

Council to remove weed from lake

With luck, the Three Lakes Council will soon have eradicated an invader to Lake Waccabuc. With no public comments objecting to the plan, and permission from all of the landowners involved, the town Planning Board on Tuesday, March 24 approved the council's proposal to suck the invasive plant species *Egeria densa* out of Waccabuc Cove on Lake Waccabuc once the weather warms. The town Planning Board had closed a scheduled public hearing on the plan earlier this month after a short discussion of what the eradication of the plant will entail.

The proposal, which is expected to start in May and last two to three weeks, would involve divers taking suction hoses to the lake bottom over an area of about two acres, trying to remove any and all plant material that could re-start the infestation. *Egeria* is capable of regrowing from a small fragment of its stem, a feature that makes it desirable in the hobby aquarium but at the same time highly difficult to eradicate once it gets into an ecosystem.

In order to keep any fragments of the plant from escaping during the suctioning, the council has proposed that curtain barriers be placed around the divers performing the procedure as well as a curtain across the cove. The material harvested would go into fine net bags, which would be periodically disposed of in nearby trash bins.

A concern over the ownership of the lake bottom had delayed the approval of the project, but the Planning Board decided that the legal issues could be assuaged with letters of permission from each landowner with property on the cove. That permission has been granted, according to council Vice President Janet Anderson.

The Lake Waccabuc Association recently made a contribution of \$2,500 to the Three Lakes Council's Eradicate *Egeria* Initiative to help tackle the problem.

"All residents of the three lakes are being encouraged to help in this fund-raising effort," said Ed Delaney, association president. "Although this plant so far has only been discovered in the north cove, it will eventually spread to all three lakes and it is imperative that the community as a whole deal with the problem."

To donate to the initiative, send a check to Three Lakes Council — EEI, P.O. Box 241, South Salem, NY 10590.