

The Post-Star

Eagle Lake is small, but love for it is large

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TICONDEROGA * Though Eagle Lake Property Owners Inc. is celebrating its 100-year anniversary, the group 's mission to protect the water and recreation quality of the small body of water between Lake George and Lake Champlain is far from over.

ELPOI was established in 1907 and has been funded entirely by membership fees, grants and fundraisers.

"Just trying to survive 100 years has been an obstacle, " said ELPOI Vice President Rolf Tiedemann. "The next biggest obstacle for us now is battling (Eurasian) water milfoil. "

Eurasian ater milfoil is a foreign plant that prevents native plant species from growing and also interferes with boating, fishing and swimming. Tiedemann said it was officially identified on Eagle Lake in the 1970s, and his organization has been combating it ever since.

Currently, the 420-acre lake has at least 12 acres of milfoil.

"Since we 're in the (Adirondack) Park, we can 't use herbicides. We 've been hand-harvesting and using benthic matting, " Tiedemann said.

Benthic matting, much like weed-guard matting for home gardens, is used to smother the plants underwater.

"Our membership is 50 to 70 percent of the residents around the lake. Everyone wants to make sure we do what 's best for it, " he said.

ELPOI President Jere Paddack said the group is applying for a grant in the amount of \$110,000, for which they are responsible to provide \$50,000.

The group still needs to raise around \$17,000 in funds and labor, Paddack said. ELPOI is holding a fundraiser to help combat costs associated with the state matching-funds grant.

They believe the grant money will help them eradicate between 30 and 50 percent of the lake 's milfoil, Tiedemann said.

Tiedemann said the ELPOI has also recently completed homeowner surveys for wastewater management and septic systems at homes around the lake, and the group monitors fertilizers and other possible lake contaminants.

To celebrate the group 's centennial, ELPOI is supplying commemorative mugs and postcards at its annual meeting, to be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, after which the group is holding a picnic at noon at the Chilson Community Center.