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KILL DEVIL HILL

CSI to give presentation in KDH on Hyde County's Lake

Fascinating research findings on Lake Mattamuskeet will be presented by UNC Coastal Studies Institute research fellow Matt Waters at public meeting sponsored by the League of Women Voters.

The presentation will take place Thursday, February 22 at

from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Kill Devil Hills Town Hall.

Located in Hyde County, Lake Mattamuskeet has an interesting history of varied uses and multiple personalities.

The lake was first discovered by English settlers in the mid 1500's.

Mattamuskeet

Michael Piehler, lead investigator on the project at Lake Mattamuskeet.

This is a situation in which the two sides of the lake are dominated by completely different primary producer communities.

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Recognizing the potential of the fertile land below the lake's surface, efforts began to drain the lake for farming in 1825. By 1915, the Lake Mattamuskeet pumping station was operational and kept the lake bed dry for farming. By 1932, pumping had ceased due to increasing costs, and the lake was allowed to refill once again. The highway dividing Mattamuskeet into two sides, NC 94, was completed in 1942.

Today, UNC Coastal Studies Institute scientists are in the process of trying to determine the origin of both the lake itself and a rare ecological phenomenon occurring in Lake Mattamuskeet.

'The lake is plant-dominated on the East side and algae dominated on the West,' said Dr.

CSI

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Scientists are intrigued by this unique condition and know of no other natural lake in the country with this dynamic.

With the goal of trying to determine how these ecosystems may have formed, presenter and scientist Matt Waters has been reconstructing Lake Mattamuskeet's primary producer history by examining cores of the lake bottom sediment.

Waters states, 'The principal objective of rebuilding the lake's primary producer history is to determine when the dual stable states began which can then identify past management practices that may have caused them and how those conditions may benefit the lake.'

The results of this study will be coupled with other UNC Coastal Studies Institute projects currently underway at Lake Mattamuskeet. This information can be applied to assist land use managers as to what practices may help preserve the health of this fragile ecosystem so it can be a valuable natural resource for future generations.

The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend this educational program. For more information, visit the UNC Coastal Studies Institute website at <http://csi.northcarolina.edu>