

Milfoil Meeting Minutes -April 14, 2026

Attendees: Barry Cahoon, Joe Hebert, Joanne Stewart, Jamie Stewart, Sue Bouchard, Jim Bernotas

Barry called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm via Zoom call sponsored by Joanne Stewart. The 3/19/2026 EWMMC meeting minutes were accepted.

Dive Team Update: Jim Bernotas put together a list of people who will either SCUBA, SNUBA, boat support, or kayakers. It is a preliminary list and will be further filled out. Joanne will be coordinating the kayakers for the season as they are needed for safety purposes with the divers/snorkelers and also for efficiency. If a diver needs to empty their catch bags of milfoil, the kayakers will have the spare bags and then paddle over to the support boat to empty. Other names were mentioned and will be approached to see if they will join the effort.

Equipment Acquisitions: Jim Bernotas put together a list of items to be purchased. These include weights, catch bags, throw rings, weight belts, and power inflator kits. The committee OK'ed the purchases. The nets will be purchased in May. Joe H. interjected that Danville will be giving the JPA \$10k and Cabot \$5K for the efforts in containing milfoil.

Greeter Accommodations: This topic was tabled since Pat R. was not at the meeting.

Greeter Tutorial Update: This topic was tabled since Pat R. was not at the meeting. Sue B. commented that the EWMMC Education committee will help with the tutorials.

Liability Update: Joe H. received examples of a release form. Dave Kidney also sent one and felt we should use the one Dave Kidney supplied. Each participant will be required to sign a release form. This includes all committee members, SCUBA and SNUBA team, kayakers, and boat support personnel. We have to acknowledge there is no protection against negligence, and we must be motivated to take care. The signed releases must be kept. Sue B thought that when people sign the form they also get the hours document to track the volunteer hours. These release forms will be signed once per 'season'. Joe agreed to ensure participants sign a form and will collect them.

Warning Signs update: Barry felt these warning signs will need to be deployed in the exclusion zones in the 1st pond and the lower end of the Town Beach. Since the WDCC has not replaced the town dock and has no plans to replace it we should be OK. Discussion occurred about Sambel's dock. It was felt that a discussion with Steve Larrabee should occur since he is Sambel's landlord. We need to minimize the traffic into the 1st pond. The Stewart's will discuss with Joe Turner about their boat rentals, Steve Larrabee, and the

WDCC. We do need to give a pathway for the Turner's rental boats into the 2nd and 3rd pond. We also have 3 camps in the 1st pond; Ribolini's, Meteer/McDonald, and their rental.

Jim Bernotas had comments to make regarding the 1st and 2nd Pond. In the 2nd pond there is a navigable channel parallel to Route 2 and it is a deep and wide channel that can be easily marked. There is not widespread growth in the 2nd pond. The 1st pond is a different story. Discussion centered about the Fireworks to happen on July 3rd. Last year it was a rainy night and not many boats went into the 2nd Pond. This year could be different. Do we mark out the navigable channel before the Fireworks? It can be a 'bumper to bumper boat' situation and would a buoyed marked channel be an issue. Jim B said we would have to get the dive team into the water before 7/3 between Bernotas' camp and Thurston's camp. He thought 2 solid days of harvesting would help. Focus the efforts there and harvest the high weeds. Maybe we should put the channel buoys down after the fireworks. It was also felt that since the 2nd pond is much smaller and all camps will see the harvesting activity and be more aware. Part of last year's frustration was most camps could not see the harvesting efforts behind the island and on Sandy Beach Rd. Jim B commented that there are 3 offenders with camps in the 2nd pond with respect to boating activity and they could be talked to privately and be told they are being watched. For sure this buoy channel marking in the 1st and 2nd pond will be discussed at the Spring Meeting.

Buoy Assembly: The newly acquired buoys will be assembled on May 16th at 9 am at the Pavilion.

SOLitude Lake Management: Emily Volgamore asked if there will be an Herbicide treatment in 2026. It is uncertain at this time but certainly possible. We still have to do the Arrowood survey in June. Barry will let SOLitude know and if so, we will work with them to prepare the treatment plan. This would have to be done by mid-June.

