

# **WEED CONTROL**

*by John Nelson*

Until I became a KLA board member I assumed that a government agency looked out for Klinger Lake. That's not the case at all. It has been the work of many dedicated men and women who have contributed their time, money, and passion for the welfare of this great natural resource. This is the first of a series of articles that we have planned to give residents and visitors of Klinger Lake a look inside the Association. Being a Klinger Lake Association Member benefits our community and contributes to the preservation of Klinger Lake. Our membership includes people other than resident property owners. There are upland property owners, then there folks who just love Klinger Lake and want to contribute to keeping it healthy and beautiful. Thanks to everyone involved I believe Klinger Lake is one of the cleanest, and most beautiful natural lakes in the country.

It is astonishing what has been accomplished by this organization based solely on contributions and volunteerism. . The past and present members of KLA have much to be proud of. This is one of the few lakes that have not had to resort to a special tax assessment for weed control.

I have a friend who lives on Lake Manitou in Rochester Indiana. A couple of years ago Manitou, a popular all sports lake, was virtually shut down for five years to gain control of weeds. He said you couldn't navigate the lake without tearing your boat motor up due to the weeds getting tangled up in the prop. According to my friend, your boat has to be inspected by the DNR and approved before you can launch it during this control period. When he pulls his boats out, they must be inspected and cleaned to the DNR specifications. Only lake residents get to launch... if approved.

Thanks to Art Renner and his forward thinking, The Klinger Lake Association has maintained control of the invasive milfoil weed that has plagued many lakes like Manitou. Bill McBride carried the torch for several years after Arts tenure. Dan Evert has championed our weed control since 2005. Dan makes certain the DEQ permit is acquired; he negotiates the contracts, and provides us the schedule for communication to the KLA Members. Not only does he handle the business end of weed control, he personally participates in the inspection for invasive weeds. We owe these gentlemen a world of gratitude.

Our program started when Art Renner contracted Professional Lake Management in July 1996. Professional Lake Management is still our choice due to the proven success of the program. Progressive Architecture and Engineering, (Progressive AE), maps the treatment sites and follows up on the effectiveness of the treatment program.

Early each year a DEQ permit is acquired through the application process. Dan and Progressive AE inspect the lake and identify problem areas in early June. By June the milfoil has a chance to grow enough to be visible. The identified areas are then entered into GPS (Global Positioning Systems) coordinates. The licensed and highly trained staff of Professional Lake Management then uses the GPS data to locate and treat the affected areas. After the initial treatment has had enough time to be effective Progressive AE returns for a follow up inspection and recommends subsequent treatments.

John Nelson, is the St. Joseph County Michigan Lakes and Streams director. In addition he is a KLA Board Member serving as our Drain Commissioner Liaison. This year John joined Dan on the weed discovery trip and submitted his account of the trip;

*When I woke up this morning and looked outside, I wondered how we were going to spot weeds with an overcast day and choppy water. Dan picked me up around 9 am and we met with Paul from Progressive AE, who is the weed expert. Paul and his intern drove Dan and me around the lake in his brand new Lund boat looking for large patches of Eurasian Water milfoil. We started in the "cove" and worked our way towards the channel and then counter-clockwise around the lake.*

*Not knowing what to look for, I was amazed at what we actually found. It is very obvious to spot the Eurasian Water milfoil when you know what you're looking for. You'll see very dark areas that look almost like a bush underwater with the weeds growing up to the surface. As I found out, there are several other similar species that will also grow to the surface, but are considered "good" weeds, or non-invasive. For me though, the only good weed is a dead weed, and I especially don't want them tangled around my feet when I'm in the water. So several "bushes" were pinpointed for treatment using GPS coordinates which will be mapped out by Progressive AE and given to Lake Management who will treat these areas in the next couple of weeks. We made it back to the public access around 11 am and said our goodbyes. It was a very enlightening experience which will now make me more aware of large dark weed beds when I'm cruising around the lake.*

*It is my understanding that after treatment, Paul will re-inspect these areas to ensure proper treatment was achieved. If not, then Lake Management will spot treat areas. Signs will be posted around the lake warning people that the lake is being treated as well. All in all, we have more areas to treat this year than last year. I doubt we are ever able to remove this weed 100% from the lake, but at least we can keep it somewhat under control and keep it from over taking our precious jewel.*