

Milfoil Control Demonstration Project is Approved!

By Dick Osgood, LMA Executive Director



Dick Osgood

The Lake Minnetonka Conservation District has approved proceeding with the chemical control of milfoil in three demonstration areas in 2006. This step follows earlier work to provide relief of milfoil nuisances using new methods. The LMA has been, and will continue to be, a partner in this project.

The objectives of the demonstration projects include:

- Demonstrate the effectiveness of herbicides to control milfoil in Lake Minnetonka.
- Evaluate and compare the effectiveness of herbicide treatments when used in large areas.
- Determine the feasibility of using herbicides to supplement the LMCD's harvesting program.
- Determine the level of public support for future large-scale herbicide treatments to control milfoil.

Three sites have been selected for inclusion in the demonstration project. The sites have a history of heavy milfoil growth. The three sites are:

- Phelps Bay, west side – 6.3 acres to be treated with triclopyr.
- Carmens Bay, northwest side – 13.2 acres to be treated with 2,4-D and endothall.
- Grays Bay, east side – 11.3 acres to be treated with 2,4-D.



The demonstration sites are all 150-feet from the lakeshore, which is considered the public area of the lake. Adjacent lakeshore owners will be notified and given the opportunity to 'opt in' to the program. While final details of adjacent lakeshore owners' participation have not yet been worked out, it is anticipated they will be given the opportunity to participate by having their lakeshore areas treated at the same time as the demonstration areas. A fee, also to be determined, will likely be prorated on the basis of the area treated.

The herbicides being used have been demonstrated to have season-long (or longer) control of milfoil, have minimal impacts on native plants

(good plants) and are safe.

The demonstration project is also designed as a 'public-private' partnership, with the LMCD as the public partner and the LMA and our members as the private partners. The LMA supports this project and will act as the coordinator on behalf of participating lakeshore owners. We encourage adjacent property owners to participate in the treatments and encourage all members to contribute financial support to assure the project's success as well as to promote the future control of milfoil in Lake Minnetonka.

We are also encouraged that this project is the result of earlier advocacy by the LMA and others and we believe Lake Minnetonka will be seen as a model for comprehensive milfoil control.

Minnesota Waters

The Minnesota Lakes Association and the Rivers Council of Minnesota have merged to become Minnesota Waters as of January 1, 2006. The merger creates a stronger advocacy voice for the protection of lakes, rivers and all water resources in Minnesota. The LMA had been a member of MLA and will remain a member of MN Waters. Dick Osgood, LMA Executive Director, has been elected as Secretary of the MN Waters Board.

SolarBees in Stubb's Bay

You may have noticed five strange-looking units in Stubb's Bay this past summer. These are called SolarBees which are solar-powered water circulators. These units have been used in western US reservoirs and are now being tested by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. The District rented the five units in 2005 to test whether they could reduce nuisance algae in Stubb's Bay. The units are designed to take water from about 7 or 8-feet below the surface and pump it out along the surface as a way to keep buoyant algae from accumulating on the lake surface.

While the final results have not been reported, it appears there was little improvement in water quality. The Watershed District and the manufacturer have agreed to testing again this coming summer, using one or two additional units. The District hopes short-term water quality improvements can occur, while longer-term management efforts are being implemented.

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HOW TO CONTACT THE LMA

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E-Mail:Minnetonka@Mnlakes.org

Web Site:www.mnlakes.org/Minnetonka

Your Membership Makes LMA Strong

The LMA has recently completed our database update, which allows us to reach every Lake Minnetonka lakeshore owner. Many of you receiving this newsletter are not yet members of the LMA. We count on full participation so we can continue to act as your advocate for critical issues facing Lake

Minnetonka. If you have not become a member, please do so today.

LMA Board Elects New Officers

The LMA Board has elected Mike Mason as Board President. Also elected were Amanda Walsh as Vice President and Mike Bosanko as Secretary. Gedney Tuttle continues as LMA Treasurer.

"From The Helm"

by Mike Mason, LMA Board President



Mike Mason

This is an exciting time for the LMA. I am pleased to serve as the LMA President and look forward to confronting the challenges facing the protection of our beautiful lake.

This newsletter is filled with informative articles about critical lake issues. Most impressive to me, however, is the increasing breadth of the LMA's influence and increasing import of the LMA's advocacy role. The LMA serves as the voice of lakeshore owners. This critical role is a luxury, because we have no legal or regulatory authorities; however, we have the responsibility of performing this job in a credible and constructive manner. I believe we have struck this balance and have had an important role in catalyzing positive action on behalf of lakeshore owners' concerns.

