

Our Mission

To learn, study and monitor the condition of Portage Lake and take steps to keep it healthy and viable.

Friends of Portage Lake

www.portagelakefriends.org

Portage Lake Report



President's Report...

PLM Identifies 55 Acres of Invasives

Our 2012 treatment program is in full swing! The initial treatment of the invasive weeds was conducted by our new lake management company, Professional Lake Management (PLM) from Caledonia on Thursday, June 14th. PLM will return in approximately two weeks to evaluate the results and to re-treat as necessary. They will not charge for follow-up treatment if the initial treatment was not effective.

PLM obtained our treatment permit based on survey data that was gathered by our previous treatment company last year. But when PLM conducted their own survey in May, they located more areas of invasive weeds than had been previously identified. In all, they estimate there are approximately 55 acres of lake area that should be treated for invasive weeds!

However, our approved permit does not allow for this large of a treatment area. And our treatment budget was based on just roughly 11 acres. It was impossible to modify the permit at such late notice, let alone try to raise an additional \$20,000.

Given these limitations, we followed PLM's recommendation to treat four distinct areas containing Eurasian watermilfoil, Curlyleaf pondweed, and Cabomba.

Three of those areas are located at the south end of the lake, including Snug Harbor, and the fourth is near the outlet of the drainage ditch on the north end of the lake (see map on page 3). Areas that could not be treated this year due to permit and financial constraints will need to be reviewed for potential treatment in upcoming years.

Of the 55 acres of invasive weeds PLM identified on Portage Lake, we were only able to treat about a sixth of this area.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed to the funds needed to treat the invasive weeds in the lake again this year. Along with the fundraisers that have been planned, we expect to meet our budget goal to complete the treatment. Our membership drive for joining the Friends of Portage Lake Corp. has yielded 55 members to date. Please note that members must join by July 1st to be able to vote for board members in the September election. I hope you will consider joining at a cost of \$25/home if you have not already done so.

Please feel free to discuss the invasive weed control plans with your board representative. We welcome your questions and input. Thank you again for supporting our treatment efforts for this year as we continue to work to protect our great lake. Let's have a safe, fun 4th of July week, and be sure to join us for the 3rd annual boat parade at 1 pm on July 4. *Mark Parks*

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Purple Loosestrife: Pretty but Deadly Invader

by *Elayna Grody*

As you cruise around the lake and look at the shoreline, you may notice the vibrant pinkish-purple flower spikes of purple loosestrife. While purple loosestrife brings this bright, beautiful color to our landscape, it also brings many problems that wear its welcome out quickly.

Purple loosestrife is originally from Europe and was brought to America as a garden flower and medicinal herb. Unfortunately, just one mature plant can produce more than 2 million seeds per year. These seeds moved from place to place by mud adhered to aquatic wildlife and waterfowl, livestock, people and their boats and other water equipment. The plant can also expand about a foot per year through underground stems. It quickly spread across our wetlands, lakes and rivers. As of 1996, it was found in every state and Canadian province except Florida.

The invasion of purple loosestrife into our wetlands can result in it taking over, crowding out the native flora and fauna and altering the wetlands structure and function. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, our wetlands are vital for the health of our lake. With the loss of their health, we will also see a decline in the overall health of our lake.

Luckily, our lake has not been entirely overtaken by purple loosestrife. So we can prevent it from spreading while working on decreasing it in the areas it already exists.

First we need to "know our enemy". Identification is important because there are a few native wildflowers that can look similar on quick glance. Purple loosestrife is an erect perennial flower with a square,

woody stem and opposite or whorled leaves. Leaves are lance-shaped, stalkless, and heart-shaped or rounded at the base. Plants are usually covered by downy hair. Loosestrife plants grow from three to ten feet high and produce a showy magenta-colored flower spikes throughout much of the summer. Flowers have five to seven petals. Mature plants can have from 30 to 50 stems arising from a single rootstock. If you are unsure, just let me know. I will be glad to help you identify it.



The second thing is to avoid buying purple loosestrife as a garden plant - yes, they actually still sell it, though it is a nuisance. Many plant nurseries will indicate that the purple loosestrife they sell is sterile. However, it has been repeatedly shown that once the "sterile" purple loosestrife comes in contact with wild purple loosestrife, it also reproduces and disperses seeds.

