

# **Ontario Wildlife Foundation Interim Report Invading Species Awareness Program**

**Outreach, Surveillance and Control of Invasive Water Soldier**

**2016 INTERIM REPORT**

## **Update on the Project**

On June 1, 2016, monitoring and surveillance activities commenced on Lake Seymour, Crowe Bay and Percy Reach. Monitoring on Lake Seymour saw a reduction of water soldier populations in direct result from the 2015 fall herbicide treatment (169 ha). Due to the lack of treatment on Crowe Bay in 2015, there was a slight increase in the water soldier populations (increase of 2.66 ha). As for Percy Reach, the water soldier monitoring protocol was implemented and there was less water soldier in 2016 compared to that of 2015.

Following the monitoring at Percy Reach, we found one population that was a perfect candidate for the implementation of the shade cloth enclosures (jute mats). The shade cloth enclosures were installed on June 30, 2016 in Percy Reach (44° 13' 29" N / 77° 46' 39" W) and were left in the water, covering the water soldier plants until August 30, 2016. This treatment resulted in all of the water soldier plants under the enclosure dying. There were two additional shade cloth enclosures installed in Crowe Bay, they generated equal results as of that in Percy Reach.

On September 06, 2016, the Invading Species Hotline received a report from a kayaker that found water soldier in Percy Reach that was not detected while conducting the monitoring. The Water Soldier Management Technician went to investigate the report and found several populations of water soldier. Parks Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), and the Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) took quick action to hand pull and rake out these populations. In total, there is 4.76 ha of water soldier now in Percy Reach. In total, 125.5 ha of water soldier was treated on October 18 and 19, 2016. Total area treated between each water body is as follows:

Lake Seymour – 113.02 ha

Crowe Bay – 6.41 ha

Percy Reach – 5.96 ha

## **Project Challenges**

The original plan outlined states that Percy Reach will be systematically sampled from Percy Reach to Glen Ross. Due to the lack of available resources and time, the ISAP relied on Parks Canada to systematically monitor Percy Reach. The ISAP was however able to perform reconnaissance of 40 kilometres of prime habitat from Hickory Island to Glen Ross.

Six new isolated populations were detected just outside the known extent of the infestation on Percy Reach. Parks Canada, MNRF and the ISAP visited these sites and removed biomass of water soldier and Parks Canada secured funds to perform an herbicide treatment in the fall of 2016.

## **Landowners Engaged**

Water Soldier Watch Day was held on July 16, 2016. 27 volunteers sampled the shoreline of Crowe Bay for 4 hours covering over 10 kilometers, equalling 108 hours of surveillance time. This event was promoted in Northumberland county and Hastings County.

The water soldier open house was held on September 7, 2016 with 51 members of the community in attendance to learn about the monitoring and control efforts for the 2016 season.

The MNR, Peterborough District invited public comment on the proposed control of the invasive aquatic plant water soldier in the Trent River. A class B environmental assessment was implemented in August to inform the public of future control measures for the water soldier in the Trent River. 916 residents adjacent to the proposed treatment areas received a direct mail ad and allowed a 30 day comment period so the public could express their opinion on the matter.

Total number of landowners engaged: 994

**Media Releases**

**Print Publications**

- A quarter page newspaper ad for Water Soldier Open House was ran in the Quinte West News (Circulation 15,992)
- Water Soldier Watch Day advertised in Out of Outdoors Magazine (Circulation 100,000)
- The MNR, Peterborough District invited public comment on the proposed control of the invasive aquatic plant water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) with the distribution of a public notice. 916 residents adjacent to the proposed treatment areas received a direct mail ad and allowed a 30 day comment period so the public could express their opinion on the matter.

**Website**

- Posted the Water Soldier Open House on the Town of Trent Hills events Calendar
- The Invading Species Awareness Program and Lower Trent Conservation posted the Public Notice on their websites.

**Presentations**

- 31 Hit squad students hired for the summer of 2016 delivered over 100 presentations about invasive species, including water soldier.

**Community Information Session**

- On September 7, 2016, the Water Soldier Open House was held in Campbellford, Ontario to inform local residents of the monitoring and surveillance season and future control efforts.

**Twitter Posts - Water Soldier Watch Day Poster**

	<b>Impressions</b> (How many people saw)	<b>Engagement</b> (How many likes/ retweets)
06/29/16	<b>884</b>	12 ( 1 retweet, 1 like)
07/04/16	<b>1584</b>	35 ( 6 retweets, 6 likes)
07/06/16	<b>5365</b>	78 (22 retweets, 10 likes)

07/11/16	<b>1468</b>	13 (4 retweets)
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**Facebook Posts - Water Soldier Watch Day Poster**

	<b>Reach (How many people saw)</b>	<b>Engagement How many likes/ shares)</b>
06/20/16	<b>801</b>	<b>3</b>
06/29/16	<b>3,259</b>	<b>9</b>
07/04/16	<b>1,372</b>	<b>1</b>
07/06/16	<b>1,044</b>	<b>3</b>
07/11/16	<b>1,008</b>	<b>2</b>