We will need to keep up, indeed expand, our watchdog efforts in 2006.

Your contributions have fueled this impressive track record. We have updated our database and are now asking all lakeshore owners to support our efforts. Most of you reading this newsletter have not yet become members. Please take a minute to support the LMA by send a check.

On another note, I am please to announce that The North American Lake Management Society has recognized Osgood Consulting as "Outstanding Corporation." The citation from NALMS reads, in part:

"Osgood Consulting is a small company dedicated to environmentally sound lake management, protection, and restoration. Facilitation, mediation, and guidance services to lake management associations, in addition to actual restoration projects, serve to support sound lake management."

As we know, Dick Osgood, owner of Osgood Consulting, serves as Executive Director of the LMA as a contract position. Osgood also performs consulting services for other individuals and organizations around the country.

Thank you and have a great year.

Mike Mason

SUPPORT THE LMA – JOIN TODAY!

Thank you to LMA members who have joined or renewed their membership. Your dues help support the important work of the LMA. **WE NEED MORE LAKESHORE OWNERS AS MEMBERS.** Without a solid base of support, the LMA cannot continue to provide a voice for the betterment of our beautiful lake.

THANK YOU, CONTRIBUTORS SINCE LAST LMA NEWSLETTER!

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1. I want to support the LMA at the following membership level:

- Basic \$50 - \$199 Sustaining \$200 - \$499 Captain \$500 - \$999 Commodore \$1000+ Business \$250

2. I want to support the "LMA Exotic Species Fund"\$ _____

3. Other or Additional\$ _____

The LMA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Treating Aquatic Plants Along Your Lakeshore

by Dick Osgood, LMA Executive Director

The LMA does not share the views and concerns of Minnesotans for Healthy Lakes.

The proposed rule changes are basically silent on the need for and value of controlling non-native plants.

Association (now Minnesota Waters) has been part of the DNR's review process, and I have represented MLA and LMA throughout that process.

While the DNR's review process has been long and, at times frustrating, the LMA does not share the views and concerns of Minnesotans for Healthy Lakes. Many lakeshore owners on Lake Minnetonka treat the nuisance plants, or weeds, each season. The DNR requires a permit for this when using chemical herbicides, and their rules are intended to provide for recreation and access while at the same time protecting the lake. The proposed changes would, in many cases, reduce the amount of lakeshore

Many lakeshore owners have received a letter from 'Minnesotans for Healthy Lakes' notifying you of changes to the DNR's permit process for chemically treating nuisance plants. The LMA, working through the Minnesota Lakes

that could be treated. The LMA supports this change, especially with respect to protecting native plants, which are important for a healthy lake.

The LMA also supports more aggressive management of non-native plants, like Eurasian watermilfoil, which harm lakes. The proposed rule changes do provide for more aggressive management of non-native plants, but they could (and should) go farther in this regard. Specifically, the DNR will require the preparation of a 'Lake Vegetation Management Plan' or LVMP to provide a credible context for the management of non-native plants. The LMA supports the LVMP process because it is sound management. However, the proposed rule changes are basically silent on the need for and value of controlling non-native plants. Non-native plants, like Eurasian watermilfoil, harm lake ecosystems and therefore there ought to be a greater imperative for preventing and controlling these plants to protect lakes.

The LMA will continue to follow and participate in this process. We hope Lake Minnetonka lakeshore owners will support the LMA through your membership and contributions to the Exotic Species Fund, so we can continue to be your advocate and support milfoil control efforts such as the demonstration project, described in the front-page article.

THE MISSION OF THE LMA

The Lake Minnetonka Association, through volunteers, lakeshore owners and the Lake Minnetonka community, works to promote lake preservation and the reasonable use of Lake Minnetonka.

Serving as an information resource and advocate for the lakeshore owners, the Lake Minnetonka Association focuses on the areas of lake preservation and protection that are appropriate for the entire lake community.

Also, the Lake Minnetonka Association promotes social interaction among members through association events. By forming a lasting relationship with members of the lake community, the LMA creates a kinship of lakeshore owners involved in the protection of Lake Minnetonka.

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LMCD Enacts Changes to Winter Regulations

By Tom Skramstad, LMCD chair

De-icing

Last winter, the LMCD approved thirty de-icing permits. A de-icing permit allows a property owner to protect their dock investment by installing a pump that circulates water around the dock, preventing the water from freezing and damaging the dock. Twenty-nine of the thirty permits were for “permanent” docks, in which a portion of the dock is constructed with large wooden posts driven into place by mechanical equipment. In the interest of public safety, the LMCD has made changes to its regulations, as follows:

- An “authorized de-icing area” has been defined for each permitted site. All open water, weakened ice, and a required four foot high fence must be contained within this area. All ice outside of this area must be safe for the public to use.
- Applicants must have appropriate liability insurance.
- No new de-icing permits will be granted for residential sites.

