



## **Great Lakes and Great Plains Virtual Book Club**

### **The Death and Life of the Great Lakes by Dan Egan**

7 PM CT/8 PM ET on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

#### **Introduction**

1. Basic introduction of members: name, where you live, ship you sailed on, date, and one new hobby or talent you have found during COVID.
2. Which Great Lake do you live closest to?
3. What has been your own experience of the Great Lakes?

#### **Chapter One - Carving a Fourth Seacoast - Dreams of a Seaway (pages 3-34)**

1. The opening of the book lists many mysteries of the Great Lakes, which one did you find most interesting? What other mysteries do you think the Lakes hold?
2. The history of the Great Lakes is an important backdrop for this book, what were things that you read that surprised you? Why?
3. Pros and cons for building the Seaway. Do you think opening the Great Lakes was needed?
4. What could have been done to avoid the problems that resulted from opening the Seaway?

#### **Chapter Two - Three Fish - The Story of Lake Trout, Sea Lampreys and Alewives (pages 35-74)**

1. In chapter two the food web and the rise and fall of the lake trout and lake whitefish are discussed. Were there signs that went unnoticed and could have helped these fish?
2. The sea lamprey was discovered first in 1835, but there are four native sea lampreys that have probably lived in the Great Lakes for thousands of years. The canal being opened most likely is what changed things, what took so long for action on the sea lamprey? And what irreversible action has resulted due to them?
3. The river herring, or alewife, may have been in the lakes for years and may have lived in harmony, but what happened? Can you compare this to anything happening in our environment now? How can we take this event and connect it to the classroom?
4. If you're old enough to remember the big fish kill in 1967 (or if you've read about it), how do you think this was a wake up call for us concerning the Great Lakes?
5. Of course, with the Alewives taking over the Great Lakes, was the solution to introduce another predator a step in the right direction? How can we use this to help students relate to the problem?

#### **Closing**

- Discussion meeting frequency and number (every week, every other week, once a month)
- Next meeting – one #BookBento image