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Cazenovia leaders begin permit process for next phase of milfoil treatment

By Alaina Potrikus / The Post-Standard

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The infestation of Eurasian watermilfoil at its worst in Cazenovia Lake. Photo submitted by Allied Biological, Inc.

After receiving positive feedback from last summer's chemical eradication of weeds in Cazenovia Lake, local officials are preparing for the next phase of the treatment process.

On Monday, town leaders began the environmental review of a plan to apply the herbicide Renovate to combat the infestation of Eurasian watermilfoil the southern and central portions of Cazenovia Lake in 2010.

The community raised more than \$100,000 to treat 234 acres of the lake's northern waters in June. A second fundraising effort is under way to treat 170 acres closer to the southern basin. Once the milfoil is under control, the lakes will need annual maintenance to keep the weed in check.

Town officials completed a strategic plan for managing aquatic plant growth this week, which was one of the provisions of the permit issued by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation earlier this year.

In order to obtain approval for next year's treatment, the town will have to complete a dye test to measure how far the chemical triclopyr is measurable in downstream tributaries like Chittenango Creek. The test will help state officials decide how many homeowners need to be notified of the chemical treatment.



A research team from Cornell University takes samples of plant species from areas around Cazenovia Lake that were treated for Eurasian watermilfoil last summer. Research assistants Jason Toner (left) and Jodi Riggs (right) sort plant species and record data about the sample. David Lassman / The Post-Standard

The test will be performed by Allied Biological Inc., the environmental engineering firm in New Jersey that conducted the Renovate treatment last summer. Injecting a red fluorescent dye below the lake surface and tracking its concentration at downstream monitoring stations could cost up to \$6,000.

Cazenovia Supervisor Liz Moran said the firm collected water samples last year that prove how quickly the chemical dissipates.

Town officials are also hoping residents will weigh in during public hearings on the project this winter. Last year, the state received 17 positive and eight negative comments during public hearings. In addition, more than 400 residents contributed to the fundraising effort to pay for the chemical treatment.

Moran said public input is an important factor in the state's decision to issue a permit.

"I've heard nothing but positive feedback about the water quality," said town board member Pat Race.

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