

## Group says lake needs chemicals to control weeds

By **Claudia Torrens**/ Daily News Staff  
Friday, May 19, 2006

Herald Interactive Tools

**NATICK** -- As the state gets ready to yank weeds from Lake Cochituate, a group of residents has filed an appeal urging the state to use chemicals to keep the growth at bay.

Fifteen Natick, Framingham and Wayland residents signed the appeal, which has been received by the town and the Department of Environmental Protection.

In the document, the residents explain how the town's denial of using herbicides in the lake will degrade the ecosystem, ruin recreation activities and undercut public safety and health.

"Because the state can't use the herbicides, the milfoil will be allowed to grow," said Michael Tilton, one of the appellants. "But herbicides are known to be the quickest methods of control of large amounts of milfoil."

Tilton is a member of the Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee.

There are three species of invasive weed in Lake Cochituate, one of them being Eurasian milfoil, a plant that clogs and damages the habitat. At least 150 acres have been taken over by milfoil, which grows aggressively year after year.

The residents group supports using the herbicide fluridone in the lake's South and Middle Pond. The state Department of Conservation and Recreation proposed the use of the herbicide, saying it is the most effective way to control weeds.

"(The state) demonstrated all that is necessary under the Wetlands Protection Act and wetland regulations to use (federally approved) herbicides as part of a plan to manage invasive weeds," the appeal says.

The document also says not allowing herbicides in the lake is contradictory to the state Wetlands Protection Act and inconsistent with state regulations.

The group wants the state to issue to overrule the local Conservation Commission to allow the state to use chemicals.

While the state's herbicide plan was denied by Conservation Commission three weeks ago, another state plan proposing mechanical methods to control the weeds was approved.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation will try two devices that circulate the water between the surface and chosen depth, the state said yesterday.

The floating circulators -- donated temporarily by a North Dakota company -- are designed to kill milfoil after the water is drawn up and spread across the lake, accelerating the biological and chemical process that cleans it up.

The state will conduct a plant survey of the lake -- including Fiske Pond -- in June. Based on that data, the state will analyze which type of mechanical methods to use, said state spokeswoman Vanessa Gulati.

Scuba divers with suction lines connected to a boat to pull out the weeds and simple hand-pulling methods are also considered by the department. After the survey is complete, the state will bring a contractor specialized in weevils, bugs that feast exclusively on Eurasian milfoil.

The contractor will evaluate if weevils should also be used as a control method, said Gulati.





"But all these mechanical methods will only reduce the milfoil by 15 percent," she said.

In Natick, a large group of residents called Protect Our Water Resources strongly opposes using herbicides. The group says chemicals pose a threat to human health because the lake is a source of drinking water.

The town also said that putting fluridone in the lake puts the public at risk. That's part of the reason why the state's plan was denied, town officials have said.

(Claudia Torrens can be reached at 508-626-3976 or [ctorrens@cnc.com](mailto:ctorrens@cnc.com))

**Related articles**

-  [Natick board rips weed-killer plan](#)
-  [State to decide whether to appeal town's decision on Lake Cochituate](#)
-  [Commission says no to lake chemicals](#)
-  [SUV rolls into Lake Cochituate](#)

**Today's most read articles Updated 8:45 AM ET**

1. [Ashland barroom allegedly hosted lewd bachelor bash](#)(541)
2. [Hopedale mom bears labor pains stuck in traffic as Pike closure jams up](#)(502)
3. [Tanker crash creates turmoil](#)(423)
4. [Depression, loss can trigger deviant behavior](#)(357)
5. [Firefighters make quick work of Framingham apartment blaze](#)(317)

**Search the site**



[Related articles](#)



[E-mail article to a friend](#)



[Graphic version](#)



[Get RSS feed](#)



[Search site](#)



[Sign up for home delivery](#)



Enterprise-level broadband service provided by [Expedient: America's Largest All-Ethernet Network](#)

Wireless broadband service provided by [Towerstream](#)

[\[ contact us \]](#) :: [\[ print advertising \]](#) :: [\[ online advertising \]](#) :: [\[ Browser Upgrade \]](#) :: [\[ Jobs \]](#)

**Order Home Delivery Online:** [Weekly papers](#) [Daily papers](#) or call **1.800.982.4023**

© Copyright of CNC and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)  
bh.heraldinteractive.com: 0.053579:Sat, 20 May 2006 12:52:44 GMT