

## **Final Report for Collins Pond**

### **Applicant Contact Information:**

Applicant Name: **Collins Pond Improvement Association (CPIA)**

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### **Project Detail:**

Since 2007 the Collins Pond Improvement Association has been working to reduce the infestation of invasive milfoil in Collins Pond. The goal is to eradicate this plant from the lake. We continue trying to get it under control to the point where our efforts can be reduced to the annual removal of a small amount of remaining plants. The use of small benthic mats continues in scattered areas where lake front owners have chosen to reduce the amount of plants in swimming areas. The most productive method to mitigate this invasive plant continues to be the Diver Assisted Suction Harvester (DASH) boats. A diver weeds the plants from the bottom of the lake, trying to get the entire root ball removed, and feeds this into a large suction hose. The hose pulls the plants up onto the boat where they are deposited into onion bags. We employ only volunteer crews and divers on the Collins Pond Improvement Association (CPIA) DASH boat. Starting in 2014 we additionally hired a local company which has greatly increased the volume of plants we are able to remove. The private contractor continues to be New England Milfoil from Brownfield Maine. Their DASH boat uses a slightly different collection technique to loosely collect the plants which are then transferred to a dump trailer. Both the loose plants in the dump trailer and the bagged plants from our boat are delivered to the Pearson's Town Farm at St. Joseph's College in Standish for composting. The Maine DEP Plant Control grant program provides most of the funding to support our efforts. During 2017 the IRS granted Collins Pond Improvement Association 501(c)3 non-profit charitable status. This has enabled our group to attract more than \$3200 in donations from our members and one company.

Please attach a project budget spreadsheet including all income and expenses including material, equipment, labor, and indirect costs (e.g., insurance).

### **Expenses:**

	<b><u>Estimated</u></b>	<b><u>Actual</u></b>
Marine Liability/Officers & Directors insurance	\$2350	\$ 2360.00
DASH Boat costs:		
Onion bags, Boat/Motor maintenance/winterization,		
Gas/Oil/boat supplies (gloves/rakes, etc),	\$2500	\$ 2323.20
New England Milfoil-private contractor (8 days)	\$10600	\$ 9600.00

### **Sources of Income:**

<b><u>Estimated</u></b>	<b><u>Actual</u></b>
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Maine D.E.P.-Plant Control Grant	\$ 12000	\$ 10517.00
Windham Watershed Protection grant	\$ 1500	\$ 1500.00
Collins Pond Improvement Association	\$ 0	\$ 2266.20
Total Project Cost	\$13500	\$14321.57

### **Value of Volunteer Match**

The State of Maine grant program established a dollar value to be used for volunteer hours donated to accomplish our project. Nineteen volunteers worked as boat captains, boat staff, surface support and divers. **The total value of their volunteer labor was calculated at \$3792.40.** The DEP grant program requires a CASH match equaling 20% of the DEP grant. The value of our volunteer labor was allowed to be used in calculating our cash match up until two years ago, but it no longer allowed. This has required us to spend more time raising funds in addition to performing the actual volunteer labor.

### **Accomplishments for the 2016 season:**

We have found that the most productive use of our time and money is in hiring an outside contractor, in this case New England Milfoil, to remove milfoil using their DASH boat. In the concentrated time they are on the lake they are able to cover a significant area leaving few isolated plants behind. The volume of plants they remove per dollar spent is better than our own volunteers are able to accomplish. We spent \$1.06 per gallon with New England Milfoil while our own costs were \$1.41 per gallon. Our volunteer costs per gallon can be lowered if we are able to attract more volunteers and work more hours, since our major costs are fixed.

The CPIA effort was slowed by limited volunteer crews and equipment problems. Our pump/compressor was in use for its 9<sup>th</sup> season this summer and we had problems with the compressor. Due to this we resorted to using Scuba tanks instead of surface supplied air. This shortened our work days a little but also increased our expenses requiring trips to Portland for tank refills. Our DASH boat worked 7 days this summer, similar to previous years.

We have decided to eliminate the use of the long benthic barriers. Despite their effectiveness they are difficult to handle and move with any precision. We have increased the use of small, 10' x 10' mats that owners can deploy from their shorelines. We held a training session this summer inviting Jim Chandler to instruct us how to build and properly deploy these mats. Some of our owners, after being trained, are using them in a limited way to help clear swimming areas near their shorelines.

Gaining the 501(c)3 designation this year has helped to attract local donations. We will continue this fundraising effort through our new web site, hoping this will allow us to book more hours next summer with the private contractor.

Surveys performed several times this summer show many areas of dense and very tall milfoil plants growing in widely separate areas of the lake. We also see large areas of natural grasses growing, some in areas we previously worked with the DASH boat. This is encouraging.

With enough monetary support it may be possible to get this infestation to a manageable amount. At the same time, I doubt that we will ever eradicate it using these methods. Hopefully research will find a more effective way to control this infestation, but so far this is the best method available.

**The total number of gallons of milfoil plants removed this year was 12344.**

As previously stated, if this infestation of invasive milfoil is allowed to continue to get out of control it will eventually affect the property values and tax revenue for this area. Additionally

the plants will likely continue to wash downstream to the Pleasant and Presumpscot rivers becoming an environmental and financial problem for the Town.

We continue to participate in the Maine Milfoil Summit held annually at the University of Maine Lewiston/Auburn campus where many organizations share ideas and accomplishments. Additionally we participate in discussions organized by Lakes Environmental Association in Bridgton around invasive plant control. Little Sebago Lake Association continues to assist us in obtaining our onion bags at a group buying price.



**AREA WORKED BY NEW ENGLAND MILFOIL IN JUNE- NOTED AS #5 ON THE MIDAS MAP**



**AREA WORKED BY NEW ENGLAND MILFOIL IN JULY – NOTED AS WEST SIDE OF #5 ON MIDAS MAP**

This map was provided to us by New England Milfoil using GPS coordinates to show the areas they worked. GPS is useful when going back the next year to inspect the areas worked. We also mark areas with small buoys to help find work areas.





# Collins Pond

MIDAS # 3728

Windham, Cumberland Co. - Delorme Page 5 - 43 acres