The final thing to do is to control what we have on our properties. There are several ways to control this plant. As with most invasives, it is best to use many methods on the same area to get better control. The ways to control purple loosestrife include hand pulling, chemical treatment and biological control.

Hand pulling is good for small infestations. Care should be taken to get all of the roots because it will re-sprout from any part left behind. However, if you hand pull the same plant for many summers, you will eventually eliminate it.

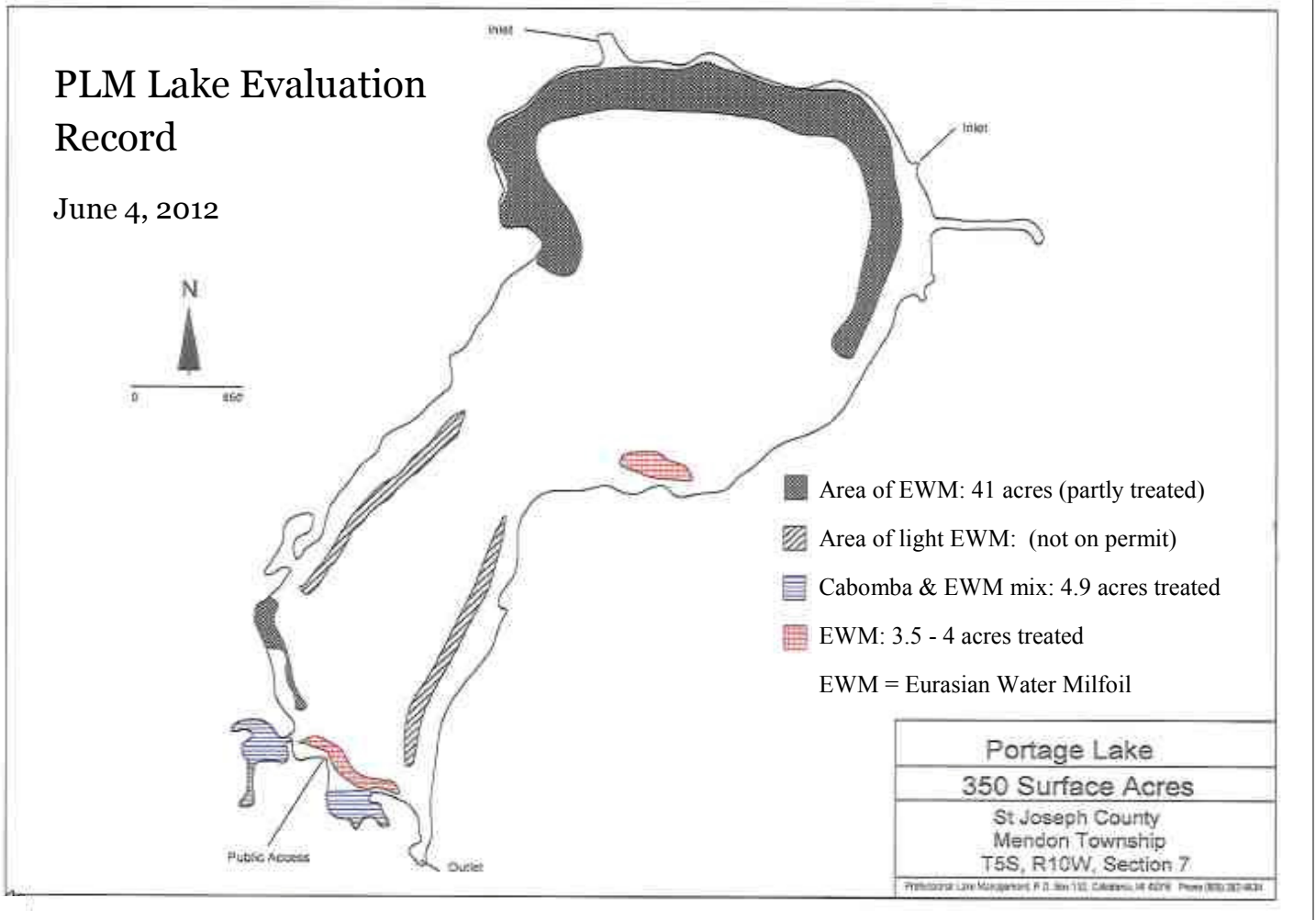
Spraying purple loosestrife with a glyphosate herbicide, such as Rodeo or similarly approved generic for use near water, is a good way to control this plant. You will want to treat it mid-summer before it seeds and again in the late summer/fall when

the plant is going dormant. At this time of year, it effectively takes the herbicide into its root system. Always use herbicides as directed by the label.

