

Rochester Times and Foster's Article

It Takes Only One "Dirty" Boat...

To destroy a lake or pond! Ask the folks who live on what used to be beautiful Lake Arrowhead in Limerick, ME. The water in the summer is so choked with milfoil (an exotic weed) that swimming and boating is virtually impossible. Spaulding Pond in Milton/Rochester and Lebanon, ME found milfoil in a few small spots in 2008 and the infected area had grown to 22 acres by last summer. Because Spaulding Pond lies in both NH and Maine and they do not agree on the methodology to control or eradicate the fast growing problem, nothing has been done thus far.

How did it happen? Most cases of milfoil infestation are the result of an unknowing boat owner transporting the weed from an infected waterway to a clean one. The weed wraps around the outboard propeller or is caught on the trailer during loading. Milfoil can survive for months (even dried up) and the next time the boat goes in the water off it comes and the weed is now planted, growing and spreading. NH now has 76 water bodies infected with exotic aquatic plants including Spaulding Pond. Others nearby include: Sunrise Lake, Willand Pond, Northwood Lake, the Cocheco River, Balch Lake, Mountain Pond, Belleau Lake, Crescent Lake, Jones Pond, Lake Ossipee, Lake Wentworth, Melendy Pond and Lake Winnepesaukee.

Three Ponds Protective Association, (TPPA, Milton/Lebanon) has been doing boat inspections at both the Town Beach and Everett's Cove Marina boat ramps for many years now. And, so far the ponds are milfoil-free. But, the locations we must watch are the small neighborhood boat entry sites. For convenience or to avoid the cost of a launch fee and short inspection, a boat (jet ski/sailboat) owner puts a "dirty" one in at any number of locations around our ponds. TPPA will ask for assistance this summer from nearby property owners to help us watch these entry sites as they have a huge vested interest in keeping milfoil OUT of the water.

The cost of getting rid of milfoil is significant. Belleau Lake in Wakefield, NH has spent about \$100K so far just to keep it from spreading, and they still have it. The cost to a homeowner is perhaps even larger. Property values on an infected lake/pond will be diminished and trying to sell the summer home in the future will be much tougher. Add the cost to the town for lower taxes available from the devalued property and you can see why this is no small matter.

We urge everyone to clean your watercraft and trailer **before** you come to the shore. We'd all rather be looking at, swimming in, and boating on.... ***milfoil-free water!***

Steve Baker, Milton, NH - TPPA Founder/President

Attachments: milfoil (one version),

<http://media.treehugger.com/assets/images/2011/10/eurasian-milfoil-ij2.jpg>

