

**Hinsdale Lake Management Committee**  
**Phone Call Summary with Dominic Meringolo**  
**March 9, 2021, 10:00 AM**

At 10:00am on March 9, 2021, I spoke with Dominic Meringolo from Solitude. Dominic started the conversation by reviewing the treatment plans as laid out in the 2020 End of Year Reports. He stated that Ashmere Lake has responded well to the mid-June herbicide treatments targeting curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil. Several other nuisance species have also been controlled and there was no need for an additional application in August 2020. Treating later in June helps with some of the later growing species and this works at Ashmere since the earlier season species like Eurasian watermilfoil have been mostly contained. (When there is a large, out of control growth, of an early season invasive such as milfoil, then a May treatment is required to hit during the earliest growth stages. If one of our lakes needed an early season herbicide application, then an August treatment would be much more likely.)

Plunkett Reservoir experienced a sharp increase in nuisance and invasive weed species during the summer of 2020. The typical targeted invasive types of curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil are treated every year and were present as seen in the past. However, the warm water species, brittle naiad, was growing in abundance along the shoreline. In past years, just a few trace plants were documented. In addition, a greater abundance of native growth was observed, including large nuisance patches of muskgrass (tape grass) and bladder wort in the shallow northern cove. The 2020 End of Year Report recommended the usual management plan and an additional mid-season, August, treatment to target the brittle naiad, also called spiny naiad. This species starts to grow in mid-July and can grow in bush like, foot high, dense patches. It will be missed by a mid-June treatment, so the August treatment is necessary to control the sudden, explosive growth of this species.

Next, Dominic addressed how to treat the various nuisance vegetations. Most can effectively be controlled by the current chemicals being used Diquat/Endothall. The brittle naiad reproduces by seeds. Normally, it will take 2-3 years of treatment to reduce the area and control growth by depleting the seed bank. However, the tape grass located in the North cove needs a copper base chemical, Mautique, to attack its strong root system. This is a slow process and could take many years to starve the roots by repeatedly killing the grass. Phragmites, which are being addressed at Ashmere can use a chemical called Imazamox by Clearcast. The new chemicals will need to be approved by Hinsdale/Peru Conservation Committees.

LMC wants to increase the herbicide notification timeline and provide online pretreatment maps provide by Solitude to better inform the Town of Hinsdale and its residents. Dominic was agreeable to having Solitude perform pretreatment surveys about two weeks before the intended herbicide applications and then provide Conservation Commission with the survey and treatment maps a week before intended application. Also, a week before the treatment date, Solitude will run a legal notice in the Berkshire Eagle and deliver the warning notice signs to townhall. (LMC will post signs the week before). It was discussed that a cost savings change would be to illuminate abutter mailings and use an alternate form of digital notification. Of the 300-500 lakes they treat, less than 12 send letters. LMC would need to get Select Board approval for this change. Other notification options are laid out in OCC.

Finally, we discussed the cost of multiple treatments and how they are addressed in the current contracts. The Ashmere contract allows for a small spot treatment if needed in August. Cost associated with second treatment notifications are not addressed in the contract and would be extra. Plunkett's contract does not address a second August treatment. (Hinsdale Conservation Committee would need to approve a second application and add to current OCC.) Because the brittle naiad is so abundant along the shoreline, Dominic expects the cost to be similar to the June treatment amount. If money is tight then each year maybe alternate treatments between curly pondweed and the brittle naiad. However, this will not help to reduce the overall nutrient loading which is likely adding to our algae bloom issues at Plunkett. Dominic recommended making two changes to the contracts, separating out the basic cost needed for any herbicide treatment: (labor, boats, notifications, travel expenses), the second cost will address the variable cost associated with the specific application, (such as the chemical cost/amount of chemicals needed to treat cold water species, warm water ones and phragmites.) Basically, determining a cost associated with each treatment and then only billing the town if the treatment occurred. The notification process is reduced by about 40% for a second treatment and a large part of this cost could be eliminated if the town chose to use another form of notification other than certificate mailing for all abutters. All this information will be shared with the LMC. Dominic agreed to attend an upcoming LMC meeting to explain the FY22 treatment options for Plunkett in more detail and will provided updated FY22 contracts with discussed changes mentioned above.

Respectfully submitted on March 30, 2021,  
Monica Montferret