

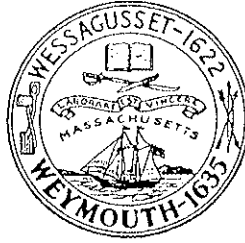
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

JAMES F. CLARKE, JR.
Director of Planning and
Community Development
781-340-5015

Mary Ellen Schloss
Conservation Administrator
781-340-5007

781-335-3283 (FAX)

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*



Susan M. Kay
Mayor

75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189

www.weymouth.ma.us

June 9, 2010

Robert O'Connor, Director
Department of Public Works
120 Winter Street
Weymouth, MA 02188

RE: Proposed Aquatic Vegetation Management of Whitman's Pond
Treatment Plan Request under DEP 81-1041

Dear Bob:

This letter provides an explanation of the Conservation Commission's 4-0 decision at its May 26, 2010 meeting to deny the proposed chemical treatment of the entire main body of Whitmans Pond prior to the end of the herring spawning season, as described in the proposed management plan prepared by Aquatic Control Technology. (2010 Whitman's Pond Pre-Treatment Survey Results and Management Plan). The Commission solicited input from the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries, the US EPA, the Whitmans Pond Association, the Herring Run Wardens, the DPW, and concerned citizens. After weighing all the information, we decided that we did not have enough information about the effects of the chemical fluridone on eggs and larval herring to approve the treatment during the spawning season. Additionally, the Commission expressed concern regarding the effects of the herbicide on pond phytoplankton and microfauna, which serve as the food for larval herring.

The proposed program called for herbicide treatments to begin on June 1st. The Division of Marine Fisheries reviewed the proposal and recommended that herbicide treatment not begin until after June 30th, due to concerns about the effects of the herbicide fluridone on fish eggs and fish larvae, as well as concerns about secondary impacts on water quality. The DMF letter is attached.

Aquatic Control Technology stated that if the herbicide treatment were conducted after June 30th, it would likely provide only one year of effective treatment. Typically, the chemical treatment provides multiple years of effectiveness. The Commission believes it would be a waste of money and effort to conduct the proposed whole pond chemical

treatment after June 30th. ACT also stated that because the infestation is already affecting the entire pond, waiting another year or more for treatment will not significantly affect the treatment program or alternatives.

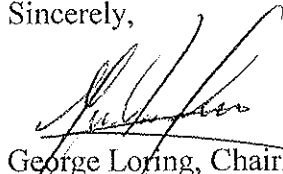
The Commission acknowledges the severity of the problem at Whitmans Pond. Because eradication of these invasive species is highly unlikely if not impossible, the problem is going to be with us for the foreseeable future. Successful management will require a strong commitment on the part of the government and the residents, and will require the town to attack the problem on several fronts at once. The Commission discussed several ideas about how to move forward. These include:

- conducting pilot studies using herbicide treatment in smaller areas of the pond prior to the end of the spawning season, with adequate pre- and post-treatment sampling.
- conducting baseline water quality monitoring in the pond (recommended by DMF) so that we can make relevant comparisons of water quality during and after chemical treatment.
- Developing a comprehensive, long-term aquatic vegetation management plan. The plan needs to address all feasible management alternatives and management constraints, including migratory fish spawning and water supply. South Cove has a substantial invasive plant population which may be affecting Whitmans Pond, but treatment options are limited due to its use as a water supply.
- Working to develop fish passage to Great Pond, which would expand many fold the spawning capacity for this herring population. This would take the pressure off Whitmans Pond as the sole spawning area and decrease the risk associated with chemical treatment.
- Applying for grants to fund the management plan, pilot studies, treatments, fish passage, etc.
- Developing a program to educate pond residents about the importance of vegetative buffers and keeping fertilizer use to a minimum.
- Working to stop sewage overflows into Whitmans Pond by reducing infiltration and inflow into the system. This can include public education aimed at eliminating unauthorized sewer hookups (especially sump pumps) into the sewer system.
- Pursuing programs to decrease nutrient loading, increase dissolved oxygen content and slow down the eutrophication of the pond.

- Working with pond residents and the Department of Conservation and Recreation's "Weedwatchers" program to track invasive plant species and density over time.

We understand that the DPW and the Whitmans Pond Association have put in many hours to get this treatment proposal before the Commission and we sincerely appreciate the efforts to restore the pond. The Commission hopes to work closely with the DPW, the Association and the residents as we tackle this difficult and important problem. We propose that the town hold a stakeholders meeting in the near future to bring together all interested parties to discuss how we can move forward.

Sincerely,



George Loring, Chairman
Weymouth Conservation Commission

encl.

cc: Mayor Sue Kay
Town Councillor Arthur Mathews
Walter Flynn, Chairman, Community Preservation Committee
Robert Luongo, Planning and Community Development Dept.
Jeff Bina, DPW
Trish Pries, Whitmans Pond Association
Tom Daru, Whitmans Pond Association
Keith Gazaille, Aquatic Control Technology
Brad Chase, Division of Marine Fisheries
Tay Evans, Division of Marine Fisheries