



## Squash Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District

PO Box 34, Rhinelander, WI 54501  
Established 2017

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Date: October 14, 2024

### SQUASH LAKE PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT LAKE DISTRICT NEWS

#### **Dear Squash Lake District Elector:**

The Squash Lake Board felt that it was important to provide a summary of the summer Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) removal program. EWM continues to be hand harvested as requested by our electors. This summer proved to be a challenging one. The spring survey of the lake showed dense and heavily scattered areas of EWM around the whole lake. Twenty priority areas of the lake were identified as critical areas in our EWM removal grant.

We were fortunate to find several new divers this summer to help with the EWM removal process. In total, 7 divers worked intermittently throughout the summer to provide consistency in our removal program. The EWM harvested this summer broke all previous harvesting records by over twice the amount. The EWM harvest total ended at 13,133 pounds. Many days our divers returned home with 300 to 500 pounds of EWM on the boat. Often you could see the dive boat returning at the end of the day riding low in the water because of the EWM on board.

The fall survey of the lake showed vast improvement. There were still single scattered plants in areas of the lake that have consistently had EWM present, but no large plant colonies were identified. The fall survey map can be found on the district web site under the resources tab ([www.squashlakedistrict.com](http://www.squashlakedistrict.com)). It is important to note that our divers continued diving after the fall survey and that they cleared many areas of the lake that had heavier levels of individual plants. The good news is that the lake is in much better shape than the fall survey indicates.

Our divers have been commended for their hard work this summer by the Lake District Board. They started diving a week earlier than usual and kept diving an extra three weeks in September. It is extremely evident that our divers have a strong commitment to keep our lake clean and healthy. We are still confident that, if not for the warning signs at the boat landing, most lake residents would not be aware that there is EWM in the lake.

At the Lake District Annual Meeting the electors voted to release the set aside funds for a new dive boat and instructed the Lake Board to complete two tasks:

1. Apply for a DNR supporting grant for a new dive boat
2. Purchase a new dive boat for the upcoming dive season

Plans are underway to complete both of these directives. The boat will have a larger deck, larger pontoons to support more weight, be specifically designed to meet our diver's needs, and have a larger and more reliable 4-stroke motor. The divers and the Lake District Board feel that these upgrades will have a positive impact on the efficiency, well-being, and safety of our divers.

Thomas Johansen,  
Lake District Chairperson