

The Eagle Lake Newsletter

December 2011

1907 – Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc. – 2011

Celebrating more than a century of responsible lake stewardship.

The Milfoil Project: Progress Report



On September 30th at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation office in Warrensburg, ELPOI President Chris Hyde, along with board member Steve Stubing and association members (and project leaders) Rolf and Dianne Tiedemann, and project attorney Ed Fitzgerald, attended a pre-application review of ELPOI's intended application for permits to use Renovate® in our lake. Ticonderoga Town Supervisor Deb Malaney, a representative from Senator Betty Little's office, John Bennett, Pesticides Control Specialist II of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and other D.E.C. staffers were on hand.

Although the meeting had been arranged by John Bennett at Supervisor Malaney's request as a pre-application review by both D.E.C. and the Adirondack Park Agency, the A.P.A. declined to attend. They sent unofficial word that they would consider any application that doesn't include the use of curtains as being "incomplete – sent back to applicant for further information." Curtains, as defined by the A.P.A., in this instance would mean completely surrounding infested areas with impermeable barriers, from lake bed to surface, during Renovate® application. With depths of up to 25' and some 14 large patches of milfoil, several being over an acre in size and with perimeters in the thousands of feet, it is the opinion of the Eagle Lake milfoil project team that curtaining would not only be exorbitantly expensive but also wholly impractical if not impossible in Eagle Lake. It would also mean using the product in a manner inconsistent with the manufacturer's product label, as well as inconsistent with the supplemental product registration requirements accepted by New York State. A 2009 letter of support from a D.E.C. official said, in part, "In my opinion, the use of curtains around a proposed Renovate treatment area in Eagle Lake would be unlikely to result in any substantial environmental benefit, and if the requirement for

curtains precluded the use of the herbicide, then the lake could suffer environmental harm."

It had been our hope, and Supervisor Malaney's, to discuss these matters with the A.P.A. and perhaps reach a solution. Despite this disappointment, the meeting proceeded and our proposed application met with a positive response from the D.E.C. staff members present, who suggested only some minor refinements to the initial two-site treatment plan. The desire expressed by both the project management team and the D.E.C. was in fact to "go still bigger" – that is, to treat as many of the patches as possible.

But with the A.P.A. we are at a temporary standstill. The board has consulted with Deb Malaney, and she has written to A.P.A. Executive Director Terry Martino to ask for clarification of her agency's position. With Deb Malaney's support, and with the continued help of Senator Betty Little and perhaps other high-ranking elected officials, we hope to win the A.P.A. over to an appreciation of the inexorable ecological disaster that our lake is facing.

As Leslie Surprenant, director of the D.E.C. Office of Invasive Species Coordination has written in a recent email to ELPOI and the A.P.A., "...the requirement for herbicide barrier curtains presents a burden both in deployment feasibility and cost. Permits for herbicide applications using Renovate in other waters in NY have not included this requirement. The manufacturer's label does not indicate the need for barriers... This office supports the efforts to control Eurasian watermilfoil at Eagle Lake. Herbicide may be the only effective and rather selective method left in the quiver; however, if the conditions imposed are not feasible and effectively preclude herbicide use, the likely outcome is simply accepting the presence of invasive EWM, i.e. effectively choosing the 'no action' alternative." *(continued)*

Eagle Lake cannot survive and we will not tolerate the “no action” alternative; we intend to continue our century-long stewardship of this beautiful lake.

For more – and more greatly detailed and technical information – on the Eagle Lake milfoil project, visit http://eaglelake1.org/html/banner/milfoil_project.shtm

Have You Considered Signing the Milfoil Petition?

More than 30 of our fellow property owners have signed this statement; those signatures have been delivered to Ticonderoga Town Supervisor Debra Malaney (and to the Town of Crown Point), in answer to her request at the annual meeting for an indication of our support of her resolve to see milfoil eradicated from Eagle Lake:

As a property owner on Eagle Lake, I support the use of Renovate as part of an integrated plan to help control milfoil, an invasive species, for the following reasons:

1. It has not proved possible to control milfoil with matting and hand harvesting alone due to the prolific nature of the species and underwater conditions.
2. The large areas of infestation have affected the recreational use of the lake. There are large areas in which it is impossible to swim or boat without becoming entangled in the dense weed and spreading the milfoil.
3. When applied by a licensed applicator, the use of Renovate has been shown to have minimal impact and to be an effective way to control the invasive species. Renovate has been used successfully in lakes outside the Adirondack Park, as well as throughout the United States without the use of curtains.
4. Proper control will help to prevent its further spread to other lakes in the Adirondacks.

