

Fall 2016
Loon Lake Hybrid Milfoil
by Lee Evans LMD Chairman

The Loon Lake Advisory board for controlling milfoil and other noxious weed in Loon Lake experienced another difficult year with our efforts to control the growth of milfoil on our lake. The 2016 season started by selecting a new vendor Aquatechnex to survey and apply herbicides to combat the ever growing challenges we have seen with milfoil in Loon Lake. This season started on a more positive note with an early survey that discovered approximately 37 acres of actively growing plants. Following the survey an herbicide application on June 27 and 28 was completed on the 37 acres using a granular form of 2,4-D which has proven to be very effective on Eurasian Milfoil with results noticeable in 10 to 14 days. Aquatechnex performed a post treatment survey on July 25th nearly a month after the initial application and discovered very poor results from the June treatment. An additional survey was conducted in mid-August when 9 samples of plants were collected and sent to the independent lab GenPass LLC from Muskegon Michigan. Each of the 9 samples came back as hybrid cross of Northern and Eurasian milfoil. Recent research indicates that hybrid milfoils may exhibit increased tolerance to some herbicides. On average, hybrid milfoil is less susceptible to control with the commonly-used aquatic herbicide 2,4-D in comparison with Eurasian milfoil. The decreased sensitivity to 2,4-D appears to be common across different hybrid lineages. Lakes that have been treated historically with 2,4-D have a higher incidence of hybrid milfoil than non-treated lakes. This research suggests that use of certain herbicides may inadvertently allow tolerant hybrid milfoil to gain dominance.

Now that we have discovered the hybrid milfoil plant in our lake we can now take steps to combat our problem. In late September Aquatechnex suggested the use of a contact herbicide on the nearly 100 acres of actively growing plants. The contact herbicide would kill the body of the plant to limit further fragmentation thru the fall and winter and early spring. This would however not kill the root system and suggested a follow up next spring using an herbicide that would better deal with the roots of the hybrid plant. Two members of the Advisory board Denny Drinkard and Lee Evans were on the lake with the Aquatechnex crew during the September application to answer home owner question and found additional plants not surveyed.

The Loon Lake LMD (Lake Management District) advisory board works in cooperation with the Stevens County Board of Commissioners with all decisions approved by the commissioner's office. We meet the second Monday of each month at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Old School House during the season starting in March. We welcome your interest and participation in this process. I would also like to thank the members of the LMD board for their continued efforts. They are George Swannack, Steve Pehl, Barry Smith, Denny Drinkard, Daryl Howe, Lee Evans and Bob French. If you have an interest and would like to serve on this board please contact any board member for information.