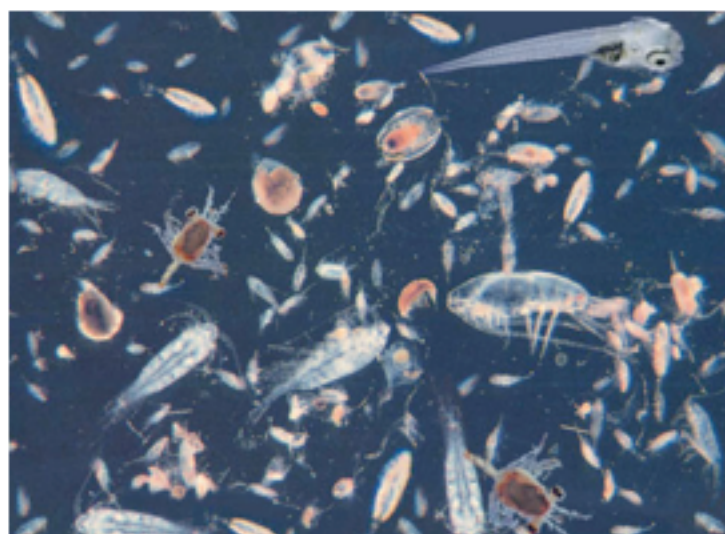
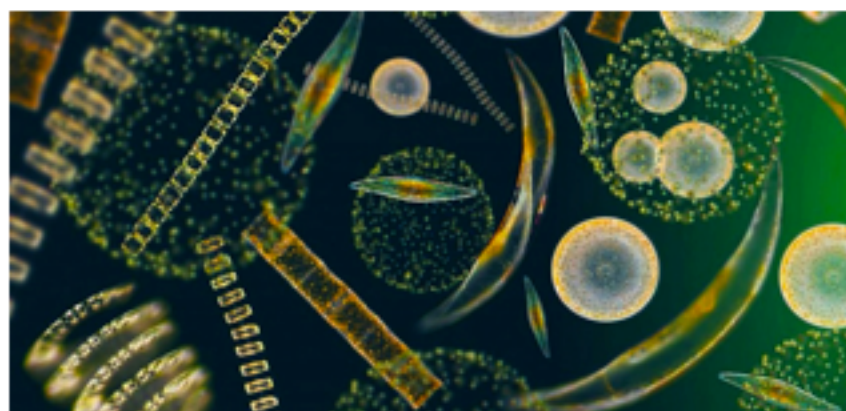
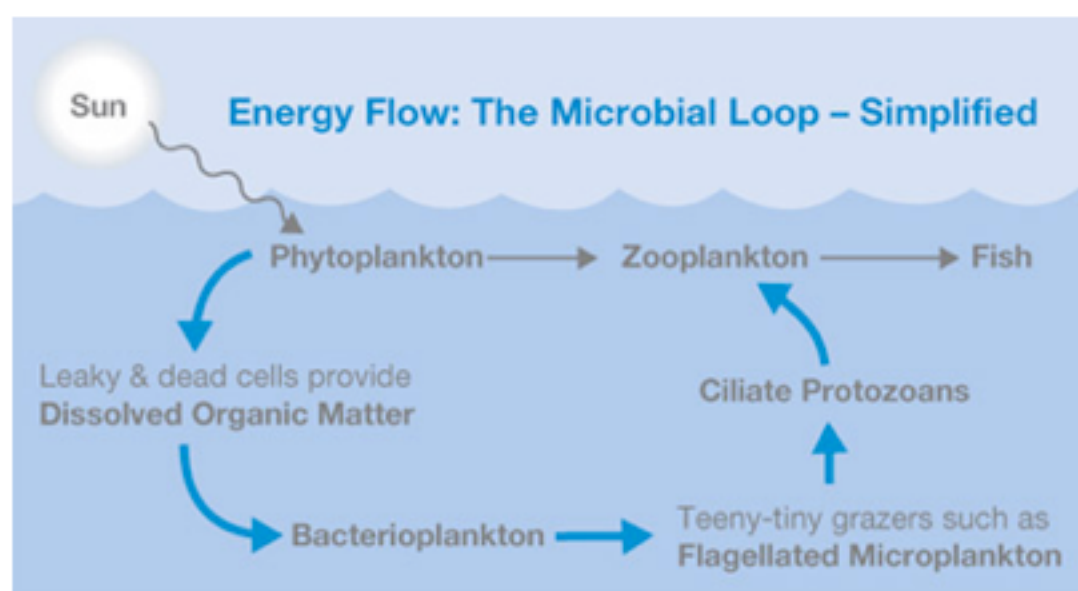


Kokanee salmon feed on plankton, small organisms that live in the water. Plankton are divided into group based on their type. Phytoplankton are plants, zooplankton are animals and bacterioplankton are composed of bacteria and archaea. When mixed together in the water they are generally referred to as plankton. In areas where there is abundant plankton, kokanee salmon can quickly overpopulate. The fish are also very sensitive to water temperature and often school at certain depths in lakes. Prior to 1986, the population of kokanee salmon in Flathead Lake was abundant, but people began to notice reduced numbers after that time.



Microscopic images of phytoplankton (left) and zooplankton (right).



Discussion:

1. List questions posed by your group.
2. What are your initial reactions to the causes of the kokanee population dropping after 1986?
3. As student scientists, what investigations would you conduct to determine the cause of the kokanee population drop in Flathead Lake?
4. What additional information do you need to know?