

Star Lake Report – January 2009

Submitted by the Friends of Star Lake (FOSL)
a committee of the Mount Holly Community Association

The Friends of Star Lake committee was established in 2001 to evaluate the invasive growth of Eurasian Milfoil in Star Lake, and to identify potential solutions. With assistance from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, and our consultants, it was concluded that the most effective method to eradicate the Milfoil was to treat the lake with the herbicide “Sonar” and then to follow this treatment with hand pulling, bottom barriers, and/or spot chemical treatment in subsequent years. FOSL submitted this strategy as its five year management plan to the State. In addition to community fund raising, FOSL applied for and has received five grants from the State for approximately one-third of the cost of the treatments.

In 2004, a “Sonar” treatment was conducted and successfully managed the Eurasian Water-milfoil throughout the summer of 2005. Isolated growth was observed by the VT DEC in September of 2005. During the May 2006 survey, no Milfoil was found, nor was any found by volunteer monitors until July of 2006. Divers hand pulled Milfoil in July and August and although the hand pulling was effective, the Milfoil continued to establish itself throughout the remainder of the summer and fall. Significant areas of growth were found during the September 7, 2006 survey.

For 2007 FOSL submitted to the VT DEC a plan which included spot treatment of approximately 15 acres with the herbicide “Renovate” (triclophyr). This area was where Milfoil growth was the most extensive. Residents were notified prior to the herbicide treatment. Volunteers collected water samples for analysis following the herbicide treatment, and continued to monitor the lake throughout the summer. As in prior years, two biological surveys were conducted by our consultant in July and October of 2007 to determine the extent and location of any Milfoil regrowth. The herbicide treatment was effective; no evidence of Milfoil was found anywhere in the Lake.

In 2008 no evidence for Milfoil regrowth was found during the summer monitoring nor observed during the September 7, 2008 biological survey. Although, hand pulling was considered in the VT DEC permit application, because of the success of the 2007 pesticide treatment, it was not needed. Therefore, no lake treatment was performed during 2008.

2008 marked the fifth and final year of the Star Lake management plan. At the annual meeting, held in December 2008 between FOSL and the VT DEC, the following issues were discussed:

- 1) the need for FOSL to submit a second five-year management plan for 2009-2014
- 2) strategies for future treatment of Milfoil which is expected to return
- 3) the problem of extensive native plant growth and how to incorporate its treatment into the overall five-year management plan.

We would like to thank the many residents and friends for their dedication, assistance and financial support of our efforts. We still have much to do to keep our Lake and beach area a wonderful place to relax, and we invite your comments and suggestions.

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