

11th Crow Wing Lake is infested with Curly Leaf Pondweed. Should you be concerned?

Like other invasive plant species, Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP) can choke out native plants, negatively impact fishing, make recreational boating almost impossible, and bring down lake shore property values. CLP spreads quickly by both natural methods and via transport stubbornly clinging to boats, trailers, motors, live wells, and the like.

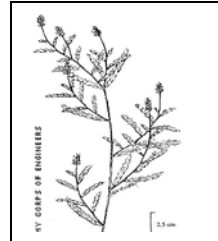
Many nearby lakes are already dealing with this noxious plant and have had to resort to costly yearly chemical treatments in an attempt to keep it under control. Portage Lake, north of Park Rapids, continues to struggle with containing CLP. Minnesota DNR studies indicate that the number of monitoring sites infested there doubled from seven to 13 percent in just one year from 2005 to 2006.

Some batches of CLP grew to form large "surface mats" on Portage Lake. One mat alone was more than 28 acres in size. Overall 48 acres of the lake were initially covered by the surface mats rendering these spots totally unusable for fishing or water recreation of any kind.

Marilyn Peterson lives on Portage Lake and has led the fight against CLP there. In the process she has become something of an expert on dealing with the weed.

"Do not be complacent," Peterson says when suggesting a plan of action. "Pull up the plants near shore if you can. If you don't get all the roots, it can regenerate" she added.

The Minnesota DNR has approved use of a chemical, named Hydrothol 191, to help control the spread of CLP. A DNR permit (currently \$35 annually) is required to use the pesticide and Mrs. Peterson encouraged the use of the chemical as it has brought positive results to Portage Lake.



"Get the permits and use the Hydrothol 191," Peterson said. Used properly Hydrothol 191 has no negative effects on native plants, fish, or swimmers."

Pulling or raking the plant is also a very effective means of controlling the plant provided it is done thoroughly and at the right time. Failure to adhere to the right schedule when pulling up the plant can cause its seeds, known as turions, to spread - making the situation worse. The best time to hand pull or rake up the plants are in the early spring. Turions usually won't form until late June or early July but this is not always the case.

"Here at Portage, we observe turions floating to shore in July & August after they have been released or broken loose from the parent plant, having sprouts already coming from the hard shell--most often roots, but sometimes a young green shoot as well," Peterson says. But sticking to an early spring "harvest time" is still the best bet for containing CLP. "A month after ice out if the water temperature warms up, there should be plenty of young plants to pull or rake," she added.

At the last DNR sampling done on 11th Crow Wing lake 17 sites were confirmed to have CLP infestations. These areas are all on the NE upper basin of the lake for now.

Despite the threat, CLP growth can be contained. Cabin and lake home owners on 11th Crow Wing have the opportunity to stop the spread of the plant before it migrates to the west side of the lake or even further down the river to 10th Crow Wing Lake and others in the chain. But stopping the spread of CLP requires action now before it gets out of hand.

10th & 11th Crow Wing Lakes association President Kim Bowen has spearheaded efforts to get local property owners involved in dealing with this threat head-on. She has been treating areas around her Crow Wing Crest Lodge on 11th Crow Wing Lake both by pulling-up young plants and with Hydrothol 191. This has yielded good results for the most part. Like Marilyn Peterson, Bowen is very knowledgeable about CLP and how best to keep it in check. For example, Bowen says that calm weather is a must for spreading the chemical, which comes in a pellet form, as high winds can cause the chemical to drift away from the desired area. President Bowen is actively seeking volunteers for help in dealing with the plant lake-wide and has offered the use of resort resources, such as a large pontoon boat to assist in treating the various areas around the lake. One of the biggest challenges is getting residents to fully understand the dangerous potential of a CLP infestation. Since many cabin owners are only here for a weekend or two throughout a season, coordinating efforts to get CLP pulled up at the right time or to get chemicals applied when conditions are best has been difficult.

11th Crow Wing has been lucky so far as the CLP, while increasing its coverage from year to year, is not yet forming the large surface mats that hinder fishing and boating. And to date there have been no reports of CLP west of the highway 64 culvert. But failure to act now could lead to increased coverage and professional treatments costing thousands of dollars per year. Portage Lake owners spent over \$15,000 for the first year's treatment for example.

Members are encouraged to contact President Bowen via e-mail at kimbowen@eot.com to find out more information about the association and ideas for dealing with Curly Leaf Pondweed.



Join us for the **SPRING Lake Association Meeting**

May 1, 2010 (Saturday)

10:00 a.m. at

Akeley Senior Center

(downtown) Senior Pancake Breakfast from 8-10 a.m. – feel free to enjoy a cheap and tasty meal before the meeting!

AGENDA

- Minutes from last meeting approved or amended
- Treasurer's report
- COLA & Lake Management Plan update
- Curly Leaf Pondweed report and Plan of Action
- Loon Nest project?
- Bridge Committee update?
- Volunteer needed to lead summer picnic at Paul's patio? Possible Theme: "Generations at the lake!" Bring and share photos from 20 years ago or more - any memorabilia of lake living encouraged. Sunday, August 8?
- Open issues – bring up a topic you think appropriate to discuss --- we have allotted 2-4 hours time to make sure you have time to voice any issues you think appropriate for Lake Association business. We want you to feel "heard"!



Don't forget to drop a check in the mail for your dues!

Mail **\$14** (annual dues -what a deal!) to Treasurer Lisa Hanson (or bring a check to the meeting with you) and you can VOTE at the next meeting. Your dues are helping to pay for this newsletter mailing, water clarity tests of your lake, supplies to build loon nests, signage, AIS fund, etc. Thanks for supporting the health of your lake!