

Appendix I : Newman Lake Newsletter Article, Spring 2003

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NLPOA/NLWSC NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2003

EURASIAN MILFOIL IN NEWMAN LAKE

Late last fall, we discovered a very young infestation of Eurasian Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) at the South end of Newman Lake around the outlet gate area. As disappointing as it was to find, it was probably inevitable that at some point we would get it. It spreads easily from even small plant fragments brought in by boats. Many lakes and rivers in Northeast Washington and Idaho panhandle have been fighting Eurasian Milfoil for years, including Liberty Lake, Loon Lake, Long Lake, Diamond Lake, Pend Oreille River, Little Spokane river and others. Fortunately we have caught it an early stage of growth and the area infested is relatively small, only about 20 acres. Management and control is much easier especially if we act soon and keep on top of it.

Problem: E. Milfoil is a submersed aquatic plant that has become a problem in many of Washington's lakes and rivers. This invasive non-native species is fast growing, spreading by plant fragments and root systems. It can eventually produce dense mats that interfere with navigation and recreational activities such as boating, swimming, fishing, and water-skiing. It also adversely impacts aquatic ecosystems by forming dense fast growing canopies that often shade out native vegetation and provide poor habitat for waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife. With its fast thick growth it can also significantly increase the decomposing biomass at the end of the growing season and therefore increase the internal loading of nutrients to the water and decreasing water quality. Because of this the Newman Lake Flood Control Zone District (NLFCZD) is trying to act quickly to implement a control plan.

Management: Effective management requires a long-term commitment. It involves frequent

surveying, implementation of control actions up to 2 or 3 times per year, and education. Plans now include surveying the entire lakeshore by boat and/or foot again in late spring as we did last fall with follow up 2-3 times during the growing season. Control options include diver hand pulling, chemical herbicides, bottom barriers, and mechanical harvesting among others. The most effective in Newman Lake at this time seems to be treatment with 2,4D, a selective herbicide proven very effective against milfoil with out impacting native aquatic vegetation. Then following up with diver hand pulling

which is most effective with small infestations and isolated plants. This is based on advice from Department of Ecology and Dr. Barry Moore (who has had extensive experience controlling milfoil at Liberty Lake). Bottom barriers are difficult to anchor for very long and also block native vegetation, which can help control milfoil spread. Mechanical harvesting in early infestations of Milfoil usually does more harm than good as it spreads plant fragments. The District will be preparing a management plan in the next couple of months to review these options and impacts in more detail. We plan to start surveying and implementing controls in late spring (late May or June). If you would like to participate in this process please see the public meeting information at the end of this article.

Education and Identification: We can use your help in preventing and identifying any further spread of this noxious aquatic weed. Please remove any plant fragments from your boat before launching in Newman Lake. Be especially careful around props and intakes where they snag and hide easily. Also keep your eyes open for any new infestations in your area. Eurasian water milfoil is a



MILFOIL (CONT.)

submersed perennial plant with finely dissected feather-like leaves. The leaves are arranged in whorls of 4 around the stem at each node. Each Eurasian water milfoil leaf generally has 12 or more leaflet pairs. See photos below. Until you've seen a few, it can be easy to confuse this with other native plants. If you think you may have spotted a milfoil plant, contact me (see contact info below) and I'll come out and take a look.

Cost: Since we've caught it early, control costs will hopefully stay manageable. Fortunately the Newman Lake Flood Control Zone District has received a \$50,000 grant from Dept. of Ecology to manage Eurasian Water Milfoil growth over the next 3 years. We are required to provide only a 12.5% (\$7,143) match from our District funds.

Public Meeting: The NLFCZD would like to get your input and also respond to any questions or concerns you might have on these plans. We will be

holding a public meeting to discuss our plans and alternatives and answer your questions at the April Newman Lake Watershed Committee meeting. It will be held on Wednesday, April 23rd at 6:30 pm at the Tri-community Grange hall. Please come! If you cannot attend but would like to receive a copy of the plan and/or notify me of your concerns please contact me as noted below.

To learn more: If your interested in learning more about aquatic weeds and Eurasian Milfoil, the best place to start is the Department of Ecology's web site for Lakes and aquatic plants at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/links/plants.html>.

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