



December 17, 2014

Dear STOP MILFOIL Donor:

The purpose of this letter is to thank you for your donations to the Belgrade Lakes Association STOP MILFOIL Capital Campaign. Now in its third year, the campaign has been generously supported by hundreds of folks who love our lakes and want to see them remain clean and beautiful for generations to come. Thank you so much for being one of those generous donors.

Thanks to your gifts, we have made tremendous progress fighting the invasive milfoil infestation in Great Meadow Stream and North Bay of Great Pond. The work continued this past season with these very positive results:

- **12,900 Gallons Removed** – The BRCA and New England Milfoil crews were very effective again in 2014. They removed 12,900 gallons of invasive plants from the stream and North Bay. That’s about 45% of the amount removed last year, which is excellent news. It means that we are significantly reducing the size of the milfoil infestation and the threat it poses to the rest of the lake and Long Pond.

- **New DASH Boat Acquired** – Last spring the STOP MILFOIL team acquired and, with the help of Colby College, equipped its own DASH boat (Diver Assisted Suction Harvester). This specialized piece of equipment greatly improves the speed of plant removal and reduces plant fragmentation. Your funding made this purchase possible. Thank you!

- **New Survey Techniques Employed** – Just as we have the last two years, a dedicated STOP MILFOIL team surveyed the shorelines of Great Pond and Long Pond and repeatedly searched the high-risk areas of both lakes for new milfoil outbreaks. No new invasive milfoil infestations were found in Long Pond or in Great Pond outside of North Bay. That’s the good news.

Here’s the concern. New survey techniques were used this year for the first time. In October, scuba divers from the Maine DEP and New England Milfoil surveyed all of North Bay while being pulled behind slow moving watercraft. Those divers did discover scattered individual milfoil plants growing around North Bay outside of the original restricted work area. All the plants that were discovered by the divers were removed, a total of about 200 gallons. No plants were found growing outside of North Bay when those waters were searched by the divers.

- **How This Discovery Changes the Plan for Next Year** – There are very likely more milfoil plants growing in North Bay that we missed this fall. What this means is that next year and in future years we will be putting a much greater emphasis on searching for the scattered plants that are growing outside the original infestation area.

These searches will entail surveying shoreline and high-risk areas on both Great Pond and Long Pond, just as we have done the last three summers. But they will now also include much more underwater work with divers being pulled behind watercraft in carefully plotted search grids, especially in and around North Bay.

Next summer we'll also equip our new DASH boat with floodlights to conduct night searches. This technique, pioneered by the Lake Environmental Association in the Sebago watershed, has proven to be very effective at spotting the milfoil plants while covering large areas very quickly. This means that more sections of our lakes can be surveyed more often.

- **Adopt-A-Shoreline Expanded** – The Adopt-A-Shoreline program more than doubled in scope in 2014. Twelve new miles of lakefront were added this year. Adopt-A-Shoreline volunteers are now regularly searching a total of 23 miles of Great Pond and Long Pond shoreline for new milfoil outbreaks. Thank you to all our Adopt-A-Shoreline participants!

- **Public Education Continued** – The STOP MILFOIL public awareness campaign also got a boost this past summer. In addition to our public information meetings and articles in “Summertime in the Belgrades,” STOP MILFOIL team members visited 122 lakeside camps answering questions and reporting on the progress being made fighting the milfoil threat.

- **Fund Raising Achieved** – You came through again this year! Thank you very much. As of December 1, 2014, the STOP MILFOIL Capital Campaign had received \$124,945 in donations. That means the Belgrade Lakes Association met and exceeded the \$100,000 challenge goal and will receive the full \$100,000 in foundation matching grant funds for 2014. Again, thank you for making this all possible.

What's the Bottom Line?

As a STOP MILFOIL Capital Campaign donor you should feel very encouraged that the basic strategy for controlling the milfoil infestation in Great Pond is working. In just three years almost all of the milfoil plants in Great Meadow Stream and the mouth of the stream in North Bay have been removed.

But the reality is that the milfoil may never be fully eradicated. We need to continue to aggressively remove new plants or all the headway we've made will be lost. The discovery of the scattered milfoil plants growing around North Bay underscores our need to be ever more vigilant in our search for new outbreaks. Early detection and fast action is still the best way to prevent further infestations.

Success is going to mean more hand pulling of the plants every summer. It's going to mean a stepped up surveillance program involving divers searching underwater and night survey work under flood lights. And it's going to mean our donors and whole lake community continuing to support the program just like you have the last three years.

THANK YOU!

On behalf of everyone who's been fighting this battle, we want to again thank you for your very generous donations. Your contributions have made our success fighting this milfoil infestation possible. Without your help, this battle would already have been lost. Fighting the milfoil on Great Pond is a battle we can win. It's a battle we have to win. With your ongoing support it's a battle we will win.

Thank you for your concern, vigilance and for your generous donations to the STOP MILFOIL Capital Campaign. We hope you and your family have a most wonderful holiday season.

With Great Appreciation,

Your STOP MILFOIL Task Force:

Charlie Baeder, Executive Director, Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance

Polly Beatie, Immediate Past President, Belgrade Lakes Association

Mel Croft, President, Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance

Pat Donahue, Belgrade Lakes Association

Adam Gardner, Belgrade Lakes Association

Mark Heuberger, STOP MILFOIL Co Chair, Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance

Meghan Loubier, President, Belgrade Lakes Region Business Group

Maureen Maslak, Belgrade Lakes Association

Lynn Matson, STOP MILFOIL Co Chair, Belgrade Lakes Association

Dr. Phillip Nyhus, Colby College

Toni Pied, Milfoil Program Director, Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance

Dr. Bruce Rueger, Colby College

Maggie Shannon, Executive Director, Maine Lakes Society

Kathi Wall, Program Director, Maine Lakes Resource Center



Members of the STOP MILFOIL team at work in their new DASH boat (Diver Assisted Suction Harvester) removing invasive milfoil from North Bay in Great Pond last July. Photo courtesy of Dr. Alex Wall.

