



## BONNER COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

---

### NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL

4100 McGhee RD., Suite C • Sandpoint, ID 83864 • Phone: (208) 255-5681 – (208) 263-3175

## Eurasian Milfoil Review 2002-2005

Protecting public waters from noxious weeds is only accomplished by preventive methods. Public cooperation for prevention is very difficult in an impatient fast-paced society. If enforcement personnel are not monitoring boat ramps and all lake accesses then it is not likely anyone can stop the spread of aquatic weeds by humans. Once a weed becomes a problem then we begin to try control methods.

The control methods used for managing Eurasian Milfoil infestations can be very different depending on various circumstances. Each body of water has its own characteristics and public concerns to be considered while developing a control plan.

This review is a listing of several control attempts with the application and evaluation information.

August 13 and 15<sup>th</sup> of 2002, an application of Reward, at 1.5gpa and 1.5gpa of Cutrine, was done at Perch Bay, Oden Bay, Kaniksu Shores, Kootenai Bay, and Boyer Slough for a total of 100 acres treated. Perch Bay and Boyer Slough were solid area treatments while the other areas were spots and strips treated.

In 2003, those same areas treated in 2002 were re-treated because of the severe re-growth. Again, Reward was used at 1.5gpa with 1.0gpa of Nautique and applied on August 13 and 14<sup>th</sup>. Plant growth was very dense and heavy in water depths that varied from 6ft. to 15ft. deep. Control was for the remaining part of the season only at a cost of \$425.00 per surface acre treated plus labor.

Bonner County began experimental test plots treating lake-bottom soils infested with Eurasian Milfoil in 2003. After the lake has reached winter pool levels and if weather conditions are favorable, a herbicide was applied with an ATV at different 2 acre sites. Renovate 3, a systemic herbicide, was used at 2gpa and costing \$192.00 per surface acre plus labor. Sites treated in late November were Sandpoint at 1<sup>st</sup> and Pacific St. and Ellisport Bays' southeast shore for 2003. Two more sites were treated in December of 2004 both at Perch Bay near Oden Bay. Control appears to be very good for 2 years and only for Eurasian Milfoil. Other vegetation or species grew back very well in its place. This herbicide degrades rapidly in sunlight, so applications will fail if applied on clear days. Application just prior to a shower has worked well.

Thama Slough, near Priest River, and the south shores of Sandpoint from Memorial Field boat ramp to Highway 95 for a total of 70 acres were treated with Renovate 3. The water depth averaged 7ft. to 9ft. and the rate used was 7 to 9.5gpa at a cost of \$900.00 per surface acre plus labor and equipment. Treatment was done August 22 and plant growth was

heavy but not in bloom yet. There were no same season benefits of the treatment. Control was excellent in these areas of 2005 for Eurasian Milfoil but White Buttercups, Coontail, and Pondweeds grew back heavily.

Boat ramps and public accesses were the priorities for project treatments in 2005. Springy Point State Park for 25 acres, Riley Creek State Park for 5 acres, Priest River State Park for 25 acres, and Albeni Falls Dam State Park for 5 acres were all treated with Renovate 3 at 7 to 9gpa in August at a cost of \$960.00 per surface acre plus labor and equipment. This year's projects included a professional mapping survey of the Pend Oreille River from the dam at Albeni Falls east to the mouth of the Clark Fork River of Lake Pend Oreille.

The rapid spread of Eurasian Milfoil has created a huge demand for assistance from numerous public and private entities. Estimated infestations of approx. 500 acres in 2001 are now approaching 3,500 acres in 2006. To date this aquatic weed has also been spread to these lakes: Cocollala Lake, Shepherd Lake, Gamlin Lake, Spirit Lake, Hayden Lake, Coeur D 'Alene Lake, and possibly others.

The growing problems include;

- 1) How is the best way to manage aquatic weeds while we watch them choking the life out of the lakes?
- 2) Who's going to pay for the cost of control, whatever type we choose?
- 3) Can we get all the government agencies working together on one management plan?
- 4) What permits are necessary every year and can they be user friendly?
- 5) Do we need enforcement to slow the spread, inspecting boats for weeds?
- 6) What about controlling other vegetation filling up waterways?

Some conclusions:

Herbicides are probably the most economical method of control for most circumstances. Costs will vary from \$500 to \$1,500 per surface acre for most sites. There are several choices in herbicides and many restrictions or conditions that must be considered in each body of water or community. This can be very confusing to many people. Herbicides are not a good option for some.

Mechanical removal by use of divers or harvesters is very temporary relief and usually just as expensive as a single herbicide treatment. But it is chemical free, provides boaters access, and reduces the spread a little. Removal of any amount of vegetation reduces nutrient loading back into the water.

Bottom Barriers are to be tried as a method of control by smothering the plant and eliminating light. It should provide possibly two or more years of control but at an estimated cost of 4 times more than most other methods. This option needs more study and costs may be reduced.

By Brad Bluemer, Bonner County Weed Dept., 1-9-06.