

## Milfoil Meeting Minutes - March 11, 2025

**Attendees:** Barry Cahoon, Jim Bernotas, Joe Hebert, Jamie Stewart, Joanne Stewart, Scott Burns, Christy Burns, Pat Rubalcaba, Sue Bouchard, Rob Stewart

Barry started the zoom meeting at 3:02 pm. He asked if there were any changes or amendments to the 2/11 meeting minutes. Scott was uncomfortable with some of the phrasing regarding 'ANR prohibits' chemical treatment early and thought this was incorrect. Jamie asked him to re-write that section off-line and send it via email to review.

**Survey & Equipment/Materials:** Jim Bernotas had to leave the meeting by 3:30 and start first. He reported that he did not have much luck in signing up additional volunteers. He got a couple of responses; one for being in a kayak and one other. The 5 volunteers would have to survey the entire lake and he felt this was not enough people. Questions came up as to where and how to fill the air tanks and what is the time commitment in surveying the sections. Barry reported he talked with the Danville Fire Chief, and he will check into filling the air tanks. Barnett can fill tanks and Barry will follow up. Jim reported that Bob Dimick has information on a SNUBA set-up which is much easier to use and has less set up and takedown. Jim will forward this to Joe and Barry. Jim also reported a conversation with Keene Engineering about DASH and learned about an air supply system with a SNUBA set-up and felt it was a Cadillac system. Jim said these people were very supportive and helpful. A quote is in the works with a 2-week lead time to build it. Jim asked how to get the word out that surveyors are needed so we have an adequate number of people searching to detect the plants at least 2 to 3 times over the summer. Joe Hebert believes more volunteers will come forward in the Spring. Joe Hebert likes the SNUBA equipment and he felt it made more sense. The SNUBA is very useful and makes life easier for folks and takes the inconvenience out of the effort. DASH uses SNUBA style equipment. Barry felt the SNUBA approach is more effective but one still needs a wetsuit. The consensus is to put aside the idea to equip SCUBA divers and refine the SNUBA raft. Jim felt SNUBA is the way to go and thought we could duplicate the Keene design and save some money. Joe asked if a diver was down 12 feet and had problems can the diver get back to the surface. Jim stated that a safety person has to be on the surface but in 12 feet of water it is easy to drop the weight buckle and get back to the surface.

Barry clarified that the Section Coordinators should not necessarily be the same person as the diver or snorkeler. The diver/snorkeler has enough to do. The Section Coordinator will be recruiting surveyors, confirming EWM identification, supplying the buoys, getting the lat/long data and sending it to the mapper and ensuring their assigned section is surveyed on a regular basis. Barry expressed concern on how to get the information to the membership. Joe stated that we need another mass email and inform the members prior to the Spring meeting.

**Mapping:** Rob Stewart joined the meeting at 3:31. He summarized the 2 maps finished and are on the website. He asked for some guidance on the interactive map. Will there be one for each year or will all the data be on one map. The Section PDF map is a visual with no data. Barry

expressed concern that his map seen on the website will not expand and the top bars and bottom bars of the page get in the way. Sue Bouchard (Zoom host) allowed Rob to share his map so all could see. Rob said that if Barry has issues, then other people will have the same issues and will try to improve it. Christy asked if the interactive map can be linked to another section off the website. Rob said he will check that out. Scott asked a question if a layer for satellite imagery could be added. The issue here is that the aerial photo has too much data for an emap we are using and is not zoomable. We are using a QGIS program which is free whereas ARCMAPS can tolerate area photos but costs much more. Barry stated that we chose to go with QGIS for now. Discussion occurred about how to get the survey information and lat/long data to Rob. One suggestion was for paper maps to be given to Section Coordinators and then the data manually put on the maps and then emailed/photo to Rob.

**Grants:** Joe Hebert stated that he and Pat Rubalcaba had a zoom meeting for the application process and the due date is March 20. The grants are done but they have to come from the Town of Danville. Joe emailed the Town and was told the grant application needs to be approved by the Selectboard. Joe expressed concern about the timing with the Selectboard and meeting the deadline. Joe will directly send the draft application to the State and hope the town will get it done. Pat stated that the Greeter program grant request was \$17,000 and the management plan was \$50,000. There are 2 different budgets. Joe Hebert has to sign the grant applications, and the decisions will be made on 4/11. Joe reminded Barry that his legal name is Albert Hebert. The JPA has budgeted \$30,000 - \$35,000 in 2025 for EWM mitigation. The Association will have to find the funds and get more volunteers once Spring comes.

Joe asked Barry if he heard back from Arrowwood regarding the native plant inventory previously conducted by SOLitude. Barry said no but that the response from SOLitude pretty much confirmed that we need to go ahead with the scheduled inventory by Arrowwood in the summer. Joe said he would sign the 3 contracts - 2 for Arrowwood and one with VT Hozers for EWM harvesting.

**Education:** Joanne asked everyone to go to the website and see the updates. She is open to making any changes and to get back to her. Barry is requesting that the May meeting training session be arranged by the Education Committee (Joanne, Sue & Christy). Kim Jensen wants to do the complete VIP training whereas we just want to focus on EWM identification only. At this same training we want the Section coordinators to be trained on geolocation via their phones. The State VIP training brings in too much extraneous stuff, much lower priority to JPA at this time. Kellie Merrill stated she could not do the training earlier in the year but says she can be there but can't take responsibility for organizing it due to her other commitments.

**Regulatory:** Scott is trying to track Olin Reed and the issue of herbicidal treatment. He wants to set up a meeting with Olin after the spring EWM survey is completed. We need a record for a case for an early chemical application.

**Chemical Treatment:** Barry described an informal conversation he had with several members of the Danville Conservation Commission regarding EWM management including the question of whether herbicide treatment might be an acceptable alternative at an early stage of infestation. He commented the CC members seemed supportive of the approach which may be somewhat influenced by their own struggles with terrestrial invasives throughout town. Barry said he originally thought that FOVLAP would submit the JPA position letter to the State but now will not. FOVLAP supports the JPA position letter but wants the JPA to submit it. Jennie Austin (Kim Jensen's boss) of ANR gave positive feedback to the position paper. Other lake associations struggling with EWM will send letters of support. Joe Hebert will sign it along with Barry. Barry's plan was to send the email to Julie Moore and to other ANR staff as appropriate. He will request a meeting and give feedback. JPA will ask the ANR to not base the decision on precedent. This position letter to go out before the end of March. Once the letter is sent to the ANR, Barry requests the position paper be placed on the website. Barry warns that this position paper requesting a pilot project will stir things up, both within the State and with the membership. Currently this committee is out ahead of the membership, but time is of the essence if we are to do the herbicide treatment this year while there is still an opportunity to achieve eradication. Joe Hebert feels that the membership will go along but they could also overrule us. Pat Rubalcaba says we must get the pieces in place to get this done. Barry directly asked the committee for their thoughts on the herbicide treatment. Everyone supported going ahead with the position paper and the request for a pilot project. Joe asked if the ANR will give a decision in time to use PC this season. Barry stated he believes the ANR will be receptive to the project as a pilot test.

There being no other subjects, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm. Next meeting will be 3:00 pm on 4/8/2025

Respectively submitted,

Jamie Stewart