The LMCD will continue to process de-icing applications, collect application fees, and conduct inspections to ensure compliance. Complete details on this regulation can be found on the LMCD Website (www.lmcd.org) in *Section 2.09*.

Speed Limits

The LMCD has simplified the “rules of the road” in the winter by reducing the number of daytime “speed zones” from three to two. The new regulations state:

- There is a “shore zone” which extends from the shoreline to 150 feet from shore. Motorized traffic using this zone shall be limited to 15 MPH (no change).
- Outside of the shore zone, the speed limit is 50 MPH during the day and 30 MPH during the night (revised).
- No motorized vehicle may be operated at a speed in excess of 15 miles per hour within 150 feet of any person fishing, any fish house, pedestrian, skating rink, sliding area, or any other area that would endanger people or property (no change).

Complete details on this regulation can be found on the LMCD Website in *Section 3.11, Subd. 3 and Subd. 5*. New signs that include a summary of this ordinance are being created and will be posted at most public access sites in January. Enforcement of the LMCD’s speed limit regulations is done by the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Water Patrol.

LMA Supports the LMCD Recommendation on the Lake Virginia Access

The Metropolitan Council will be reconstructing a sanitary sewer line under Smithtown Road, which will necessitate the reconstruction of the culvert between Lake Virginia and Smithtown Bay.

The Metropolitan Council has offered several options for the culvert size, one of which may allow navigation between Lake Virginia and Smithtown Bay. Many Lake Virginia lakeshore owners want this navigable connection. However, the water

levels in the culvert will be insufficient to allow navigation by anything but canoes most of the time.

The LMCD recently supported culvert option ‘B,’ because it would not allow traffic between the two lakes, which the LMCD feels creates safety concerns. The LMA has a standing policy in opposition to adding new shoreline areas to the lake because of boat traffic, so we support the LMCD’s recommendation.



THE LMA NEEDS YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

As you can see from the articles in this newsletter, Lake Minnetonka is facing several critical challenges that require strong advocacy and timely actions. The LMA is able to confront these issues in a positive, effective manner, but we need your financial support. Your support will allow the LMA to:

- *Continue and increase our advocacy on behalf of lakeshore owners.*
- *Work with agencies, elected representatives and municipalities to coordinate and facilitate action.*
- *Provide financial support for inspection programs and milfoil demonstrations which will result in assured protection and better management of the lake.*

These activities, to be meaningful and effective, are expensive. LMA members have ‘stepped up’ in the past to challenges like this. It is time to show your support again. Thanks.

Zebra Mussels – GET READY

Zebra mussels are not in Lake Minnetonka – yet. The LMA has called for inspections of all boats entering our lake as the minimum step needed to prevent zebra mussels from getting into Lake Minnetonka. We know there are significant legal, financial and logistical hurdles, but there is no other known way to keep zebra mussels out, and once in a lake there is no remedy!

At this time, the agencies who must facilitate the inspections have not removed these hurdles. This is frustrating, to say the least, because many of these same agencies are charged with protecting our lakes.

The LMCD has indicated they are not of the view that a zebra mussel infestation is inevitable, which consistent with the inspection program they have funded the past several years. However, a zebra mussel introduction is now highly likely and more aggressive and comprehensive measures are required. We know it is impractical to have inspections at all accesses – public and private – at all times, thus we have advocated closing some accesses to facilitate the inspections as well as charging fees to pay for this program.

The LMCD and the LMA will be exploring these options with the MN DNR in the hope of having a credible prevention program in place this coming boating season. However, if such a program cannot or will not be implemented, Lake Minnetonka

lakeshore owners should be prepared for a zebra mussel infestation. About all lakeshore owners can do to protect your docks, boats and other property is to make sure you boat is lifted entirely out of the water when not in use. Any other measures are stop-gaps and maintenance.

Zebra mussels are moving rapidly into lakes, so get ready. Unless or until comprehensive inspections take place – which we consider the only rational and credible protection measure – our only other option is to sit back and wait.

'TONKA IN THE TWENTIES...



Lake Minnetonka
Submitted by Paul Crowe, Dassel, MN. Friends of Paul's Great Aunt Bridget (Crowe) Olson on Lake Minnetonka in the 1920s

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