For your convenience, a copy of the petition can be completed, signed and submitted on line at...

http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/eaglelakemilfoilproject/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=button.

July 9th Annual Meeting and Picnic



Acting for ELPOI President Andy Belkevich, who was unable to attend, Treasurer Rin Fraize chaired this year’s annual meeting, opening with the traditional reading of our organization’s mission statement, then providing a summary board report of the year’s activities, with special attention to the milfoil problem.

Election of the board followed; members elected officers Chris Hyde, president, Steve Phelps, vice president, Rin Fraize, treasurer, and Mary Loose, secretary; Jack Mulcahy, Andy Belkevich and Steve Stubing were elected to new terms as board members. Ann Patterson,

retiring from the board, was sincerely thanked for her service.

Rin Fraize submitted the treasurer’s report for 2010–2011 and a proposed budget for 2011–2012; these were approved. Chris Hyde reported that membership had remained stable; this year as last, 61% of property owners are members. Two new members were welcomed to the lake: Peter and Liz Popinchalk, and Jennifer and Peter Harvey. It was announced that, sadly, long-time resident and member Theresa Smith had passed away.

(continued)

Todd and Tonya Condon were heartily thanked for their Adopt-a-Highway efforts in collecting trash and keeping Route 74 pristine; it was noted with gratitude and pride that Tonya had recently completed 100 hours of service. All members were encouraged to help with this effort. Finally, it was announced that a current list of property owners had been provided to state and local police.

Other reports included that Essex County Fish Hatchery had this year stocked Eagle Lake with 900 two-year-old brown trout; that Paul and Lloyd Burroughs continued to test the lake's water every two weeks throughout the summer, and that both clarity and the fecal coliform count remained excellent.

Announcements included that new signs (see picture in this issue) have been put in place by Chris Hyde asking for vigilance against invasive species; that the town of Ticonderoga has not rezoned Eagle Lake but that rezoning remains a possibility; that ELPOI contributions to Chilson Volunteer Fire Department and Ticonderoga Emergency Squad will remain at a total of \$350 for the year; and that the organization will apply for an \$800 grant from International Paper.

The 2012 annual meeting and picnic date was set for Saturday, July 14, 2012.

Guest speaker John Bennett, Pesticides Control Specialist II of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, then summarized the application process for the use of Renovate, and congratulated ELPOI for

our integrated approach to the management of our milfoil problem. A question-and-answer period followed, during which Mr. Bennett answered questions about the safety of Renovate use, and board members and Rolf Tiedemann answered questions about the possible process to be used and precautions to be taken if the application is to proceed. Several letters of concern had been received by Deb Malaney with regards to earlier surveys regarding direction of the milfoil project; these letters were shared with John Bennett prior to the annual meeting and thus gave him the opportunity to address some of the concerns raised.

Ticonderoga Town Supervisor Deb Malaney was introduced, and talked about her appreciation of ELPOI's efforts in lake conservation. She asked for confirmation of our membership's commitment to milfoil abatement; members of the board suggested that we would undertake a petition process (see below).

A highlight of the enjoyable picnic that followed was an opportunity to admire the new tanker-pumper that had recently been deployed by Chilson Volunteer Fire Department.

Comments and questions about the milfoil project can continue to be sent to Ticonderoga Supervisor Debra Malaney, P.O. Box 471, Ticonderoga, NY 12883 and project coordinator Rolf Tiedemann, 358 Electric Avenue, Rochester, NY 14613.

2011 – 2012 Board Members



Standing: Chris Hyde, Mary Loose, Steve Stubing, Andy Belkevich, Dave Williams, Steve Phelps, Jack Mulcahy; in front: Lloyd Burroughs, Rin Fraize

Mat Removal

With diver Amy Calkins in the water and Rolf and Dianne Tiedemann (with some additional help from Carlos Alden) on the float, the dirty, strenuous and hazardous job of removing 266 mats – with a total area of 54,000 square feet and a total weight of 13,000 pounds – was accomplished over several weeks at the end of summer. Mat removal was the necessary final step in the process of attempting, to little effect, to eradicate milfoil from sections of Eagle Lake. Approximately 1 ½ acres of the lake's more than eight acres of dense milfoil was addressed. There are many acres of light density milfoil mixed with native vegetation that were not addressed. While the mats did indeed temporarily smother any milfoil directly underneath them, native vegetation of every variety was also smothered – and the milfoil continued to spread.



