

Flowering Rush Management Update

By Amy Kay, Black Lagoon Pond and Lake Management

Flowering Rush (FR), an aquatic invasive plant that primarily lives along the edges of lakes, streams and wetlands, was identified north of the Sauk River Chain of Lakes in the Sauk River. Much like other invasive plants, FR can take over rapidly, outcompeting native vegetation and displacing habitat for fish and wildlife. The invasive species has an attractive pink flower that typically blooms in June making it easily identifiable at that time.

With support from Senator Jeff Howe, Representative Lisa Demuth, DNR, Stearns County, the Sauk River Watershed District, Limnopro Aquatic Science and the Sauk River Chain of Lakes Association (SRCLA), the Stearns Coalition of Lake Associations (SCOLA) secured a DNR grant to manage FR that included survey work to identify plant bed locations and densities, aquatic herbicide applications to the identified sites, and follow up survey work to evaluate efficacy. Initially, the plan was to target the FR via herbicide applications from a boat; however, with the low water level of the river, the contractor was met with multiple access issues. Aquatic herbicide applications via drone were considered for use and a plan

was developed once the contractor confirmed they would be able to access the sites. Habitat (imazapyr) herbicide was chosen to target the FR, because it could be applied aerially, and some success has been seen in other regions of the country where imazapyr had been used for this target species.

Applications were made by a licensed drone pilot who also holds an aquatic pesticide applicator's license on July 27th, July 28th and July 31st to approximately 40 acres of FR on the Sauk River. Post-management survey work to evaluate the efficacy of applications will take place in 2023 prior to the end of the growing season.



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