Milfoil Meeting Minutes - August 11, 2026

Attendees: Jamie Stewart, Joanne Stewart, Rob Stewart, Barry Cahoon, Sue Bouchard, Pat Rubalcaba, Joe Hebert, Chirs Burns, Scott Burns, Sue Yesalonia

Barry Cahoon started the meeting at 3:01 pm.

July 7, 2026 minutes were accepted with no changes

DASH Project Report - Barry felt the week was successful. The DASH team covered the First Pond and an important point was seeing a lot of immature plants. This indicates there will be a lot of plants coming up just like what we saw on Sandy Beach and Channel Drive in 2025. The DASH crew loves the treatment and support they get from Joe's Pond and had a very positive experience. They loved the food and accommodations.

Harvest Crew Report - Jim Bernotas was not able to attend this meeting and sent the following report:

The inlet channel is currently our top priority. We have worked there weekly and have seen a large decrease in the amount of EWM collected.

I think we are down to stray plants scattered on the edges of the channel and in the surrounding shallows.

Surveying there regularly from paddleboards and kayaks is requested so we can locate and eliminate any remaining plants.

So far, we have found three individual plants that had escaped the channel and landed near the small island.

Continued snorkel and SCUBA operations will continue there when we do channel work.

On Sunday we had some SNUBA training and surveying in the second pond that went very well. We will figure out how to attach a crotch strap to the vests

so we can keep them in place. Until that time, we will limit the SNUBA to surface/shallow surveying and pulling.

One large patch of EWM was found on the edge of the navigation channel and pulled. Buoys were placed for GPS logging.

This week we will implement our new sign-up procedure for the weekly diving details.

We are planning a Friday trip to the channel, and unless the board has other priorities we will SNUBA from Turners docks up to the second pond on Saturday.

I have two divers interested in trying SCUBA. Both are excellent EWM pullers and comfortable in the water.

I have all the equipment required to get them set up except for one XL vest. I have a friend with a used one for $120.00 if the board ok's the purchase.

The Board authorized the expenditure of $120 for the XL vest. It was also commented that the SNUBA cannot effectively harvest in the Channel area due to the multitude of weeds. It was reported that Bob Dimick will not be available for SCUBA diving this summer.

SIGN-UP GENIUS - Joe Hebert - This computer app is used by the West Danville Brainerd Library to sign up volunteers to work at the library. Joe modified the sign-up sheet to trial it for scheduling SCUBA, SNUBA, and kayakers. It seemed to work well for the coming week and several slots were filled. We will keep using this for the balance of the harvest season and assess the efforts at the end of the season.

SHED Improvements - It was felt that more hooks and shelves are needed within the SNUBA shed and Joe H will take care of it.

PAINT & SIP - Sue Bouchard reported on the successful fund raiser and thanked the Monaghan's for the Red Barn gift card.

POTLUCK Dinner - Sue Bouchard thought it would be nice to have a Potluck at the Pavilion and invite all of the volunteers, divers, kayakers, LSCs, committee members and several dates were suggested. Everyone thought it would be a great idea, and we need to be sure Jim Bernotas will be at the Pond on the given day. It was estimated that about 60 people could show up. Suggestions on whether the separate fundraisers (i.e., Mahjong group, Jay Chatot, Jane Brown) should be included. Sue B will take the lead and check with Jim B and the date would be either August 29 or September 12.

UNDERWATER DRONE - Scott Burns researched the efficacy of purchasing a drone and submitted the following:

Assessment of Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV) to Support EWM Eradication Actions in Joe's Pond

Purpose:

- *To provide superior documentation of location, extent and propagation of the EWM infestation in Joe's Pond and to demonstrate impacts of JPA's eradication actions to support regulatory requirements and inform future EWM control operations.*

System Design Objectives:

- *Provide timely, area wide video documentation of aquatic plants (including EWM) along repeatable transects and study areas*
- *Sufficient video resolution to support identification of aquatic plant species*

- *Concurrent GPS coordinates collected during each survey to facilitate site relocation for monitoring changes in vegetation over time*
- *Ability to operate in and around tall vegetation*
- *Equipment capable of operation by Lakeshore Section Coordinators from boat using simple game controller or tablet interface*
- *Video surveys can be archived for use and analysis by JPA contractors and regulators.*

