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Monday, April 18, 2022

Town of Hague opposes use of milfoil herbicide in Lake George

by Guest Contributor

[40 Comments](#)

The Lake

The Lake George Park Commission (LGPC) [applied for and was granted on April 14 a permit from the Adirondack Park Agency \(APA\)](#) to put the herbicide ProcellaCOR into Lake George at two pilot sites: Blair's Bay in Glen Burnie and Sheep Meadow Bay in Hulett's Landing. Although both sites are located on the east side of the lake, they are part of the Town of Hague, whose boundaries extend to the eastern shoreline.

The LGPC feels that this herbicide could be an effective way to combat [Eurasian milfoil, an invasive species](#) that has been in Lake George for decades. Working with partners, including the Lake George Association (LGA), the LGPC has, for several years, used hand-harvesting to try to control the plant. It notes that nearly 68 tons of milfoil were removed from the lake using this method in 2021. Now the LGPC wants to test ProcellaCOR as an additional tool to manage this weed, noting that it's far more cost-effective than hand-harvesting. The LGPC plans to apply the herbicide at the two sites as a pilot in June of this year.

The LGA and Chris Navitsky, Lake George Waterkeeper, are strongly opposed to using this chemical, stating that "there simply is not enough science about the potential adverse impacts to water quality, human health, and aquatic plant and animal life to proceed at this time, particularly given the unique and complex character of the Lake." They had asked the APA to deny the current application until more peer-reviewed scientific data that is specific to Lake George can be collected. The product information label on the manufacturer's website describes ProcellaCOR as "a herbicide for management of freshwater aquatic vegetation in slow-moving/quiescent waters with little or no continuous outflow." This is not the profile of Lake George. Some of the other concerns include how long the toxic chemical will remain in the lake, the fact that ProcellaCOR eventually breaks down into chemicals that are as toxic as the parent and the fear that decomposing milfoil could even increase the risk of harmful algal blooms.

At its April 12 meeting, the Hague Town Board considered the arguments before unanimously adopting a resolution stating its opposition to the application of ProcellaCOR in Lake George at this time. The public is also concerned. Of the 325 public comment letters received by the APA, 300 expressed opposition to the use of the toxic chemical in Lake George – more than 90 percent. Some reminded the APA that thousands of people use Lake George for drinking water, and they feared the herbicide's potential adverse effects. Many said they wanted additional scientific study about the effects this herbicide could have on plant and animal life in the lake. Some also pointed out that, for many years, DDT was considered safe – until scientific studies proved that it wasn't.

At its regular meeting on April 14, the APA Board listened to a staff presentation recommending approval of the LGPC's application before narrowly approving it by a vote of 6-4. One Board member noted that one of her reasons for voting against approval was the fact that Hague's Town Board was unanimously opposed to granting approval.

The LGPC held an informational session on April 15 for the public. Many participants wanted to know why it is so urgent to put this relatively new herbicide into the lake now rather than waiting for more research on how ProcellaCOR will specifically affect Lake George. Since the LGPC's original decision to seek the APA permit, public opposition has become very clear, as evidenced by the public comments and the Hague Town Board's resolution. The LGPC still has the opportunity to take these factors into account before making a final decision on whether to move forward at its April 26 regular meeting.

Ginger Henry Kuenzel is a former town of Hague board member.

Photo of Blair's Bay courtesy of <https://glenburnie.org/>

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40 Responses

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1. *Boreas* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 1:26 pm](#)

I am glad someone is being cautious and skeptical of the chemical treatment.

[Reply](#)

2. *Nathan* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 2:57 pm](#)

agree Boreas!

Totally against introducing massive dose of chemical herbicide that is barely known, violates its very rules of use. Why poisoning the drinking water, irrigation, food species from fish to ducks and downstream is considered a good idea is just ridiculous. Shame yet again on APA for ignoring the public, not having public meetings for citizens who live there to express themselves. APA is still ignoring the good of the adirondacks, citizens of above said and ignoring the required public meeting. WE NEED APA OVERHAUL AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

[Reply](#)

- *Martin* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 4:28 pm](#)

What about the Lake George Park Commission? Who do they represent that they would entertain this insanity? People must realize the EPA does not test these herbicides themselves instead they rely upon the manufacturer's own evaluations. Trust but don't verify!