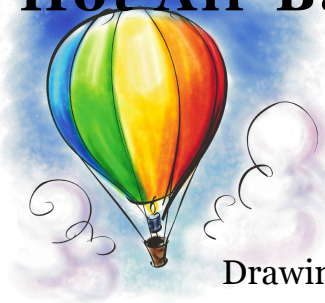
For large infestation, biological control is the best alternative. Four host specific insect species approved by USDA-APHIS have been released in the US. These insects included a root-mining weevil, two leaf-eating beetles, and a flower-feeding weevil. Although these beetles have

been observed occasionally feeding on native plant species, their potential impact to non-target species is considered to be low. This method has been used in Michigan for years. The Friends of Portage Lake are communicating with State Agencies to check into this option as a possibility for our lake.

So as we take steps to improve the environmental health of our lake through purple loosestrife control, I know that our future will hold beautiful cruises around the lake seeing cardinal flower, great blue lobelia, iris, arrowleaf, swamp milkweed, water lilies and a diversity of other beautiful natives instead of just purple loosestrife.



Hot Air Balloon Ride Raffle



Tickets available from our booth at the Klines Resort Yard Sale

Saturday, July 7 from 8 to noon

Donation: \$1 each or 6 for \$5

Drawing at noon. Need not be present to win.



Doubletime Triathlon Report

Congratulations to this year's overall **Megan Smithergill James!** She finished in under an hour to lead a field of 92 triathletes across the finish line. New this year, the duathlon saw 22 athletes finish, led by James Henderson with a time of 1:06:55.

Thanks to all the great volunteers, and to race organizer Jim Mishler. With your help, the race produced \$1,112 for the Friends of Portage Lake.

We had a great event and look forward to a bigger and better future. Next year's race is tentatively set for June 1.

Pancake Breakfast Aug. 4

Enjoy a great breakfast and support a great cause at our Friends of Portage Lake Pancake Breakfast.

Klines Resort Clubhouse

Saturday, Aug 4 from 8 to 10 am.

\$5 per person, \$2.50 age 12 & under.



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Save These Dates!

3rd Annual Boat Parade:

1 pm Wed. July 4

Hot Air Balloon Ride Raffle

@ Klins Resort Yard Sale on
July 7. Drawing at 12 noon.

Pancake Breakfast:

8 to 10 am Sat, August 4

Lake Area Yard Sales:

Saturday, Sept. 8

Annual Meeting & Elections:

Thursday, Sept. 27, 7pm

ANNUAL JULY 4TH BOAT PARADE

JOIN "FRIENDS OF PORTAGE LAKE" FOR OUR JULY 4TH BOAT PARADE!

DECORATE YOUR BOAT IN A PATRIOTIC STYLE!
BE CREATIVE WITH ANY THEME

YOU MAY WIN THE "PATRIOT CUP" TRAVELING TROPHY.
YOUR NAME WILL BE ENGRAVED ON IT FOR 2012 AND
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DISPLAY IT PROUDLY!

TELL YOUR NEIGHBORS & JOIN THE FUN!

TIME: 1:00 PM starting in front of the light house.

New for 2012: Every participant will receive a souvenir.

For More information contact:

Kevin Hughes

Email: chrisnkev19@comcast.net

Phone: (269) 649-9535



Treasurer's Report

A personal note of "Welcome!" to all the new members of Friends of Portage Lake! Your generosity and support has allowed us to proceed with our 2012 water treatment plan.

In addition to your membership fees, we rely on donations and fund raisers to meet the balance of our weed treatment goals each year. So far our expectations have been exceeded. A full financial report will be published following our August pancake breakfast fundraiser. Hope to see you there!

Thank you again for donating, for volunteering and for attending our fundraisers. We could not do it without all of you!

Kathleen Kauffman

I'm a Friend of Portage Lake!

- Membership enclosed (please include form).
- Contribution enclosed:
\$ _____ (Thanks!)
- Volunteer to help with Pancake Breakfast August 4
- Send me emails with copies of the MLSA newsletter
- Other: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____@_____

Clip and return to: Friends of Portage Lake, c/o Kathleen Kauffman,
56112 Angevine Road, Mendon MI 49072

