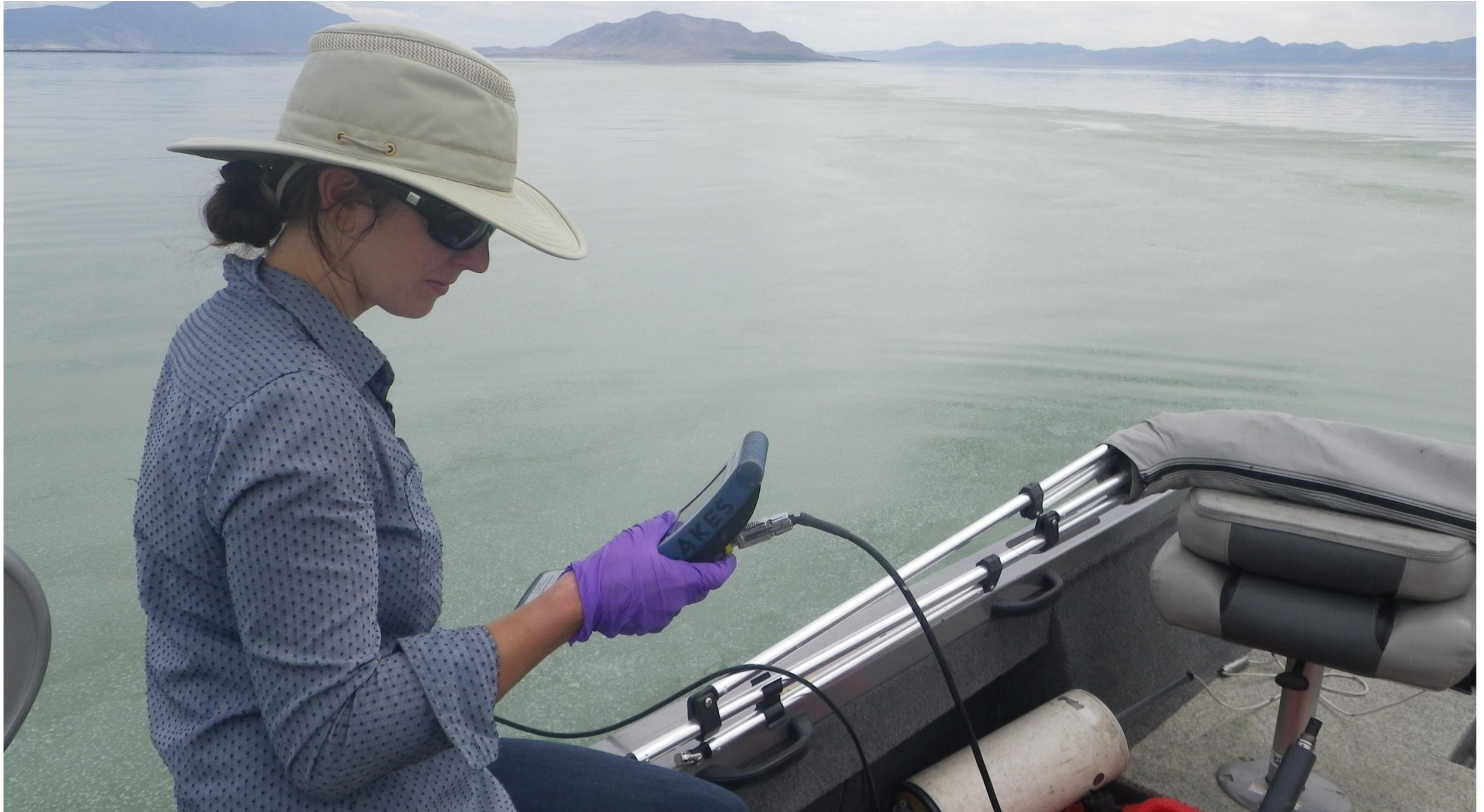




UTAH DEPARTMENT *of*
**ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY**

HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Communication Best Practices



Agency Response

- Updated contact list for all affected agencies/entities
- Protocol for contacting affected agencies/entities
- Protocol for coordinating HAB response with affected entities
 - Conference call schedule
 - Single, dedicated coordinating agency/entity for all bloom events
 - Roles and responsibilities for each agency/entity during blooms



