

Maker of milfoil herbicide

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The maker of the controversial aquatic herbicide, Sonar, announced Friday it has requested the state Department of Environmental Conservation's Bureau of Pesticides to show why it has denied its registration application to use the chemical in New York lakes.

Some have advocated the use of Sonar to rid lakes such as Lake George of milfoil, a fast-growing aquatic plant.

Indiana-based Dowelanco, which manufactures herbicides and insecticides, has requested the state convene a public hearing before an administrative law judge to determine why that state has not registered Sonar.

Warren County officials, state Sen. Ronald B. Stafford and the Lake George Association, an environmental watchdog agency, support the use of Sonar to

treat the milfoil, now growing in Lake George.

Milfoil also grows in Lake Luzerne, and on Friday was announced that milfoil had been found in six of Brant Lake in the Warren County town of Horicon.

At Friday's meeting of the Lake George Association Committee of the Warren County Board of Supervisors, committee members bowed to a request by M.

Arthur Beebe, executive director of the lake association, to offer sympathetic support to Dowelanco's challenge to use the chemical in New York.

"We'll support Dowelanco's public hearing 100 percent and will draft a letter" to them, said Bolton to Supervisor Frank Dagles, who chairs the lake affairs committee.

Beebe asked county committee members to write Dowelanco expressing concern for the milfoil growing in Lake George and in other lakes, and to state that Sonar is a solution to control milfoil growth.

Company asks for DEC hearing

Dowelanco applied in 1986 to the bureau of pesticides to allow Sonar in the state. The herbicide is approved for use by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is allowed in several states, said Dan Barber, manager of state registrations for Dowelanco.

The application included data supplied to the EPA. The state has denied the permit and requested additional data, which was supplied, Barber said.

"We've been supplying for some time. The bottom line is that over four years of providing data to the state, it hasn't not yet provided clear guidance regarding the decision to reject" the application, Barber said.

Environmental studies using Sonar in Florida and Massachusetts show that Sonar does not constitute an environmental risk when used according to label directions, Barber said.

The state Bureau of Pesticides received Dowelanco's

letter in May, responded in June and Dowelanco answered in July, said Stephanie Zarpas, spokeswoman for the DEC. The bureau is studying Dowelanco's request and will prepare an answer "shortly," Zarpas said.

Along with the LGA and Warren County, Stafford, R-Plattsburgh, introduced bills in the 1988 and 1989 sessions of the Senate to allow the use of Sonar, but the bills have died in the state Assembly.

The new push for registration of Sonar comes at a time when Warren County has stopped its measures to control the growth of milfoil in Lake George. The county has not allocated funds to control milfoil growth with mechanical procedures in 1991.

"We've studied milfoil to death and it is still getting away from us. We've spent \$240,000 and we still haven't gotten rid of it. It's time to do something different and get the use of Sonar approved," Dagles said.