[Reply](#)

- *M.P. Heller* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 2:12 pm](#)

LGPC doesn't really represent anyone or anything but themselves. They are a prime example of redundant bureaucracy that does very little that can't or isn't already being done by other agencies like DEC or NYSP. They raise hundreds of thousands of dollars through wharf and boat registration fees annually with the vast majority going to salary, equipment purchase and upkeep, and maintenance of their office facilities. Recently this included a brand new building to replace the existing one.

An interesting piece of information is the annual law enforcement bulletin that LGPC releases. It can be found here: <https://lgpc.ny.gov/lake-george-marine-patrol>

It's interesting to note that only 2 boating while intoxicated and less than 10 noise violations were cited in each of the last two years. This statistic reinforces the fact that this is a totally unnecessary and superfluous agency.

[Reply](#)

- *Martin* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 6:50 am](#)

Thanks for the information. I watched LGPC's zoom meeting where they discussed this herbicide. It was essentially a heavy handed sales pitch. All expressed concerns were politely dismissed.

[Reply](#)

- *M.P. Heller* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 10:17 am](#)

This is the normal mode of this agency. Very condescending and dismissive. If you look through the published meeting minutes you can easily see a pattern of monied interests being granted variances while average individuals go largely ignored and denied. It's similar to the situation at APA in recent years but much more egregious.

[Reply](#)

3. *Charlie Stehlin* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 5:46 pm](#)

I went online to see what is said about ProcellaCOR and a study is saying the stuff is safe according to the experiments they did on rats, rabbits, and guinea pigs. But who's to know for sure? One thing for sure is Lake George is a huge economic machine, especially regarding tourism, and so the question will always be floating..... do we believe a supposed legitimate study put forth by a state whose interest is tax monies, or tourists dollars? And then there's the wording, "it's far more cost-effective than hand-harvesting," which immediately throws up a red flag as such indicates 'the cheap way out', a standard we live by, always trying to save a buck no matter at what cost.... that's the American way of doing business! While it is so that this treatment for milfoil may be environmentally safe, I can most certainly see where the mindset of skepticism would come in with the naysayers on this matter due to the self-interests history which continually repeats in this country. Personally I have my misgivings about any 'thing' tied to 'cide', whether it be pesticide, herbicide, fungicide....whatever.

Another thing is... this issue regards invasives on Lake George should have been discussed long before it came to the fore. We should have thought about it long before we allowed the very activities which brought them to fruit in the first place! That's another whole story in itself! It boils down to this! We have not learned from history which we again and again repeat!

[Reply](#)

- *Boreas* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 11:15 pm](#)

Charlie,

That is great news for any rats, rabbits, and guinea pigs living in the lake!

[Reply](#)

4. *JB* says:
[April 18, 2022 at 11:05 pm](#)

It seems that the major players pushing for this—LGPC and APIPP—are run by New York State. Therefore, it is no surprise that the state-appointed APA board ultimately approved this measure. The NYS government has been consistently on the wrong side regarding environmental issues in the Adirondacks and beyond for the past decade. And local citizens and municipalities are now emerging as true defenders against ill-conceived economic development projects and all-around bad management of New York lands and waters. My opinion: we are seeing manifest the results of widespread institutional decay, not just of executive leadership and the bureaucratic machinery, but of the scientific and educational institutions that ultimately lend credence to these types of bad ideas. A national problem, to be sure; but one that is acutely exaggerated in New York, caught under the wheels of a historically complicated institutional structure.

[Reply](#)

- *Zephyr* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 6:47 am](#)

So why are the major NY agencies supporting dumping chemicals in the lake? There must be a money stream somewhere that is pushing this if history is any lesson.

[Reply](#)

- *Dana* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 9:08 am](#)

A bit cynical, but where do NYS officials have vacation homes?

[Reply](#)

- *JohnL* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 7:17 am](#)

Good morning Z. I believe you and I talked about my ‘follow the money’ theory on another subject a few weeks ago. Bottom line was....you said that NY state was being run completely by a majority of Democrats and that we’d be OK. What’s up with this subject that your majority Dems can’t handle??

