

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many things have and have not happened in the fall of '97. The Pilot project has been stalled and has not proceeded in a timely fashion due to lack of funding. However, what has occurred is a funding initiative undertaken jointly with the Federation of Lakes Association. This initiative, which is further described in this newsletter, is aimed at obtaining funds from the Federal Government to initiate a Statewide Lake Management Program. After an initial meeting with a Congressional liaison, numerous meetings were held with representatives of the Lake Services Section at DEC. These efforts culminated in a meeting on December 16, 1997 with Congressman Sherwood Boehlert of Utica.

Congressman Boehlert is Chairman of the Congressional Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. He has shown a great interest in preserving the beautiful natural resources of our state, and so we turned to him for assistance in obtaining more funding for the efforts to preserve the native ecology of our lakes. We are hopeful that this initiative will prove fruitful.

Funding still continues to be the greatest impediment preventing effective weed control projects from being implemented. Some lakes, such as the Lamoka-Waneta Lakes Association are forming Rehabilitation Districts. Others are soliciting donations from residents and local businesses. We have heard from at least two lakes that have availed themselves of the State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and have submitted proposals for funding weed projects under this act. One, Caroga Lake has requested funds for suction harvesting of milfoil and another, Kinderhook Lake has proposed a project using Grass Carp to control milfoil and other weeds. We at COLAM wish them luck with their endeavors and look forward to seeing the results of their efforts.

You will note that a large part of this newsletter is devoted to an article by Kathryn Macri on the use of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund in financing projects. We hope you will find it informative and useful.

In future newsletters we will look at other funding mechanisms in more detail.

## COLAM HAS A NEW ADDRESS

Please note that our new mailing address is P.O. Box 4054, Queensbury, NY 12804.

The President may be reached directly at 31 Fitzgerald Rd., Queensbury, NY 12804 or via phone at 518-798-4693. During the period from January 20 through April first you may reach him by mail at PO Box 25291 GBS, Christiansted, VI 00824.

## COLAM AND FOLA JOIN FORCES IN BID FOR 1.2 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS

Working with representatives from the Lake Services Section of the DEC, representatives of COLAM and the Federation of Lakes Association (FOLA) have submitted a proposal to fund a Statewide Nuisance Species Control Program through Federal funds.

The impetus for this initiative was the languishing of three specific projects within our State because of lack of funding. One project was the proposed Statewide Aquatic Weed Lake Management Program. Another was the Pilot Project for the Control of Eurasian Watermilfoil in Eagle Lake and Lake George. The third was a research project conducted to analyze the potential for the use of the aquatic moth and aquatic weevil in the control of Eurasian milfoil.

As you all are aware, nuisance aquatic species enter waterways as a result of public access and navigation making comprehensive management of the problem beyond the scope of local and state regulation. Nuisance aquatic species, such as milfoil are not native to our lakes and have entered our country as a result of international commerce. As such, their control is the responsibility of both Federal, State and Local agencies.

An analysis by staff members at DEC has shown that existing State and Federal grants programs place low priorities on aquatic weed management. Most of the existing statutes were initiated to address sewage and industrial pollutants. As a result of this, and the late recognition of weed problems, localities have little chance of obtaining help in dealing with invasive plants.

This proposal calls for a Statewide Aquatic Plant Control Program which will include a Statewide Grants Program for plant control, funding for research on control technologies and funding for the Pilot Program for Lake George and Eagle Lake.

Members of a task force, including Don Milne and Mary-Arthur Beebe of COLAM, John Miller and Bill Harmon of FOLA, and Bob Johnson from Cornell, met with Congressman Boehlert in his Utica office in December to present this proposal. We are now awaiting his response to our appeal.

# The Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Fight Against Milfoil

by Kathryn Macri, Environmental Project Manager, NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation

Much of the effort in fighting milfoil and aquatic weeds in our lakes is obtaining the funding to get a project underway. Low interest loans and technical assistance are available through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The primary goal of the CWSRF is to provide low interest loans to municipalities for water pollution control projects.

