

Lake Colby Association
Post Office Box 934
Saranac Lake, NY 12983-7934

Project Name: Lake Colby Eurasian Milfoil Survey Project

Project Category: Partnership Grant

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Organization Mission:
[From Charter]

1. To monitor lake-water quality and to take action if pollution or infestation threatens water quality or the life of the Lake. To provide educational materials to homeowners on ways to reduce pollution.
2. To support restrictions on resident watercraft, including:
 - At present the State restricts boat launches at its public launch site to 10HP. We would like to make this a voluntary restriction for all lake residents as well and support legislation to make it a legal restriction;
 - To support rules and regulations to bar Jet Ski use;
3. To monitor the invasion of Eurasian Milfoil, Zebra Mussels, and other pests that threaten the Lake's health and to work with the State and other groups in eradicating them;
4. To monitor the Lake's water level and to alert and work with Town, County and State officials in the event the outlets are contaminated with debris or beaver dams;
5. To monitor the proposed move of the public beach and to insure that any change in use is consistent with the Lake's current residential and forever wild status;
6. To join with other associations (for example by joining the Franklin County Network of Shoreline Associations and the Federation of Lakeshore Associations) to increase our knowledge and effectiveness in dealing with water quality and other quality of life issues affecting lake dwellers;
7. To act collectively in Village, Town, County, and State issues that affect us;
8. To perform septic testing for residents;
9. To form sub-groups to act on behalf of affected land owners;

Project Summary:

Lake Colby's CSLAP survey found early stages of Eurasian Milfoil infestation. The LCA is hoping to professionally survey what initially appear to be localized patches of milfoil, leading to a subsequent project to install benthic barriers. We seek \$4,000 of support.

B. Application Questions/Answers

1. **Project need.** Lake Colby is in the early stages of milfoil infestation and with prompt action may be able to reverse its hold on the Lake and its threat to other lakes. Lake Colby feeds Lower Saranac Lake as well as having a State-run fishing boat access. It is the residence of Camp Colby, the State conservation camp used for weekly conservation camps during the summer season. Most of the Lake is State-owned forever-wild property. There are seven private shoreowners with lake access (all members of the LCA) and a major medical facility (Adirondack Medical Center, also a member) with Lake property. The Lake is small (185 acres) and mostly deep, therefore it is possible to map and control or even possibly eradicate the Eurasian Milfoil that is developing, and hence stop the possibility of the Lake and of other downstream lakes being diminished or destroyed or potentially infected by transient boats.
2. **Project objectives and tasks.** We want to work with a prime contractor and our volunteers (including several D.E.C. employees who have expressed strong interest in this project) to map the Lake's milfoil via surface and if necessary SCUBA observation. Once mapped, we would use the data to put benthic barriers on the milfoil to stop its growth. The prime contractor, tentatively Steve LaMere of Adirondack Ecologists, is highly experienced in both mapping and control projects, and one of our objectives will be to develop better-trained volunteers who could continue the mapping program in future years. As noted elsewhere, several D.E.C. employees have volunteered their time to both assist in the initial mapping and to assist the LCA in future monitoring programs, and we would expect a significant transfer of knowledge from the professionals to the future volunteers.
3. **Methods.** Software mapping using GPS from a boat with SCUBA supplements if required. We chose GPS mapping because of its increased accuracy and reasonable cost. Our milfoil beds will be, we believe, contained due to the topology of the Lake, which is cup-shaped. This will, we believe, constrain the areas where growth would be rapid and vegetation thick. The DEC has volunteered to help convert the coordinates of the surveyed milfoil into a detailed map of the infestation and Lake. The only existing hydrological survey map of Lake Colby in existence today is a Fish and Wildlife information leaflet with obvious errors. The survey would therefore have several ancillary benefits as well as being the blueprint for a benthic barrier program.
4. **Tangible products.** The most obvious and immediate benefit of the grant will be a time factor. We believe that the infestation is thus far contained and that if accurately mapped it can be controlled. This will not be true as time passes. Further, as we are one of the lakes with know infestation and with a public boat launch we are a danger to other lakes unless and until we bring the milfoil under control. However, there are other benefits we believe. Working with the D.E.C., the FCNLSA, LCBP and others we will document the project, its successes, failures, methods, and lessons learned. We will make this data available to others. It has taken us a fair amount of time and much networking to get to the stage we are at, i.e., to understand the alternatives, viable resources, and methods, and we believe that documenting and publishing (via the internet) our results will help others.
5. **Benefit to broader community.** Eurasian Milfoil is a major problem for Lake Colby and its sister lakes. Like the project at Lincoln Pond, a project at Lake Colby represents a truly controllable undertaking that could benefit both the Lake and others seeking demonstrable methods for controlling this pest.

