

IRPCLA AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN: UPDATE PROCESS

Onterra, LLC has served as PCLA's consultant throughout our EWM battle. The information below is taken from an email from one of their Aquatic Biologists.

I would like to first take this opportunity to connect this audience with some of the recent reporting on Aquatic Plant Management (APM) from the Pike Chain: <https://pikechain.org/>, specifically *the 2016-2018 Final EWM Monitoring & Control Assessment Report* and the *2019 EWM Monitoring & Control Assessment Report*. Hopefully these documents demonstrate the level of planning and monitoring that have surrounded the Pike Chain's APM activities.

The WDNR has requested that the Iron River Pike Chain of Lakes Association (IRPCLA) create an update to their APM Plan. The IRPCLA and Pamela Toshner (WDNR Lakes Coordinator), with assistance from Onterra, developed a plan for creating the updated APM Plan for the Pike Chain. While we are open to modifying this process based upon your feedback, we would need to run it past Pamela to make sure we do not jeopardize the WDNR's approval of the plan nor the IRPCLA's grant reimbursement that is funding part of this effort. Below is an outline of the process:

- Onterra will create a report of the aquatic plant community of the chain, a historical account of the EWM management activities, and some context on future EWM management planning. The summary report would also contain a fisheries data integration section with updated data provided by fisheries staff (state and tribal).
- Prior to a Strategic Planning Meeting (Video Conference), Onterra will provide an early draft document to WDNR lakes biologist, WDNR fisheries manager(s), GLIFWC rep(s), Red Cliff rep(s), and other entities that I may have missed. The Planning Meeting was anticipated for roughly mid-November.
- The Strategic Planning Meeting would include an Onterra-lead presentation overview of the APM materials (approximately an hour) followed by a discussion about future APM management goals/actions (probably another hour or so). We would provide the opportunity for other entities to present materials if they wish to do so.
- Likely follow-up teleconference(s) with the IRPCLA planning committee to distill the overall discussion and continue management goal and action development. Additional follow-up teleconferences with all partners may also be warranted.
- Onterra will create a draft Implementation Plan Section for the IRPCLA to review, making sure it reflects that association's wishes in the context of input from WDNR & tribal entities. The Implementation Plan would management goals and associated management actions as it relates to APM activities. This would include timelines for monitoring, triggers for when particular management would be considered, etc.
- Once the Implementation Plan reflects the APM direction the association wants to put forward, Onterra will marry the summary report document with the implementation plan section, making it available for review by WDNR, tribal, etc. We call this the Official First Draft (OFD).
 - We would set a timeframe for review of the OFD – likely 45 days per WDNR code (or longer if folks need it)
 - We recommend the association putting the OFD on their website and alerting association members/riparians to provide comment.
- Once we receive comments from those that wish to, we will integrate into the updated Plan and work to finalize (requires WDNR approval). Agency comments will be

aggregated into a comment-response document and included as an appendix to the finalized plan.

Correct me if I am wrong, but it is our understanding that folks on this email will be creating a Fisheries Recovery/Management Plan to present to the WDNR in parallel with the IRPCLA's APM Plan Update. Having these two Plans created in parallel and reference each other will be a great strength. These two plans have obvious overlap as it comes to EWM management, particularly in regards to aquatic plant habitat and toxicology of herbicide use. We sincerely want to take advantage of this opportunity to get as much input from GLIFWC and the Red Cliff Band especially as it relates to these components.

As discussed above, our typical Plans include a fisheries data integration section. This section usually provides an overview of stocking, harvest, creel surveys, and some notes about the management direction. The IRPCLA's 2008 Plan can be found here (<https://dnrx.wisconsin.gov/swims/downloadDocument.do?id=29842799>) with the fisheries section starting on page 52. While our more recent fisheries sections are a little more elaborate than what we put together in 2008, I am not sure we have the expertise to put something together for the Pike Chain that does its complex fisheries justice. We could work with folks on this email to strengthen the reporting in this section within the updated APM Plan, or perhaps decide to remove it from the APM Plan and simply reference the Fisheries Recovery Plan, perhaps as an appendix.