

Aquatic Plant Control

The past few years have witnessed a dramatic increase in the growth of Eurasian watermilfoil and the continued presence of starry stonewort. These invasive weeds adversely affect native plant and fish populations, while negatively impacting recreational use by boaters, skiers and fishermen. Having consulted with aquatic plant specialists from MSU, the State of Michigan DEQ and professional lake consultants, including results from a recent aquatic plant survey, the following multi-faceted approach is currently planned for 2013.

Mechanical harvesting has been the primary method to control the growth of nuisance weeds in Upper Straits Lake. Selective harvesting will be utilized to minimize cutting Eurasian watermilfoil, since mechanical harvesting produces greater plant density as the fragments grow into new plants. The removal of 35 to 40 truck-loads of weeds from the lake each summer reduces the amount of nutrients that would otherwise contribute to increased weed growth. Selective weed harvesting removes the weeds that can clog boat propellers and restrict swimming.

Chemical control of invasive aquatic plants is planned for the two acre RC Bankers cove on the south shore, which has seen a dramatic increase in invasive plants. The select use of herbicides has been shown to be the most effective method to treat Eurasian watermilfoil. Spring is the appropriate time of year to treat the emerging invasive plants. More information concerning this approach will appear on this site as it becomes available.

Hand raking aquatic weeds near the shoreline is another method of removing invasive weeds with minimal fragmentation. Once weeds are removed, care should be taken to transport the weeds to a disposal site away from the water's edge. A variety of professional lake rakes and other devices are available online.

Donations for aquatic weed control are necessary to fund on-going efforts to protect the water quality of Upper Straits Lake. As in past years, the City of Orchard Lake Village has agreed to receive donations and deposit them in a special Water Quality Improvement Fund. Please make your check payable to WQIF and designate "For Upper Straits Lake" on the memo line. Mail to Rhonda McClellan, City Clerk, 3995 Orchard Lake Rd., Orchard Lake, MI 48323.