

Lake Iroquois Association
Annual Report

In recent years we have gathered data on nutrient levels in tributaries, written grants to remediate streams to reduce storm run off, run a greeter program, and numerous other initiatives. These efforts continue and are aiding in improving water quality of the lake. However reducing the infestation of Eurasian Water Milfoil continues to be a difficult problem.

There is no magic bullet to get rid of the milfoil. It will not go away, but it can be reduced and managed. It takes consistent effort and funding over many years to reduce and control milfoil. This year, we created a working group, led by board member Jamie Carroll, to research options and develop a management plan. This group has spent many hours studying and talking with people from other lakes who have done battle with milfoil. We have also had guest speakers, including one from Lake Dunmore which has very well developed milfoil management efforts, and we sent a team to visit that lake and observe milfoil harvesting. We continue to work with state agencies to explore different methods of management and we met with stakeholders to explain the problem that we face and the various methods we are studying.

Throughout this process, one thing has become clear: any method of abatement will be very expensive. However, we know that milfoil will not simply go away and so we are optimistic that we will come up with the best solution for our lake. We have studied suction harvesting, use of chemicals, hand pulling, and the use of barriers secured to the lake bottom. All methods have benefits, and all have liabilities. We are meeting with the various stakeholders, including the surrounding town select boards to discuss these options in detail, and look at methods of fundraising. We are in it for the long haul!

Other activities involved attending statewide meetings (our vice president, Roger Crouse, is on the board of directors of the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds), rewriting the homeowners manual of best lake front management practices, distributing an updated directory of homeowners, and working with the Lake Iroquois Boaters Association on safety issues. A number of buoys were placed at spots 200 feet from shore to remind boaters that State law requires boats travel at 5 MPH or less within this zone.

The greeter program was active on weekends during the summer to inspect boats for plant life both entering and leaving the lake. Close to 1000 boats were "greeted" and nearly 100 boats were found to be carrying invasive species. We have written a grant to fund a high powered, hot water wash station for boats entering and leaving the fishing access.

The LIA has also worked with the Lake Champlain Committee to sponsor blue-green algae training and identification. Chip and Jo Wright began monitoring the south end of the lake as part of the LCC monitoring program. In other partnerships, the LIA worked with the State Fish and Wildlife Department to help with the upgrade of the fishing access, and worked with the Lake Iroquois Recreation District to improve the drainage at the beach. All of these cooperative efforts will serve to reduce the amount of nutrients entering the lake and improve water quality in the lake. It has been a really busy year for LIA, and next year looks like more of the same. Our thanks for town support now and in the future.

Submitted by Pat Suozzi, President, Lake Iroquois Association