EFC's programs can help COLAM members in a number of ways. Financing may be obtained for certain aquatic weed control projects. If the cause of aquatic weed overgrowth is pollutants carried into the lake or waterbody through stormwater runoff, from failed septic systems or inadequate sewer systems or wastewater treatment systems, financing is available for these projects as well. This article will provide a brief overview of CWSRF financing and basic project requirements. A discussion of weed control projects which may be eligible and a quick list of other related types of projects eligible for financing is also provided.

## Financing through the CWSRF

Municipalities can apply for financing through the CWSRF. Municipalities include any county, city, town, village, district corporation, county or town improvement district, Indian reservation within New York State, any public benefit corporation or public authority or agency of New York State. This definition also includes lake improvement or lake protection and rehabilitation districts and sewer districts.

Both short-term and long-term financing are available. There are administrative fees for loans. Fees may be waived for communities building sewer systems that qualify for financial hardship. To qualify for financing, projects must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Approved engineering reports must be submitted.
2. The project must comply with all applicable rules, regulations, and laws; protect water quality; and employ good management practices.
3. Construction must be completed in accordance with approved plans and specifications.
4. There must be a dedicated source of revenue to repay the loan amount, i.e., taxes or user fees.

There are some other practical considerations for financing. A project manager for the applicant should be able to coordinate the project's development, application for financing, and project completion. Because EFC issues bonds for the CWSRF financing, an applicant must retain bond counsel. There is no restriction on loan amounts, however, the applicant should evaluate their potential savings. The savings can be significant savings for larger projects. Based on the 1996 bond pool, the effective interest rate for CWSRF borrowers after all fees was 2.96%, compared to 5.54% for the market rate. This represents a savings of \$390,000 on a \$1 million loan.

With all these considerations to think about, you might think a CWSRF loan is not worth it for an aquatic weed program. But a larger aquatic weed control program could be a good candidate for CWSRF financing on its own. An aquatic weed program could also be a good candidate for funding as part of a water body restoration project or carried out in conjunction with stormwater or point source projects. Many CWSRF loan applications are made for multiple projects.

## Aquatic Weed Control and Water Body Restoration

Restoration projects may be developed for lakes, ponds, wetlands, streams, and estuaries to tackle sedimentation, aquatic weed growth, or other problems. As described above, the main criteria for funding are twofold: the project must be a capital project and it must be municipally owned. For example, use of chemical controls such as herbicides, or biological controls such as grass carp would be considered an operating cost rather than a capital cost and therefore would not be eligible for CWSRF funding. Since they are capital projects, purchase of a mechanical harvester or installation of artificial circulation equipment may be eligible for financing.

Below is a list of types of aquatic weed control and lake restoration techniques which may be eligible for CWSRF financing. For further information on the individual techniques, refer to "Diet for a Small Lake: A New Yorker's Guide to Lake Management," by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Federation of Lake Associations.

- creation of ponds or wetlands along streams for groundwater recharge;
- dewatering or draining the water body during construction;
- dredging, dewatering and disposal of sediments as well as testing of sediments related to proper disposal;
- erosion control and control of sediment discharges during construction;
- grading, installation of stormwater and sediment control practices;
- artificial circulation;
- mechanical harvesting and rotovating; and
- propagation of appropriate aquatic vegetation.
- bottom barriers

### Other Types of CWSRF Projects

Restoring a lake is important but like the adage says, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We know milfoil is a hardy exotic weed but it's likely there are other reasons why the weed flourishes. Is uncontrolled stormwater runoff adding sediment or pollutants? Are failing septic systems contributing to the problem? Stormwater management facilities and point source facilities may be needed to prevent water quality problems which in turn help weeds flourish.

The following are lists of stormwater management facilities and point source projects eligible for CWSRF funding.

### Stormwater Management Facilities

- Infiltration basins, trenches and pits;
- Water quality inlets (oil and grit separators for sediment or hydrocarbon removal);
- Detention basins and sediment traps;
- Conveyance system storage;
- Constructed wetlands and similar treatment systems;
- Flow regulators;
- Street sweepers and catch basin vacuum trucks;
- Porous pavements; and
- Roof runoff control systems.
- Permanent vegetative cover and re-establishment of riparian vegetation;
- Streambank and shoreline erosion protection; and
- Filter strips and forest buffers.

Coalition Of Lakes Against Milfoil  
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*Handwritten notes:*  
 \$100  
 2 septic - 50 Acres  
 Point  
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