

## **FAQ's**

**Updated 5-16-05**

### **WHEN WILL THE 2006 SEASON BEGIN AND HOW WILL IT BE DIFFERENT THAN PRIOR YEARS?**

Planning, communication and monitoring the Milfoil Project on Upper Saranac Lake is an ongoing process. This is our third year in a three year intensive effort. This year's dive program will start on May 22, 2006. Phase I will begin simultaneously in Lower Fish Creek Pond and Upper Saranac Lake. Phase II will begin on June 5th. 2006 will utilize one less crew of divers than last year (16 vs 20). Additionally, we will spend the last week of the dive season modeling the 'rapid response' approach for 2007 and beyond. We expect far less Milfoil but will not know for sure until we start diving.

### **WHY DID THE PROJECT EXPAND TO INCLUDE FISH CREEK?**

Fish Creek Ponds in general are heavily infested with Eurasian Milfoil. Since Fish Creek is upstream of Upper Saranac and has heavy recreational use in the summer from the Public Campsite, milfoil fragmentation and subsequent flow to Upper Saranac is a concern. By cleaning the Lower Pond, we will minimize man made fragmentation from boat traffic and slow the flow of fragments to USL. A comprehensive fragmentation flow study was done in the channel between the lakes by the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's in 2005. Results from this study were encouraging in that the actual amount of fragments observed can not be considered a major cause of infestation at this time. Matting and harvesting for two years should prove to be an additional benefit.

### **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE UPPER SARANAC LAKE ASSOCIATION AND THE UPPER SARANAC LAKE FOUNDATION?**

The Upper Saranac Lake Association was founded in 1901 and in the early years was largely a social organization although it did assist with the placement of navigation buoys and the maintenance of campsites. The Association today functions as an advocacy group for property owners to further the interests and concerns facing the lake and adjoining area. The Association has approximately 500 members making it a sizeable political constituency. The Association maintains fire equipment and sponsors boating safety and emergency CPR courses and advocates for shore owner issues. The Foundation was formed in 1989 as an environmental protection fund to provide the financial resources to support the direction and activities of the Association. The primary impetus, at that time, was the acquisition and rebuilding of the Bartlett Carry Dam. Financially, the two organizations operate at 'arms length', with the Foundation eligible to receive tax deductible contributions as a 501(c) (3) organization. Both organizations work closely together to address the key priorities of the lake.

### **HOW DOES THE UPPER SARANAC LAKE FOUNDATION PROPOSE TO PAY FOR THE MILFOIL PROJECT?**

Historically the Upper Saranac Lake Foundation has received almost 100% of its funds from concerned property owners and friends of the lake. Currently, \$1.7 million has been received or pledged for the Milfoil Project. The original \$1.5 million expense projection for the years 2004 - 2006 has proven to be right on target. Each shore owner has been asked to contribute in much the same way as one would be asked to join a capital campaign for their College or other favorite charity. In this case, the contribution to the Foundation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law but can also be considered a means of protecting or reinvesting in the value of your lake front property. Special grants have been received from New York State Senator - Betty Little and The Town of Santa Clara. A major grant application is currently pending with New York State Department of Conservation for Milfoil Eradication

### **WHAT IS A FAIR CONTRIBUTION TO A PROJECT OF THIS MAGNITUDE?**

A project of this magnitude has never been done on Upper Saranac Lake or anywhere in the Adirondack Park. The only benchmark would be the campaign for the Bartlett Carry Dam and the annual appeal the Foundation conducts each November. Like the campaign to rebuild the Dam, we would expect contributors to pledge funds over a three year time frame and longer if needed. A simple assumption is 500 lake front properties on average have contributed \$3000 each.

### **WHY NOT WAIT FOR THE STATE TO HELP?**

Both the USLA and the USLF have long held that we can not wait for local or state government to help financially on water quality, environmental or water safety issues. Both organizations must work aggressively to influence legislation and good environmental stewardship. We can not wait for action rather must take appropriate local responsibility and act. Upper Saranac Lake has an opportunity to set the pace and establish a model for other lakes, municipalities and states to follow. Waiting for action is no longer an option, due to the severity of the problem. Waiting another one or two years could double or quadruple the cost to contain the spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil. ***This answer was written in early 2004. The State of New York has yet to allocate any meaningful amount of money statewide for Eurasian watermilfoil. NYS Senator Betty Little did manage to pass legislation that allocated \$1 million statewide for 'Milfoil Eradication'. Grant applications were due Feb. 28, 2006 and awards have not yet been made or announced. The maximum allowable to any one lake is \$100,000. USL has already expended \$1.0 million since January of 2004.***

### **HOW WILL YOU MEASURE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THIS EFFORT?**

Prior to the current effort (five years), divers worked on a limited budget under the direction of Michael Martin – Lake Manager for Upper Saranac Lake. The program was limited in scope and thought initially to be sufficient to control Eurasian Watermilfoil. After three to four years, it became apparent that milfoil could not be sufficiently contained with the employment of only four divers. With increased boat traffic on the lake and aggressive proliferation of the plant, milfoil was getting the better of the removal effort. The aggressive three year program has rigorous scientific and operational controls to manage the performance of the divers and to track regrowth very precisely. For the first time we will

have detailed invasive plant growth assessments. The Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's under the direction of Dr. Dan Kelting continues to conduct the scientific measurement component of the Project. There are several references within the website that demonstrate our progress and projection of success.

### **WHY NOT USE CHEMICALS TO TREAT EURASIAN MILFOIL?**

Chemicals have been used in other lakes in New York State and Vermont. However, chemical treatment within the Adirondack Park must have the approval of the Adirondack Park Agency. A major environmental debate, and decision not to allow chemicals in Lake George was rendered last year. Clearly time was not on our side to wait for a chemical solution, given the level of infestation in 2004. Additionally, all the literature suggests that Chemical treatment is not a stand alone solution, and must be used in conjunction with other treatment modalities over the long term to be successful. Chemicals are best used on smaller lakes or in areas of a lake that can be isolated. Concentrations of 8 parts per billion are usually considered effective and cost per acre can range from \$200 - \$500 per acre or more per application (Upper Saranac Lake is 5500 acres - therefore \$1.1 to \$2.75 million). Additionally, chemical treatments on a larger lake take multiple applications before long term success can be claimed. ***With our current level of success, and the removal of over 20 tons of biomass, chemicals would simply be inefficient, not cost effective, and still not permitted within the Adirondack Park.***

### **WHAT QUESTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED?**

Send your email with questions to [info@uslf.org](mailto:info@uslf.org)