

Big Cedar Lake Stewardship Association - BCLSA

Date: March 8, 2016

To: All Big Cedar Residents & Cottagers

From: Brian Stock, President – BCLSA

Copy: BCLSA Board: Brian Stock-bstock58@gmail.com; David Madden-davymadden@gmail.com; Don Austin-dbaustin@rogers.com; Heather McCarten-mccartenheather@gmail.com; Darcy Wefers-darcy.wefers@sympatico.ca; John Graham-jgrahami@sympatico.ca; Leo Desorcy-l-desorcy@aol.com; Meg Luxton-mluxton@yorku.ca

Hello from Big Cedar Lake,

Swimming in Big Cedar Lake (BCL) at Christmas? Over 14 degrees on BCL in February? After the cold winter of 2015, who would have thought 2016 could be so different. Even with this mild winter, I am sure everyone is still looking forward to those beautiful warm summer days on Big Cedar.

Weevil Project

Background

I am pleased to bring to you today, the summary of the Weevil project for 2015 (the full report is on the BCLSA website). As you will recall, we took a different approach in 2015 with the hiring of Trent University to run our project. The switch to Trent gave us a fresh approach to the situation in Big Cedar Lake and allowed us to look at the milfoil infestation with a different set of eyes, and a view that used more scientific data and background research.

First off, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Project in 2015. Your ongoing support has enabled the Association to fund a very important battle against the invasive Milfoil weed.

Project Methods

Trent started last year with an informal survey of the lake and found approximately 25 patches of Eurasian milfoil. They noted that good progress had been made since 2011 in managing the milfoil. Their estimate is that milfoil had started in the lake approximately 2 decades ago but had grown to a problematic level over the last 6-8 years. For 2015, 25,000 weevils were placed over four sites around the lake. In addition, 5 control/monitoring sites were established. Beyond monitoring weevil damage, the Trent team also measured biomass and density of milfoil and the biodiversity of the various sites.

Results

Over the summer, the team measured weevil damage on the Eurasian milfoil. The weevil's continued, as in past years, to do significant damage to the milfoil. As stated in the report, the amount of damage from weevils will also vary from year to year depending on the weather and other environmental factors. What they also noted is that the weevils may be at their saturation level in many parts of the lake and that further stocking of weevils in those areas would lead to diminishing returns. But in other parts of the lake stocking of weevils could still be beneficial. What they would recommend the Association do is to focus our resources on addressing the bio diversity of the plant life on the lake bottom and minimize the chance of milfoil replanting itself.

Next Steps

How do we address bio diversity? Trent is recommending the concept of placing benthic mats (15m x 15m) in various areas of the lake (these are biodegradable). Attached to the mats are local native water plants which could fill in areas as the milfoil dies off. By taking this approach, the regrowth of Eurasian milfoil in those areas can be minimized. They wanted to try this approach last year but they were unable to find the mats that were 100% environmentally friendly for the lake; they now have sourced the correct mats. In addition to the mats, Trent would place weevils on the Eurasian milfoil around the matted areas to hold back the milfoil while the new plants take hold.

Cost

The cost of running this program is similar to last year; therefore the cost to each lake resident/cottager is \$375. In addition to the Lake program, we are looking at a program where we could have Trent create a "do-it-yourself" mat kit – where residents who participate in the Lake program could also buy mats/plants for their lakefront and install them by themselves. This "do-it-self" program is currently in the development stages and we will keep you informed as it progresses and if it becomes an option for this current season.

If anyone has any questions about our new lake program please do not hesitate to email me at bstock58@gmail.com or call me at 905-717-0303.

Thank you again for your ongoing support. The continued health of our lake is vitally important to maintaining the enjoyment we all receive from our time at Big Cedar Lake and also preserves the investment we all have in our lakefront properties.

Please contribute now while it is fresh in your mind by mailing contributions to our Treasurer, Don Austin at 85 Somerset Road, London, Ontario, N6K 3M6 or make an email transfer to dbaustin@rogers.com (our preferred method). The contribution form is attached.

Membership Fees

On another note, since the Board has been able to keep the operating costs of the Association low, we will be able to waive the membership fee of \$25 for 2016: but we will definitely need to reinstate the fee for 2017.

Annual General Meeting

Our next AGM is scheduled for **Saturday May 21st at 9:30am** at the Wilson Park Hall on Northey's Bay Road. At this meeting we will be discussing several important issues, please plan on attending.

One of the items on the agenda will be the appointment of Board Members. Currently we have 8 members with half of them up for reappointment this year. We know that many of you have a passion for topics related the Big Cedar, so we encourage you to consider joining your Association Board. If you are interested, please send in a nomination form available on our website www.BCLSA.ca by May 13th, 2016. If you have any questions about the roles, don't hesitate to reach out to any of the current Board Members copied at the top of this letter.

Thanks,

Brian Stock