Messaging

- Single Overriding Communication Objective (SOCO) (Message Map)
 - Consistent template
 - Coordinated messaging for all agencies/entities
 - User-group SOCOs prepared prior to bloom season
 - Waterbody SOCOs prepared on a case-by-case basis during bloom events
 - Forecast SOCO for upcoming season
- Development of “one source of truth” fact sheet

Single Overriding Communications Objective (SOCO) Work Sheet*

Key Message:

In one brief paragraph, state the key point or objective in doing the interview or press event. This statement should reflect what you would like to see as the lead paragraph in a newspaper story or broadcast news report.

Key Facts:

What are the three facts or statistics you would like the public to remember as a result of reading or hearing about this story?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Target Audience:

Who is the main audience or population segment you would like this message to reach?

- Primary:
- Secondary:

Interview Objective:

What is the one message the audience needs to take away from this report/interview?

Primary Media Contact

Who in your office/organization will serve as the primary point of contact for the media?

- Name:
- Phone:
- Date and time available:

* Developed by Bob Howard, assistant to the director, National Center for Infectious Diseases

Press Release Coordination

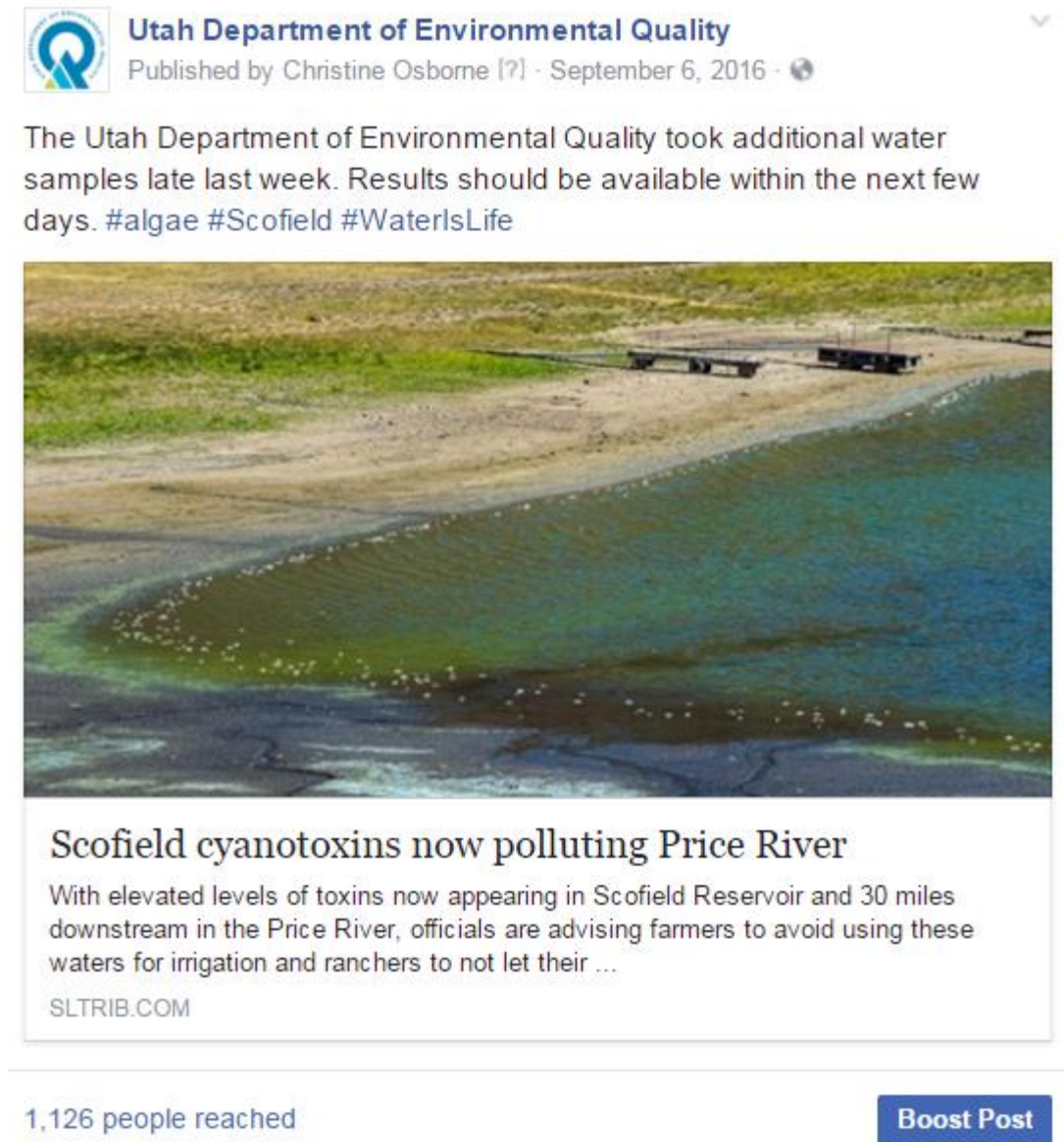
- Contact list for agency/entity/LHD PIOs along with protocol for contacting PIOs
- DEQ: lead for coordinated press releases
- LHDs: lead for advisories on specific waterbodies
- Dedicated conference-call number during bloom season
- Google Docs for drafting press releases



