



Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP) Project update
Kevin Kolstad, Water Quality Committee Chair
Summer 2010

Question: What grows exponentially faster than the National deficit?
Answer: Curly Leaf Pondweed

Okay, so you came up with some great answers too. I'll give you credit for that. But the article header should have given you a great hint towards the answer I was looking for.

To refresh your memory, in the spring of 2009 CLCC asked the DNR for permission to treat 15 acres of CLP. CLCC was permitted to treat only 8.4 acres. As noted in the previous communications, we hired PLM to do an official vegetation assessment and to do the CLP treatment this spring. The point intercept mapping results identified 63 acres of CLP in Cedar Lake this spring. As you can see, CLP has spread and grown significantly over the past year. We asked the DNR for permission to treat all 63 acres and they permitted us only 38.2 acres. The DNR focused on just treating the high concentration areas of CLP.

CLP has a unique life cycle that gives it a competitive advantage over many native aquatic plants. CLP can tolerate low light and low water temperature conditions, so it begins its growth cycle even before the ice is out in the lake, and is usually the first plant to appear after ice out. However, it dies off quickly in the summer as the water temperatures rise.

Keep in mind that the chemical used to treat CLP is also harmful to the good native vegetation in the lake. The DNR permits treatment of CLP before the water temperature reaches 60 degrees, when the good native vegetation starts growing. The DNR is reluctant to apply chemicals in thinner patches of CLP for fear of harming the native plants as well. This is the main reason we see such a difference in what we request and what is permitted. While the DNR wants to help us control CLP, they also want to do no harm. The presence of native plants is crucial to the lake's ecology.

Of the 38.2 acres permitted, we had an application failure on 5.8 acres. PLM had some problems treating some of the very shallow areas with their equipment. We have addressed this issue with PLM, so it will not be an issue going forward. We also observed some areas in the 5.8 acres where the chemical was ineffective at killing the CLP. PLM refunded the expenses for these 5.8 acres back to CLCC.

I had a chance to discuss our CLP permitting situation with association members from other area lakes at the lake water monitoring training session this spring. They too have similar DNR permitting results and concerns. So we are all in the same boat, so to speak. We will continue to address these concerns.

CLCC's total cost to prepare and to treat CLP in 2010 in Cedar Lake was \$14,286.88. CLCC will apply \$5,000 that it received from the Initiative Foundation Grants program and \$1,800 from the CLCC annual membership dues. The remaining \$7,486.88 will be paid by the Clearwater River Water Shed District's P06-01 project O&M (Operations and Maintenance) budget.

Manual CLP harvesting is also encouraged by landowners. The sooner you can do it in the spring and early summer, the better, before the plants start to produce turions (seeds). While the results from manual harvesting are not as encouraging as chemical treatments, it can help if performed properly. In shallow water, gently try to remove the entire plant by pulling the roots out of the lake bottom. In deeper water, gently pull on the plant, trying not to break it. Broken pieces with turions can actually cause CLP to spread in the lake if left floating in the water.

2010 Curly Leaf Pondweed Treatment Areas

