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Fall Newsletter and 2023 Recap

Efforts to Restore and Preserve Goose Bay

This year GBRC undertook several initiatives to further our mission to restore and preserve Goose Bay as a premier wildlife, fishing and watersports area for St. Lawrence River and Goose Bay residents, and visitors.

Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) is returning to the Goose Bay after successful milfoil control projects in 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2020. In March, with the Town of Alexandria as the lead applicant, and in conjunction with the Mud Lake Association, we applied for \$690,000 in funding from National Fish and Wildlife's Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) program. The total \$950,000 project would have funded 300 acres of herbicide treatment for milfoil control in Goose Bay, 150 acres of herbicide treatment in Mud Lake and operation of the Town's milfoil harvester for three years. GBRC pledged \$48,000 to the project as work in kind and cash. Unfortunately, the proposal was not funded.

GBRC considered four additional grant funding opportunities but elected not to pursue them because of constraints in the grant requirements that made it unlikely that we could be successful. Three of the four grant opportunities were related to milfoil control. The fourth was for funding from the Army Corp of Engineers to study the impact of restoring outflows from the north end of the Bay to Crooked Creek and/or Chippewa Bay. GBRC will continue to identify, evaluate, and pursue grant funding opportunities going forward.

In July, GBRC commissioned a drone survey of Goose Bay to map milfoil infestations around the Bay. The entire Bay was photographed from shoreline to shoreline. The heaviest milfoil infestations were in the south end of the Bay in the Cranberry Creek, Island Number 9, and Purpura Rd. areas. Moderate infestations were located along the East Shoreline to the north end of the Bay, across to Kring Point State Park.



Island Number 9 Shoreline



Purpura Rd. Area

In August GBRC connected with Dr. Diana White at Clarkson University. She and several colleagues have developed a model that predicts the effectiveness of milfoil weevils for control of EWM. Milfoil weevils are naturally occurring insects that bore into milfoil stems causing the milfoil to die. Back in 2014, GBRC selected weevils as the preferred EWM control method, but weevils were not implemented at the time.

GBRC's connection with Dr. White has resulted in three projects for Goose Bay. First, Prof. White has offered to use the weevil effectiveness model to determine if and under what conditions weevils can be successfully used to control milfoil in the Bay. GBRC volunteers are in the process of collecting input data for the model. This project will help to determine if conditions in Goose Bay are suitable for a weevil solution, and if not, what would have to be done for weevils to be successful.

Second, Prof. White and Profs. Jessica (Rogers) Pearson and Glenn Johnson at SUNY Potsdam have submitted a proposal to the DEC to start a milfoil weevil farm which will be housed at SUNY. If successful, this project would solve the weevil sourcing problem for Goose Bay and other waterways in the area.

Third, Prof. White and Stephanie Kring, also of Clarkson, have submitted a proposal to the DEC to develop a model that will predict the spread of milfoil. The model will be based on observation of conditions in Goose Bay over a three-year period. If

funded, this project provides a means to determine how rapidly the milfoil propagates and where. Clarkson students and GBRC will support the project. GBRC and the Town have provided letters of support for both DEC proposals.

In September, GBRC funded a project to test an improved mechanical harvester method for controlling milfoil. The method combined a harvester owned by Comprehensive Weed Control that uses an underwater sickle bar to pull weeds by the roots, with the Town harvester that collects the weeds from the surface. The one-day project was expected to clear up to ten acres. The Town contributed harvester operation at no cost to the project. Work was suspended when the Town harvester had mechanical problems shortly after work started. Work was resumed the following week, but was again suspended due to poor weather conditions. Given what was accomplished over parts of two days, and continued poor weather, the project was called off with inconclusive results.

Finally, in 2023 GBRC made significant progress in establishing a network of supporters, advisors, and stakeholders; including the Town of Alexandria, State Senator Mark Walczyk, the DEC, SLELO PRISM, Save the River, Thousand Islands Land Trust, and National Fish and Wildlife. The Town, and particularly Town Supervisor Brent Sweet, have been very supportive of GBRC's efforts by facilitating the SOQL proposal, contributing to the harvester test project, supporting the Clarkson projects, and helping with key contacts.

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Membership, Fundraising and Engagement

Membership, fundraising, and community engagement provide critical support for projects that directly benefit Goose Bay, as well for the operation of GBRC. Funds raised are used to leverage larger sources of grant funding that are necessary to make meaningful progress toward our mission.

This year we held a very successful golf tournament in July with twelve teams and eighteen sponsors and donors. We raised over \$4,000 through the sponsors/donors, player registrations, and silent auction/raffle items.

Our annual membership drive, which ran from Memorial Day through August raised over \$6000 in new memberships and member renewals. A significant number of members increased their contributions this year.

The 50/50 raffle, which was drawn at the annual pot luck picnic and member meeting in August, raised \$2365 in ticket sales that were shared with Jim and Connie Flynn, Purpura Road.

Our 2023 fundraising wrapped up with Christmas in September. BJ and Alex Mosher hosted the event at their wonderful store, Treasure Island. Decorated with a Christmas tree, lights, garland, and snowmen, attendees got a jump start on their Christmas shopping while supporting GBRC's efforts to control the spread of milfoil. We raised over \$450.



Some of the funds raised this year were used to defray operating expenses, engage the community, and fund the harvester test project. Operating expenses included postage, copying, printing. Efforts to engage the community included development of our new website and more news coverage. We also revised our logo - Bill Gill, Gill Creative Industries (formerly SignTech), brightened up our previous logo with a fresher, more vibrant look.

Thank you to all our members, sponsors, and supporters - we couldn't do it without your support!

Save the Dates - Upcoming 2024 Events
(more details available on our website)

June 15th - Monte Carlo Night on a 2-Nation Uncle Sam Boat Tour Fundraiser

July - Membership Drive

July 20th- Golf Tournament Fundraiser at LA Golf Course

August 1st - 50/50 Raffle Kick-off

August 24th - Member Meeting, Potluck Picnic and Raffle Drawing at Krings Point State Park

Still Looking for Updated Email Addresses

Has your email address changed? Please send us your current email address. To minimize our mailing and postage expenses, we would like to be able to reach out to members and users of Goose Bay electronically. Please send your email address to Debbie at GooseBayReclamationCorp.org@gmail.com.

Our Mission:

The Goose Bay Reclamation Corporation (GBRC) is focused on the restoration and preservation of natural fish and wildlife habitats in and around Goose Bay for the purpose of maintaining the Bay as a premier wildlife, fishing and watersports area for St. Lawrence River and Goose Bay residents and visitors.



A late summer Goose Bay sunset.

Photo by Diane Orbaker