[Reply](#)

- *Zephyr* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 7:20 am](#)

Are the members of the LGPC and the APA all Democrats?

[Reply](#)

- *JB* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 12:58 pm](#)

Zephyr and JohnL,

I agree that the corrupting influence of money is a problem here. But I also think that there is a larger structural problem. There are too many recirculating flows of money, too many revolving doors, to even enumerate. To me, this is neither a Republican nor Democrat problem.

A much more important argument in the Adirondacks is that of home-rule vs. state intervention. Arguably, without major state-level interventions—on behalf of both state Democrats and Republicans—the Adirondack Park would likely not exist as anything more than a sprawling, 5-million-acre commercial development complex. But on the other hand, after 50 years, that same top-down approach has found us hurtling headlong in the same ultimate direction.

I'll suggest this: the only solution is one that preserves local autonomy to the absolute fullest; any half-measures have failed and will continue to fail. I'd argue that the reason that local governments have proven incapable of implementing forward-thinking policies that protect both people and the environment is because they have lived under the constant corrupting pressure of a larger, structurally broken New York State, which in turn has its own federal obligations. Hence, the fullest home-rule scenario for the Adirondack Park as a part of status quo New York State would create a situation similar to that of any sprawling and socially stratified megalopolis, for example, something akin to Westchester County; an autonomous Adirondack Park as a state-level entity within the United States federation would look something like the largely undeveloped but highly-industrial, highly-extractive Maine; and a truly autonomous Adirondack Park as its own nation-state would look like the more social and environmentally utopian Iceland or Bhutan.

Of course, this is an argument for an extreme form of libertarianism (specifically geolibertarianism) that is currently unattainable. But that does not mean that it is not an argument worth making.

[Reply](#)

- *Zephyr* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 1:19 pm](#)

Unfortunately, in my experience having lived many different places the more local some government is the more likely it is corrupted by money or personal influence. Despite the failings of our state, they are subject to much greater oversight than any local official, who often hires his brother, then rules in favor of his father, and then works double overtime for 10 years straight, then retires on full pension with full benefits only to get reappointed to some other office by his son.

[Reply](#)

- *JB* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 1:40 pm](#)

I can confirm that this is happening in the Adirondacks, but the most egregious recent examples of misconduct have been perpetrated by those who spend the most time liaising with NYS. In smaller towns at least, it is difficult to become corrupted by money or power without working in coordination with higher levels of government—otherwise, there isn’t enough money in the town coffers to be worth the effort! ...As it should be.

[Reply](#)

- *Zephyr* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 2:06 pm](#)

Take a look at municipal and county jobs in many places and they are basically hereditary fiefdoms. There’s enough money so that people do play games, and then their buddies get the contracts from the town and the public meeting on the sewage system doesn’t really mean anything because they already made their decision over a few beers in someone’s backyard. I remember sitting in on a meeting once where hundreds of thousands of dollars in expenditures were made by unanimous voice vote and not one question was asked. Took about five minutes to spend a small fortune.

[Reply](#)

5. *geogymn* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 6:54 am](#)

They have a machine for everything else, why not the mechanical removal of this weed.

[Reply](#)

- o *Boreas* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 9:13 am](#)

Removing the weed mechanically or even by hand can often increase its spread – especially in lakes with a fair amount of current. This is indeed done where practical, but with what result? Helps with boating immediately, but is it curbing the spread? Kinda like mowing crabgrass...

[Reply](#)

- *geogynn* says:
[April 19, 2022 at 1:13 pm](#)

Thanks for the explanation.

[Reply](#)

- *nathan* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 5:56 pm](#)

AHAAHA, crab grass is such a widespread invasive species and for so long, most people don't even realize it's an invasive species..another war we will not win...invasives basically never get eradicated, only real solution is to limit their spread, where are the boat/trailer dipping stations???

[Reply](#)

6. *Charlie Stehlin* says:

[April 19, 2022 at 7:53 am](#)

"we are seeing manifest the results of widespread institutional decay, not just of executive leadership and the bureaucratic machinery, but of the scientific and educational institutions..."

