

DNR coordinating new starry stonewort treatment method in West Lake Sylvia

Public access closed during treatment

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is partnering with the Greater Lake Sylvia Association on an aggressive new treatment method for the invasive algae starry stonewort in West Lake Sylvia in Wright County. This week's treatment is the first time the diver-assisted suction harvest, or DASH, method has been used in Minnesota.

Earlier this month, DNR invasive species staff confirmed a half-acre of sparse to moderate growth of starry stonewort at the public access to West Lake Sylvia. The public access, which also provides access to adjoining East Lake Sylvia, will be closed for about a month during the treatment. An alternative public access site has been made available at Camp Chi-Rho, located on a peninsula directly east of the temporarily closed public access. The DNR is working with the Greater Lake Sylvia Association to provide signs and directions to the temporary access.

The lake association is sharing in the cost of the effort to remove the half-acre of starry stonewort from the lake.

Diver assisted suction harvest is a manual control method that combines hand pulling with machine suction to physically remove starry stonewort while sparing native vegetation, followed by application of a selective herbicide.

"We're hoping for effective treatment of the relatively small area where starry stonewort is present," said Heidi Wolf, DNR invasive species unit supervisor. "While no treatment method has eradicated starry stonewort from any lake in the United States, this aggressive treatment will at least remove enough of the algae to minimize the risk of spread to other parts of the lake and to other lakes."

Starry stonewort are grass-like algae that may produce dense mats, which could interfere with use of the lake. The invasive algae also may choke out native plants.

The algae is typically spread by lake users who transport fragments of the plant from an infested body of water. Lake users must follow Minnesota

laws to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, whether or not a lake has invasive species:

- **Clean** aquatic plants and animals from watercraft.
- **Drain** all water by removing drain plugs and keep drain plugs out while transporting watercraft.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash.

Some invasive species are small and difficult to see at the access. To prevent their spread, take one or more of the following precautions before moving to another body of water, especially after leaving infested waters:

- Spray with high-pressure water.
- Rinse with very hot water (120 degrees F for at least two minutes or 140 degrees F for at least 10 seconds).
- Dry for at least five days.

More information about aquatic invasive species and how to report them is available at www.mndnr.gov/ais.