Photo by Utah DEQ


Social Media Coordination

- Coordinated sharing/consistent hashtags for Facebook and Twitter posts by all affected entities to strengthen messaging
- Reiteration of main message(s) across all social media posts
 - Advisories and what they mean
 - Poison Control phone number
 - DEQ webpage URL (habs.utah.gov) for updates
- Facebook Live for real-time question-and-answer opportunities between agencies/officials/LHDs and the public/media



Central Repository for Information

- Shared Google Drive folder with subfolders
 - Press releases
 - FAQ sheets
 - SOCOs
- Shared spreadsheet with contact emails and phone numbers
- Shared Google Doc with links to agency/entity HABs webpages



State of Utah
GARY R. HERBERT
Governor
SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of
Environmental Quality

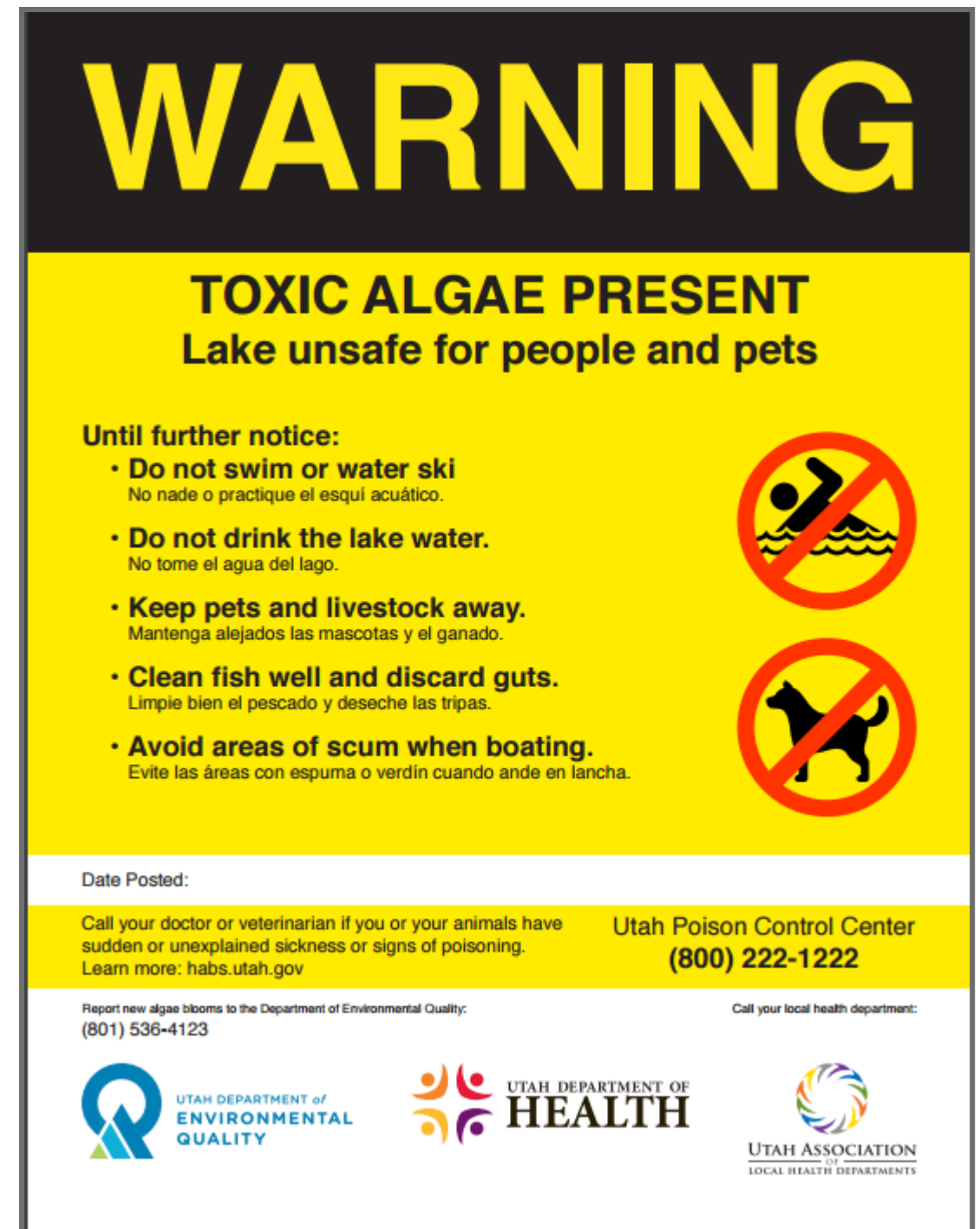
Alan Matheson
Executive Director
Brad T. Johnson
Deputy Director