This seems to be the way it is going JB... anti-science, anti education, or anti public education, which is not a laughing matter. This is what happens when money comes first, or if there's lack of moral vision. Or when you vote for millionaires! I've been collecting literature on the early history in New York and New England, and so I am learning our history and am knowing that which was and that which is. It is the most fascinating, and interesting, reading, all of it with a large air of intelligence. It was all about education and science back in the day 200 years ago and much earlier. It was about natural history. If you go back to the old family magazines, the school tracts, the children's literature, all of it...even many of the religious publications, the old sermons, you'll see science was a major theme throughout. I see where we're headed and I feel sorry for future generations! It's a shame really!

[Reply](#)

- o *JB* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 1:13 pm](#)

Exactly, Charlie. The only way to really appreciate the failings of our institutions is to learn about history. Nowhere is this more true than in scientific and educational institutions. (Modern science and education themselves are inherently institutional.) The capacity for human reason has not changed historically—or at least not for the better!—but the ways that we have used that reason have become essentially purposeless. I'm officially proposing that all New York State-funded organizations engaged in environmental management and education be required to retain the services of a dedicated bioethicists and a methodologist (and hopefully a science historian as well).

[Reply](#)

- *Charlie Stehlin* says:
[April 21, 2022 at 6:56 am](#)

"The only way to really appreciate the failings of our institutions is to learn about history."

Or stand back and observe society! It's frightening JB!

[Reply](#)

7. *Jeanne* says:

[April 19, 2022 at 10:56 am](#)

Would anyone anywhere trust a chemical company and their product? Not me!
I won't be returning to Lake George anytime soon!!

[Reply](#)

- o *nathan* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 6:01 pm](#)

you never used Scott's lawn products, or wasp spray? not even Lysol, windex, air freshener, ect? every product manufactured contains some level of chemicals that are hazardous and yet never thought of. it's scary what 99.9% of people use and have no idea if it is truly safe in your very home! General rule: read ingredients, if you cannot pronounce it, you probably dont want it in your house.

[Reply](#)

8. *Peter* says:

[April 19, 2022 at 12:44 pm](#)

We all need to see more scientific evidence on the safety of this chemical, I don't see a realistic sense of urgency to test it at this time.

The Lake George Park Commission should schedule a forum to have an open discussion on this topic. The Forum should occur mid to late June so that the summer residents can be present!!

[Reply](#)

- o *Fisherking* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 5:24 am](#)

Eurasian milfoil has been present in Lake George for at least 37 years.

[Reply](#)

- *nathan* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 6:12 pm](#)

supporting information? link?

[Reply](#)

- *Fisherking* says:
[April 21, 2022 at 4:26 am](#)

“Combating The Great Milfoil Invasion”
Sheila Nason Magee
Wednesday, February 11, 1987
The Post-Star

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/347149544/>

[Reply](#)

- *Nathan* says:
[May 7, 2022 at 12:30 pm](#)

thanks, good tidbit of history of milfoil and LG, suprised it hasnt been more of an issue, Maybe the cold spring feeds into lake reduce the growth, versus the warmer lakes?

[Reply](#)

- o *Nathan* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 6:11 pm](#)

sadly Peter, i think many people agree with you, But APA doesnt care to invest real effort into it.
A new herbicide, limited testing, limited usage. even if nearly identical to another compound, it can be very different....personally i feel if it kills anything, then it's dangerous to everything period! All to often something is used for 10 , 20 plus years and it's finally linked to some cancer, Round-up being a perfect example, can cause cancer after repeated exposure, huge lawsuits won, but yet its still sold in stores....WHY? because chemical manufacturer's make more money than lawsuits cause...so in other words as long as there is profit to be made over losses, they don't care if people die. they sell products knowing they kill and as long as its profitable it's ok. people would never smoke a ciggerette but spray unknow stuff in home, water they drink and on food they grow....isnt that the definition of insanity???

[Reply](#)

- *Fisherking* says:
[April 21, 2022 at 5:23 am](#)

Supporting info or link on “I feel if it kills anything then it's dangerous to everything period!”?
The definition of insanity can be found in a dictionary.

[Reply](#)

- *nathan* says:
[May 7, 2022 at 12:26 pm](#)

“silent spring” by racheal carlson. That man made herbicides,insecticides, fungicides all are dangerous, that many mimic hormones and are detrimental, very long lived compounds that resist breakdown.

