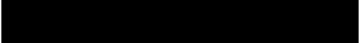




Date: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 8:03:17 AM
Attachments: [Lake St. Catherine Trends 2023.pdf](#)
[2022 LSCA Aquatic Plant Survey Report.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.



Hello Act 57 Study Committee,

This is [REDACTED] contacting you from the [Lake St. Catherine Association](#) (LSCA). The Lake St. Catherine Association is a Vermont 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, organized on August 31, 1953. Our mission is the preservation, protection and maintenance of beautiful Lake St. Catherine. We are a volunteer organization of 15 Trustees who work year-round to fulfill this mission. For 70 years, we have been stewards of Lake St. Catherine. Our most important work for Lake St. Catherine includes numerous water quality improvement projects, and invasive species prevention and control.

I'm writing in today on behalf of the LSCA to echo the comments made by Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds President Pat Suozzi, and to also address other statements made during the public comment section of the last meeting on October 10th.

Pat told you about how much work volunteer Lake Associations do for their lake (with technical direction from the DEC), she asked you to keep in mind these volunteers as you consider changes to an already rigorous permitting process, and she asked that when interested parties become involved that the discussions be evidenced based and data driven.

You then heard from Mr. White who proclaimed that the milfoil at Lake St. Catherine has used herbicides and 'has as much milfoil as I can recall', and that 'not a lot has come of it', and that 'it has gotten worse', and that the LSCA does not have a long-term plan.

These statements represent the misinformation Pat was referring to when she asked for interested party participation to be based on evidence and data, and not on comments without evidence.

The LSCA runs a very successful Milfoil Control Program, consisting of 5 components:

1. 'Stop The Spread' education and outreach. Our 'Stop The Spread' campaign educates boaters and property owners on best practices to limit the spread of milfoil. Each year, the LSCA holds a lake community meeting to discuss the control plan for the season, answer questions, and hand out a flyer with best practices for lake users to limit the spread of milfoil.

2. Volunteer milfoil cleanup. Throughout the season, we organize volunteers to collect detached floating milfoil from the lake and deposit it on our designated drop off platforms. The milfoil is then picked up from the platforms and disposed of. We also encourage boaters and property owners to remove any milfoil they see in the lake while boating or on their shoreline.

3. DASH - Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting. Our DASH crew suits up in scuba gear and hand-pulls milfoil by the roots from the lakebed. In sections of lower milfoil density, they will swim the area and hand-pull with mesh bags. In higher density areas, they will set up the DASH equipment which allows them to suction the hand-pulled milfoil up through a tube to a catch table on a boat. Milfoil is then placed in 17.5 gallon buckets for transport off the lake.

4. Herbicide spot treatments with ProcellaCOR EC. In order to maximize our DASH crew's time, effectiveness, and number of acres covered, one of our control methods includes spot treatments with the herbicide ProcellaCOR EC.

5. Watershed management (phosphorus reduction). Although not directly related to Milfoil Control, the LSCA's work on [Lake Wise on LSC](#), the [LSC Stormwater Master Plan](#), and the [LSC Watershed Action Plan](#) all help to limit phosphorus and other nutrients from entering the lake which can contribute to excessive plant growth, and are improving overall water quality as noted by DEC's Kellie Merrell in the attached slide deck from March 2023.

In 2001, 199 GPS points were set in the littoral zone (the area where aquatic plants can grow) in Lake St. Catherine. At that time, milfoil was found at 94% of those points, or at 187 of the 199 points, and was densely populated throughout the littoral zone of the lake. These GPS points have been visited every fall from 2004 - 2022 and surveyed for our aquatic plant reports. In our 2022 fall aquatic plant survey, milfoil was found at just 17% of the GPS points, or just 34 of the 199 points. In recent years, DASH has been our primary control method, and in 2023, we did not perform a spot treatment. Our work, and these components of our milfoil control plan have safely and effectively controlled our milfoil infestation, contrary to what you were told at the last meeting.

A copy of our 2022 aquatic plant management report is attached.

It is both insulting and wrong for Mr. White to claim that the LSCA does not have a long-term plan, and that the milfoil at Lake St. Catherine has 'gotten worse'. In fact, as you can see in our plant data, our integrated control program has greatly reduced the amount of milfoil, and greatly reduced its negative impact on the lake, while allowing our native plants to fill in the spaces previously taken by the milfoil. You can read more about our Milfoil Control Program here; <https://lakestcatherine.org/milfoil-control-program>

As the committee works through their mandate, we hope that you will hear from, and consider the tremendous amount of volunteer effort put forth by lake associations like the LSCA, as we work to preserve, protect, and maintain Vermont's lakes and ponds for all Vermonters and our visitors. We hope that any changes you propose to the already rigorous permitting process, if

any, will be based on the facts and the science, and not by those who seek to influence the process by providing misleading and false information.

Thank you for your time,

 on behalf of the Lake St. Catherine Association