Special thanks for their help go to Jeff Burns of the Ticonderoga Fire Department for filling scuba tanks used in mat removal; to diver Amy Calkins for her interest and help with the milfoil project above and beyond the task of mat removal; to Lycott Environmental for working with the Town of Crown Point to hire our local divers and crew chief for milfoil mat removal; to the Town of Crown Point for supporting the ELPOI milfoil project by once again in 2011 handling the collection of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Invasive Species Eradication Grant funding and hiring the personnel needed to complete milfoil project tasks; to Ticonderoga Supervisor Deb Malaney for her abiding interest in and encouragement of the Eagle Lake milfoil project; to Ada Phelps and Carlos Alden for mat-removal photos.

Hurricane Irene Brings Out the Best in Us

Hurricane Irene did significant damage in the Adirondacks on August 28. A section of NY 73 in Keene Valley was washed out; the Dix and Giant wilderness areas and parts of High Peaks Wilderness Area were closed by landslides. Floods took out historic covered bridges in Vermont, and closer to home streets throughout Ticonderoga, Schroon and Crown Point were flooded, with a number of washouts. Innumerable downed trees led to many scattered power outages; Chilson Volunteer Fire Department responded to a record 17 separate emergencies that day. Line breaks and dam failure in the Gooseneck water supply shut down Ticonderoga's town water system; the town is now drawing its water from Lake George and plans to drill wells to furnish its water in the future. On Eagle Lake the water level rose dramatically (to +24" or higher during the storm) and, combined with wind and waves, floated docks away from their moorings, set a few indifferently secured small boats adrift, and flooded boathouses and beaches. Route 74 was closed east of the lake by flooding as Putts Pond Creek overflowed its banks and spilled onto the road; the Corduroy Road was also closed for several hours as waters backed up behind Penfield Dam. Significant damage was done to one of the culverts that runs under the Corduroy Road; the road there was closed for more than two weeks before repairs could be made.



Loose dock (pun intended – sorry) found between the Stevens properties on the north shore – complete with Adirondack chairs, planters and watercraft!

Eagle Lake residents showed their traditional neighborliness and mutual concern during and after the storm, checking on each other, sharing resources, and pitching in to clean up. Leland and Mary Loose expressed their thanks to Jim Davis,

who retrieved their errant dock (see picture) for them. Andy Belkevich and Rolf Tiedemann made a preventive opening in the beaver dam in advance of the rain; Jack and Deb Mulcahy and Rolf and Dianne Tiedemann removed boards from the spillway after the rain to help bring the lake level back to normal. (*Several members have inquired about the current lake level; as of November 6 the lake was stable at minus 2, and remains there as of this writing.*) After the storm, Rolf and Dianne made a careful survey by boat of most of our properties, taking photos for the web site, and reporting problems to absent owners when necessary. See all the pictures at...

http://eaglelake1.org/html/photo_album/2011_photos/hurricane_irene_aftermath.shtml

On Fishing Tournaments

An Essay by an Eagle Lake Fisherman

The onslaught of bass-fishing tournament money and commercialization is slowly coming north, and we should consider what our position will be if and when it reaches us here on Eagle Lake.

I am against ever allowing bass tournaments of any kind at any time on Eagle Lake. Bass tournaments are – plain and simple – fishing for dollars. And when money is involved, might seems to make right: whoever has the mightiest attorney, wins. Under the pretext that “it’s good for the economy,” wealthy fishermen are able to brutalize not only the fish, but also local residents and the delicate natural balance of our lakes.

I have seen these tournaments on other lakes. They are all about speed: getting out to the fish and getting back to the dock first. I was on Lake Champlain a few years ago during one such situation. Here’s what happens: Many champion fishermen are there with their huge, expensive boats, roaring to spots all over the lake, taking bass, and putting them in “live wells” on their boats. The fish are then transported (pounding along at incredible speed) many miles from where they were caught, taken from the so-called live wells, and put into bags. Then the fishermen stand around and talk, waiting to get their bagged fish weighed and measured. This takes considerable time – and nobody cares. When the weigh-in is over, all the bass are thrown back into the water off the one available dock.