[Reply](#)

9. *Kate* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 9:47 am](#)

What can we do to stop this?

[Reply](#)

10. *Kate* says:
[April 20, 2022 at 2:07 pm](#)

What can we do about this??

[Reply](#)

11. *Zephyr* says:

[April 21, 2022 at 9:46 am](#)

The Lake George Mirror is reporting that Bruce Young, Chairman of the LGPC, has passed.

[Reply](#)

12. Charlie Stehlin says:

[April 22, 2022 at 2:59 pm](#)

Nathan says: "as long as there is profit to be made over losses, they don't care if people die. they sell products knowing they kill and as long as its profitable it's ok."

Take the current war the Ukrainian's are being subjected to as we rant! The United States alone is sending umpteenth millions of dollar amounts of lethal weaponry to that nation every week so that maybe them good Ukrainian's can fend off the evil which will most likely eventually crush them. Surely those weapons makers don't give two hoots about those beautiful Ukrainian boys and girls and their mums and dads.....while they're reigning in all of that money in sales! Welcome to the real world!

[Reply](#)

13. Bill Girvan says:

[April 22, 2022 at 5:44 pm](#)

Do your ember the late, great Adirondack Jack Leach of Utica, N.Y.

Adirondack Jack was quite a character .Every Spring he would Make his Annual Trout Fishing Paper Guide to help Young Anglers & their parents rap into good Trout Fishing hot sports mostly in the Adirondacks inside the Blue Line . Hall of his guides were free to the public. Adirondack Jack Leach also was a big believer in Big Foot especially in the Adirondacks in the North Lake area .He even had his own special Adirondack Jack Outfit including a wide brim hat with numerous Fishing Club Buttons all over it .

Long I've the Legion of the late, great Adirondack Jack Leach of Utica,N.Y.

[Reply](#)

14. Eric G says:

[July 6, 2022 at 10:12 am](#)

Also remember that herbicides can cause herbicide resistant strains of EWM that require stronger chemicals as time goes on. This is cited in the official literature by SePro, the maker of ProcellaCOR. There is also the increased risk of algal blooms due to the sudden release of excess nutrients from the rotting biomass of dead plants.

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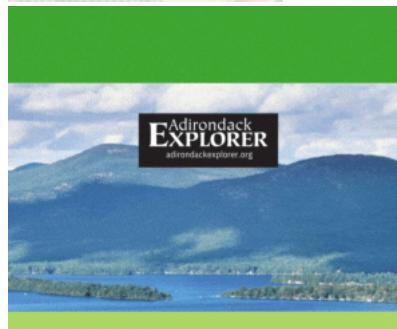
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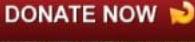


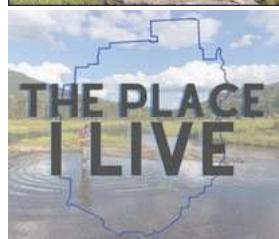
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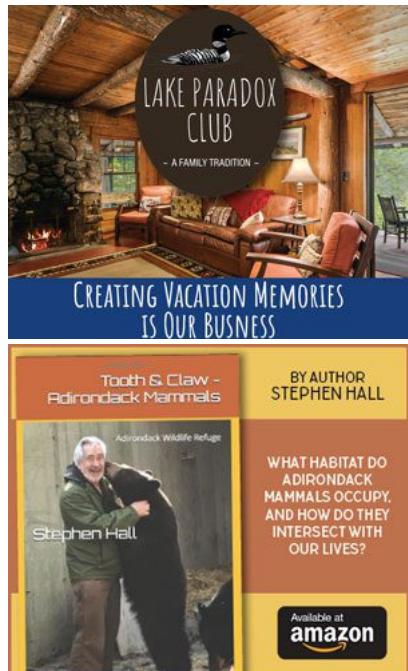
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We publish commentary and opinion pieces from voluntary contributors, as well as news updates and event notices from area organizations. Contributors include veteran local writers, historians, naturalists, and outdoor enthusiasts from around the Adirondack region. The information, views and opinions expressed by these various authors are not necessarily those of the Adirondack Almanack or its publisher, the Adirondack Explorer.

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