

Starry Stonewort Update

By Kevin Farnum

Unfortunately, the Starry Stonewort is now growing well. Over the winter it fell to the bottom, but with the warmer weather and the water temperatures increasing it has started to grow taller. When Dr. Rodgers, from Clemson University, was here it was still found on the bottom. Sampling a month ago in the pilot areas it was often difficult to find Starry Stonewort, however when sampling this week it was quite easy. Sampling in front of the Stone Gate area over this same timeframe it was easy to find the Starry Stonewort. I am anticipating that we will start our pilots in the next three weeks. Our first step will be to bring the third party auditor out to help us select the pilot area and verify that the Starry Stonewort has grown out enough that it can be grabbed by the equipment.

MN DNR did a second chemical treatment in the Hwy 55 access area. Results are still pending but thus far don't look favorable. Speculation is that the algae were not actively growing during the time of the treatment so chemical uptake by the algae was minimal.

The MN DNR sent samples of water and Starry Stonewort to Dr. Rodgers to study for the correct chemicals to use. We needed to follow-up with additional samples. We have recently received the first set of results. The results indicate that he has tested a chemical that shows promise in the lab situation.

The buoys for the channels through the Southeast bay are now in place. Thanks to all of you that use this channel. The pulling project in this area will be completed at the same time as the other pilot areas.

The seining nets that will be used for the pilots have been manufactured and are now being stored at the Paynesville Township (Thanks Don and Mike and M&M Lumber for receiving the shipment for KLA. This truly has become a community project.)

The Stearns Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA) (KLA was one of the founding organizations) has been a great supporter of KLA and our efforts to develop methods to contain, and manage Starry Stonewort. Stearns COLA has started a program to help find funds for KLA for the match of the funds that we have been awarded through the Initiative Foundation from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. As a result of this effort we are starting to get an amazing amount of financial commitments for phase 2 of this project. To date we have commitments for the following:

Stearns COLA	\$1000
Sauk River Chain of Lakes	\$2000
Rice Lake	\$1000
Grand Lake	\$1000
Big Birch Lake	\$1000
MN COLA	\$ 250
Kandiyohi County	\$5000

Thanks to all of these organizations that are our partners in trying to protect the lakes in Minnesota.

Senator Michelle Fishbach spearheaded an effort to get \$200,000 for Lake Koronis AIS efforts in the Senate and House Representative Jeff Howe did in the House. Governor Dayton signed into effect this grant. KLA feels that this actually puts the match needed to free up the necessary funds for phase 2 of the project, provided phase 1 works. If you recall phase 1 was a pilot project to mechanically pull (remove) Starry Stonewort from a small pilot area (4-6 acres) inside a seining net, followed by divers gleaning the area, pulling the seine, allowing some growth of whatever might have been missed and a chemical treatment. If this is demonstrated to be successful; phase 2 will be a very large area of the lake. The whole project was estimated to be over \$800,000, of which \$400,000 (50%) was needed for a match. With these rough numbers we would have less than \$200,000 to raise for release of the full grant (over \$400,000) from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Thanks Senator Fishbach and Representative Howe.

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