

## **Town of Moultonborough**

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### **Conservation Commission Milfoil Committee Minutes**

Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009

**Members Present:** Chairman Peter Jensen, Secretary Joanne Farnham, Herb Farnham, Bob Boyan, Steven Maguire, Jim Leiterman, Nancy Wright, Karin Nelson

**Members Excused:** Susan Connolly, Paul Daisy

**Members Absent:** Bob Clark, Barbara Rando

The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the meeting on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 were approved. Approval of Nov. 23, 2009 was deferred so that references to Bob can be edited to include last names since there were multiple Bobs at the meeting.

**New Business:** Chairman Peter Jensen introduced Mary Ann Murray, from Tuftonboro, who was invited to speak about the Lake Hosts program. Peter explained that the committee was seeking to learn about the Lake Hosts and Weed Watchers programs. Peter commented that whether the committee effort to consolidate milfoil control funding at the municipal level is successful or not, a Lake Hosts program would help control the spread of milfoil.

Ms. Murray explained how a Lake Hosts program operates. She shared examples of important things to monitor in the program's operation as well as passing examples of the weeds to watch for. She explained the necessity of bagging any discovered weeds from the list, preparing them so they remained biologically viable long enough to get to the labs for analysis, and explaining how proper recording influences the next year's funding. She left a video for us to watch. She also left brochures that help educate boaters. She discussed the training that is done in Concord; that the program's Point Person would track volunteer as well as paid-employee time as the State requires records of the volunteer time for matching funds to pay paid employees.

Ms. Murray explained that to her, the most valuable thing the Lake Hosts program does is educate boaters – many of whom are not aware of all the places weed fragments may “hitch a ride” and many also not aware of the damage many exotic weeds can cause. She used an example of checking tackle boxes as milfoil fragments have been found stuck to fishing lures.

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Ms. Murray said that the State is only offering \$1,000 for the first year so it would be a good idea to raise funds from the town with a warrant article to help.

Ms. Murray has agreed to answer further questions should members have them. Her contact information is available from Nancy Wright.

Bob Boyan introduced the second speaker for the evening to the committee, Marc Bellaud from Aquatic Control Technology (ACT). Mr. Bellaud is a senior biologist with ACT. He used a Power Point presentation on Milfoil Treatment Options and agreed to share a copy of it with us. He will send it to Bob Boyan.

Mr. Bellaud focused on Variable Milfoil. He explained it is found in Acidic Waters and its range appears to be from Connecticut through New Hampshire and from Maine to Vermont. There are no natural control agents or competitors that kill variable milfoil. He mentioned the studies that show the economic impact milfoil infestations have on shoreline property values.

He reviewed the different methods for controlling milfoil and explained experience has shown 2,4-D variants to be the most cost effective method of control. To be effective, it must be applied to the weed during the plant's growth cycles which are from mid-May through mid-June and then again in September. 2,4-D disrupts the plants cell growth. It breaks down into several basic harmless elements over roughly a fourteen day period so there is no leftover buildup in treated areas. 2,4-D does not affect animal cells so it does not harm fish, people, etc. 2,4-D has been a weed control option used since the late 1950's for different nuisance weeds.

Mr. Bellaud explained that effectiveness was a function of the quantity of 2,4-D times the length of exposure to the plant. This is important because the more waterflow an infested area has, the less time a treatment of 2,4-D would have to disrupt the plant.

A joint effort between the US Army Corp of Engineers and DES concluded that of all herbicides available to treat variable milfoil, the 2,4-DBEE variant was the most effective. Mr. Bellaud said there are currently no swimming restrictions for areas treated with any of the herbicide options but that can change whenever an herbicide option is re-registered with the EPA. The current EPA warning for 2,4-D is that it presents less than 1 millionth chance for any adverse reaction. Re-registration occurs every 10 to 17 years. To Register a Product in Aquatics it costs anywhere from \$50 million to \$80 million.

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Mr. Bellaud said that the typical treatment dose is 100 pounds per acre and that some current research in areas with difficult flow rates were being conducted using 200 pounds per acre. He said that the current preliminary results suggested to him that the 100 pounds per acre dosage was still the most effective when cost is added as a factor. Mr. Bellaud said that in some areas a repeat treatment may be needed; that this would likely be the case where the plant has developed deep root systems the deeper parts of the root can survive an initial treatment. The repeat treatments can sometimes be done in the same year and are often done in the following year.

