Skaneateles Lake Eurasian Watermilfoil Control Program
Annual Report – 2022

Photo – patch of Eurasian Watermilfoil on Skaneateles Lake

Program Overview

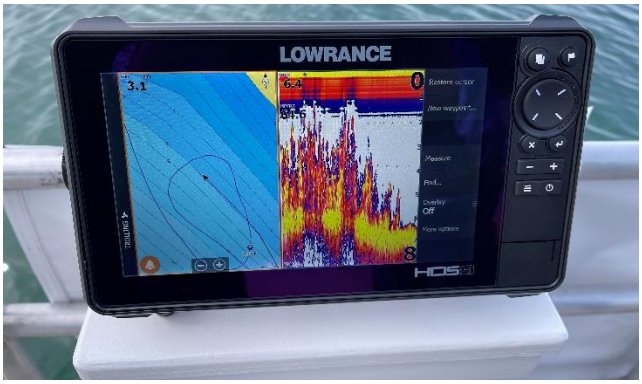
The Skaneateles Lake Association (SLA) implements a Eurasian watermilfoil (Myriophyllum spicatum) control program on Skaneateles Lake that has reduced that species coverage to a level requiring "maintenance" control. While most associated program costs, totaling close to $200K, are paid for by SLA memberships and other funding sources, the $40K in FLLOWPA* funds administered by Onondaga County have also provided valuable needed assistance. *(*FLLOWPA – Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance is funded though the NYS Environmental Protection Fund)*

SLA's overall commitment to preventing and addressing invasive species through the Boat Launch Steward Program, Hemlock Tree Protection, and Milfoil Control represents over a $300,000.00 annual investment in Skaneateles Lake and its watershed that could not be possible without dedicated members, SLA Legacy Fund and other donors, and public funding support.

Photo courtesy of Ty Denslow – Milfoil Control work boat with matting on board

Milfoil Control Operations in 2022

Through services provided by Aquatic Invasives, Inc., divers underwent a training program that started on May 24, 2022, and began diving related to deploying benthic mats on May 31st. The mats are constructed from geotextile material; 12 ft. wide and each mat is approximately 60 ft. long. They are rolled up on a 14 ft. 2 X 4. Multiple mats are loaded on to the pontoon boat and carried to the priority sites identified the previous summer. The last set of mats were deployed on July 26th. In total, 325 mats were deployed covering approximately 6.25 acres of milfoil this year. Each mat is left on the milfoil patch for a minimum of 8 weeks to insure complete elimination of any milfoil under the matting. After that time has elapsed, divers return and roll up the mats. The mats are then tied to the 2 X 4 and stacked on the bottom for pick up later. That last set of mats were retrieved on October 23rd.



Left Photo (L to R) – Aboard "The Bob" - (Dr. Robert Werner Research & Education Boat) - SLA Board Members, Dr. Bill Dean, Co-Chair of Lake Ecology Team; Dr. Paul Torrisi, President; Dr. Buzz Roberts, VP and Lake Ecology Team Co-Chair conducting a Milfoil Survey. Right Photo – Side-scan Sonar imaging with Milfoil signature.

Milfoil Survey – Data-Driven Decision Making

Each summer after the mats are deployed, the entire littoral zone of the lake is surveyed using visual verification through rake tosses and sonar with GPS to locate existing milfoil patches to be addressed the next year. Using software from BioBase, patches are mapped, and a polygon is drawn around each patch to determine its area. Priority sites are based upon area size with highest priority going to the largest patches that exhibit Eurasian watermilfoil density of 70% plus within the patch based on visual observation. Other factors such as lake depth, slope of lake bottom and boat launch activity are decision factors in matting locations.

The 2022 priority sites with number of mats deployed at the approximate GPS location are listed here:

Location No.	Mat Qty	Latitude	Longitude
1	29	42.92352	-76.407811
2	53	42.911604	-76.398669
3	18	42.79908	-76.297203
4	24	42.91588	-76.425223
5	14	42.92323	-76.407623
6	13	42.899301	-76.392469
7	5	42.90159	-76.415784
8	3	42.939992	-76.419203
9	13	42.876843	-76.380247
10	34	42.898482	-76.415213
11	54	42.907771	-76.41945
12	18	42.859586	-76.392364
13	6	42.81961	-76.304220
14	32	42.844951	-76.364667
15	3	42.829738	-76.340273
16	3	42.796048	-76.280675
17	3	42.801445	-76.285374
Total Mats	**325**		

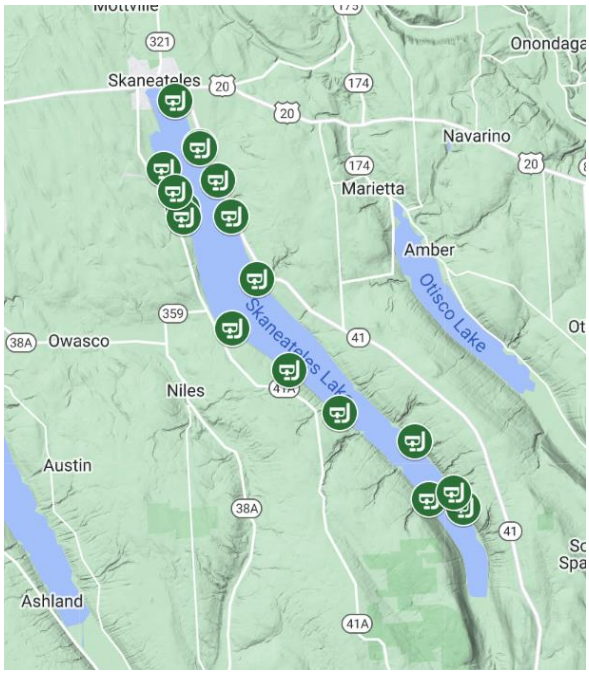


Table 1 – 2022 listed matting locations with quantity of mats at each location. Map photo – geographic distribution of 2022 matting areas.
