2018 Invasive Report

2018 has been another challenging year.

Scattered Milfoil plants have been found on nearly every shoreline of the Upper lake basin, with the three largest areas requiring the most attention.

These (3) areas are the Eastern most Bay including the Inlet, Grass Island shoreline and along the “sand bar” to the Marked Rock and in the Narrows Eastern Bay from the Peaked Hill Trailhead into the Narrow area within the 5 MPH buoy’s.

This is the second Year the PLA has contracted with Aqualogic, a company specializing in Milfoil Removal. They spent 13 days on the water with a two person crew each day, consisting of one Diver and one on board operating the equipment and sifting the Milfoil into containers.

They have been concentrating on the (3) worst areas as identified above. Their involvement has

increased the Harvesting effort immensely beyond what the Volunteers were able to accomplish.

Aqualogic was able to get started in June and finished in Mid-September, although the schedule was modified from the original plan, they were able to complete the contracted number of days.

They spent 9 days along the Eastern shoreline, 2 1/2 days at Grass Island and 1 1/2 days in the Narrows. During this time they Harvested 1410 Gallons of Milfoil. (See spreadsheet with annual volunteer and Aqualogic harvesting quantities)

As often as possible volunteer scouts were present during Aqualogics Harvesting to help direct from the surface and pick up any fragments that may have been missed.

Nancy Girling, a current PLA Board Member was Aqualogic’s main contact person coordinating and directing them to which areas they will concentrate on during each visit.

The Volunteer scouts had been out individually and in groups throughout the summer and fall marking areas for harvesting prior to Aqualogic’s arrival. This is an important factor in the success and efficiency of the harvesting. In addition everyone should keep an eye out in both ends of the Lake for floating fragments which can occur at any time of the year.

With numerous scouts continually marking areas there have been fewer organized sweeps this year (One on lower lake narrows, one on upper lake narrows). Future sweeps should continue as a means of recruiting and training new individuals interested in assisting in the effort.

Volunteer divers/snorkelers have also contributed to the overall Harvesting effort assisting in the (3) worst areas and along with the shoreline and other needed locations. There have been 3-4 Divers that contribute time as their schedule allows. They have been instrumental in the overall effort for the last 7-8 years. During this year they harvested Approximately 4500 Milfoil Plants.

The overall Volunteer effort has been around 200 hrs. this past year, scouting and harvesting.

Numerous plants have been marked in the shallow weedy areas in the Narrows and Eastern end of the lake and are very difficult to remove. Divers and Aqualogic cannot get in with the equipment due to accessibility and the depth of mud/silt posing a potential safety issue. These areas will continue to be of concern with no easy method of removal.

This year a Milfoil plant was found growing on the south side of Severance Beach within the swimming area. It was sent to APPIP for positive identification, and was determined that it is Eurasian Milfoil.

We will need to increase sweeps and awareness of possible fragments on the Lower lake shoreline, fortunately there are a large group of scouts presently out on the lower lake trying to stay ahead of any potential spread.

 A shared observation of the year in review is that the Milfoil continues to spread due to natural Fragmentation and typical lake traffic. At the end of the season there was a noticeable reduction in the number of plants in the areas Aqualogic had Harvested compared to earlier in the season. The plants are being found in deeper water each year making them more difficult to spot until they are near the surface allowing them a longer time to fragment and spread. Although there have been some success in smaller areas we are seeing continued spreading of the Milfoil. Paradox Lake has a group of dedicated volunteers that have helped keep Paradox in much better shape than other local lakes, but it will be a continuous fight to attempt to minimize the spread.

This year:

In 2019 Aqualogic will be providing a (3) person crew, which will include an addition of a surface support person in a Kayak assisting with spotting and fragment control. All (3) crew members will be trained divers rotating in the diving effort.

They are scheduled for June 3-7, July 1-5 and Aug. 12-16.

Jim Frederick