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OR) (/NEWS/REPORTERS/2/DAVID-SOMMERSTEIN)

Last week, a state Supreme Court judge put the brakes on a plan to use an herbicide, ProcellaCOR, to kill off an invasive weed in Lake George.

The Lake George Association, which brought the suit, argued for more caution in dealing with Eurasian watermilfoil after the Adirondack Park Agency had approved the plan.

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Eurasian watermilfoil after it's pulled from Lake George and on the way to be disposed of. Photo courtesy Lake George Mirror (<http://www.casella.com/>)

"[The LGA argued] that we should be more intellectually modest about what we put into the lake," said Tony Hall, co-owner and editor of the Lake George Mirror (<https://www.lakegeorgemirror.com/lake-george-village-waters-cleared-of-milfoil/>), "and acknowledge that there's too much that we don't know about the lake and the ecosystem and how it would respond to a foreign element such as ProcellaCOR."

The court ruling sets up a public hearing on the use of the herbicide this summer.



Tony Hall of the Lake George Mirror on the herbicide debate

Eurasian watermilfoil was first discovered in Lake George in 1985
(<https://www.lakegeorgemirror.com/archive/imagine-lake-george-without-milfoil/>).
Today, the weed threatens Lake George's ecology and tourism economy.



efforts (<https://www.lakegeorgemirror.com/more-boats-drained-dry/>) to kill milfoil for years as co-owner and proprietor. He told David Sommerstein that's included plastic vacuuming, and ripping milfoil out by hand. *Their efforts were cited for clarity.*

TONY HALL: Every summer for the past several summers, the Lake George Park Commission has been spending as much as \$500,000 a year to go from site to site to clear these spots.



Why are they going to such extents to do this? What's so bad about the detrimental effects of milfoil. One is simply ecological. It includes plants which play a role in keeping the lake clear, as well as being a food source for phytoplankton.

It's also an obstacle to recreation. If you've ever been in a very weedy body of water, where it's difficult to swim, and the plants get trapped in your propeller, you know this is not something that a recreational area such as Lake George wants to see spread.

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Divers float above a patch of Eurasian watermilfoil. Photo courtesy Lake George Mirror

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SOMMERSTEIN: So let's continue. The Lake George Park Commission has been



l these means to try and get rid of the milfoil. And then

proposed using a chemical called sonar as part of a pilot
e a more cost-effective means of killing milfoil. And it

Adirondack Park Agency scheduled an adjudicatory hearing

to hear the arguments for and against, and the Adirondack Park Agency concluded that it would have damaged native plants. And so a permit was denied.

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re reluctant to revisit that argument until a few years ago,

ProcellaCOR, which, according to Lake George Park

l but rather a hormone, and was being used in other lakes

other lakes in the Adirondacks. And so the Lake George Park

was only responsible to at least look at the possibility of

of these dense beds in Lake George, which had not

sting.

Late in 2020, it came up with a serious proposal to use it. In 2021-22, it did submit an application to the Adirondack Park Agency and the DEC.

(<http://www.casella.com/>)

At that point, the Lake George Association stepped up and raised objections to it, saying there were too many unknowns about its impact on nontarget species, to native plants, animals, and even to human health for those people who still use the lake for their drinking water.

It reached the Adirondack Park Agency in April 2022. The APA did approve it. The Lake George Association brought a suit against the APA to at least hold off on the use of ProcellaCOR until some of its impacts had been evaluated.

On March 3, New York State Supreme Court Justice Robert Muller ruled that the APA had not properly looked at all of the counterarguments for ProcellaCOR and ruled that the APA had arbitrarily and capriciously approved permits to use it without holding a public hearing.

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[publicradio.org/news/images/20200812ReRootedMilfoilcolor.j](http://publicradio.org/news/images/20200812ReRootedMilfoilcolor.jpg)

Eurasian watermilfoil first appeared in Lake George in 1985. Photo courtesy Lake George Mirror (<http://www.casella.com/>)

SOMMERSTEIN: What does the Lake George Association want to see done with Eurasian watermilfoil? What's their solution?

HALL: That's a really good question. The LGA and its leaders argue that there are just too many unknowns about the potential impacts of this product upon the lake's ecosystem. It has said that it simply wants more science. But it has acknowledged that there's not enough time to do an entirely new scientific research project on this before June 2023, when presumably a public hearing would be called.

I think [the LGA argues] that we should be more intellectually modest about what we put into the lake and acknowledge that there is too much that we don't know about the lake and its ecosystem and how it would respond to foreign elements such as ProcellaCOR.

The Lake George Park Commission will argue this has been tested through a rigorous scientific process, and we know precisely what its impacts are, which are nil.

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SOMMERSTEIN. And so in the meanwhile, as it all works itself out, it sounds like it's a good approach to getting rid of milfoil as we enter this summer.

So we can definitely say that the ProcellaCOR will not be a pilot project this summer.



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