As the fishermen pull out and head for the next body of water – their boats replete with milfoil, spiny water fleas, Zebra mussel and other hitchhikers – the fish that were “returned to the water unharmed” slowly turn belly up and float away. Many, many of them... all white spots, bloated, bobbing away down the lake, inverted and dead. Bass is a territorial fish; even if they live, they will not swim back 10 miles to the point where they were taken.

It’s a travesty, but when big bucks are involved, in this as in anything else, unless good people are vigilant – anything goes. Lake George today is a mess; Schroon Lake had its first 75 m.p.h. boat this year. These lakes are being turned into recreational swimming pools.

I hope that all of us on Eagle Lake will band together to prevent this kind of fishing on our lake, if and when it’s ever proposed or tried here. I want Eagle Lake to remain forever the quiet, pristine lake we know today, with its abundant wildlife and its tranquil beauty.

For my part, I will do everything I can.



ELPOI President Chris Hyde had these signs made up and has mounted them at the boat launch, the beach and other strategic places around the lake.

Beaver Dam

Thanks to Jack Mulcahy for taking time out from hunting to breach the beaver dam again this past month. The beavers are once again at work building a dam of their own partway between the boat launch and the spillway dam. This has long been a problem spot, and a permit has been secured from the D.E.C. to allow the beavers to be discouraged. Anyone interested in helping remove the beaver dam – or the dam beavers – is asked to contact Jack Mulcahy at (518) 793-6368 or jdmulcahy5@verizon.net, or Paul Burroughs at (518) 585-7277 or eaglake@aol.com.

In Memoriam

Long-time Eagle Lake property owner, association member and friend Tim Bush has passed away. We extend our deepest sympathy to his loved ones, and cherish the memory of his enjoyment of Eagle Lake.

OTHER NEWS



In early August the son of a friend of the late Joe and Dotty Muehlich, who lived on Hurd point, dropped by – quite literally! – hoping for chance to see his dad’s friends. JoAnne Riley (center), daughter of Joe and Dotty, was there to greet him, as were Lloyd and Paul Burroughs. We don’t see many seaplanes on Eagle Lake, so this visit was a bit of excitement for everyone who witnessed it.

Ticonderoga Supervisor Deb Malaney Re-elected

Ms. Malaney has been elected to a second term in office; she has been very supportive of Eagle Lake property owners, and we wish her continued success in her second term in office.

Charles Harrington Elected Crown Point Supervisor

The town of Crown Point will have a new town supervisor in 2012 when Charles Harrington takes over from incumbent Bethany Kosminder. ELPOI congratulates Mr. Harrington and thanks Ms. Kosminder for all her support of the Eagle Lake milfoil project. We look forward to working closely with Mr. Harrington to bring him up to speed on the status of the milfoil project and other matters affecting Eagle Lake’s Crown Point residents.

Changes to the Crown Point Assessor’s Office

2012 heralds the replacement of the traditional three-elected-member Crown Point assessor’s office by a single appointed assessor. This change could affect Eagle Lake residents whose properties are in Crown Point, if the new assessor contemplates changing the way such properties are valued. Our Crown Point members will want to carefully to monitor developments.

Irene Aftermath: Possible Effects on Ticonderoga Water for Route 74 Residents

As the Town of Ticonderoga explores options for state-mandated updates to its Gooseneck water supply, Eagle Lake residents could be affected. Ticonderoga is currently looking at drilling wells in or near the town proper, and may close the Gooseneck water supply completely, which would shut off Route 74 property

owners. It has been suggested that Eagle Lake residents might have to drill their own wells, and it has also been suggested that the town “backfeed” water up the hill to Chilson and Eagle Lake. This is a matter that residents will want to monitor closely as planning proceeds.

Essex County Fish Hatchery Could Close

Essex County is studying whether it would be possible to buy fish more cheaply than the Essex County Fish Hatchery in Crown Point can produce them. The fish hatchery employs a manager and two technicians and costs the county about \$288,000 a year. If it is closed, the three jobs would be eliminated and ownership of the property would revert back to the state. The hatchery generates an estimated annual \$12 million in fishing tourism tax revenue for the county. It stocks 50,000 three-year-old “trophy” fish each year in county waters, including Eagle Lake.

