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**GREAT PROGRESS MADE IN EFFORTS TO
CONTROL MILFOIL IN LAKE GEORGE**

The Lake George Park Commission and its partners have made great strides in reducing milfoil in Lake George, according to the Commission's 2012 Eurasian Watermilfoil Management Report. Since its discovery in Lake George, more than 85 percent of milfoil sites in the lake have been cleared, and plans are in the works for a final push to nearly eradicate the invasive species.

This progress has been made possible with significant funding from the State's Environmental Protection Fund, including \$130,000 since Governor Cuomo took office, coupled with considerable funding from the nonprofit organization The Fund for Lake George.

"The bottom line is that we've made significant headway in controlling milfoil in Lake George, and with continued effort and funding we will be poised to finally get this invasive plant nearly eradicated in a few short years" notes Bruce Young, Chairman of the Commission. "However, we need to keep vigilant on this issue, because any lapse in effort will only allow this threat to come roaring back. We can't allow that to happen."

Plans for the 2013 program include \$65,000 to the Commission from the 2013 NYS Environmental Protection Fund, coupled with another \$70,000 from the NYS Department of State through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Grant Program. The Commission and its partners are meeting currently to finalize a three-year plan to determine resource needs and best methods of management for the future.

Milfoil was first discovered in Lake George in 1985, and has been managed to varying degrees annually ever since. With significant effort over the past decade involving many partners and funding sources, the tide has turned on this aggressive invasive plant.

“Thanks to funding over the past decade from the NYS Environmental Protection Fund through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and with support from local partners, we are on a great path to success,” LGPC Executive Director Dave Wick said. “Given its nature, milfoil will likely never be completely eliminated from Lake George, but with continued effort and financial commitment we are moving towards low levels not seen in decades.”

Currently there are approximately 200 known sites on Lake George that harbor some level of milfoil, from only a few plants up to fairly dense beds approaching a football field in size. Plans have been proposed to address all of these sites, using techniques including hand harvesting and “benthic mats,” which smother the plants in highly dense areas.

The number and size of these dense beds of milfoil have been dramatically reduced in the past few years, and this change has been noted by the municipal and recreational boating communities.

“The Town of Bolton has one of the most active boating communities on the lake, and I’ve heard many positive comments about the reduction in the milfoil beds over the past few years. It’s very encouraging,” notes Ron Conover, Supervisor of the Town of Bolton. “The Town of Bolton is a very active partner in invasive species prevention and management on Lake George, and we’re proud to see this progress.”

“Recognizing the magnitude of the threat posed by aquatic invasives, to both the ecology of the lake and the regional economy, the FUND for Lake George has been a steadfast supporter of stopping their spread,” said Eric Siy, the FUND’s Executive Director. “The FUND has been the largest private contributor in the effort to eradicate milfoil from the lake and as the threat of invasives grows, we are redoubling our commitments by working with the Commission and many others to ensure a level of protection for Lake George befitting the Queen of American Lakes,” said Siy.

The report is posted at www.lgpc.state.ny.us. The LGPC is a small NYS agency dedicated to the long-term protection of Lake George, including invasive species management.

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