

Eurasian Water Milfoil Summary 2021

EWM is here to stay in Roberts Lake. Our best option is to mitigate its presence as much as we can. Aquatic Plant Management conducted 2 days of snorkeling and harvesting EWM this summer. They spent most of their time in the North and North East part of the lake. They removed quite a bit more EWM than in the past few years.

2018 – 2 days snorkeling – 25.5 cubic feet

2019 – Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting – 57.5 cubic feet

2020 - 2 days snorkeling – 44.5 cubic feet

2021 – 2 days snorkeling – 90.0 cubic feet

That may not be as alarming as it looks though. In 2020 they spent most of their time removing scattered spots in on the East, West and South shorelines to help keep it from spreading. Looking at the survey maps conducted by Ontera in 2020 and 2021 it doesn't appear to have spread as much as in previous surveys. The majority of the EWM is in the Northern part of the lake. Especially near the Wild Rose boat landing. This is probably where it entered the lake.

We have always had a lot of native Northern Water Milfoil in the lake and you can still see a lot of it now too. Northern Milfoil will grow up near the surface of the lake and stop. EWM will continue to grow and float in mats on the surface of the water. I did see some matting in the Northwest corner of the lake where it is very shallow. This can get so bad as to hinder navigation.

The DNR was unable to tell me what we might expect for the future. Will EWM find equilibrium and coexist with the native weeds in our lake, or take over to the point where extreme measures like chemical treatment are required?

At this point we plan to continue monitoring its expansion with annual surveying and try to contain its spread by harvesting. I liken it to dandelions in your yard.

They will always want to be there and you just have to keep after them to keep them out.

Gus Nordholm