New Champlain Bridge Opens

On November 7 the new Lake Champlain Bridge opened, ending the nearly two years of disrupted travel between New York and Vermont since the old unsafe span was closed. An opening ceremony on the bridge was attended by New York Lt. Gov. Robert Duffy and Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin, and turned into an impromptu celebration, with several hundred walkers and bikers taking the opportunity to cross the new span. The \$70 million bridge replaces the original 80-year-old structure, which was closed in October 2009 after inspectors deemed it unsafe; it was taken down by controlled explosion in late December 2009. A temporary ferry service had replaced the bridge while construction was under way. Officials originally set the opening of the new bridge for this past October, but spring flooding on Lake Champlain caused a delay.

Lowe's Closes Abruptly in August

Lowe's in Ticonderoga was one of seven locations the retail chain abruptly closed in August. Lowe's said the Ticonderoga store, which opened just two years ago, had failed to meet sales goals from the beginning. The store had employed 86, all of whom reportedly received 90 days of pay and benefits and were eligible to apply for positions at other Lowe's locations. The closure came as a surprise not only to the store's employees and customers, but also to area officials and business associations. The \$8.2 million property, a 124,000 square foot building on a 25-acre parcel, now sits vacant.

Tractor Supply Opens in Ticonderoga

Tractor Supply Co. opened a new store in Ticonderoga on October 20, adding 13 jobs to the local economy. The new location has 25,000 square feet and is located in the former Dockside Landing Boat Center at 9 Commercial Drive. Its hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. Tractor Supply is the largest retail farm and ranch supply store chain in the United States.

Extensive New and Different Milfoil Found in Lake Champlain's South Bay

More than 20 acres of variable leaf milfoil (also an invasive) have been found in the southern portion of Lake Champlain's South Bay, growing in water up to six feet deep, with densities ranging from 5% to 50%. In September 2009, milfoil was also found in Lake Champlain's Missisquoi Bay in Vermont. Due to the extent of the growth, the Lake Champlain Invasive Species Rapid Response Team has determined that a rapid response to eradicate the plant is not feasible. Boaters are being warned to avoid beds of watermilfoil to prevent spreading the plant further.

2011 Lake George Invasive Species Report

The Lake George Association has released preliminary results from the 2011 Lake Steward program. Of 8,500 boats inspected, suspicious specimens were removed from 52. Of these, 31 were found to have been carrying at least one invasive species. The LGA recovered 22 samples of Eurasian watermilfoil, 9 samples of curly-leaf pondweed, 4 of water chestnut and 2 of zebra mussel.

Historic Chilson Building Burns



Mountainman Photography
PHOTO COURTESY MOUNTAIN MAN PHOTOGRAPHY

On October 20, the historic former Hideout Bar on Route 74 near Putt's Pond Road in Chilson was destroyed in a fast-moving fire of unknown origin, which had engulfed the 1879 structure by the time firefighters were called to respond. No one was living in the structure, which is owned by James and Stephanie Frasier of Chilson, and there were no injuries. The cause of the fire is under investigation by the Essex County Fire Investigation Unit. Chilson Volunteer Fire Department firefighters received mutual aid from Ticonderoga and Crown Point, with the Schroon Lake department on standby at the Chilson station.

Thanksgiving Snow!



A surprising early snowstorm layered a foot of snow around Eagle Lake on Thanksgiving eve; pictured is the view across the lake from the Cerny camp to the Alden camp.

The Eagle Lake Newsletter is published by Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc., c/o Fraize, 11 Deepwood Drive, Ticonderoga, NY 12883. ELPOI is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation and contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. This issue was written by Chris Hyde, Rolf Tiedemann and Steve Phelps, and edited by Steve Phelps. Additional photography by Ada Phelps, Lloyd Burroughs, Dave Williams and Rolf Tiedemann. Send information, changes of address, and especially new or changed e-mail addresses to Chris at Cdhyde1@gmail.com and Steve at stephenephelpsjr@gmail.com.

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Members! Have you renewed your membership yet this year? Please send a check today to help us close the books for 2011 on a positive note!

Full Property Owner Membership still only	\$25
Associate Membership (for non-owner lake supporters)	\$15

Send your check today to...

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