

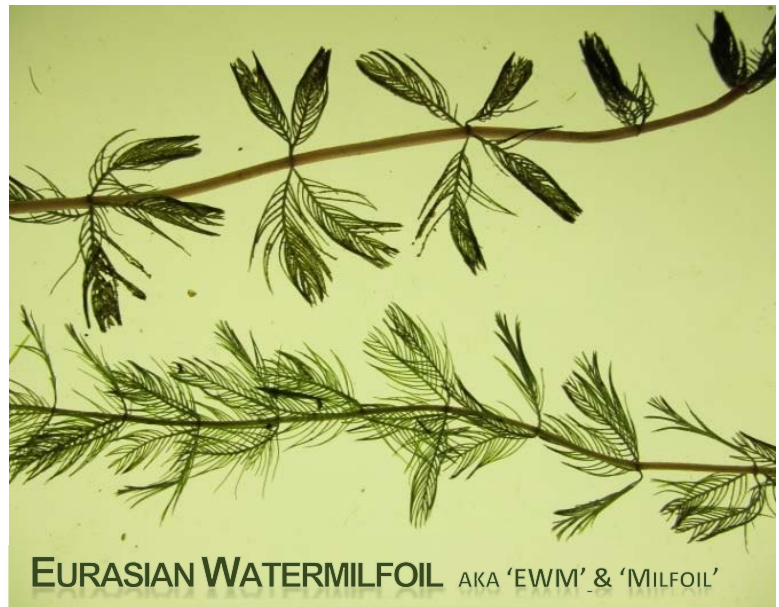
To All Who Enjoy Upper Straits Lake Access,

Please read this memo carefully.

It contains this year's request for Upper Straits Clean Lake Association dues and for your contribution to the Upper Straits Lake **Weed Management Program**.

Here you'll find the distressing reasons behind the changes in this year's Weed Control contributions request.

Each of us enjoying access to Upper Straits Lake – whether lakefront owners or not – recognize the increasing weed density each year.



Alarmingly, some areas of your beautiful, clear lake are being completely choked; entirely filled with a thick mat of invasive weeds – especially the two shown here.

These photos of **Eurasian Watermilfoil** and **Starry Stonewort** were shot on Upper Straits lake last year.

For the last 20 years or so, we've used Weed Harvesting to remove many of the weeds each July. Last year's \$15,000 harvesting cost was paid with donations from just 71 concerned households and four organizations associated with the lake and until recently, harvesting was adequate.

Mechanical harvesting is less and less successful as Eurasian Watermilfoil increasingly flourishes in the shallow waters of the canals and bays of Upper Straits Lake.



In fact, scientific research reveals that harvesting which causes fragmentation – can actually spread and increase the growth of Milfoil (EWM) – by creating the thousands of small pieces that escape collection and then flourish anew.

Results from a weed study done in 2008 showed EWM at 15.2% cumulative cover.

A repeat study done in Oct, 2012 showed EWM at 21.4% relative density and in some areas it was so thick that you couldn't see through the weeds. If we let the weed situation continue to worsen it will reduce our water quality, hurt recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, boating, and water skiing and negatively impact property values.

Find Annual Dues and Weed Management Fund Information on the final page of this communication

A general meeting regarding our worsening weed conditions and the need for a comprehensive program to address this issue was held on April 25 for all users and lake riparians. If you attended, you heard Dr. Lisa Huberty from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality discuss the spread of invasive weeds, specifically Eurasian Watermilfoil and Starry Stonewort, throughout the State of Michigan.

You also heard representatives from five of our neighboring lakes, along with Dr. Huberty, point out that programs far more aggressive than that we've been using here on Upper Straits will be needed in order to get ahead of the progressive spread of these invasive, non-native weeds.

Several members of the USCLA have worked over the past year to gather facts, to talk to many other lake representatives and lake consultants and to benchmark what other area lakes are doing. These efforts have uncovered some revealing information.

- Most nearby lakes are involved in an aggressive weed management program
- Lower Straits Lake, Elizabeth Lake and Lake Angelus have annual weed budgets that are four times the size of Upper Straits Lake's fund
- Due to insufficient voluntary donations, many nearby lakes have established Special Assessment Districts (SAD's), or government sponsored Lake Boards
- Weed harvesting alone will not control the spread of invasive weeds
- The most successful weed management programs include the integration of selective weed harvesting, bio-control, aeration, weed blankets and raking.
- Past total contributions for Upper Straits Lake weed management have averaged \$15,000 annually, falling far short of future funding needs.

For 2013 the weed management program will proceed in much the same way as in prior years since the funds to support a more extensive program simply do not exist. Several small-scale trials will be conducted using methods to supplement mechanical weed harvesting as suggested by the DEQ and lake consultants. The results of these trials will be used in defining our program for 2014 and beyond.

To support our future programs, USCLA estimates that an annual budget of \$60,000 will be needed to support the weed management program required; roughly four times the amount that we have collected in the past.

We are determined, however, to try to continue to raise the necessary funds through voluntary means as opposed to getting the government involved.

The contributions we collect now are the funds set aside for the 2014 weed management program. To achieve the \$60,000 needed we are asking all lakefront owners for a contribution of \$250 or more and all non-lakefront users of the lake for a minimum contribution of \$100.

We, the volunteer officers of USCLA, understand the significance of this request. We also feel that we need to be open and direct as to the needs of the lake and to the funding for an adequate program. The lake is changing because of these invasive plants. We now need to change our thinking. A few concerned homeowners "can't get it done alone anymore."

We need the entire Upper Straits Lake Community to join us in this fight to control these weeds. We ask each of you to donate a fair share so we can generate a weed management fund sufficient to keep our lake as clean and healthy as possible. All the experts tell us that if we don't act now, the invasive weeds will win.

We simply can't let that happen.

www.upperstraitscleanlake.org

Upper Straits Clean Lake Association(USCLA)

Dues and Weed Harvesting Notice

Dear Upper Straits Lake Neighbor,

USCLA Dues

Your Dues support the management of lake activities and preservation efforts. Funds are used to support the various activities around the lake including the website, newsletters, WEB site, water quality testing, Music on the Lake, Lake Association parties, lake education and more.

Weed Management

Weed harvesting will be conducted on Upper Straits Lake to keep the main boating and swimming areas of the lake free of weeds for the summer. It will begin around July 24h, weather permitting. Don't forget to mark your check for the "Upper Straits Lake," since the City of Orchard Lake Village also collects contributions for Orchard Lake. All of the USCLA contributions go towards weed management on Upper Straits Lake only.

----- Print this page and cut here to send this lower portion along with your contribution -----

Upper Straits Clean Lake Association Dues & Weed Harvest

Name _____

Address _____

City, St ZIP _____, _____

Please make your check payable to:
"City of Orchard Lake Village WQIF"

Include a memo on it saying:
"For Upper Straits Lake"

USCLA Association Dues - \$35.00

Weed Harvesting

Suggested Contribution Amounts:

- Major Benefactors \$1,000 (or more)
- Neighborhood & Lake Assoc. \$1,000 (or more)
- Lakefront/Canal \$250 (or more)
- Lake Access \$100 (or more)
- Lake Out Lot / Infrequent User \$25 (or more)

Mail to:
**City of Orchard Lake Village
Water Quality Improvement Fund
3955 Orchard Lake Road
Orchard Lake, MI 48323**

Contribution Totals

Dues \$ _____

Weed Management \$ _____

Total \$ _____