

Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc.
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www.eaglelake1.org

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July 3, 2006

Hello All,

The membership of the Eagle Lake Property Owners will be disappointed that during the Adirondack Park Invasive Species Awareness Week (ISAW) they will **ONLY** be watching the milfoil and marveling at how well it is growing. The ELPOI applied for the NYS Eradication Grant Fund secured by Senator Betty Little for a multi pronged approach to start to control this invasive on Eagle Lake this summer. The approach included hand-harvesting, matting, minimizing disturbance to naturally occurring herbivores and localized herbicide use on two large dense stands. Funding was denied.

The ELPOI and their immediate townships were denied their funding because “The Regional participants on the Evaluation Team were adamant in their consensus that the applicant would *not* be successful in obtaining the permits necessary for the herbicide portion of the project.” A joint meeting between most of the “key players” that would be involved in this permit decision making process was conducted in late December of 2005 to discuss the merits of Eagle Lake’s multi pronged approach. Dialog at this meeting was open and everyone involved had the opportunity to share his or her thoughts. I believed as a result of this meeting that those present felt that further discussion on the permitting for herbicides was warranted and supported.

This meeting was initiated by the ELPOI based on their 2005 trials for hand harvesting the extensive spread of milfoil throughout Eagle Lake waters. It was felt that hand harvesting and mating could be effective on the isolated plants and small patches, but with several patches approaching an acre or more in size, a more cost prudent and environmentally effective method was necessary. Last year ELPOI members volunteered more than 150 hours of their time obtaining the necessary permits and providing above water support for this effort with paid divers providing an additional 30 plus hours. A good amount of biomass was removed from one of the 50 or so patches that have been identified. After 30 hours of bottom time a sizeable portion of the patch remained; this effort showed that it would never be possible to get an upper hand on this cancer-like invasive without a more efficient approach.

The ELPOI has invested thousands of volunteer hours as it has sought help from various local, state and national agencies in an effort to control invasives. At all levels the individuals that have been asked to help have been interested, but to this date they have been unable to assist or have only been able to make small “educational/ awareness” type steps. Application for the Invasive Species Eradication Grant by ELPOI, in conjunction with the towns of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, was the first true opportunity for a source of funding that would allow for more than the customary “let’s study it” approach. The membership of the ELPOI was committed to raising more than \$30,000 of in-kind cash and volunteer labor to match the State’s funding. When the project was completed this volunteer labor would have totaled several thousand-man hours of above water time. The late Senator Stafford awarded ELPOI an Aid to Localities Grant in 2000 that would have also provided matching funds for this project. Based on the DEC’s decision, most of the combined efforts for funding the required 2:1 matching portion of this grant will be lost as a result of not being able to move forward this year.

As a result of being denied the grant, paid dive services necessary to hand harvest and place matting will not take place. Paid services to complete the paperwork necessary to move the permitting process for an herbicide application along will also not be possible. It was the goal of this project and its proposal to include the use of an herbicide that would be judged by the same rules as all other lake across NYS. Thus Eagle Lake, Essex County, located on a major east/west connection between the Northway and Lake Champlain, will continue its 30 plus year history of being the breeding ground for this easily spread invasive.

DEC’s actions/ inactions to control milfoil are a great disappointment. This is one more lost opportunity for responsible action to positively protect the Adirondacks. So, come join us “watch it grow” during the Adirondack Park Invasive Species Awareness Week (ISAW) July 9-15. Comments about this letter are welcome at camptouchstone@yahoo.com

Sincerely,

Rolf Tiedemann
ELPOI Board Member