System Constraints:

- *Commercially available underwater drones are tethered*
- *No underwater ROV has true underwater GPS. Site locations are defined by boat located GPS equipment.*
- *Surveying will require a trained Lakeshore Section operator to 'drive/follow' the drone from a boat during each survey*

AI Recommended Equipment:

- *FIFISH V6 Expert M200 tethered ROV*
- *BAD ELF FLEX Mini Standard (portable 1.5-meter resolution GPS; may have alternative unit)*
- *Mounting & Positioning Hardware*
- *Data processing and mapping tools (may already have)*

Estimated Cost of Recommended System: *$4,350 – $4,550*

- *Demonstration of underwater drone technology at Joe's Pond by TetraTech Consulting may be available should the committee prefer.*

Commercially Marketed Autonomous Surface Vessels (ASVS) with Downward looking Cameras: *$8,000 to $12,000*

- *More advanced autonomous robotic surveying system capable of self-operation at specified times/dates and locations*

Comments: Scott felt the robotic version had advantages such that it could be set out at any time and remotely operated. This could be helpful in dealing with the DEC and any last-minute hurdles such as we are getting now. This device could look at treated locations; past and present. Barry commented that the robot is twice the amount, but the operability is greatly enhanced with the video capability. The drawback is we will need a person to identify the sensitive species. Scott said he generated a list of previous studies and has a report from another location. The cameras are not at a hobby level and have hi-Res capability. Drones can tilt and rotate with great resolution. This is a professional grade resolution, but we will need an ecologist to identify species. Pat R asked if there is a facial recognition capability for plant species such as being available for land species? Joe H felt there were 2 possibilities. If a

system is purchased, we can use it for ourselves, which is a benefit, but will the DEC accept the data from this device, and would it relieve us from doing the pretreatment and post treatment surveys? Scott stated that there are consultants who are available to do this work but at what price. This type of technology is used by many industries and States. We should check with the State of Vermont to see if they would accept this data. Joe H said we should check with Olin Reed if this data would be helpful. Barry has a meeting tonight with FOVLAP and will ask if any other lake is using this technology. A tremendous benefit would be, so the Dive crew does not have to go searching for the plants. Let the drone robot do this instead. In any event, this technology cannot help us in 2026. Barry also stated a cautionary given a tethered drone and the video resolution. Lou Monaghan has a tethered drone, and it kept getting caught in the vegetation. Scott suggested we reach out to Tetra Tech (located in Montpelier) and see if a demo can be arranged. This would be a submerged drone followed by a boat operation. This technology would require a skilled operator. Jamie and Barry commented that our existing GPS unit while hand-held is not all that great. One needs to hold still to get the GPS point and, on a boat, this is not easy. Sometimes it takes 3 to 5 minutes to latch onto the signal. Scott said the drone would have to surface and can hold its position for the satellite signal to be centered. Scott suggested we get a demo on this unit.

Lake Shore Coordinators - Sue Yesalonia said they are monitoring activities and getting the coverage and will collect the data and send it out to the committee. Concern was stated on whether the boat access area was being covered given Bob Dimick's out of commission. Sue Bouchard said they searched the Sandy Beach Road area and wanted another set of eyes in the water to help. Jane & Tom Segale are out looking. Barry said we need to focus on the areas with the plants in 2025. Point Comfort needs looking at also.

Kettle Ponds - Jamie reported that 7 experienced surveyors went to the Mike Dornbrook property at his invitation to survey the two kettle ponds. Tom/Jane Segale, Ginger & Lee Erdmann, Butch Bouchard, Mark Rudin, and Jamie Stewart searched for 2-½ hours and no EWM was evident.

Webmap Status - Rob asked if the web map with the zoom in capability is truly needed. He will do both but asks if anyone uses it. Barry stated that the points on the web map have the GPS data on it once you zoom in and felt it was necessary and asked that we keep doing this map. Instead of keeping a map per year on the page, having a map with layers identified by the year was possible. Rob reminded us that we have the 'free' version of this web site and he was not sure if having layers was possible. We may have to pay for this capability. He will check it out.

