



Lake Iroquois Association

PO Box 569, Hinesburg, VT 05461

Research, education, and action for a healthy lake

Dear Friends of Lake Iroquois,

As most of you are aware, in recent months the LIA has worked closely with the VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on the development of an effective management plan to control the aquatic invasive plant, Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM). With close scrutiny and advice from the state, the LIA and the Lake Iroquois Recreation District (LIRD) have developed and submitted an Aquatic Nuisance Control Permit Application to use the herbicide, ProcellaCOR (active ingredient florasulam), in Lake Iroquois during the summer/fall season of 2020 to reduce and control the EWM infestation. This herbicide has been approved by the DEC and the Vermont Health Department to be used for mitigation of this invasive species.

The LIA uses various methods of control of EWM as part of a multi-faceted approach to dealing with this invasive species. Benthic (bottom) barriers have been placed at the public boat access to maintain an open channel so boats do not fragment the milfoil which contributes to its spread. Diver-Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) was used but has been shown to be most effective for clearing small areas of infestation. It does affect native species and causes considerable lake-bottom disturbances.

The use of a targeted herbicide to treat a large infestation such as that in Lake Iroquois can be an effective method when considering controlling EWM. We were told this summer by our DASH contractor, AB Aquatics, that Lake Iroquois is the worst body of water when dealing with EWM that they have seen in the past few years in New England.

The LIA-LIRD Aquatic nuisance Control Permit Application submitted to DEC proposes the use of the aquatic herbicide, ProcellaCOR, to help control growth and spread of the invasive EWM. The Vermont Department of Health has examined the product and concluded that its use presents "...a negligible risk to public health..." when applied in the very low concentrations necessary to eliminate EWM.

The DEC will only allow up to 40% of the littoral zone (the area where aquatic plant growth is possible) to be treated in any one season. The Lake Iroquois littoral zone is approximately 100 acres. The plant survey completed in September of 2019 showed that EWM was found in 86% (86 acres) of the littoral zone. The LIA-LIRD permit application proposes to treat 40 acres at the north end of the lake where the worst and most dense infestation is. Depending on the results of a post treatment plant survey, the permit application proposes a possible treatment in the next year of up to another 40%. Again dependent on results, it is expected that use of benthic mats, DASH, and hand pulling should be able to manage any further infestation.

The DEC permit process requires that public notification be done of owners of property that borders the waterbody proposed to be treated as well as owners of property bordering waterbodies for one mile downstream. The LIA sent out this notification on the day the permit application was submitted. If the permit is granted, it is expected that it will be conditioned on notices being sent in advance of any treatment to this same group of abutting property owners, as well as to all recreational camps and camp participants that may use the lake and notices will be posted around the lake. Although there are no drinking water restrictions when using this herbicide in such low concentrations, the LIA-LIRD plans to provide drinking water on the day of treatment to those properties, on request, which draw their water from the treated waterbody.

Our efforts to protect the lake from the damage and disruption caused by this invasive is an ongoing collaborative effort between the LIA and LIRD, in addition to multiple stakeholders that include the surrounding towns of Hinesburg, Richmond, St. George and Williston, lakefront property owners, lake users, and the state of Vermont.

These mitigation efforts require an integrated five year management plan utilizing all available methods of control and stakeholder involvement. We believe this plan achieves this objective. The plan is fiscally sound and will effectively aid in the reduction and control of EWM while at the same time we continue our remediation and runoff mitigation projects to achieve nutrient reduction goals. Reduction of nutrients and sediment runoff helps to discourage EWM growth and enhances lake water quality and a healthy lake ecosystem.

We need your help. Honestly, we can't do this without you. This is obviously an expensive undertaking in dollars and in volunteer time. As an all-volunteer organization, every penny of your membership dues and donations goes to supporting the efforts to protect and enhance our precious lake. If you have already sent in your 2020 dues and donations, we thank you. If you have not yet done so, we hope you will soon. We also hope that you will consider donating some time; we can use your help on many projects. Please contact me for more information on how you can help.

For more information, including projected dates of public meetings to discuss this project, to read the full permit filing and the full lake management plan go to our website www.lakeiroquois.org. You can also renew your membership and make a donation via the website, as well as sending comments or questions by clicking the "Contact Us" button.

Once again, thanks to all of you in our wonderful lake community. These many different projects to protect and enhance our beautiful lake only happen with your help and support.

See you soon at the lake!

Christopher J. Conant
President

lakeiroquoisassociation@gmail.com