

2020 Aquatic Plant Surveys in the Chain of Lakes

By Brad Matuska, SRCL Aquatic Invasive Species Committee Chairman/Board Member

The Sauk River Chain of Lakes Association (SRCL) is in the early stages of developing a comprehensive aquatic plant lake management plan for the entire Chain of Lakes. To start, the SCRL hired Limnopro of St. Cloud, MN to conduct two aquatic plant surveys. The first was a meandering survey in early May to map out the locations of the aquatic invasive species curly-leaf pondweed. Those maps are posted at *srcl.org*. A chemical treatment of curly-leaf pondweed was done by Clarke on a total of 20 acres in late May.

In the late summer and fall, Limnopro did another lake-wide point intercept survey of the entire Chain of Lakes. An aquatic plant sample was taken for every two acres of water, and divers inspected each boat landing. The final report has yet to be done but a preliminary report is posted at *srcl.org*. The preliminary report shows that the Chain of Lakes has poor water quality (high nutrients) dominated by surface native plants like coontail, duckweed, filamentous algae, watermeal, and water lily. The good news is that starry stonewort, an invasive plant, was not found, but zebra mussels (invasives) are on each lake and an unconfirmed hybrid Eurasian milfoil (invasive) was found on Horseshoe. Curly-leaf pondweed was not detected in the late summer and fall, because these plants complete their life cycle by the beginning of July.

Next, the SRCL will continue moving forward with the development of a lake management plan by working on a lake user opinion survey and a nutrient budget. Watch for more information!