

Star Lake Report -- UPDATE 2004

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."

FOSL then submitted to the State a five year management plan which included Sonar treatment in its first year. In order to fund the costs of this plan and treatment, FOSL conducted a community fund raising effort and received an overwhelming response. In addition, FOSL applied for and received a grant from the State for approximately one-third of the cost of the first year treatment.

As part of the management plan, FOSL engaged Lycott Environmental, Inc., a lake and pond management company, to conduct the surveys and treatment of Star Lake. In April, 2004, FOSL received a "Nuisance Control Permit for the management of the aquatic vegetation, Eurasian Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), in Star Lake with the herbicide Sonar."

Surveys by the VT DEC and FOSL's consultant were used as the pre-treatment surveys and basis for calculating the 2004 treatment program. The survey revealed that Eurasian Milfoil was identified in all areas of the lake.

Prior to undertaking the Sonar treatment, FOSL contacted all residents around the lake who could be impacted by the management program, and held an informational meeting including residents of the Town, Lycott Environmental, SePRO (the manufacturer of Sonar) and the VT DEC. Brochures and pamphlets were also made available in the local library for review. Prior to each treatment, posters were erected to alert lake residents and visitors of some limited water-use restrictions, and public announcements were made on local radio stations.

A whole-lake treatment was undertaken in accordance with the permit on June 11, 2004. Booster treatments were conducted on June 29, July 13, August 2, and August 30, 2004.

On September 17, 2004 Lycott conducted a post-treatment survey of Star Lake. Global positioning system equipment was used to evaluate the fifteen survey areas established by the pre-treatment surveys. This survey revealed that the treatment program effectively managed the Eurasian Milfoil without adversely affecting the non-target plants. On October 1, 2004 a letter from the State indicated that all use restrictions were lifted from Star Lake and the Star Lake outlet stream to its confluence with the Mill River.

As part of the permit and five-year management plan, a survey will be conducted in September 2005 to determine if there has been any re-growth of Eurasian Milfoil. The use of alternative management techniques will be reviewed for implementation if necessary.

We would like to thank Jacki Brown, former Chair of FOSL, for all the hard work she did throughout the fund raising and permitting process, and to many others 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 are delighted with the success of our first year treatment.

For more information, contact Dottie Finnerty, FOSL Chair at 259-2491 or dottie@finnerty.us.