NEWS RELEASE
July 17, 2016

CONTACT
Donna Kemp Spangler
Communications Director
Office: 801-536-4484
Cell: 801-554-4944
dspangler@utah.gov

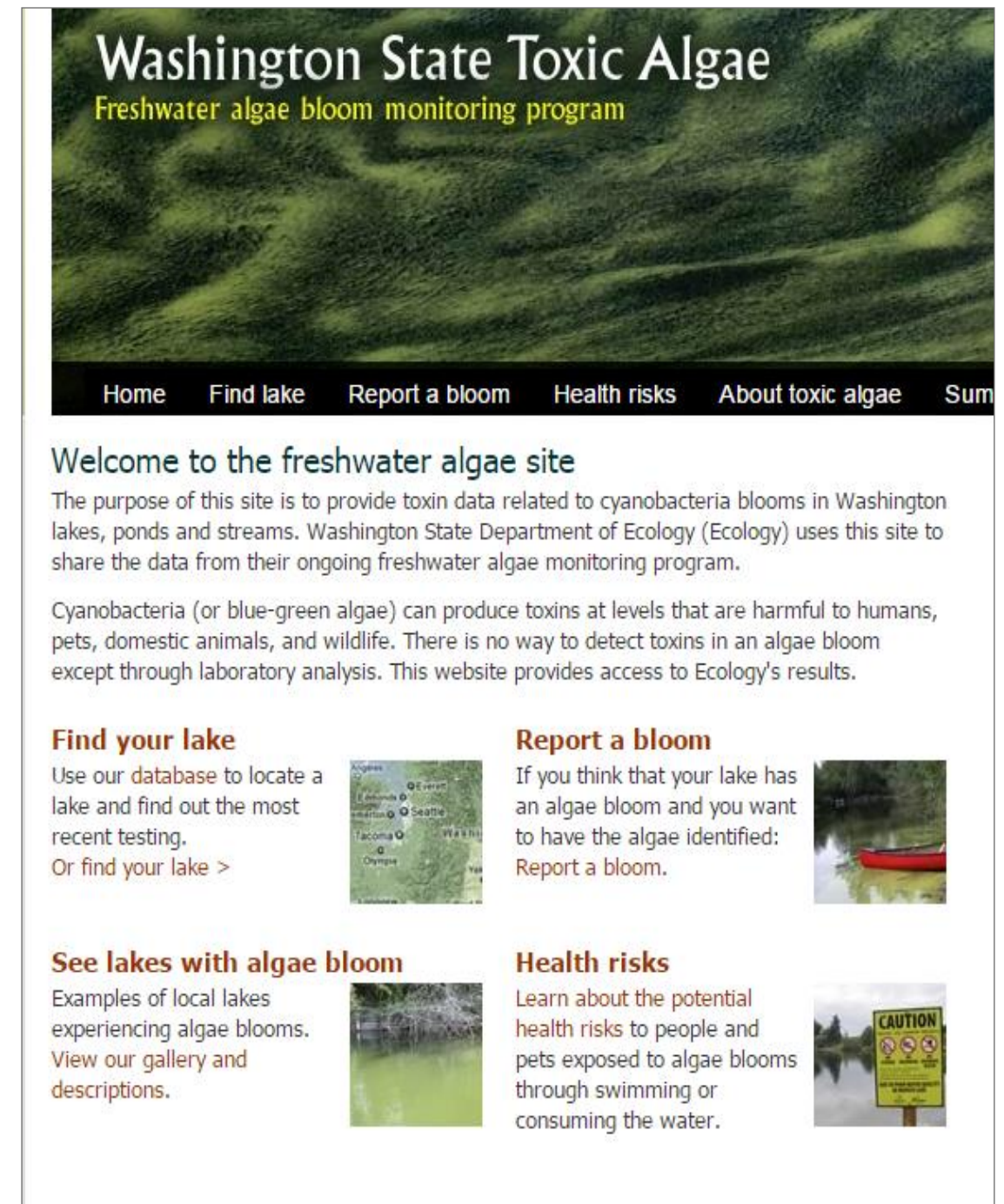
Signage Updates

- Distribution of signage templates to LHDs, State Parks, UDAF, municipalities, irrigation companies, and any other entities that may need to post signage
- Date range on signage rather than date posted
- Larger field available for LHD phone number
- Utah Poison Control Center phone number more prominent



Website Layout

- DEQ website as central repository of all information for public/media
- Simplified landing page with important information
 - Current advisories (interactive map)
 - Report a bloom
 - Protect yourself
 - Health risks
 - Photo gallery



Website Layout

- “At a glance” template with a weekly snapshot of activities/advisories
 - Date samples taken
 - Date sample results received
 - Waterbody
 - Cell counts
 - Toxin levels and type
 - Advisory (link to signage)
- Daily/periodic updates with detailed information (current update format) in addition to ‘at-a-glance’ info
- Email alert signup (Listserv) on HABs webpage(s)

Update: August 15, 2016

Sampling Results

DWQ has received cyanobacteria cell-count results from August 9, 2016, sampling is available later this week. The division will continue to coordinate with the local health department as results come in.

