

The Post-Star

Lake Luzerne milfoil first in Adirondack Park to be treated with chemical

By [dayelin roman droman@poststar.com](mailto:dayelin.roman@droman@poststar.com) | Posted: Monday, May 17, 2010 6:32 pm

LAKE LUZERNE -- Eurasian watermilfoil at the southern end of the lake was met with a herbicide on Monday morning.

It was the first time that a chemical has been used to combat milfoil in any lake in the Adirondack Park.

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive species of plant that is a nuisance to swimmers and boaters, and kills off native plants.

Officials began spreading triclopyr, also known by the brand name Renovate OTF, at 10 a.m. on Monday throughout some 11 acres of the southern end of Lake Luzerne. The process took about an hour, but a sequestering curtain separating the southern bay from the rest of the lake will be left up for about 10 days while the concentration of the chemical begins to fade.

Aquatic Control Technology, a company out of Sutton, Mass., was hired to spread the chemical at a rate of \$15,000.

"It went very well," said Robert Sherman, the head of the town's Aquatic Conservation Task Force.

Sherman and others on the task force worked with town officials in getting permits for the use of the chemical.

But how well it really worked won't be known for some time, he said.

"It will be several months before we know if it's an unequivocal success," Sherman said.

Within 10 days, he said, results in the form of dead milfoil plants should be seen, and in the next several weeks, a series of tests will be conducted.

Officials expect about 85 percent of the milfoil in the southern end of the lake to be killed by the herbicide. The rest will be picked by hand.

Tests will determine how quickly triclopyr breaks down, Sherman said. But within a month, no trace of the chemical should remain in the water.

On Monday morning, Sherman said officials from the Adirondack Park Agency and the state Department of Environmental Conservation stood by to make sure correct application procedures were being followed.

"The APA is very interested in the data we're gathering from the work done here," Sherman said.

Monday's treatment was the first of its kind approved by the APA, touted by some APA officials as possibly the equivalent of the first cell tower in the Adirondacks.

The chemical was used in Saratoga Lake in 2008.

When the herbicide was approved by the APA in February for use in Lake Luzerne, Town Supervisor Gene Merlino said the chemical was necessary. He said other control methods, such as hand harvesting and benthic barrier, had been exhausted and continued to run up costs.

Merlino did not return a call for comment Monday.