

Lake Breezes



October 2020

Welcome to Fall in Vermont!
The temperatures are dropping and the leaves have changed color and are now past 'peak' color. Nevertheless, the weather and foliage are still beautiful. This summer brought us stunning weather and the cooling lake breezes we all love, but there is 'trouble in paradise' as Milfoil growth is threatening our beloved lakes like never before. Read on to learn about the multiple projects the LRA is managing this year, including Milfoil control, the dredging permit, sedimentation, the state dock proposal and other issues. We are encouraged by the many concerned members who have reached out and offered their ideas and help as we face this crisis. At the same time, we need more of you to join with us in keeping our lake healthy. Please encourage those you know around the lake, who might not be members, to join. It's easy to do now on our updated website, <https://lakerescue.org/member-login/>
Check it out!

Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting Carried out in Round Pond

As you have already heard, the Milfoil growth this summer was so extensive that we contracted with A&E Diving to mechanically remove Milfoil from Round Pond. This method, Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting or DASH is the next step in our escalating response to the Milfoil explosion in our lakes. Here is a short video explaining its use: <https://youtu.be/EuLuqiBHajk>. A&E Diving was here for 5 days at the beginning of October, at a cost of around \$8,000 and cleared Milfoil only in the northern- most part of Round Pond. They were to return for three more days, October 23-25, to continue milfoil removal, but mechanical problems forced a cancellation. We are now looking at buying, or more likely, constructing or own DASH boat at an estimated cost of \$25,000. Our goal is to have the boat operational in time for next summer. We are confident that the boat will pay for itself in the first year. It will be operated by our current diver team, the Yoders, and will be a 'force multiplier', greatly increasing their effectiveness. Having our own boat will give us the greatest flexibility in deploying this tool to address hard hit areas in a timely manner. In total, the LRA will have spent about \$40,000 for this summer's Milfoil control program. (Excluding the potential DASH boat purchase). The financial challenge of the Milfoil crisis and the dredging project is beyond what we can sustain with our current income stream. Please see p.3 for more on our upcoming fundraising campaign.

How We Reached the Milfoil 'Tipping Point'

This summer saw an explosion of Milfoil growth throughout the lakes. Whether it was due to the unusual water clarity or early hot spells, the spread was much worse than in prior years.

Our divers, Cat and Shane Yoder, started extracting Milfoil plants in mid-May and immediately saw the profusion of weed growth. Due to VT Fish and Wildlife rules we have been restricted from placing the bottom barriers on the lake bottom until July 1st. Unfortunately, between late May and July 1, the Milfoil had a chance to grow prolifically.

Once the 24 barriers, purchased last year, were put down during the first week of July, it was clear they were inadequate to cover the largest patches. We then ordered an **additional 24** barriers, which were all placed in Round Pond, at a cost of about \$10,000. By August, the divers could not keep up with the spreading growth in Round Pond and in the northern part of Lake Rescue. In hopes of freeing up some diver time, the LRA circulated a video to show approach was necessary.

Kim Jensen, of VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) came by to evaluate our Milfoil situation and recommended that we consider Suction Harvesting. We then contacted Chris Sheldon, A&E Diving, who had the equipment and the capability to implement DASH. This was implemented the week of October 5th.

Milfoil Remediation: Going Forward

The LRA has adopted a multi-year multi-pronged plan to mitigate and hopefully eliminate the infestation of Eurasian Milfoil on Lake Rescue and Lake Pauline.

Bottom Barriers: The lake increased its purchase and deployment of barometric bottom barriers from 12 to 48 between 2019 and 2020. These polyvinyl mats can be used for multiple years and will be an important component of the remediation plan moving forward.

They will be strategically placed in shallower, high traffic areas and sections of the lake where other plant removal techniques are difficult or less effective. They can also be moved to amplify their effect mid-season. Placement will be determined with consultation of our contracted milfoil divers.

Suction Harvester: The LRA has authorized the purchase and construction of a suction harvesting work boat for deployment in 2021 summer season. Suction harvesting removes densely populated milfoil fields which are not suitable for hand harvesting. It also addresses the fact that bottom barriers alone are insufficient and impractical to address the total areas of infestation. Harvesters reduce the likelihood that recreational boating will chop and create floating plant fragments, as dense fields are addressed more quickly. It also provides flexibility as new infestations can be dealt with immediately while bottom barriers cannot be moved for 8 weeks. The amount of plant material removed is significantly higher than hand harvesting.

Hand Harvesting: When appropriate the divers will continue to hand harvest areas with limited and new plant growth with a focus on Lake Pauline where the harvester may not be feasible.

Lake residents: LRA changed its policy regarding resident removal of milfoil plants in 2020. This will continue in 2021 with a "protect your waterfront effort". An instructional video and additional resources will be provided and residents are encouraged to safely remove plants from shallow water in and around their waterfront. This not only preserves the homeowner's waterfront, but also frees up the divers to work on more problematic areas.

