



Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain Aquatic Plant Control Program 2023 Activity Summary

A publication of the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Improvement Board

Hodunk-Messenger Lake Board

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Coldwater, MI 49036

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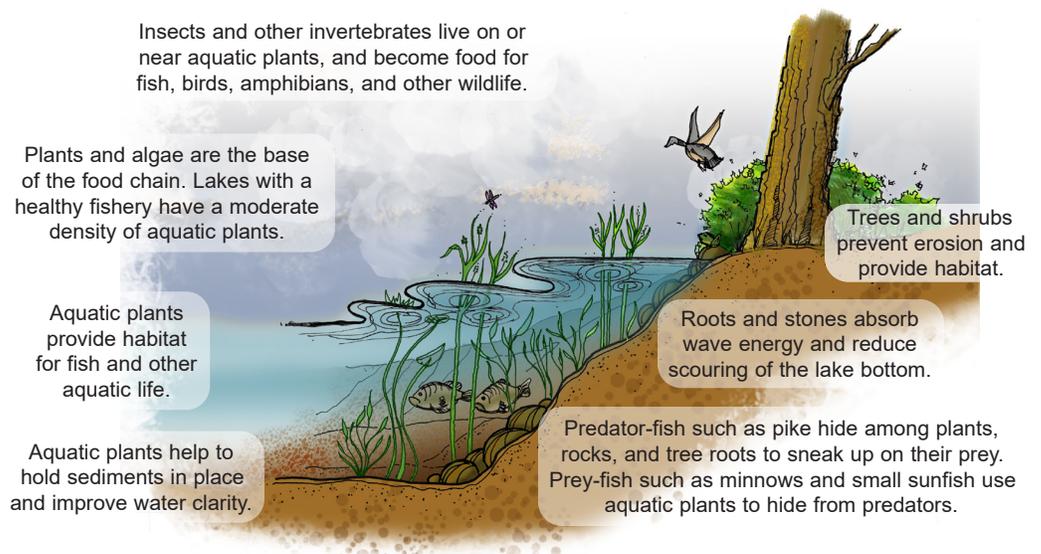
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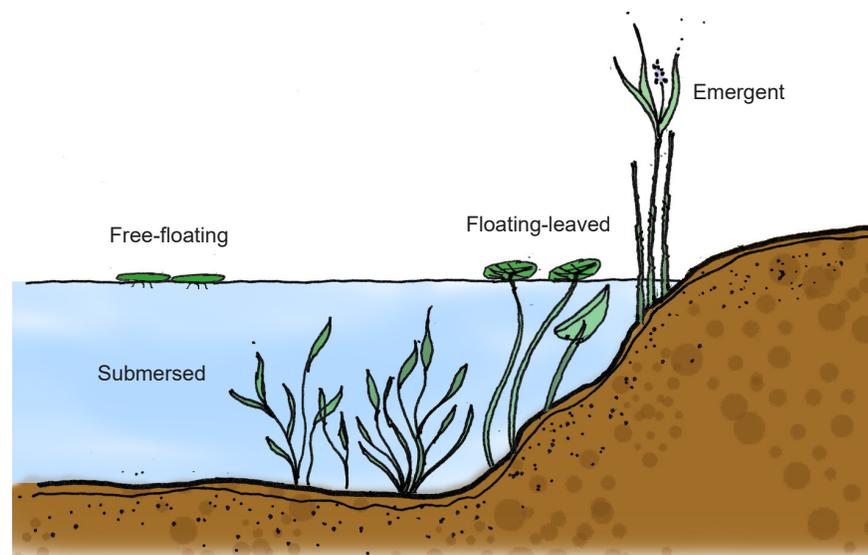
Randall Hazelbaker
Branch County Commissioner

For many years, a nuisance plant control program has been ongoing on the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain. The primary objective of the program is to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic plants while preserving beneficial plant species. This report contains an overview of plant control activities conducted on the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain in 2023.

Aquatic plants are an important component of lakes. They produce oxygen during photosynthesis, provide food, habitat and cover for fish, and help stabilize shoreline and bottom sediments.



There are four main aquatic plant groups: submersed, floating-leaved, free-floating, and emergent. Each plant group provides important ecological functions. Maintaining a diversity of aquatic plants is important to sustaining a healthy fishery and a healthy lake.



