

**SECTION 206 PROGRAM
PRELIMINARY RESTORATION PLAN
EAGLE LAKE
AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM HABITAT RESTORATION**

Project: Eagle Lake Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Congressional District: NY R-22

Location: Towns of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, Essex County, New York
U.S.G.S Quadrangle Map: Pharaoh Mountain

Background: Eagle Lake is a 422-acre lake experiencing eurasian watermilfoil infestation, an invasive aquatic plant species. The infestation is characterized by several large patches occurring in various locations of the lake. Eurasian watermilfoil typically forms thick mats that compete with native vegetation, degrade water quality, and impair fish spawning sites. Based on a site visit, 2 July 2001, and conversations with the local interest, Eagle Lake Properties Owners, Inc. (ELPOI), the eurasian watermilfoil infestation primarily affects recreational use of the lake. The ELPOI have not yet implemented any management measures, but are in the process of securing funds to employ some type of eurasian watermilfoil remediation. Additionally, funds are being sought to conduct a comprehensive investigation on the presence of Acentria moth and milfoil weevil populations that have recently been observed in the lake and their effect on the eurasian watermilfoil. Various national and international studies have indicated that these two species can impair the viability of the plant by feeding on the meristems, stem and leaves.

Views of the Sponsor: The primary contact with whom the Corps has been coordinating is the Eagle Lake Properties Owners, Inc., a coalition of homeowners who live along the lake. At this time, there are no identified entities involved in this project who meet the Corps criteria to act as the non-federal cost share partner. The potential non-federal cost share partner can be any entity, including non-profit organizations, that retain the legal and financial capability to provide funds and real estate requirements needed for a project.

Views of the federal, state, regional and interested organizations: N/A

Findings: Based on the review of Corps guidance and regulations, discussions with the local interest and a site investigation, no Federal interest to proceed to the Environmental Restoration Report phase exists. Several factors contribute to this decision. First, the presence of this invasive species does not appear to have created conditions that impair the aquatic habitat of the lake. Specifically, evidence showing a decline in wildlife use, impairment to existing fisheries or a decline to native plant populations due to the presence of eurasian watermilfoil could not be established through discussions with the local interest nor through the site visit.

Second, it has been determined that Section 206 authority is not appropriate to fund or proceed with this project. Although removal of invasive aquatic plant species may be authorized under this program as part of an overall restoration project, it is generally preferred that the removal be a one-time action, rather than a recurring obligation for maintenance. Eurasian watermilfoil can be eradicated at one time if the affected area is small and isolated. However, given the ranges of size and widespread locations of the infestations in the study area, a routine maintenance program would be required to successfully eradicate the species from the lake.

Third, the problem of one-time eradication in the study area is the lack of a State -wide, or County-wide, program that takes an aggressive approach in the identification of invasive plant species, preventative control measures, and enforcement of control measures to prohibit further infestation of invasive plant species. In many instances in New York, invasive plant management is incumbent upon the many lake coalitions and non-profit organizations that have been established to deal with invasive plant species problems. Without uniform enforceable measures or rigorous education programs to prevent the proliferation of eurasian watermilfoil, the success of the restoration effort would be inhibited.

As stated above, the ELPOI does not meet the Corps requirements to serve as the non-federal sponsor in that they are unable to provide the necessary real estate actions required for a project. Also, the condition of the lake does not warrant additional study since the primary problem is due to recreational nuisance, rather than an ecological impact to the lake ecosystem.

Estimate of Study Costs and Request for Current FY funds: No further funds requested
Federal Allocations to Date: \$10,000