



PONDerings®

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of **AQUA DOC®**

WHAT ARE WE JUMPING INTO?

The common phrase “a picture says a thousand words” certainly can apply to this photo. These youngsters are about to be unpleasantly surprised when they hit the water... but it surely doesn't have to be that way. The vast majority of the lakes and ponds we see and enjoy are man-made. Man-made ponds and lakes... man-made problems. We need to understand our waters and care for them in a responsible, sustainable and consistent manner.

**SUSTAINABLE
STEWARDSHIP
GUIDE**
see inside

SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP of Our Lakes and Ponds

Carter Bailey, M.S. in Lake Management
SUNY at Oneonta

When embarking on the road of freshwater management, do you know what you're jumping into, literally and figuratively? Water resources are important to us all, whether it be for human consumption, economic importance (navigation, agriculture, or industrial purposes), recreation, and/or conservation of biodiversity- water is important and requires sustainable stewardship. The concept of sustainable stewardship applies to anyone looking to protect the conservation value of their natural resources now and into the future. The vast majority of water bodies in the United States are the responsibility of private citizens or citizen groups. AQUA DOC has been working for over 35 years to provide our customers with sustainable and stewardship based management programs for their freshwater resources. Below are some important concepts to consider when jumping into management actions on your waters.

KNOWLEDGE

All water bodies are different from size and shape to natural vs man-made, flow rate, nutrition, plants and animals present, the list can go on and on. Knowledge and understanding of a given water body is the crucial first step in aquatic management.

PLANNING

Any good plan requires informed decision making where goals are determined along with a long-term strategy to get you there. These must be attainable goals based on the actual characteristics of your waters.

TOOLS & STRATEGIES

Know the management options that are available and the science behind them. What is the long-term outlook on a management technique? Is it a sustainable option that will lead you to your ultimate goals? These are important questions when you develop a long-term strategy.

THE BATTLE FOR BALANCE

The challenge of even the most experienced professional is to maintain a balance. For every management action there is a reaction. Lakes and ponds are dynamic systems and change overtime. An experienced professional will account for this with an adaptive management strategy which will allow for changes and adjustment over the long-term.

Applying Aquatic Herbicides Yourself or Pay Someone?

William E. Lynch Jr., Program Specialist,
Aquatic Ecosystem Management (Retired)

Pond owners can apply aquatic herbicides themselves, and need not pay a certified pesticide applicator to do it. That's not the case in many other states, where the pond owner must pay a commercial applicator if he/she wishes to control nuisance aquatic plants.

Are there instances where it is wise to pay a licensed applicator to treat aquatic vegetation? Sure there is! Not all pond owners feel comfortable handling chemicals safely. Chemicals can be dangerous and accidents do happen. These folks should consider paying a commercial applicator. Commercial applicators are trained to handle chemicals safely and must be re-certified every three years. This same advice applies to the application of terrestrial herbicides around the house.

Misidentification of the problem plants can lead to additional costs because the wrong product was used or not enough of the correct product was used. A licensed aquatic herbicide applicator can almost always ID the plants correctly and determine what to use and how much.

Another instance a commercial applicator may be "worth their weight in gold" is if it is difficult to calculate the volume of a pond. Poor math here can cost bit dollars! Many pond owners treating their own pond grossly underestimate the pond's volume, and therefore under-apply the product chosen. No control is achieved. Commercial applicators are quite efficient at making those volume determinations.

In reality, the pond owner should ask themselves the following questions when considering whether or not to apply a herbicide themselves:

- Am I willing to take the time to read product labels, making sure to pay close attention to warnings, safety instructions, and restrictions?
- Am I able to correctly identify the plants causing the problem?
- Can I accurately calculate the amount of product required to do the job?
- Do I have the proper application and safety equipment to apply the herbicide?
- Do I really feel comfortable handling chemicals?

A "no" answer to any of these questions should cause the pond owner to consider a licensed applicator. Two "no" answers and the owner should pick up the phone and call a licensed, commercial applicator.

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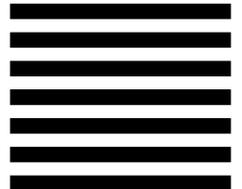


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