DWQ and its partners will continue to sample Utah Lake and the Jordan River and the results of the sampling show that cyanobacteria toxin concentrations are within the low-risk range for two consecutive samples.

Utah Lake

Cyanobacteria cell-count concentrations remain in the low to moderate health-risk range (10,000 to 100,000 cells/milliliter(mL)) at Pelican Point, 0.5 miles west of Geneva Harbor, and one sample from the Salt Lake Canal at 90th Street. Cyanobacteria cell concentrations were in the very low range (<20,000 cells/mL) at the other locations. Caution signs remain posted.

To date, scientists have identified six species of cyanobacteria at Lincoln Harbor: *Aphanizomenon* (131,000 cells/mL) and *Dolichospermum* (8,500 cells/mL) to moderate health-risk concentrations, *Pseudanabaena* (7.7 million cells/mL), *Phormidium* (3 and 5 million cells/mL) (338,000 and 776,000 cells/mL). The private marina is closed to the public on the north side of the harbor. The Utah Department of Environmental Quality, and recreationists should avoid areas of scum.

Jordan River

Cyanobacteria cell-count concentrations remain in the low to moderate health-risk range (10,000 to 100,000 cells/mL) at the Utah Lake outlet, in the Jordan River Narrows, and in the Salt Lake Canal at 90th Street. Cyanobacteria cell count concentrations were in the very low risk range (< 20,000 cells/mL) for the other locations. Caution signs remain posted.

Questions?