When asked about the cost to treat our known area Mr. Bellaud said he estimated about \$80K to \$90K as long as we could do the shoreline posting required. He did a quick thumbnail breakdown of the process and costs; Permitting can be done by regular mail; Legal Ads for 2 weeks \$200 each; Certified Letters to everyone involved at \$5.75 each; Postings on the shoreline at all access areas and homes within the treatment area, Herbicide Monitoring will be done by the State Labs for \$2 thousand to \$3 thousand dollars. The total cost: \$80 thousand to \$90 thousand for 200 acres. Mr. Bellaud said he thought that 200 acres could be treated in two days. He noted that for target treatment areas where a homeowner had a water intake for either drinking or for watering his lawn or plants, if the owner did not agree to find alternate supply sources for the 30 days beginning with initial treatment, then water within 1200 feet of that intake would not be treated. This was also the case for target treatment areas within 50 feet of a land-based well. Mr. Bellaud said 2,4-D breaks down in sand/sediment faster than in water.

After completion of presentations from both speakers, the committee commenced its work at 8:45 PM.

Peter distributed two draft handouts for member review asking for constructive suggestions for preparing educational aides to help us communicate. One is a rough draft of an idea to ask people to support the warrant article. The other is to provide a brief education of why this is important. Peter said the idea was to reduce political differences between voters and offer a common purpose for them to agree on; working to protect the economic health and natural beauty of the town. Peter asked the group to review the drafts and to bring improvement suggestions to the next meeting. The group discussed how and where the flyers might be most effective and agreed it would be where the voters are most likely to read and consider this kind of media. Peter feels we should start asking people to support the warrant article sometime in January. Steve Maguire suggested Paw Prints, Joanne

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Farnham suggested the Library. Peter will try to contact Barbara Rando to see if she has drafted anything for Paw Prints. Peter again asked members to review the handouts; to help condense them so they are simpler to read. Peter thinks they are still too long. Bob Boyan commented he thought one of the most important the committee could make was the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph on the page titled "You Should Know". The committee agreed. Peter reminded everyone that the purpose is to explain to people at a high level what the problem is and make them feel like they should do something about it; and ask them to support the effort at town meeting. Bob Boyan suggested for town meeting, and perhaps elsewhere, a condensed "quick read" on top of the two page idea would be effective. Bob agreed to work on it. Karin Nelson suggested we consider a display at town meeting with brochures and perhaps a graph showing and explaining the milfoil problem, outside in the hallway, so people will see and read about the problem. Peter suggested that we consider a Phone Campaign to communicate the issue and ask for support. There was consensus that we need to communicate to the person off the water that the milfoil problem causes their taxes to go up because the shorefront property taxes will drop when their property values drop due to milfoil infestation. Also all the people that own or work for local businesses will suffer from other effects as tourist and summer visitors bring their business elsewhere.

Bob Boyan suggested trying to get one or more papers to interview the committee chair so the papers would run an article as an editorial. An editorial would be more effective than just letters to the editors.

Peter gave an Update of the Milfoil Summit held on Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009, in Concord. House Bill 1295 attempts to raise \$1,000,000 specifically targeted to State's matching grant program for Milfoil Control programs. The money will come from a \$10 increase for Power Boat Registrations. They will try to pass the legislation before town meetings in the state start but most of the representatives felt the debate and committee reviews would not be concluded until end of May at the earliest. Betsey Patten announced to the Summit that the Moultonborough Milfoil Committee was going to ask the town to support a \$100,000 warrant article for milfoil control. Bob Paterson's low cost skin diver solution for hand pulling was discussed at the Summit and will likely be accepted by the State by next year. This will trim as much as 50% to 75% off the cost of the diver operated hand pulling methods used for spot treatment or treatment of areas where herbicide treatment will not work.

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Karin commented that she had ceased her work on the mapping of associations and coves because Barbara Rando and Paul Daisy were also doing the same work.

The committee discussed what the elements of the committee's plan should be. The committee agreed the plan should be as short and concise as possible; not a version of the 20+ page plans developed by the state for the permitting and grant process.

Next Meeting will be held at the Moultonborough Public Library at 6:30 PM in the Program Room.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Joanne M. Farnham*

Joanne M. Farnham, Secretary

The following meeting dates have been scheduled for 6:30 PM start times at the Library starting at 6:30 PM:

2010 Committee Meeting Dates

January: Mon. 4<sup>th</sup>, Mon. 11<sup>th</sup>, Tue. 19<sup>th</sup>  
February: Mon. 1<sup>st</sup>, Wed. 17<sup>th</sup>, Mon. 22<sup>nd</sup>  
March: Tue. 16<sup>th</sup>

Voting is on March 9<sup>th</sup>, Tue.

Town Meeting is March 13<sup>th</sup>, Sat.