

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Herbicide Treatment Planned to Reduce Curly-Leaf Pondweed

Sometimes getting into the weeds is a good thing.

SAINT PAUL (April 8, 2020) – Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) is committed to improving water quality in Como Lake, a beloved water resource in Saint Paul for over a century. Despite efforts to improve water quality in the lake over the years, decades of stormwater runoff and pollution have made a new Como Lake plan necessary. The Como Lake plan identifies strategies to address water quality issues, beginning with a Fluridone (herbicide) treatment to reduce unwanted curly-leaf pondweed on April 13, 2020.

Curly-leaf pondweed was first observed in Como Lake in the early 1990s. It was likely introduced by a boat, boot treads, or aquarium plants. Today, it has come to dominate 90% of the plant community in the lake, leaving little room for native plants to grow. Curly-leaf pondweed thrives in poor water quality conditions. It begins growing beneath the ice, giving it a competitive advantage over native plants, and starts to decay in late June. The decaying plants add nutrients known as phosphorous to the water, which fuel algae growth in the lake. Excess algae cause lakes to become green and occasionally smelly in the summertime.

“Controlling curly-leaf pondweed is an important step towards restoring balance in Como Lake. It will allow native plants to reestablish and better support aquatic insects, fish and waterfowl. Reducing curly-leaf pondweed in Como Lake will also slow the cycling of phosphorus, a nutrient that algae consumes, causing green algal blooms to occur throughout the summer.” Britta Belden, Water Resource Project Manager

CRWD obtained a permit from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to apply the herbicide Fluridone to Como Lake after the ice melted in early April. Early season application ensures that the herbicide targets curly-leaf pondweed before native plants begin growing. Fluridone prevents plants from photosynthesizing. Die-off of curly-leaf pondweed is expected approximately two months after the application. It will be applied by a licensed contractor by boat. Additional applications of Fluridone may occur later this spring to maintain the 60-day concentration of 4 parts per billion needed to treat the curly-leaf pondweed. Once applied, Fluridone does not have water contact restrictions for visitors, pets, or wildlife.

Monitoring will occur throughout the treatment and the weeks following to maintain safe concentrations and to determine its effectiveness. Additional herbicide treatments may be needed in future years to further reduce curly-leaf pondweed in Como Lake.

Learn more at capitolregionwd.org/comolake or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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