Environmental Consultant
Progressive AE

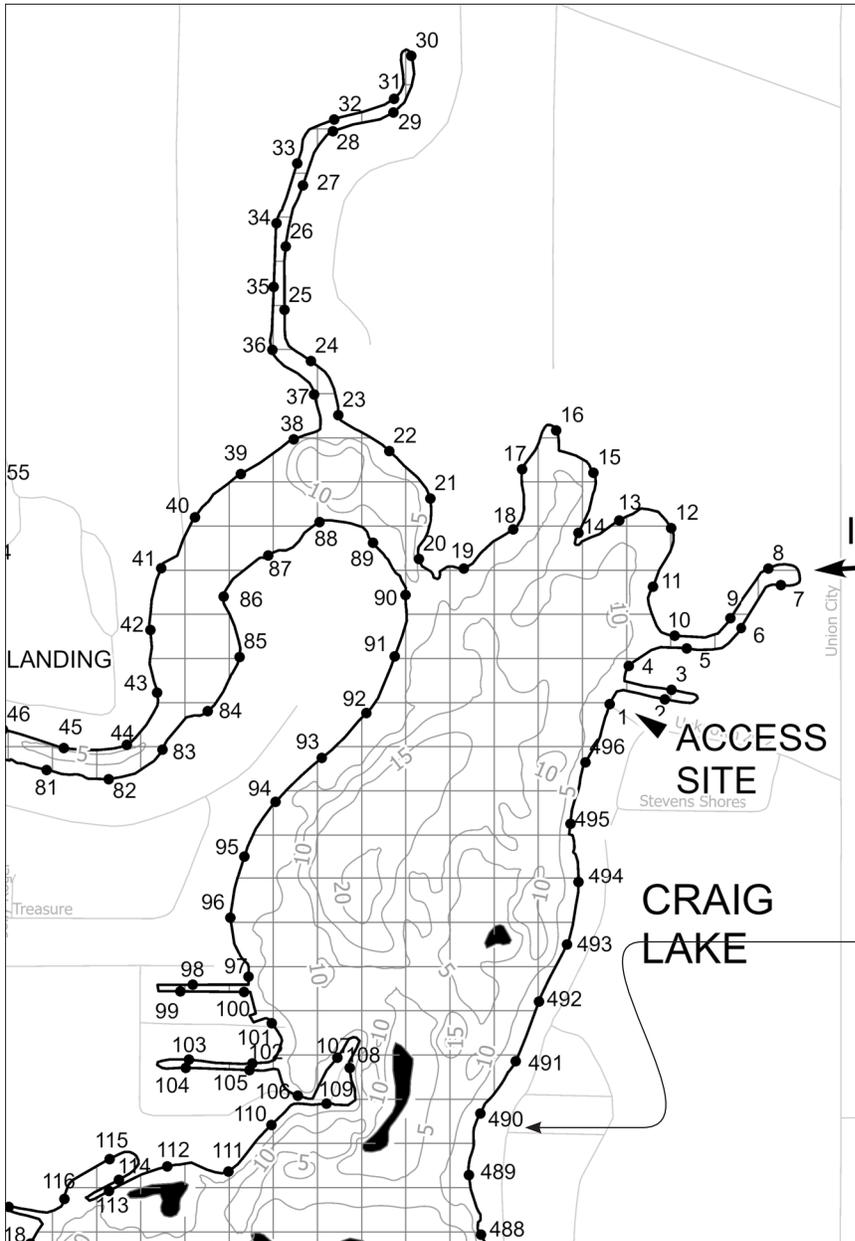
Herbicide Applicator
PLM Lake and Land Management Corp.

Harvesting Contractor
PLM Lake and Land Management Corp.

Plant Surveys

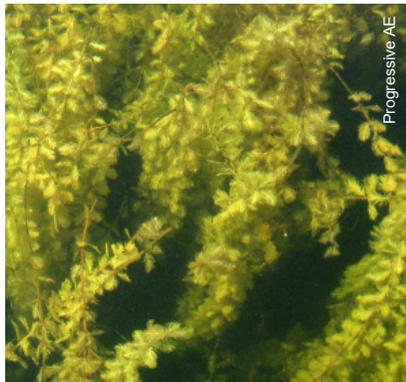
Plant control activities are coordinated under the direction of an environmental consultant, Progressive AE. Biologists from Progressive conduct GPS-guided surveys of the lake to identify problem areas, and georeferenced plant control maps are provided to the plant control contractor.

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GPS reference points established along the shoreline and drop-off areas of the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain are used to guide plant surveys and to accurately identify the location of nuisance plant growth areas.

Plant control in the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain involves the select use of herbicides and mechanical harvesting to control invasive plant growth. Primary plants targeted for control in the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain include Eurasian milfoil and starry stonewort. Both of these plants are non-native (exotic) species that tend to be highly invasive and have the potential to spread quickly if left unchecked.



Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)



Starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*)

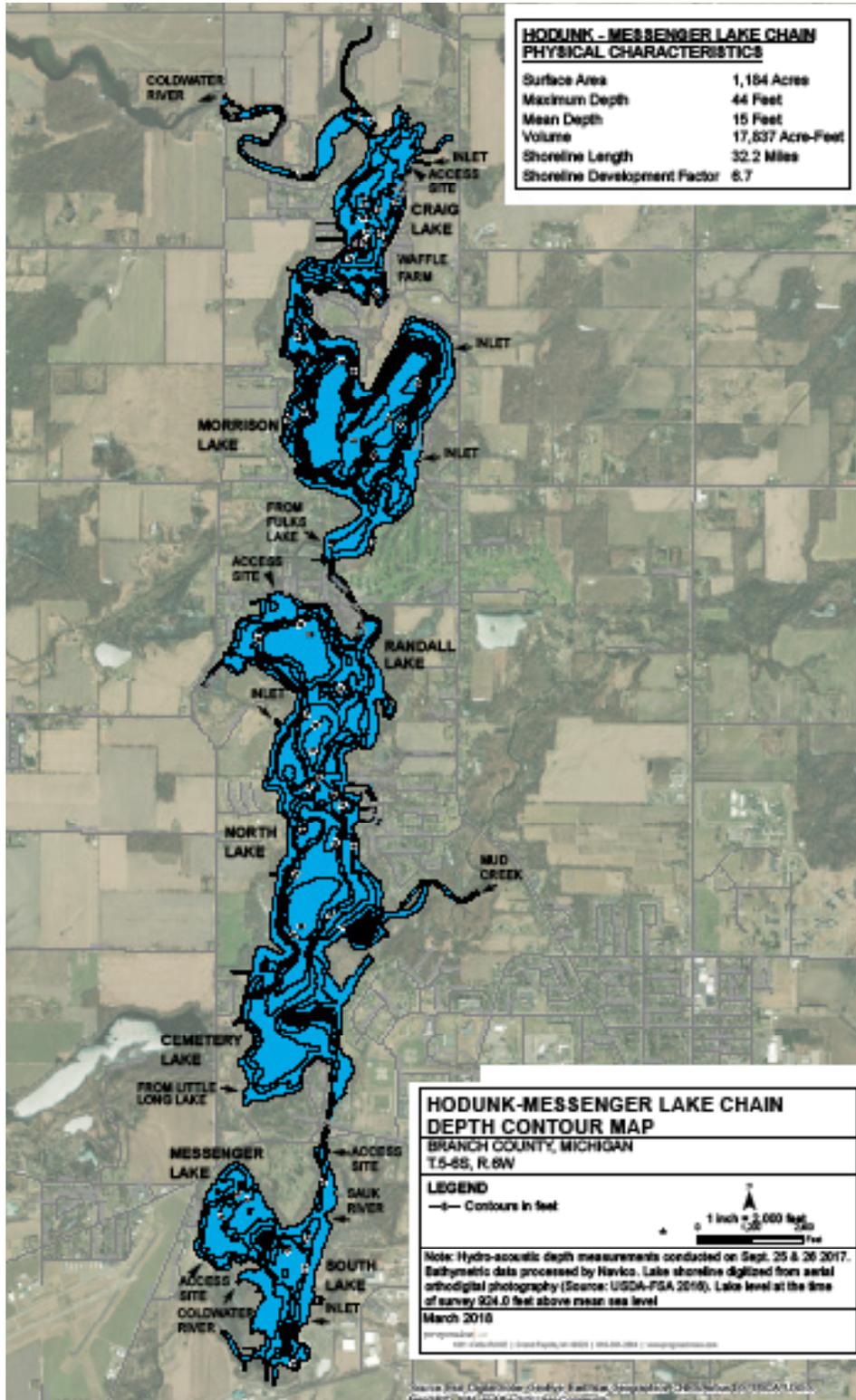
Plant contractivities conducted on the Hodunk-Messenger Lake Chain in 2023 are summarized in the table below.

**HODUNK-MESSENGER LAKE CHAIN
2023 NUISANCE AQUATIC PLANT CONTROL SUMMARY**

Work Type	Date	Plants Targeted	Acres
Algaecide	April 27	Nuisance algae and starry stonewort	40
Survey	May 3		
Herbicide	May 10	Eurasian milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, starry stonewort	54
Survey	June 6		
Harvesting	June 14-19	Nuisance natives	35
Survey	June 19	Harvest inspection	
Herbicide	June 20	E. milfoil, starry stonewort nuisance natives	75
Survey	July 10		
Herbicide	July 18	Starry stonewort, nuisance natives	56
Survey	August 10		
Herbicide	August 15	E. milfoil, algae, starry stonewort	35
Harvesting	August 14-17	Nuisance natives, starry stonewort	33
Survey	August 17		
Total			328

Depth Contour Map

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High-definition hydro-acoustic mapping of the Hondunk-Messenger Lake Chain was conducted in 2017 by Progresseve AE and processed data was used to create bathymetric mapping.