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The State of New Hampshire  
Department of Environmental Services 87



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

August 8, 2019

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and The Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

President of the Senate, Donna Soucy  
State House Room 302  
Concord, NH 03301

Speaker of the House, Stephen Shurtleff  
State House Room 311  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu and The Honorable Council, President Soucy, and Speaker Shurtleff:

In accordance with the provisions of RSA 487:29, this document provides the report for State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2018 and 2019, on the Milfoil and Other Exotic Plants Prevention and Research Grant Program (the Program), including a description of prevention and research projects funded by the program and the extent of aid to municipalities or subdivisions of the state, non-profit corporations, and research institutions. New Hampshire has 89 infested waterbodies (11 river systems and 78 lakes and ponds). There have been no new infestations over the last two years. Grant funds are administered to maximize effectiveness at reducing the spread of infestations, and managing those infestations already in state waterbodies.

Background:

Funds associated with the milfoil prevention and research grants began accumulating following the enactment of RSA 487:26 on January 1, 2003. Per the legislation, *"The grant program shall be funded by the portion of the lake restoration and preservation fund, established in RSA 487:25, and allocated to the milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants prevention program. Approximately 3/4 of the moneys distributed from the fund to the milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants prevention program shall be allocated for the purposes of milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants prevention and the remainder shall be allocated to milfoil and other exotic aquatic plants remediation research, as appropriate, based on grant requests."* Fee funds are derived from a \$9.50 fee from motorized boat registrations annually, yielding about \$893,000 of program funds each year. In 2019, \$280,000 was spent on prevention, \$388,359 on control, \$8,000 on research, and the remainder on staffing and administration costs. The fund is non-lapsing and continually appropriated, with all funds granted out each year.

A Request for Proposals is issued in September of each year for projects that meet the criteria outlined in Chapter Env-Wq 1300 of state administrative rules. All prevention grant proposals are reviewed by a committee comprised of a designee of the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services, a designee of the Commissioner of the Department of Safety, and a member of the New Hampshire Lakes Management Advisory Committee. The research grants are reviewed by a team of biologists from within the Biology Section of the Watershed Management Bureau. All proposals are reviewed for eligibility and ranked based on standard review criteria for this program. Applicants typically have long-established relationships with NHDES, and work with the

agency to provide applications for projects that are well-planned and comprehensive in terms of their goals for prevention, research or control.

Each year these grant resources have shown their value in helping to prevent new infestations of exotic aquatic plants, and in funding research projects that build the knowledge base of state biologists and others in better managing exotic aquatic plants.

Summary of SFY 2018 and 2019 Prevention and Research Grant Awards:

Tables 1 and 2 below provide summaries of the prevention and research grant awards made in SFY 2018 and 2019.

**Table 1**  
**SFY 2018 and SFY 2019 Exotic Aquatic Plant Prevention Grants**

Year	Grantee	Project Summary	Grant Amount
2018	NH LAKES	<p>The purpose of the NH LAKES project is to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into lakes and ponds in New Hampshire by continuing to expand and administer the Lake Host Program on public access sites throughout the state. This program has a proven track record of success, and since its inception in 2002, greater than 1600 saves have been catalogued (a save is when a Lake Host removes an identified piece of an invasive aquatic plant from a boat or trailer entering or leaving a waterbody). Organizations participating in the Lake Host Program staff public access sites to conduct inspections of boats, trailers and other recreational gear as they enter and leave public waterbodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year's program included an expansion of database capacity to track movement of boats from waterbody to waterbody. The data will be used in a risk assessment for invasive species infestations.</li> </ul>	\$254,000
2019	NH LAKES	<p>The purpose of the NH LAKES project is to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into lakes and ponds in New Hampshire by continuing to expand and administer the Lake Host Program on public access sites throughout the state. This program has a proven track record of success, and since its inception in 2002, greater than 1600 saves have been catalogued (a save is when a Lake Host removes an identified piece of an invasive aquatic plant from a boat or trailer entering or leaving a waterbody). Organizations participating in the Lake Host Program staff public access sites to conduct inspections of boats, trailers and other recreational gear as they enter and leave public waterbodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year's program will include the purchase of a portable Clean, Drain and Dry unit to aid in removing tag-along invasive species.</li> </ul>	\$280,000

**Table 2**  
**Exotic Aquatic Plant Research Grant**

Year	Grantee	Project Summary	Grant Amount
2018	n/a	No requests for research funds this year	\$0
2019	University of New Hampshire	This project is part of a regional collaborative to establish an Environmental DNA (eDNA) tool to detect the presence of invasive aquatic mussels and clams in freshwater systems. UNH is developing a method that can then be used by NHDES and other states to test for the presence or absence of particular species of concern.	\$8,000

**Control Grants:**

In addition to the grants outlined above, funds are also awarded for control of invasive aquatic plants. These control grants are awarded to local entities (municipalities, lake associations and other such groups) for projects to control exotic aquatic plant growth in waterbodies in the state. Cost sharing on grants for exotic plant control activities is outlined under RSA 487:21. Grant match is determined annually based on an evaluation of projects, requests for funds and funds available. The requests for control grants are expected to continue to exceed the current budgeted amount for control activities, which put more of the burden of cost on a local entity, like a municipality or nonprofit organization.

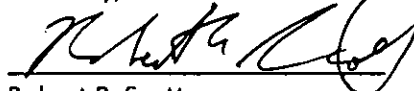
Table 3 shows an estimate of cumulative project costs and grants made each year from 2018-2019. In general, the focus of the control program has been on making incremental reductions in invasive species, as opposed to focusing all resources on a single or handful of projects each year, and it is the model that has worked to reduce the overall degree of infestation over time. State grant funds are not sufficient to pay for 100% of the management of all infestations in the state. Funding is cost-shared with local entities to expand management capabilities to more bodies of water.

**Table 3**  
**Invasive Aquatic Plant Control Grants**

Year	Requests for Grants	Cumulative Cost of Projects	Available to Grant	Grants Awarded
2018	41	\$1,492,251	\$391,877	41
2019	44	\$1,525,748	\$388,359	44

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email at 603-271-2958 or Robert.Scott@des.nh.gov, or Amy Smagula, Limnologist/Exotic Species Program Coordinator, at 603-271-2248 or Amy.Smagula@des.nh.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert R. Scott  
 Commissioner

cc: NHDES Exotic Species Program  
 NHDES, Director, Water Division