

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District's Conservation Corner

Highlighting the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District's projects, programs, and events.

August 2011

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Working to manage and promote the wise use of natural resources in Hamilton County

What's that blue stuff?

During your outings, have you spotted blue stuff along the sides of the roads and on lawns? Not to worry...an alien spacecraft did not explode in our area. That blue stuff is hydroseeding material that is helping to prevent soil erosion in Hamilton County by promoting

successful in preventing soil erosion that washes away valuable nutrients, degrades water quality and fills in fish habitat. Mulch, fertilizer, grass seed, lime, tackifying agents, and water are mixed in a large tank and sprayed onto soil. This process is cost effective, allows for



Grass grows a few weeks after hydroseeding a steep road bank in Benson.



Material is sprayed onto bare soil from the top of the Hydroseeder to prevent erosion.

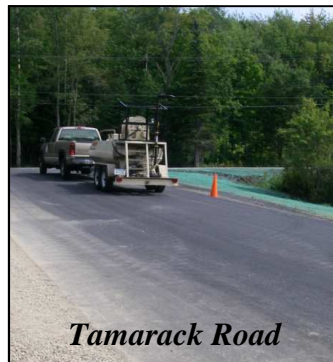
quick seed germination that stabilizes soil.

Since 2006, the District's Hydroseeding Program has been

uniform application, promotes quick growth, and results in thick grass coverage. We work with private land owners and municipalities to seed or re-seed lawns or large project areas, and stabilize ditches.

This summer, District staff worked with Hamilton County municipalities to stabilize ditches and seed road construction

sites in the Moose River Plains and Tamarack Road in the Town of Lake Pleasant. More County jobs are lined up for this coming fall. Prepared soil has been hydroseeded for local residents who want a healthy, fast growing lawn. To date, 6.8 acres of soil have been stabilized. To learn more, call Lenny at 518-548-3991.



Tamarack Road

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The Low Down on Invasive Milfoils

Eurasian Watermilfoil and Variable Leaf Milfoil threaten Hamilton County's lakes and economy. Even though they may look a bit different, the impacts of these invaders are the same. They degrade aquatic ecosystems, impair recreation, and are expensive to manage.

back into the submerged aquatic form.

Invasive Ecology and Threats

Eurasian Watermilfoil and Variable Leaf Milfoil jump start their growing season early before other perennial aquatic plants begin to grow. Because they

in a lake with an infestation of invasive milfoil. These plants devalue shoreline property and provide a suburb breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Spread Pathways

Invasive milfoils spread by fragmentation. Bits and pieces of plants that collect on boats, trailers, and gear may be transferred to uninfested lakes where they take root and establish new populations. Water movement also spreads fragments. If that weren't enough, autogragmentation takes place where abscising vegetation develops roots, falls off the main plant, and takes root to produce a new plant.

Characteristic	Variable Leaf Milfoil	Eurasian Watermilfoil
Leaves	Feathery	Feathery
Leaf Arrangement	4-6 leaves per whorl, alternate	3-5 leaves per whorl, alternate or whorled, leaves collapse around stem when out of water
Leaflets	Greater than 10	Greater than 9, blunt tip
Stem color	Red, dark green, or brown	Pale pink, red, or brown
Emergent spike	Bares tiny white or reddish flowers covered by green, serrated bracts	Bares 4 petaled reddish flowers
pH	Prefers 7.2 and up	Tolerates 5, prefers 6.2 and up
Cost	Milfoil management in New York State: \$500,000 / yr	

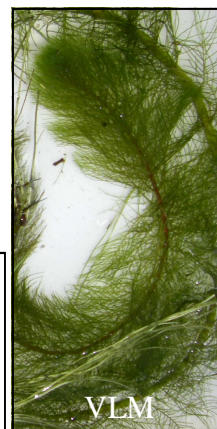
A New Invader

Variable Leaf Milfoil has recently been upgraded from a watch species to an invasive species by the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program due to its aggressive nature. Native to some parts of the United States, it rapidly reproduces in New England's climate, displacing natives and overrunning lakes. Fragments that wash up on dry shorelines adapt to terrestrial conditions by morphing into what looks like mini pine trees. When the water rises again, the terrestrial morphs will change

tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions, they quickly become established. Thick surface mats prevent light needed for photosynthesis from reaching native plants. Dense populations crowd out native plants and congest waterways. Valuable habitat for fish, waterfowl, and invertebrates is lost. It is unenjoyable and often impossible to swim, fish, or boat

1. **Check** your boat, trailer, and gear for plants, animals and mud and remove at the boat launch.
2. **Drain** all lake water from water craft and bait containers.
3. **Monitor** your lake for aquatic invasive plants.
4. **Report** sightings to the District.

Join the **Water Quality Coordinating Committee!**
 Reactivation meeting this Fall.
 More to come!



VLM

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