

## **Aquatic Plant Harvesting – 2007 Season**

The attached document titled “Aquatic Plant Harvesting Priorities for the 2007 Season” is identical to the one used in the 2006 Harvest season, with the following **exceptions or inclusions**.

Dane County along with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is in the development stage of identifying a proposed aquatic plant project for Turville Bay. This proposal will be in a project design finalization stage during the summer of 2007, with an operational phase, if the project is approved occurring during the summer of 2008.

As a result, harvesting in Turville Bay (and possibly some areas outside of the bay, but in its close proximity) will be restricted to areas **outside of the proposed test and reference plots**. There will be 6 test areas approximately 5 acres in size each. **Harvesting should not be done in any of these test plots.**

We are in the process of finalizing these sites and you will be receiving information on how to proceed. Harvesting will still be done in order to provide relief or access to residents found along the east side of the Bay.

Harvesting will incorporate use of the newly acquired GPS units. We will likely train only several operators for specific work in Turville Bay so that harvesting during 2007 does not compromise the test plots.

## **AQUATIC PLANT HARVESTING PRIORITIES FOR THE 2007 SEASON**

Dane County's web site

([www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/aquatic\\_plant\\_harvesting.asp](http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/aquatic_plant_harvesting.asp)) provides four "Harvesting Priorities for Aquatic Plants" maps of Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa and the Yahara River. Harvesting priorities are explained in the paragraph below. The width of the priority harvesting areas indicated on the maps was chosen to be visible at various map scales, and does not indicate the exact extent of areas that will be harvested.

Especially during times of high plant growth, harvesters will address priority #1 (if high water) and then #2 priority on each lake. Later in the season, if conditions warrant, the harvesters may be able to return to a lake and address lower priority harvest areas. Not every area that is possible to be cut will be cut in any given harvesting season, either because there is little to no plant growth or because attention to higher priority areas does not permit it.

Harvesting machines will be cleaned to remove potential invasive species such as zebra mussels before being moved up river to Lake Mendota.

Plant harvesting for aesthetics and the collection of wind-blown plant fragments due to boat propeller action cannot generally be accomplished as a priority given the size of the Yahara Lakes, extent of plant growth in them, and limits of the equipment, staff, and budget.

### **Harvesting Priority Areas**

#### **Priority #1 - Emergency Flood Relief**

This priority is assigned only to the Yahara River between Lakes Waubesa and Kegonsa, and only during emergency high water and flood conditions. Cutting is confined to the deepest part of the river channel in order to maximize water flow downstream. The section just north of Dyreson Road is not cut due to machinery hazard and to protect historic structures.

#### **Priority #2 - Recreation and Navigational Access**

This is the type of cutting traditionally provided by the harvesters: a 30 foot swath cut parallel to shore with periodic 20 foot access lanes cut to open water, to provide for recreation and lake access. These cuts are typically 5 feet deep. The cutting lanes are parallel to shore at a distance of 100-150 feet. This category includes cutting done to provide access from private shorelines, public Lake Access Sites (boat landings), swimming beaches and developed public shorelines.

### Priority #3 – Experimental shallow cuts and filamentous algae removal

For the 2006 season DNR has approved a pilot program which involves primarily Lakes Monona and Waubesa. Shallow cuts (2-3 feet down from the surface) will target Eurasian water milfoil in order to provide better access for recreational activity. A side benefit of these shallow cuts may be reducing filamentous algal mats which form and frequently sit on top of the Eurasian water milfoil. DNR is satisfied that the shallow cutting will not harm fish habitat as it will leave deeper parts of the vegetation for habitat. DNR would need to approve any proposal to go outside of the areas described in this section. Areas targeted for these activities include, but may not be limited to:

#### *Lake Monona*

- *Areas around the inlet of the Yahara River. One area is around Morrison Park and the other goes northeast towards Hudson Park.*
- *Primarily filamentous algal mats, found in the Northeast part going from Olbrich Park south towards Stone Bridge Park. This area is basically a narrow band and runs parallel to the designated shallow no-cut machinery hazard zone.*
- *Squaw Bay*
- *Monona Bay*
- *S.W. corner of the lake off of John Nolan Drive Northwest of Olin Park.*
- *Southeast side of Turville Bay going eastward to Esther Beach.*

#### *Lake Waubesa*

- *East side of lake off McDaniel Park.*
- *East side of lake going lakeward from Yahara River outlet.*
- *East side of lake north of Bible Camp.*
- *West side of lake south of Hog Island and towards the Alma Road area.*

### Priority #4 – Special Events

As time and budget permits, harvesters cut plants for special events held on or in the water. Only the minimal amount necessary for the event is cut. These are not mapped because locations vary; however, two examples are the mooring area for sailboat regattas held offshore from Bishop's Bay Country Club on Lake Mendota, and the "Ironman" swim course near Monona Terrace.

Areas Not Identified on the map – Harvesting is not prohibited in these areas; they are typically not harvested due to very minimal nuisance plant growth and budget limitations.

## **No-Cut Areas**

### No-Cut Areas – native plants

These areas have significant populations of beneficial native plants that Dane County, working with the Department of Natural Resources, intends to protect and encourage. These areas are not all identified on the map, as they may change from year to year. Additional areas will be added as they are identified by DNR aquatic plant staff, and will be protected as much as possible. Example: University Bay of Lake Mendota.

### No-Cut Areas – machinery hazard

These are rocky or shallow areas where the harvesting equipment cannot operate due to potential damage to the equipment. Example: southwest corner of Lake Waubesa.

### No-Cut Areas – undeveloped shoreline

These are undeveloped areas where access for motorized navigation is not needed. Example: north shore of Lake Kegonsa between the Yahara River mouth and Door Creek.

### No-Cut Areas – fish habitat

These are important fish spawning and juvenile fish cover areas located outside of the typical harvesting lanes, where harvesting would reduce fish production. Example: offshore from Hudson Park on Lake Monona.