

[Home](#) > [News & Opinion](#) > [Local / Regional News](#) >  [RSS Feed](#)

## Committee wants to sink Lake Cochituate herbicide use

By **Katie Liesener**/ Daily News Staff

Sunday, April 2, 2006 - Updated: **03:28 AM EST**

**WAYLAND** -- A local group says the state's plan to use herbicides to kill weeds in Lake Cochituate is all wet.

The Surface Water Quality Committee unanimously opposes that plan and recommended the town work with Framingham and Natick to request alternatives.

"We're not ruling out herbicides, but we want to see them used as a tool of last resort," said Jackson Madnick, chairman of the committee, which has voted to use herbicides in Dudley Pond and Heard Pond for limited periods.

"If (North Pond) were strictly for boating, it wouldn't be as much of an issue, but this is where the children of Wayland learn to swim," he said.

The Conservation Commission, which closed its public hearing on the plan Wednesday night, has three weeks to weigh the comments from the committee and the public before deciding whether to reject the plan, accept it, or accept it with conditions.

Though the state's five-year plan advocates using hand-pulling, suction harvesting and putting heavy mats at the bottom of the lake to crush the weeds, it also calls for using herbicides fluridone, endothall and/or diquat in Middle Pond, and in North Pond only if other options don't work after the first year.

Middle and North ponds are two basins of the lake that partly lie in Wayland. The plan also includes fluridone and diquat use in the third basin, South Pond. Though located in Natick, the water in South Pond flows northerly into Middle and North ponds.

The state plan indicates the chemicals could have "temporary, minor impacts to fish and wildlife habitat." As federally registered herbicides, they do not pose an "unreasonable risk" to humans, according to the plan.

But the committee is not convinced. In a letter to the Conservation Commission, the committee said it felt the state had not fully considered new mechanical methods, such as floating circulators, which circulate oxygen, creating an inhospitable environment for weeds.

The committee also felt a five-year plan did not show enough foresight.

"As in life and business, it's a wiser thing to have a longer range outlook, as far as saving the environment and saving money," Madnick said.

The committee was also concerned to have found residual fluridone in the sediment water of Dudley Pond two years after its last application.

In its letter, the committee said it was unsure whether herbicide use could affect the town's drinking water, because the surface water of the ponds feed aquifers that recharge groundwater supplies.

"We don't know what the low-level, long-term effects of these herbicides are," Madnick said. "Until the '50s, they used to think cigarettes were good for you because they increased circulation."

The state Department of Conservation and Recreation, which issued the plan, said the department is drafting a letter to answer the committee's concerns, according to department spokeswoman Vanessa Gulati.

The Framingham Conservation Commission has approved the state plan, with certain conditions, such as that endothall not be used, according to Michele Grzenda, the town's conservation administrator.

The Natick Conservation Commission's public hearing on the plan is still open, according to Bob Bois, the town's conservation agent.

Wayland's commission will meet to deliberate on the state plan April 11, said Megan Lucier, commission chairwoman.

"The weeds are on their way, they're coming," she said of the weeds that have quickly spread from the south end of Lake Cochituate toward Wayland's portions of the lake. "It's easier to address this while it's still on the way than when it's an even larger issue."

The weeds crowd out other wildlife, interfere with boating and pose a danger to swimmers.

"The problem is serious," said Selectman Joe Nolan in Monday's selectmen's meeting. "You go fishing and there's a mat of weeds that wasn't there 20 years ago."

### Herald Interactive Tools



[Related articles](#)



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



[View graphic version](#)



[Get RSS feed](#)



[Search site](#)



[Sign up for home delivery](#)

(Katie Liesener can be reached at 508-626-4436 or kliesene@cnc.com.)

**Related articles**

 [Natick's board of health says no to chemicals](#)

**Today's most read articles Updated 7:00 AM ET**

1. [Recruits hit the wall](#)(183)
2. [Town-owned golf facilities struggle to turn a profit](#)(166)
3. [BMW dealer is eyeing Sudbury](#)(113)
4. [Quality remains at issue](#)(106)
5. [Churches to tackle tragedies](#)(103)

**Search the site**






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: 0.030889:Sun, 02 Apr 2006 07:28:15 GMT