Cloud Drive for EWM - Rob has set up the Cloud drive and asked for suggestions for the folders. Barry sent his named folders to Joanne and asked Rob to look at them and consolidate them for transferring. A thumb drive is the best way for Barry to send Joanne to upload his files. Joanne has placed all the photos she has to the Cloud. Rob asked that it was important to name the files beginning with the date i.e., 2026_08_11 etc.;

ProcellaCOR Treatment Plan - Barry informed the committee of the issues with Olin Reed and the treatment plan status. The first roadblock was that the Arrowood survey did not report there were many plants found. Olin said there was no evidence EWM was in the 1st and 2nd pond.

Barry immediately had RobVt Hozerz) put together maps with the plants found and sent to Olin the maps and the DASH report. The second roadblock was a new condition of the permit stating a vegetation survey in the year of the treatment was required. This was not true for the treatment of 2025. The State used a 2024 vegetation survey and for the 2026 treatment plan we used the 2025 post treatment survey. We thought the State was inconsistent in approval. Barry talked with Emily Vulgamore (Solitude Consulting) about this inconsistency, and she informed us of the new permit condition so Barry's plan to point out to Olin the inconsistency was a no-go. Barry asked Emily Vulgomore if Solitude had the time and resources to do a quick survey and she said no but she knew Amanda Polchlopek - Pondweed Pursuits LLC. who could possibly do a quick survey. Barry contacted her and she said she could do this. The question came up of what type of vegetation survey Barry was to contact Olin Reed and inquire but has had no response to date. He hoped we could get the survey done in time and give Olin Reed time to respond.

Discussion then centered around the sensitive native species affected by PC and whether these species have not been found in Joe's Pond. It seems overkill as to how many vegetation surveys are required. After any PC treatment a post treatment (within one month) survey is required and another one during the following year. This is per treatment year. A pre-treatment survey is also required during the same calendar year. An EWM survey is also required. We have scheduled a vegetation survey in the fall of 2026 which is to comply with the 2025 treatment approval. If we do treat in 2026, we need a post treatment survey in 2026 also. The plan is that these two surveys can be combined in one operation by Arrowwood Environmental.

We need Amanda of Pondweed Pursuits to conduct the survey, report out the findings, and get it to the State for their approval; all in 2 weeks. Joe H stated if the PC permit is denied, then we need to control what is coming out of the inlet channel. It is evident that there is very little boat traffic in the 1st Pond and we need to keep a pathway from Point Comfort docks into the 2nd pond. The whole committee felt that we have the opportunity to eradicate the EWM but feel it is slipping away if we do not treat it in 2026. There will be more potential for fragments going into the 3rd Pond. Questions if we do not treat EWM in 2026: Is it worth having DASH in 2027? There is little boat traffic but still there are plants upstream of the signs. DASH minimizes plants being fragmented. Can PC be used earlier in season (2027). PC needs to be used when the plants are maturing in mid-July to mid-August. Barry will ask FOVLAP on the other lake's timing of treatment.

Scott had concerns with 4 species found in the post survey that were impacted by the treatment of PC in 2025. There was 100% necrosis and we need to be sure the upcoming surveys look hard for those plants to prove that 'they came back'. Scott was concerned that failing to find those plants will give cause to the State to deny any treatment. We need to prove the species did not die back. Joe H expressed frustration that PC has been used in the State since 2019 and in all cases - the species recover every time and the State knows that. Scott reiterated that we need to play the State's 'game' and take steps to refute that these plants died. We will need independent factual data.

Discussion then centered around the costs of the 'Amanda' survey and if the State will accept the survey. We need clarity on the type of survey to submit and waiting for Olin's

response. The committee approved the costs for the Amanda survey (1st & 2nd pond only) and to keep plugging away. The sense of the committee was to pursue the herbicide treatment of 8/26 if at all possible. Do the survey and take the risks of the expense (approx. $2000) of the Amanda survey.

Assuming the Treatment plan of 8/26/2026 is allowed the duties of the committee will be assigned for the day.

Date of next meeting: 9/15/2026 at 3:00 pm EST. Meeting ended at 5:05 pm

Respectively submitted

Jamie Stewart