

GSWA AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS) WORKING GROUP MEETING
with
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CGS ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING DEPT
Monday, February 6, 2016 at 11:30 – 12:30 a.m.
At MNR Office, Hwy 69 South
Exploring the Jute-Burlap Control Method for Eurasian Milfoil

PRESENT:

GSWA – Chair of AIS Alex Cieslewicz, Craig Hamilton (Richard Lake); Leslie Flowers (GSWA), Susan Darling, Richard Witham (Long Lake); Michelle Ross, Punom Kumar, Nicole Wittke by conference call (St. Charles Lake); Stu Greaves (Lake Panache); Bill Querney (Nepawhin)
MNR - Derek Luetchford, Lisa Venne, Eric Cobb, Mike Hall, Bruce Richard
CITY/CGS – Stephen Monet, Lana Haslam

Welcome remarks from Derek and from Alex.

PURPOSE OF MEETING - To discuss the feasibility of jute burlap coverings as an environmentally safe control method for Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM).

1. Alex: Main concern of GSWA – Can lake residents safely use the jute-burlap method for controlling EWM? Would we have MNR approval? If so, MNR recommendations as to how best to install and how to complete permits would be appreciated.

Lisa:

First Step - get federal Department of Fisheries & Oceans approval

Second Step – apply to MNR for a work permit. Jute laying is a new initiative; Sudbury seems to be at the forefront. MNR is seeking input and approval at the provincial level.

Stephen Monet confirmed there are 18 lakes considered to have EWM in the City of Greater Sudbury.

Lisa suggests a group application to DFO. See Requirements for Review. It is designed for individuals but GSWA could do for a group of 25 – 50, for example. Then MNR requires individual permits for each property. These individual permits should be submitted as a group ‘package’. Such an application would fall under a Class A category, the lowest category. A very large group application would likely involve a new level, higher category, increased scrutiny.

Mike Hall, Biologist:

Mike has some reservations since milfoil is a habitat for fish. If you remove milfoil, you may also remove the nutrients left behind as well as the habitat.

However, he feels clearing a swath 12’ wide per property, such as that affected by a Bio-Ad home kit, is not a problem, he would have no objections.

Nicole Wittke:

Nicole informed the group that Parks Canada is using Block-Aid’s burlap in a trial control method for the Rideau Canal, and that the National Capital Commission (NCC) is running a trial with it in a Gatineau area lake.

Stephen Monet:

He reported contacting a Quebec biologist who had experienced success with a jute project; however, it was only a 2-year study. There's another study occurring in connection with Trois Rivieres University. The barge designed as a prototype is being reviewed and improved (confirmed by Nicole). Stephen acknowledged that this jute-burlap process is in its early stages and there are unknowns.

There was general discussion re the dock or home kits, that they will be immediately popular. Lake residents dealing with dense milfoil are eager for control solutions. Many are hopeful there will be an environmentally approved solution such as the jute laying. Stewardship groups are also hopeful for an approved solution, an alternative to harvesting or other undesirable actions.

Pilot Project. Discussed previously. Would require some planning and organization. End of Long Lake at entrance to Grant Lake suggested again by Stephen as a containable area like a pond. Possibly grad students at LU or College Boreal could be a low cost way to manage such a project. One unknown is the ecological vacuum that could occur where EWM is removed, i.e. natural vegetation may or may not return/locate to areas where EWM is removed. All lakes in the area have some natural vegetation; varies but average of 10 species per lake (Lana).

Apart from an official pilot project, which would take time and volunteers or staff, it may be advisable to simply begin. If a few lake residents go through the application/permit process, we would learn about the response of DFO and about the timeline for the entire application process.

2. Public Education Event – Again GSWA will plan an information event. This year it will focus on EWM and the jute-burlap control method. Tentatively the Lockerby Legion is booked for Tuesday, April 11 at 6:30 p.m. Date chosen was affected by Easter and by availability of Rob Perris of Block-Aid. MNR was asked if they'd like an opportunity to meet with Rob P while he is in town and they were very interested.

MNR made us aware of its anonymous TIP line for use by concerned citizens. See website.

GSWA reps will stay for further discussion and planning.

Alex thanked all present for their time and interest.

Adjournment at 12:30 p.m.

Recorder, Susan Darling