Spring Meeting Preparation: Barry said his report for the Spring Newsletter is comprehensive and will give a quick overview at the meeting. He will stress that we cannot have complacency and DO NOT LET UP! Many members probably think since the 2025 herbicide treatment was successful that all is well. Barry will show the new buoys, discuss the growth in the 1st and 2nd pond and we cannot have this milfoil be transported back to the 3rd pond. We all need to promote greater engagement. Barry will also discuss the pros and cons of ProCellocor and will ask Rob if he will be at the meeting to present his views. Also to be mentioned since it will be obvious in the financial report at the meeting that the JPA has a generous donor for a boat wash station if we can get the Fish and Game to change their views. Sue B asked if there was a representative from another milfoil infested lake that could come and discuss their experiences. Barry has a FOVLAP meeting

soon and will inquire. Most of the infested lakes are in the southwestern corner of Vermont and it is a distance away. Joanne brought up Mike Segale and Norma. They had a camp on Lake Iroquois and had to hire private divers to clear a path from their dock to the deeper portion of the lake. Maybe Mike can speak about his experience. He will be approached. Joe H brought up the channel markers in the 2nd pond. He felt that we should go ahead and mark out the channel in the 2nd pond regardless of the fireworks. To delay for one evening did not make sense to him. The Committee has prepared a paper to be emailed to the members 2 weeks before the Spring meeting to discuss the pros and cons of the use of the herbicide. The use of this herbicide is a sensitive issue and we need to acknowledge it. We want feedback from the members, discussions, and facts. He will invite discussion. Barry felt the use of this herbicide was a committee and Board of Directors decision. Joe H stated that if there was a vote by the membership to not use herbicide then the committee and BOD cannot override that. Joe stated he doubts the membership would vote against the use of herbicide. An inventory of the handouts we used last year will be taken and made available at the Spring meeting. Also, at the meeting it will be mentioned that:

Sue Yesalonia will be coordinating the LSC's and monitoring them

Joanne Stewart will be coordinating the EWM harvesting surface support activities and the release forms will need to be signed.

Sue Bouchard will be coordinating the meals for VT Hozerz on 7/13 thru 7/17

Contact Jim Bernotas if interested in joining the SCUBA team and SNUBA team.

S.224 update - Mention will be made of the generous donor to fund a boat wash station. This is a \$100k donation plus \$10K per year for maintenance. These funds will be earmarked for a boat wash station only. If a boat wash station is never realized, the donor has said these funds can be used for invasive management efforts.

How to Promote and achieve greater membership engagement: Scott and Chris Burns have some great input for this. *“At the meeting, take time to clearly walk everyone through what has been accomplished so far, highlighting that a small group of members has carried the bulk of the work. Put this into perspective by sharing the total number of volunteer hours contributed - so everyone can fully see the scope of effort required to make this successful.*

Use this as an opportunity to illustrate a key point: when responsibilities fall on the same few individuals year after year, it leads to burnout and limits what the group can achieve long-term. Help the membership understand that sustaining and growing these efforts depends on broader participation.

Then invite the group into the solution. Ask for thoughtful ideas and practical suggestions on how to encourage more members to get involved, share the workload and take ownership moving forward. Frame it as a collective responsibility and an opportunity for everyone to contribute to the group/s continued success.

How can we best and most effectively illustrate to and educate the membership on the severity and potential worse case scenario of EWM proliferation. *Send an email or flyer to the membership with language something like: This year presents new challenges. EWM is a persistent and aggressive invasive species that can spread quickly if not actively managed. Rising treatment costs, the need for ongoing monitoring, and increasing coverage in certain areas mean that both financial and volunteer demands are growing. Other lakes that have experienced unmanaged EWM infestations provide important lessons. There has been: Limited boating, swimming and fishing, required significantly higher long-term treatment costs, and negatively impacted shoreline property values. Studies show that lakes with uncontrolled invasive species often see declines in property values due to reduced usability and aesthetic appeal. In contrast, lakes that invest in proactive management tend to preserve both environmental quality and property investment.*

What other alternatives could we implement to reduce watercraft-induced fragmentation? *Invite legislative leaders and/or regulatory representatives to a brief on-site presentation and tour of Joe's Pond to discuss our current successes and future challenges. Share a clear overview of costs incurred, results achieved, and current challenges. Demonstrate conditions through a guided tour. Discuss the long-term risks to water quality, recreation, and property values. Explore opportunities for statewide solutions, including funding support and regulatory improvements.*

Many lakes across Vermont are facing similar pressures. Proactive investment and policy coordination now can help prevent significantly higher environmental and economic costs in the future”.

Next Meeting: May 12, 2026 3:00 pm. Via Zoom sponsored by Joanne Stewart

Respectively submitted,

Jamie Stewart