

Minutes—7/15/2013 Lake Josephine Improvement Association Homeowners' Meeting
Recorded by: Pam Newcome - Secretary

Lake Josephine Homeowners, thank you to those of you who attended last night's Homeowners' Meeting. We had a strong showing, with approximately 70 people, representing 43 properties, in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to update homeowners re: recently-discovered Eurasian Water Milfoil contamination of our lake and to explore solutions for treating it and other invasive weeds such as Curly Leaf Pondweed.

The meeting was run by Emil Kucera, President of Lake Josephine Homeowners' Association. We also had representatives from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Rice Creek Watershed (RCWS), and Lake Management (the company that treats for invasive weeds). Highlights of the meeting are noted below.

Quick Summary

Our lake has both a Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed infestation. Bottom line, we agreed that chemical spraying is probably the most effective and economical way of treating both. The spraying won't eliminate the weeds, but will help control them so they don't interfere with lake usage. It will need to be done annually. The lake area that needs to be treated each year will vary, and depends on many factors. Among those are 1) the area of contamination, which may change year to year based on spread of the weeds and the effectiveness of the prior year's spraying and 2) the coverage area allowed by the DNR, which factors in the size of the lake and the amount of shoreline spraying for which individual homeowners register.

Based on input from Lake Management, the worst-case cost estimate for spraying our lake each year would be \$5K for two treatments, assuming the contamination remains close to the current 15-20% infestation level. We agreed that asking for a voluntary \$100 per household would be a reasonable and appropriate way to cover the cost of the treatment. (Please see donation form attached to this email.) Any funds that are not used will be reserved and put towards future treatments.

Background of Lake Josephine Homeowners' Association--Emil Kucera, President

- Formed in 1996
- We are a 317A nonprofit corporation
- There are nine board members
- The association works with the DNR, RCWS, Pollution Control, Ramsey County, Lake Management and others on issues such as water quality, maintenance of the public boat launch, and removal of muskrats and geese from the lake.
- We owe Emil a debt of gratitude, as he's tirelessly worked with these entities over the last 17 years, helping to ensure that our lake remains clean and safe. Most importantly, he was able to seek and get a permit from the DNR to spray for Eurasian Water Milfoil this summer, soon after the extent of the Milfoil contamination was known. The spraying has had a significant impact on the weeds. Thank you, Emil!

DNR Discussion--Keegan Lund

- The DNR issues permits for Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed spraying
- There are two types of permits: 1) individual shoreline control (requested by individual homeowners) and 2) lake-wide/offshore treatment
- Typically, a lake survey is done to determine where--and what--the contamination is, then the DNR creates a map and spraying plan to address it.
- Most lakes in MN fall into the "15% Rule", meaning the treatment area cannot exceed 15% of the lake's littoral area. Lake Josephine is 116 acres, with 81 of those considered littoral. Based on the 15% rule, we are allowed to treat just over 12 acres.
- Currently we contract for 3.2 acres of individual shoreline spraying. Additionally, we utilized another 7.9 acres for the offshore spraying that was allowed this summer. A little over 1 acre is held in reserve.
- It's important to note that if an area is sprayed twice with two different chemicals (e.g., one for Eurasian Water Milfoil and one for Curly Leaf Pondweed), any overlapping area where the two chemicals are sprayed is only counted once towards the 15% coverage area. This is true even if the spraying is done on different dates.
- If our lake infestation spreads, we can request a variance to treat more acreage. However, with that comes additional requirements such as a costly annual lake survey. (This is a more formal/specific version of the survey mentioned in bullet 3 above.) This survey helps monitor the effects of ongoing treatment to ensure we are not harming too many native plants and thereby negatively impacting the lake.
- The DNR has grants available to help homeowners offset the cost of treatment. Unfortunately, by the time we discovered the Milfoil contamination in our lake, we were too late to apply for a grant this year. Emil will be seeking funds next year.

Rice Creek Watershed Discussion--Matt Kocian

- Our lake is part of the Rice Creek Watershed. Water flows from Little Josephine to Josephine to Johanna to Long Lake then into Rice Creek.
- Lake Josephine has been monitored since 1975 and is considered to have good water quality, especially compared to other metro lakes. White Bear Lake is considered one of the best, followed closely by Lake Johanna then Lake Josephine. Further down the water clarity spectrum are Balk Eagle Lake, Long Lake and Lake Peltier, with the latter being the most cloudy.
- One of the greatest threats to water clarity is phosphorus, which is often introduced into lakes via grass clippings and storm water run off. Chlorophyll is another culprit. Based on a RCWS report, our lake generally meets--or is below--state standards for both contaminants.
- Homeowners can take measures to help maintain our lake's water quality, through either shoreline restoration or installing rain gardens. If you are interested, please visit the RCWS Blue Thumb Website for more information.

Lake Management--Margy Pennings & Mike O'Connell

- Margy again reviewed the allowable treatment coverage area for Lake Josephine.

- Although there are other methods for treating Eurasian Water Milfoil (e.g., mechanical harvesters, Milfoil Weevil which is an aquatic beetle that feeds on the weeds, etc.), chemical spraying is the most effective, most economical, and most used solution in Lake Management's estimation.
- Areas that were treated a few weeks ago were chosen because of their heavy concentration of Eurasian Water Milfoil.
- Lake Management would recommend spraying for both Eurasian Water Milfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed in the future. They suggested that we continue to concentrate efforts on problem areas. Once they are under control, then we can start to target secondary problem areas.
- In future years, lake contamination levels will need to be monitored. Based on their experience, Lake Management said that oftentimes less spraying/coverage is required over time.
- We discussed that, should our weed situation spread, more offshore coverage could be added if individual homeowners who are now contracting for shoreline treatment would be willing to reduce their level of treatment. Many in the audience seemed to be willing to consider this option.
- It is difficult to estimate how much future spraying will cost. It could range anywhere from \$3K - \$5K for two treatments, depending on the coverage needed.

Funding Options--Emil Kucera

- After a brief discussion, attendees seemed to agree that asking for a voluntary contribution from members of the Lake Josephine Homeowners' Association was the best way to seek funding for future weed treatment.
- For the sake of simplicity, contributions will not be based on the amount of shoreline footage. Instead, anyone who owns property on the lake--or has deeded access--will be asked if they are willing to contribute.
- As the treatment price may vary based on contamination levels, we decided that we should probably plan for a worst case scenario of \$5K per year. Assuming we have roughly 70 homes with lake access, the price would be just over \$70 per property on the lake. One audience member suggested we ask for contributions of \$100 from each homeowner, realizing that some may be unable/unwilling to contribute. The audience generally seemed to feel this was a reasonable request. (Note: those with deeded access will have a lower individual homeowner burden.)
- **Requests for the contributions are being made primarily via this email. (See attached form.) Homeowners not in attendance or without email will be contacted by mail or in person.**
- **Checks should be made to the "Lake Josephine Improvement Association" and sent to Emil Kucera, 3098 Hamline Ave., Roseville, 55113.**
- Any remaining funds not used for treatment will be held in a reserve account for future treatments.

Future Lake Josephine Homeowners' Notices/Correspondence

- Thank you to those of you who provided your email addresses! As noted, your information will be treated as confidential, used only to share pertinent information, and will not be shared

beyond a few members of the Board. You will be blind-copied on all correspondence so others do not have visibility to your email address.

- If you have neighbors that were unable to attend last night, we ask that you please forward this recap on to them.
- If they would like to be added to future distribution lists, they can send me a quick email, and I will do so.