

Starry Stonewort Found In Okauchee Lake! What You Need To Know

Starry Stonewort Found In Okauchee Lake

As most of you know, the newest invasive aquatic species, Starry Stonewort, was discovered in Okauchee Lake in late summer of 2019. Starry Stonewort is a very troublesome invasive plant. It grows to the surface in shallow areas in very dense concentrations making boat traffic and swimming extremely difficult. It chokes off other native species and may negatively affect fish habitat. It has now been discovered in more than 10 Wisconsin lakes and in several other states.

How Has The OLMD Board Been Dealing With Starry Stonewort?

The OLMD Board has been hard at work researching options, consulting with our marine biologist and other experts, contacting other lake districts and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to develop an effective treatment to control this aquatic invasive species. Currently, there is no path to eradication, and lakes in this state and around the country have been struggling to define the most effective treatment.

What's Happening In 2020?

The OLMD Board has worked with the WDNR to select a treatment option, and the DNR has made a grant available to lessen the cost of treatment. The OLMD has applied for and will be receiving the grant in the next 30 days. The grant is a 75%-25% grant, which means the WDNR will provide 75% of the funds, up to a maximum of \$20,000.

Treatment Locations

Treatment involves placing a curtain around an area of Starry Stonewort, and chemically treating in that containment area, followed by divers conducting hand treatment as the last step. Discovered stands of Starry Stonewort are currently located south of the bridge near Foolery's and in front of the Golden Mast, adjacent to the boat launch. The area in front of the Golden Mast is the larger of the two areas and will be targeted in the first round of treatment. The OLMD will continue to push for treatment to begin as soon as it might be effective, with a target date (hopefully) in early June. Treatment will take approximately eight days. During that time, the Starry Stonewort will be curtailed off



and boat traffic will be prevented in that area for the duration of the treatment period. **Please be aware of these treatment areas and steer clear!**

What Should You Do?

It is imperative that all riparian owners and recreational boaters practice WDNR Clean Boat, Clean Waters guidelines (please see Clean Watercraft & Trailers To Avoid Spreading Aquatic Invasive Species!-page 5) to stop the spread of this invasive species. In addition, the WDNR website has information on best practices (<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/disinfection.html>). Please continue to monitor the OLMD website for current information about information related to Starry Stonewort in Okauchee Lake.

The OLMD encourages you and others to take the steps necessary to prevent further spread of Starry Stonewort in Okauchee Lake and other waters.



Starry Stonewort bulbils are produced in the lake sediment and spread Starry Stonewort.

Photo Courtesy of Paul Skawinski