

DRAFT MILFOIL STRATEGY OUTLINE

Building on Progress in 2025

Last year, members adopted [Watercraft Guidelines](#) designed to reduce the spread of milfoil by directing boats away from infested areas. We also expanded our supply and use of yellow buoy markers to mark milfoil beds. Following implementation of these measures we observed a noticeable decline of watercraft travel through milfoil beds. [Survey results](#) last summer also demonstrate strong support and a clear intention among the vast majority of residents to follow the **Guidelines**. Continued adherence to these practices, supported by ongoing outreach, remain among our most effective and feasible control measures.

Context: The Cost of Eradication

Experience at a comparable lake in Quebec illustrates the enormous financial cost of milfoil eradication.

Residents at Lac des Abénaquis reportedly invested approximately **\$185,000 per hectare** over five years using mats and hand-pulling by divers followed by maintenance costs (\$20,000/year). This effort produced near eradication of Lac des Abénaquis' milfoil infestation, but with approximately 51 hectares of infestation at Lac Notre-Dame, a similar approach can be expected to cost \$millions plus an indefinite commitment of sustained maintenance. At present, such funding is not available.

In addition, large scale treatment interventions require provincial authorization. Permitting processes for aquatic treatment beyond 75² meters are complex, resource intensive and require substantial documentation. Community consensus and financial backing would be essential prerequisites.

We propose to follow a different path for now.

Near term - Immediate Actions within our Control

Our proposed path is built on a **two-phase** approach.

First, we propose to focus on efforts to control milfoil, including:

- Expansion in our supply and deployment of approximately 100 buoys marking infested areas.
- Door-to-door canvass to re-engage residents on the merits of following the **Watercraft Guidelines** and respecting the buoys
- Continued outreach and communication with other lake associations facing the same milfoil challenges as Notre-Dame and Usher lakes.
- Renewed education campaign regarding milfoil prevention and spread reduction including:
 - Production and distribution of a short video explaining buoy placement and navigation expectations.

- Educational programming on safe removal and disposal near docks.
- A Department of Fisheries and Oceans funded education session on best practices for cleaning boats and preventing inter-lake spread of invasive aquatic species.
- Targeted Pilot Project

We propose to test the application of benthic mats on the lake bottom in an area where milfoil beds are typically dense. The purpose of this pilot would be to assess the feasibility, environmental effects and cost/benefit of benthic mats before considering broader application of this approach as a milfoil control measure. The scope of future use of benthic mats depends on community financial support and/or access to a source of third-party financial support (i.e. government or foundation grants).

[Benthic mats, combined with hand pulling, at other Quebec lakes has produced promising results, but milfoil control remains a costly and long-term endeavour.](#)

The mats are much like covering a garden bed with black plastic to keep the weeds down. By covering a milfoil field with the tarp for several weeks, weed growth is inhibited for a period providing time to implement further mitigation strategies.

As physical intervention that exceeds an area larger than 75² meters requires one or more permits from the provincial government, this pilot project would not exceed this limit. The pilot project would be informed by the experiences of neighbouring lake associations and input from an expert from the Canadian Museum of Nature who has been advising the Lake Association for many years. It will require the purchase and installation of mats and weights.

The longer-term

If the benthic mat pilot is successful and financial commitments are sufficient the Association can apply to the Government to exceed the 75 m² area and lay down more mats. Meanwhile, we will continue to review emerging research and control methods. A comprehensive literature review concerning milfoil and other invasive aquatic plants currently being conducted by Carleton University will inform future considerations.

Herbicide Considerations (ProcellaCOR)

Some residents have raised the potential use of the ProcellaCOR, an aquatic herbicide registered by Health Canada for control of Eurasian water milfoil. Health Canada has determined permits are required to protect our watercourses, human health, fish and aquatic ecosystems. Unlike mats or hand-pulling, it is the position of the Quebec government that at this time it will not permit the use of aquatic herbicides. This is not expected to change for the foreseeable future.

Milfoil Strategy Meeting : from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, Monday, March 30th via ZOOM

RSVP by clicking on this link: <https://forms.gle/rVjhgY6Es3SxFmFj7>