6. **Organization and partner experience.** The Lake Colby Association is an unincorporated not-for-profit association made up of shoreowners and local businesses and governmental agencies that border Lake Colby. It was organized in 1998 as the successor to the Lake Colby Environmental Protection action committee, and today represents all of the private shoreowners with lake access, the Adirondack Medical Center, the State Conservation Camp, and several property owners near the Lake without shorefront property.

Despite our relative youth the LCA has been active in numerous projects. LCA is a member of the Franklin County Network of Shoreline Associations, the Federation of Lakeshore Associations, and is represented on the Saranac Lake Waterfront Revitalization Committee (whose charter encompasses Lake Colby).

From a project standpoint, LCA in 1999-2000 we worked through a complete CSLAP evaluation program using volunteer labor (see report authored by Scott A. Kishbaugh and Betsy R. Hohenstein in April 2000). This report pinpointed the problem of Asian Milfoil to which this grant refers.

The LCA has a sub-fund dedicated to the maintenance of Moir Road, a totally private right-of-way. Anyone who has traveled this road can attest to the changes in surface quality and drainage since the LCA took over.

Recently the LCA has been active in various civic events affecting the Lake. LCA posted, for example, a \$500 reward for the apprehension and conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting of the male of one of two breeding pair on the Lake, the intent being to educate the public that this is a crime, not hunting. This received top press billing and random shooting from the railroad tracks has significantly diminished. Within the last two months the LCA mounted a vigorous campaign against hydroplane races on the Lake, a completely inappropriate use in front of a hospital and on a lake with no inlets, given the attractive and appropriate alternative venues. In short, while of limited resources the LCA is one of the more active lake associations in the region.

Our primary partners will be volunteers from among our members, the D.E.C., and our professional sub-contractor (Steve LaMere of Adirondack Ecologists). Mr. LaMere has been the project coordinator for a number of similar projects, most recently the Rainbow Lake survey project (a grant recipient and current applicant).

C. Budget Table and Justification

Expense	LCBP Grant Request	Non-Federal Matching Contribution ¹	Totals
DIRECT Costs:			
Personnel			
Project Coordinator	\$ 750.00	\$ 300.00 ²	\$ 1,050.00
Volunteers		\$ 1,200.00 ³	\$ 1,200.00
Contracts			
Sub-contractor/volunteers to perform mapping	\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00
Indirect Costs			
Totals	\$ 3,750.00	\$ 1,450.00	\$ 5,250.00

We believe that these costs are justified by considering the alternative: further propagation of the Eurasian Milfoil to other lakes and the loss of a key resource to the local community, including the State Environmental Camp. Colby is the last “quiet” lake with easy access in the area, a sanctuary for fishermen, canoers, sailors, and swimmers. It houses the local beach for Saranac Lake. It is a vista for everyone coming into the village. We are organized to eradicate or at a minimum control this aquatic infestation and as a byproduct develop a body of knowledge and a trained volunteer corps who can carry the fight into the future. This would be a wonderful way to use a little of the taxpayers’ money to give them something back for now and for the future.

¹ In kind labor plus out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers paid by the Lake Colby Association

² 20 hours @ \$15/hour [NOTE: LCA will pay for food, transportation, etc. for all volunteers]

³ 100 hours @ \$12.00/HR [Note: LCA members will supply boats, gas, computers, etc.]. Note further that several of these volunteers are D.E.C. employees volunteering their time off hours as well below their rate of pay.