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Fundraising Committee Formed

We're pleased to announce the launch of the LRA fundraising committee! As first mentioned during the annual LRA meeting this summer, a committee has been formed to focus on fundraising to support our on-going critical missions: mitigating the milfoil issue and lake dredging. The committee is made up of ~10 friends and neighbors who live on our beautiful lakes. As this volunteer group was being formed, it became obvious how important it was that the group included people who live on all three bodies of water. In addition, the challenges that we're facing also effect those outside of our Lakes, and take a toll on the larger Ludlow community and visitors to our region.

The current campaign will be named '**Rescue Our Lakes**'. The goal of the committee is to raise \$250,000. These funds will aid in the acquisition of the DASH Milfoil Eradication Boat, continuing implementation of the Milfoil strategic remediation plan, and on-going dredging plans. The committee is in the process of putting together a roadmap to get us to our goal, and will be sharing details of that plan as it comes together. Our immediate goals are to focus on growing LRA membership, seeking donations from current members, and working with the Ludlow community to solicit donations. As we look ahead to 2021, we'll be putting in place several fundraising events that will not only grow donation revenue, but also provide an opportunity for our community to get together (as soon as we're able!) and continue to foster the LRA environment that we all love.

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...Going Forward

Lake residents can also play a big role in "skimming" fragments around their dock and while pleasure boating. Residents will occasionally be called on to pick up fragments which are not contained by the DASH boat barriers. The suction harvest process releases fragments which come to the surface and can be scooped up from a kayak. Every fragment removed is one or more plants that will not root.

Thank You to Our LRA 'Milfoil Warriors'!

In conjunction with the DASH project in early October, we needed kayakers to scoop the fragments which were released while the divers were suctioning. THANK YOU to the 18 volunteers who put in 50+ hours of scooping, some of it in very chilly conditions. Many thanks to **George and Linda Thomson** for coordinating these efforts and supplying kayaks, buckets and skimmers! Also, BIG thanks to Bruce Zanca, Bill Vanneman, Kevin Golmont, Phil Newell and son Max for transporting the collected mountain of Milfoil to the Ludlow Community Garden and the Transfer Station for composting!

Other News

- **Emerald Ash Borer:** Consider having an inventory of Ash trees on your property, in preparation for our area becoming infested with this insect. Early intervention may save your trees and avoid costly removal later. For more information, Visit <https://www.vtinvasives.org/land/emerald-ash-borer-vermont>.
- **Winter Ice Safety:** Before going out on the ice this winter learn how to reduce the risks of falling through the ice. Visit <https://lakerescue.org/ice-safety/>

Lake Restoration and Other Sedimentation Projects

Dredging - Our application for a dredging permit was approved by the state in August. It will allow us to dredge approximately 2000 cubic yards of material from the area around the mouth of the Black River in Round Pond. This will increase the depth in this area to 4 feet, to improve navigability through the channel. The timing will depend on how quickly we can raise the funds necessary for this project. The estimated cost is \$125,000. The permit is good for 5 years and we plan to complete the project within this time frame.

Better Roads - This spring the LRA, together with the town of Ludlow, applied for a Better Roads grant to make improvements at the stream crossing near Archibald Lane. Normally, we would have heard long before now whether the grant was approved or not, but this year nothing is following normal timelines. In response to LRA's requests to the Town of Ludlow, Ludlow cleared the drainage ditches and catch basins along East Lake Road and Ellison's Lake Road during the week of September 4, 2020

Stormwater Master Plan - The Town of Ludlow is in the initial stages of developing a Stormwater Master Plan (SWMP). All stormwater infrastructure within the village and town is being reviewed with an eye toward improving water quality and reducing flood vulnerability. The Lake Rescue watershed has been specifically identified as needing long term to address ongoing erosion and sedimentation issues.

Members of the LRA board met in August with Evan Fitzgerald of Fitzgerald Environmental Associates, Ludlow's consultant working on this project. We

showed him the areas around the lake where sedimentation is of greatest concern. Once the consultants have surveyed all the problem areas they will be prioritized and ultimately some will be funded by the state. We of course hope that our area will benefit in this process.

Update on Dock at Fishing Access

For the last two years we have been unable to find agreement with VT Fish and Wildlife (F&W) on the installation of a 48-foot ADA compliant dock at our fishing access area.

We appealed the Lake Encroachment permit which was issued in 2018 by the Shoreland Permitting Section of the Watershed Management Division. Following a mediation meeting in January of 2019, we and F&W were requested to submit reports showing why the dock should or should not be installed. The LRA submitted a lengthy report arguing the many ways the dock would adversely impact safety and water quality. F&W submitted a 3-page proposal to move the dock from the left side of the ramp to the right side of the ramp (facing the lake), which we felt was an even worse option than their initial proposal.

We were prepared for a pre-trial meeting this spring but to date none has been scheduled.



**Promoting Water Safety,
Environmental Education &
Improved Water Quality**

www.LakeRescue.org

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