

**Breaking News From
Maine Department of Environmental Protection**

**Invasive Milfoil Confirmed in Cobbosseecontee Lake
Rapid response aims to keep plants in check**

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- Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has confirmed growth of Eurasian water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) in the north end of Cobbosseecontee (aka Cobbossee) Lake in Winthrop. The plant was discovered in July by Friends of Cobbossee Watershed (FOCW) plant surveyors. DEP, FOCW and Cobbossee Watershed District have searched for and removed plants since last month's discovery.

This find on a highly-valued central Maine lake highlights the risk of introduction of invasive aquatic species including plants, fish, and other organisms such as zebra mussels. DEP urges boaters to clean, drain, and dry boats, anchor lines and fishing gear before and after launching in Maine waters.

"The sharp eyes of Friends of Cobbossee Watershed surveyors found this invasive species at what we believe to be an early growth stage," said DEP Commissioner Paul Mercer. "Initial surveying and removal efforts by Friends of Cobbossee Watershed, Cobbossee Watershed District and DEP indicate the plant is confined to the north end of the lake. We are optimistic that continued rapid response by local organizations and DEP will reduce risk of this plant from spreading to other parts of the lake, and to other lakes. It's too early to tell if eradication is achievable but that is the goal of this collaborative rapid response effort.

The lake community is fortunate to have strong local organizations working to protect area waters."

The message to boaters is simple: clean, drain and dry your watercraft, trailers and equipment before launching and after removing from every waterbody. Cleaning-up a problem is much more expensive than preventing a problem.

Eurasian water milfoil, an aggressive aquatic plant throughout the U.S., is known to be in only one water body in the state, a 28-acre pond in Scarborough.

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