

Lake Namakagon Chain Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Lake Namakagon, Jackson Lake, and Garden Lake

SUMMARY July 2023

Advisory Committee Members

Bayfield County: Andrew Teal

Business Partners: Amanda Staudemeyer , Four Seasons Resort and P.C. Rasmussen, Lakewoods Resort

Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission: Travis Bartnick and Brandon Byrne

Namakagon Lake Association: Kris Cooper, Terry Cramer (NLA Board), Randy Lueth, Barb Ketcham, Don Ketcham, Ted Peichel, Larry Pribyl (NLA Board), John Schneider (NLA Board), and Bill Thomas

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United States Forest Service: Paige Klassa

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: Austin Dehn and Pamela Toshner

This Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Lake Namakagon, Garden Lake, and Jackson Lake in Bayfield County, Wisconsin presents a strategy for managing aquatic plants by protecting native plant populations, controlling the growth of hybrid Eurasian northern water-milfoil (HWM), and preventing establishment of additional invasive species. The plan includes data about the plant community, watershed, and water quality of the lakes. Based on this information and public input, goals and strategies for the management of aquatic plants in the lakes are presented. This plan will guide the Namakagon Lake Association (NLA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in aquatic plant management for the lakes over the next five years (from 2024 through 2028). The plan and background documents are available at <https://namakagonlakeassociation.org/>



Lake Management Goals, Objectives, and Actions

The Namakagon Lake Association board and committees will track implementation of plan actions and evaluate progress toward reaching plan goals and objectives. The Namakagon Lake Association will seek financial and technical support from partner organizations.

Goal 1. **PROTECT** the natural functions that diverse native plants provide both in the water and on the shore.

Native plants provide essential functions in lakes including providing habitat for fish and wildlife, stabilizing bottom sediments, and preventing shoreline erosion. On the land, shoreland native plants also provide critical habitat, prevent shoreline erosion, and filter runoff entering the lake.

Whole lake plant surveys to evaluate the native plant community are planned every 3 -5 years to evaluate potential changes. Native plants are also carefully monitored in areas where chemical treatment occurs to control aquatic invasive species (AIS).

Program Guidance to protect native plants

- Use AIS control measures that limit impacts to native plants.
- Limit herbicide treatments for AIS where recreational impacts or ecological harm are not identified.
- Follow criteria for tolerance levels to hybrid watermilfoil growth.

Native plants on the shore

- The NLA will encourage owners to encourage and plant native plants along with shoreline with technical and financial assistance.



Photo by Ed Ronkowski

Goal 2. **PREVENT** the introduction of aquatic invasive plants and animals.

Definition: Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are non-native plant and animal species that can out-compete and overtake native species damaging native lake habitat and sometimes creating nuisance conditions. Hybrid watermilfoil is currently present in Lake Namakagon and Jackson Lake. Shoreland invasive species present in Lake Namakagon include purple loosestrife, forget-me-not, narrow-leaf cattail, and yellow iris. Additional AIS threaten the lakes and will be monitored throughout the lake by volunteers and consultants.



Zebra Mussels

Actions to prevent AIS introduction

- Staff at the landing will continue to deliver AIS prevention messages and gather data through the Clean Boats, Clean Waters Program.
- Cameras to monitor compliance with AIS prevention requirements will remain in place at County D, Funnys Bay, Lakewoods Resort, and Garden Lake.
- New decontamination stations using tools and a mild bleach solution will be installed at landings and other locations.



Goal 3. EDUCATE lake residents and visitors about the importance of native aquatic and shoreland plants, the threats from invasive species, and the plan management strategies.

The ways we use and enjoy the Lake Namakagon Chain impact the lake ecosystems. With careful stewardship, we can limit our impacts and even enhance the lakes. Outreach focuses on the impacts of invasive species and appropriate control measures, importance of preserving native aquatic and shoreline plants, aquatic invasive species prevention measures, and encouraging volunteerism.

Education Methods

- Newsletter and Email
- NLA website
- Facebook
- Annual meeting presentations
- NLA board meetings

Volunteers are needed to help with a variety of tasks from monitoring the lake for invasive species, hand-pulling to remove invasive species, monitoring landing camera video, and encouraging native plant and fish sticks installation.

For more information:

<https://namakagonlakeassociation.org/contact-us/>

Goal 4. ID, CONTROL and CONTAIN aquatic and shoreland invasive species.

Dense growth of the hybrid Eurasian X Northern water milfoil found on the Namakagon Chain can cause negative impacts to recreation and to native plants and ecosystems.

Protocols and responsibilities for monitoring and controlling hybrid Eurasian water milfoil (HWM), yellow iris, and other AIS are established in the plan. In 2023, the US Forest Service, Bayfield County and the Department of Natural Resources are assisting with monitoring efforts. Regular monitoring is important for early detection and rapid response should new AIS be discovered. Past trials with various herbicides for HWM helped to develop the current control strategy.

Actions to Control Aquatic Invasive Species

- The plan establishes thresholds for herbicide treatment of hybrid Eurasian water milfoil which vary depending upon likelihood of spread and predicted impacts to native plant populations. With these standards, herbicide use is avoided in important habitat areas. Herbicide treatment procedures are established to maximize effectiveness.
- Hand-pulling will be used in areas of new infestation and very scattered growth.
- Owners will be encouraged to remove AIS such as purple loosestrife and yellow iris, and the NLA will continue to monitor their populations.
- Regular professional and volunteer monitoring along with protocols and contacts for response are established should a new invasive species be introduced.



*Hybrid Eurasian X Northern
Watermilfoil*

Goal 5. COORDINATE AND COMMUNICATE with our partners.

Continued communication with our partners helps us to keep up with evolving technology and best practices, enhance response time for permit review and grant cycles, and avoid duplication of efforts. We will periodically contact and meet with project partners to maintain and build upon the connections we've built to meet common goals.

