

# Koontz Lake Aquatic Control Committee

First of all we'd like to **THANK EVERYONE** who donated to the **Lake Weed Control**. Without your donations, the keeping of the lake weeds under control would not be possible.

## What's new:

We have been able to secure a LARE grant again for weed control which requires a 20% matching portion from the sponsoring organization, the Koontz Lake Association. Our applicator will be treating for milfoil this year but not curly leaf pond weed. Grant money was not available for the curly leaf and it was felt that the native plants needed a better chance to reestablish themselves.

We are fortunate that the Koontz Lake Association has been able to sponsor weed control efforts on the lake. Without the financial assistance of the association and your generous donations, we would be back to a hodge-podge spot treatment effort on the part of isolated residents and the overall condition of the lake would deteriorate. It is important to realize that the water in the lake provides a pathway for invasive plants to grow elsewhere in the lake. Treating just a small portion here and there will not keep the invasive weeds in check.

We need your continued support for weed control efforts.  
Please donate.

## Trouble on the Horizon

The 20% match represents a substantial effort for the association and has been a strain on their finances. Additionally the LARE program can not guarantee funding on an ongoing continuous basis for weed control in our lake. We must maintain a milfoil control program or we risk back sliding to where we were before we started. If you have been on the water for several years you know that is unacceptable.

In addition there is the expense of the marker buoys to assist boaters in maintaining a safe distance from shore and away from swim areas. The buoys get damaged by being run in to and need to be repaired or replaced, and the anchoring hardware wears out and requires maintenance. The buoys are maintained by volunteers for no pay, but the hardware, repair

materials, and replacement markers must be paid for.

Then there is the matter of sediment removal. In the past the Koontz Lake Environmental Enhancement Committee had made some progress reducing the amount of sediment coming in to the lake, adding drop structures and a sedimentation pond on Pontius ditch. They had a plan to dredge the lake and had attempted to acquire federal funding for this effort. They came close but were unable to get the effort underway. Laws were changed and with time the sediment in the lake has moved also. This has made much of the work previously done obsolete. We have no funding for this costly effort which is necessary to prevent resuspension of fine sediment particles and nutrients on the bottom of the lake ruining the clarity of the water. The expense is quite large but we may have a way to start on the worst areas

## **How do we pay for it all?**

Our idea is to form a conservancy district. The establishment of The Koontz Lake Conservancy District would ensure reliable funding to maintain existing programs and give us funding to do some sediment removal as funds accumulate to sufficient levels to efficiently remove deposits from the lake bottom.

The district is to be made up of water adjacent properties.

We believe that owners of lake front property receive the most benefit from the lake and have the most to gain by this effort. The property value reflects that belief.

The funding would be assessed with property taxes and collected by the Stark or Marshall County Treasurer depending on the location of the property. The assessment would have to be approved by the court, and the budget reviewed by several agencies. The funds would be held by the county treasurer and typically released twice a year. The conservancy would be required to be audited per statute. The officers posts (3) would be voluntary with elections held for and voted in by freeholders, one vote per freehold. The activities of the district will be limited to lake issues per statute and organizing documents. Annual public meetings would be promoted and held as required by law.

Additional lake users would be able to donate to the district, contributing to the well being of the lake.

We will be circulating petitions to form a conservancy to remedy the funding issues

regarding lake maintenance by the June KLA meeting. One Freeholder, per freehold may sign. We would like to have a 50% signature rate before going to court to establish the district.

## **What's it going to cost?**

On average with an annual budget of \$70,000 the average contribution would be \$200.00 per year based on 350 freeholds in the district. The actual break down would be based on your homes assessed valuation as part of the total property in the district just like it is with school funding. More expensive houses pay more, smaller lower assessed properties pay less.

## **What am I buying?**

\$70,000.00 budget would look something like this:

\$15,000.00	Weed control
\$ 1,500.00	Buoy maintenance
\$ 1,000.00	Legal support
\$ 1,000.00	Office supplies
\$ 400.00	Postage
\$ 1,000.00	Professional education seminars
\$50,100.00	Sediment removal or prevention, dredging and related required consulting

Unused balance to carry forward to next year adding to dredge fund.

This budget makes no allowance for delinquent taxes or other short falls and is intended only as a draft. LARE grants will cut the amount used for weed control, the amount to be put toward the dredge fund.

If you have any questions please feel free to call either Jim or John.

Jim Berger Chairman 574-586-7406

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