



NEWS RELEASE

Interim Report Released on Treatment of Asian Clams found in Lake George

Steering Committee

Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program

Darrin Fresh Water Institute

FUND for Lake George

Lake Champlain Basin Program

Lake George Association

Lake George Watershed Coalition

NYS Adirondack Park Agency

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

NYS Lake George Park Commission

Advisory Committee

Bateaux Below

The Nature Conservancy's Dome Island Committee

Innerspace Scientific Diving

Lake George Waterkeeper

Scientific Diving International

University of California Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center

University of Nevada Reno

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

100 mats out of initial 825 installed were removed to open up beach areas for resorts and the public. Preliminary results show over 97% mortality of clams under mats removed.

For more information see media contacts below.

July 27, 2011

Lake George, NY – An interim report (see attached) released by the Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force provides initial information on the containment and eradication effort underway in Lake George Village for the invasive species Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*). Last April, a 5-acre treatment effort for the Asian clam was launched. Over 825 benthic barrier PVC mats were installed on the lake bottom by mid-May. Approximately 100 mats were removed from beach areas in front of resorts starting in late June. Over 97% of the clams in areas where these mats were removed were found to be dead.

“We received the interim report as very good news indeed that the project is achieving a high rate of success,” said Bruce Young, Chair of the Lake George Park Commission. “There is still much to learn from the scientific evaluation of the project that will shape our future strategies to stop this unwanted invader of Lake George.”

Of the over 825 mats initially installed, over 175 were outfitted with ports to measure the concentrations of dissolved oxygen (DO). DO levels at 3.0 or less milligrams per liter (mg/L) should kill clams if sustained for a long period of time, 30 - 45 days. Results from samples taken from these mats over a 5-week period found an average

(over)

of over 75% of the mats with ports had lowered DO concentrations that could achieve high mortality. Unfortunately, 10% of the mats with ports have not yet achieved a level of 3.0 or less during any of the sampling points. Organizers of the project believe that some mats are failing because they were placed in areas with lots of rocks, cut under and around docks and posts, or were located in shallow areas. “To date there has been success in reducing DO concentrations under the majority of the mats that have ports for sample collection. Additionally, in beach areas where mats needed to be removed prior to 45 days of treatment there was over 97% clam mortality,” said Dr. Sandra Nierzwicki-Bauer, Director of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Darrin Fresh Water Institute.

In an effort to bolster the effectiveness of mats for attaining levels of 3 mg/L or less, over 2,000 sandbags were placed on barriers throughout the treatment site during the week of July 15th. The added weight and stability may help improve DO levels across the site. No testing has occurred at this time for live/dead clams under the over 725 mats that remain in the lake.

“The completion of the Lake George Village Asian clam treatment is very important. The results of the treatment will provide critical information in addressing the infestation in Boon Bay or any additional populations of Asian clam found in Lake George. The preliminary results of the benthic barrier treatment are very encouraging. Partners have redoubled efforts to install the sandbags on the mats to maintain seals. LGACRRTF and volunteers have worked tirelessly to control this population. We are doing our best to prevent this species spread” said Meg Modley, Lake Champlain Basin Program.

The organizers of the project have received approval to extend the treatment time to ensure that the remaining mats are successful. Organizers are assessing secondary treatment options for the fall to re-install mats in areas where they were removed, to mat areas that could not be treated in the spring, and to undertake some form of suction harvesting effort in areas where mats are not effective.

“We’ve extended the treatment time to maximize effectiveness of the project. While we’ve worked to open up beach areas we know there are still a small percentage of live clams in many of these areas. This means that the mats in the balance of the project need to remain for a longer period to achieve maximum control of the clams and prevent reinfestation. We’re working now to organize the full scope of the fall treatment” said Peter Bauer, Executive Director of the FUND for Lake George.

“We are pleased to see that the project is proving to be effective even though we are forced to leave the mats in longer. It’s very important to the long-term health of Lake George that we are successful with the Lake George Village infestation this season,” said Walt Lender, Executive Director of the Lake George Association.

Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force

The Lake George Asian Clam Rapid Response Task Force is managing the eradication effort. This Task Force includes a wide variety of organizations, scientists and agencies. The Task Force includes the RPI Darrin Fresh Water Institute, Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program, FUND for Lake George, Lake Champlain Basin Program, Lake George Association, the NYS Lake George Park Commission, The Nature Conservancy’s Dome Island Committee, Lake George Watershed Coalition/NYS Department of State, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Adirondack Park Agency, Bateaux Below, Inc., InnerSpace Scientific Diving, Scientific Diving International, and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation as well as researchers from Lake Tahoe.

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