

Project Name	Rare Aquatic Plant Outreach	Date	03/14/2024
To / Contact info	BCWD Board of Managers		
Cc / Contact info	Karen Kill, District Administrator		
From / Contact info	Jimmy Marty, Mike Majeski		
Regarding	Outreach Plan for Rare Aquatic Plants at Goggins and Lynch Lakes		

Background

[Snailseed pondweed](#) (*Potamogeton bicupulatus*) is a state endangered aquatic macrophyte known from only 14 lakes in Minnesota. Surprisingly, this species was discovered in Lynch Lake during an aquatic macrophyte survey conducted by EOR in 2014 as part of the Northern Chain of Lakes Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) project. Surveys completed by EOR in summer 2023 documented the status of the Lynch Lake population and identified an additional population of snailseed pondweed at Goggins Lake. A second rare species, [slender naiad](#), was also likely observed at Lynch Lake but has yet to be confirmed. The discoveries at Lynch and Goggins increase the statewide occurrence of snailseed pondweed to 16 lakes out of over 2,000 lakes surveyed for rare plant species.

Recommendations provided in the 2023 survey memo (and shared with the Board at the February 14th Board Meeting) included outreach to landowners with snailseed pondweed present on or adjacent to their lakeshore. Additional outreach opportunities were also discussed with the Board (i.e., newsletters, meetings with lakeshore owners, etc.). The following scope summarizes next steps and costs for the development of an outreach plan, conversation with MNDNR, and the development of specific outreach materials and follow up actions.

Outreach Activities

Task 1: Develop Outreach Plan

Direct, inadvertent impacts to snailseed pondweed were observed along the shoreline of one property on Goggins Lake. No snailseed pondweed was observed within an approximately 100-foot-long area of shoreline where the population was otherwise continuous. This area was being used for storage and launching of multiple small watercraft. For reference, the entire linear shoreline occupied by snailseed pondweed was estimated to be about 700 feet. The 100-foot gap represents a substantial portion of potential habitat that is being disturbed.

Additionally, potential inadvertent impacts were identified on a second property with snailseed pondweed present at Goggins Lake. Though no impacts were evident at the time of the 2023 survey, the area is frequently trafficked and there is risk of future impacts. No impacts or potential direct impacts were observed at the Lynch Lake snailseed pondweed location. However, intensive shoreline development along one parcel was observed outside of the mapped snailseed pondweed population but within potentially suitable habitat near previously mapped locations from 2014.

The development of a targeted outreach plan may help to mitigate these impacts. EOR will work with District staff to develop an outreach plan that targets specific landowner activities as well as increases the public’s knowledge about the presence of these unique aquatic resources in the

Brown's Creek watershed. Examples of outreach activities to landowners may include notification of species presence, communication of species importance, identification of practices to minimize/avoid ongoing impacts (e.g. narrowing access points, storing watercraft outside of potential habitat), and communication of general impact avoidance/impact measures (e.g. use of herbicides, mowing practices, avoiding disturbance).

The presence of these unique and sensitive aquatic plant resources is an opportunity to highlight the health and quality of the District's lakes and streams. Not only is it important to target adjacent landowners to address direct impacts to the plant populations but it is also important to let the public know about these rare and sensitive plant species in order to promote awareness about healthy ecosystems and the stewardship of our landscapes. EOR will work with District Staff/WCD to develop an outreach plan that (1) targets specific outreach for adjacent landowners on Goggins Lake and Lynch Lake (2) provides monitoring and management recommendations to WCD staff and (3) informs the public that there are new species being added to the Unique Species Inventory that warrant protection.

Task 2: Review Plan with MNDNR

Once the draft Outreach Plan has been developed, EOR will share it with the MNDNR to solicit their feedback. Coordination with MNDNR will ensure compliance with state statutes regulating rare species, assess risks of disclosing rare species locations (e.g., intentional destruction), and facilitate collaboration with partner agencies engaged in conservation outcomes for snailseed pondweed. This task includes up to 2 virtual meetings, correspondence with MNDNR staff, and revisions to the draft Outreach Plan based on MNDNR feedback.

Task 3: Develop Outreach Materials

Following consultation and plan review with MNDNR, EOR will draft outreach materials for use by District/WCD staff. These materials may include a fact sheet, shoreline management guidelines, newsletter, and/or technical materials required to support outreach by District/WCD staff to specific landowners and the public.

Task 4: Implement the Outreach Plan

District/WCD staff are anticipated to lead plan implementation. This task includes up to 2 meetings for EOR to provide support to staff prior to and following implementation. Ideally, this task would be completed between mid-June to mid-August 2024 when snailseed pondweed is most readily identifiable.

Cost Estimate

Tasks	Hours	Estimated Cost
Develop Outreach Plan	11	\$1,856
Review Plan with MNDNR	7	\$1,186
Develop Outreach Materials	8	\$1,340
Implement the Outreach Plan	3	\$462
TOTALS	29	\$4,844

Requested Action

1. Approve this Scope of Services in the amount of \$4,844 from account number 910-0000 to develop and implement outreach for rare aquatic plant populations at Goggins and Lynch Lakes.