

Musconetcong News-Summer 2013

Weeds, Weeds and More **Weeds!** Through the years anyone who views our lake, lives on our lake, tries to enjoy our lake or cares about our lake has wondered what can be done to control the large quantities of weeds clogging the lake. One local resident actually has documents dating back to 1936 dealing with the same concerns about weeds. Two groups are now working on the problem. They are the Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board and the Lake Musconetcong Community Association, Inc. Both have websites where you can read about the organizational structures and mission: **LMRPB** - www.lakemusconetcong.com **LMCA** - www.lakemusconetcong.org

What has been done in 2013?

Herbicide Treatment:

Funding for the 2013 herbicide treatment was derived from the following sources:

1. LMRPB	\$18,445 (Govt. Funding)
2. LMCA	\$16,712 (Local Donations)
3. NJ Department of Parks	\$10,817
4. Borough of Stanhope	\$ 966
5. Borough of Netcong	\$ 483
6. <u>Township of Roxbury</u>	\$ 483
Total Cost of Herbicide Treatment	\$47,906

The LMRPB used the brand name Navigate (2-4-D) specifically to address the water chestnut problem in Byram Bay, Arbolino Bay and the area around the Stanhope Island for a total treatment area of approximately 80 acres. The LMCA used the brand name Clipper to address the Eurasian Milfoil and Coon Tail around the shoreline. NJ Parks used Navigate in the areas of the State boat launch, the Towpath and the area in front of the park adjacent to the dam. The LMRPB also treated approximately 40 acres of algae growth in the center of the lake.

The goal of the LMRPB has been and remains to focus of the largest problem facing the lake, water chestnut. The culmination of previous year's treatments and the treatment applied this year has had a significant impact on the water chestnut. Those areas that were treated have little or no visible growth and the spread of the water chestnut to other areas of the lake has been stopped. There are, however areas of Byram Bay that still have healthy water chestnut infestation and will need additional treatments in the future. Additional funding to the LMRPB could have been used to expand the Navigate treatment to the shoreline around Byram Bay as well as addressing the significant algae bloom which occurred in late June.

Funds collected by the Lake Musconetcong Community Association are tax deductible and are used to treat shoreline areas with herbicide. This is to help minimize the need for harvesting in the hazardous/shallow areas of the perimeter of the lake. The LMCA is also excited to announce their new initiative, which is to rebuild the once thriving beach located by the dam on route 183. They are currently in the feasibility stage of this project and need all the help they can get to turn this into a reality. Being that they just received 501(c)(3) charitable status from the IRS, they are looking for volunteers (grant writers, etc.) to help raise funds for this project and others. If you are interested in helping the LMCA with their 'Build-a-Beach' project please contact them at info@lakemusconetcong.org.

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HARVESTER: A weed harvester has also been in use in 2013, though down time for maintenance and repairs and wet weather has limited the effectiveness of the harvester. The harvester is operated by volunteers and the harvester is managed and coordinated by Bob Hathaway, a member of the Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board. It is no secret that the harvester is a limited resource that can be overwhelmed if there are too many acres of weeds to try to harvest and dispose of. Decisions about where to deploy this limited resource are difficult, since everyone wants to see their shoreline harvested and all of us would like to look out at the lake and not see acres of algae floating on huge mats of submerged weeds the size of many football fields. The cost of operating and maintaining the harvester as well as disposing of the harvested weeds is borne solely by the LMRPB. A number of new volunteers were recruited and trained in 2013 for operating the harvester, backhoe and conveyor. New harvester volunteers are welcome and needed. If interested please contact them at weedharvester1@gmail.com.

The State of New Jersey: Lake Musconetcong is a state lake, and designated as a state park. In 2013, the state of New Jersey allocated \$10,817 in herbicide funding to help maintain the lake. In addition, state DEP approval is needed every time herbicide is applied. In 2013, approval was eventually granted, but delayed beyond the optimum time for herbicide treatment. State approval is also needed for any drawdown of the lake over the winter to help control weed growth the next season. Requests for a drawdown for the winter of 2012-2013 were denied. (Due to an unfounded fear that a drawdown could contribute to the stress on the fish population and possibly contribute to another fish die off in the following spring)

The LMRPB did not receive any new grants in 2013. Each attempt to acquire grant funding during 2011 and 2012 was denied.

Looking Ahead: Planning for 2014 has already begun. Here is what we hope to accomplish going forward:

1. More extensive herbicide treatment. (This will require more public donations in addition to other sources of funding. This will also require state DEP partnership in expediting approvals.
2. Effective utilization of Harvester
3. Addition of at least one more harvester
4. Upgrade of harvester support equipment
5. Increase in Grant Proposals/Applications
6. Turn the 'Build-a-Beach' idea into a reality

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Stay Informed
2. Donate to Herbicide Treatment
3. Volunteer

Public meetings are held for the LMRPB and LMCA at Netcong Borough Hall as follows:

LMCA – Second Wednesday of every month at 7pm

LMRPB – Third Wednesday of every month at 7pm

Please Provide Your Contact Information

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____