

SWIM ACROSS LAKE WASHINGTON

Join the Pacific Northwest Association of Masters Swimmers and the USMS Fitness Committee for a virtual swim across Lake Washington. Swim from south to north to cover 13 miles with views of the shoreline, Seattle, Mercer Island, the I-90 and 520 bridges, and Mt. Rainier. If you want more distance, swim across and back for a total of 26 miles.



Lake Washington is the largest of the three major lakes in King County, and the second largest natural lake in the State of Washington. The basin of Lake Washington is a deep, narrow, glacial trough with steeply sloping sides, sculpted by the Vashon ice sheet, the last continental glacier to move through the Seattle area. The lake is 20.6 feet above mean lower low tide in Puget Sound, to which it is connected via Lake Union and the Lake Washington Ship Canal, constructed in 1916. The Ship Canal is the only discharge from Lakes Sammamish and Washington via the locks and dam at the western end. Prior to construction of the canal, the only significant inflow was from the Sammamish River in the north. Construction of the canal resulted in the lowering of the lake 9 feet to its present level, leaving the Black River dry and the Cedar River diverted into Lake Washington. Mercer Island lies in the southern half of the lake, separated from the east shore by a relatively shallow and narrow channel, and from the west shore by a much wider and deeper channel.

The lake area is 21,500 acres; lake volume is 2,350,000 acre-ft. Mean depth is 108 feet with a maximum depth of 214 feet. Length of the lake is 13 miles in a north-south direction.



Each year, the Fat Salmon Open Water Swim is held in Lake Washington on the third weekend in July.

