

# Pickerel and Kimball Lakes Aquatic Plant Control Program

A Publication of the Pickerel and Kimball Lakes Improvement Board

May 2018

**Pickerel and Kimball Lakes Improvement Board**  
306 S. North Street  
PO Box 885  
White Cloud, MI 49349-0885

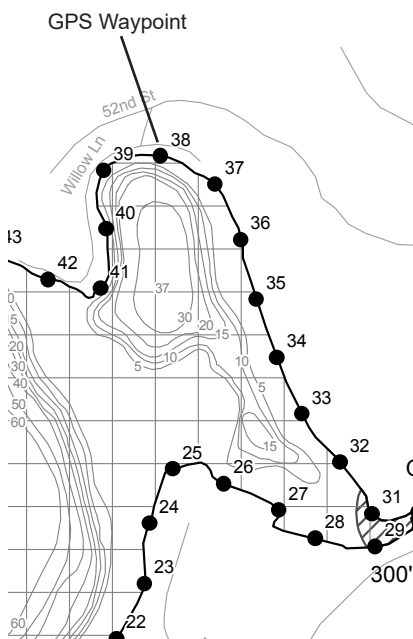
Bill Alsover, Chair  
*Lake Property Owner Representative*

Valerie Hobbie, Vice Chair  
*Garfield Township Representative*

Temporarily Vacant  
*Brooks Township Representative*

Vern Willett  
*Newaygo County Commissioner*

Dale Twing,  
*Newaygo County Drain Commissioner*



*Environmental Consultant*  
Progressive AE

progressive|ae

This past winter, the Pickerel and Kimball Lakes Improvement Board retained Progressive AE to assist with the coordination of the nuisance aquatic plant control program on Pickerel and Kimball Lakes. Progressive AE's team of biologists has years of experience working with lake communities across the state to coordinate the implementation of plant control programs. Below are some questions and answers designed to explain how the plant control program will work moving forward.

## ***Who will oversee the plant control program?***

Plant control activities will be coordinated under the direction of Progressive AE. Biologists from Progressive AE will be conducting GPS-guided surveys of the lakes to identify problem areas, and will provide detailed treatment maps to the plant control contractor. Follow-up surveys will then be conducted throughout the growing season to evaluate treatment effectiveness and the need for additional treatments.

## ***Who will conduct the herbicide treatments?***

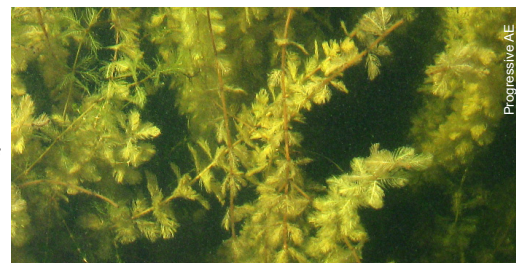
The lake board competitively bid the plant control work and the treatment contract was awarded to Savin Lake Services, Inc.

## ***Who determines when and where treatments will occur?***

The timing and scope of treatments is based on where nuisance plants are found when biologists from Progressive AE conduct their surveys.

## ***What plants are targeted for control?***

The plant control program on Pickerel and Kimball Lakes will primarily focus on non-native (i.e., exotic) plants, such as Eurasian milfoil. Exotic plants tend to be highly invasive and have the potential to spread quickly if left unchecked.



Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

## ***Is there a permanent fix to the problem?***

If conditions are favorable, aquatic plants will grow. However, there are steps property owners can take to help minimize plant growth in the lakes such as limiting the use of lawn fertilizers and maintaining natural vegetation along the shoreline to prevent nutrients from washing into the lakes.

## ***How about a pre-emptive strike?***

To be effective, aquatic herbicides must be applied directly to the plant beds when the plants are actively growing. There are no pre-emergence aquatic herbicides like there are for agriculture.

**Aquatic plants are part of a healthy lake. They produce oxygen, provide food and habitat for fish, and help to stabilize shoreline and bottom sediments.**

Insects and other invertebrates live on or near aquatic plants, and become food for fish, birds, amphibians, and other wildlife.

Plants and algae are the base of the food chain. Lakes with a healthy fishery have a moderate density of aquatic plants.

Aquatic plants help to hold sediments in place and improve water clarity.

Aquatic plants provide habitat for fish and other aquatic life.

Predator-fish such as pike hide among plants, rocks, and tree roots to sneak up on their prey. Prey-fish such as minnows and small sunfish use aquatic plants to hide from predators.

### **Why are there still plants in the lake following treatments?**

In managing aquatic plants, it is important to recognize that most plants are beneficial. Aquatic plants produce oxygen during photosynthesis, help stabilize shoreline and bottom sediments, and provide cover and habitat for a variety of fish. The primary objective of the plant control program on Pickerel and Kimball Lakes is to control nuisance, exotic species while maintaining beneficial native plants. We do not want to remove all the plants in the lakes. This would negatively impact the fishery and cause many other problems such as algae blooms.

### **How do the treatments impact fish?**

If applied properly, herbicides have no direct impacts on fish. In general, lakes with a variety of plants often support more productive fisheries. The plant control program in Pickerel and Kimball Lakes is designed to control invasive plants while preserving plants that provide valuable habitat and cover for fish.

### **Why didn't my property get a treatment notice sign?**

If there is no sign posted along your property, it means your area was not treated and there are no use restrictions. State regulations require that areas within 100 feet of treatment areas be posted with a sign that lists herbicides applied and the associated use restrictions. Which properties get treatment depends on where the plants are found during the surveys of the lakes. Not every property gets treated every time; it depends on where the plants are found in a given survey.

### **When is it safe to swim after a treatment?**

All herbicides have a 24-hour swimming restriction that will be posted on signs along areas of the shore that have been treated. However, if you do not have a sign posted or the sign indicates that only algaecides were applied, there are no swimming restrictions.

### **When can I water my lawn following a treatment?**

If you draw water from the lake for irrigation, be sure to read the sign posted along your shoreline at the time of treatment. Most irrigation restrictions do not apply to established lawns. However, if you water flowers or a garden, you should adhere to the irrigation restrictions posted on the sign.

### **What can I do to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in Pickerel and Kimball Lakes?**

If you trailer your boat to other lakes, be sure to thoroughly wash your boat, motor, and trailer before launching back into Pickerel and Kimball Lakes. With exotic species, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!