

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR 2024 SONAR HERBICIDE APPLICATION IN BANGS LAKE

The Village of Wauconda has developed this set of FAQs to provide you with more details about the herbicide treatment planned to begin in mid-March of 2024. Scan the QR codes to access the links in the document or visit the Village website, www.wauconda-il.gov, to find the links.

1. Why is the Village changing from the current cost share and harvester program?

The study conducted by ILM on behalf of the Village of Wauconda showed that the density of the aquatic weeds has increased over time. A new approach is needed to be more effective in preventing the continued spread and nuisance of non-native European Milfoil and Curly-Leaf Pondweed.

2. What has the Village been doing to control weeds?

Since 2015, the method of controlling weeds has been to reimburse private property owners for application of the herbicides to the lake bottom. In addition, for at least 30 years, the Village has completed mechanical weed harvesting in Bangs Lake. Weed harvesting is a method of mowing the weeds just below the surface and collecting the fragments. When the weed harvester and private boats cut and leave fragments of Milfoil in the water, they actually contribute to the spread of the weed.

3. Who is ILM?

ILM or Integrated Lakes Management is an ecological consulting company that specializes in managing natural areas, ponds and lakes. In 2023, the Village contracted with ILM to complete a lake management study and plan. ILM was chosen and awarded the contract by the Village Board after the Village requested proposals from various qualified firms.

4. Does the Village have a permit for this herbicide?

Yes, ILM completed the necessary ECOCAT permit with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources on the Village's behalf.

5. What is the herbicide the Village will be using?

The herbicide is fluridone or the brand name Sonar. It has been approved by the US EPA for aquatic plant vegetation management since 1986.

6. Will this get rid of all of the plants in the lake?

No, this Sonar application is targeted toward the aggressive non-native plants that interfere most with the use of the lake, but not the native plants that support the fish population, including threatened and endangered fish found to be in Bangs Lake. A healthy lake needs aquatic plants to support fish and other wildlife. While this new approach is tested and monitored, the Village will continue to keep the weed harvester available.

7. What is the Bangs Lake study?

In 2023, ILM conducted a study on the Village's behalf to review the health and maintenance needs of Bangs Lake. The entire study is available on the Village's website here: Bangs Lake Study. The study has a number of recommendations, including the recommendation for the whole-lake herbicide.



Bangs Lake Mgmt

8. When will the treatment start?

The treatment will begin in early to mid-March. This herbicide is to be applied at the time the aquatic plants are just beginning to emerge from the lake bottom. The contractor is required to guarantee that the concentration of herbicide stays at the minimum effective level for 75 days following initial application so additional small treatments may be applied during April and May. In contrast, for the past several years, herbicide has been applied in May and June when the plants are already at full size.

9. Which contractor is the Village using?

The Village issued a request for proposals for qualified contractors to apply the herbicide. Five contractors provided proposals and the Village Board will award the contract in February or early March.

10. How will the herbicide be applied?

The herbicide will be applied by a Village contractor. The contractor will use hoses to drop the herbicide below the surface of the water. To be effective, the herbicide will be kept at a certain concentration (2 parts per billion) in the water for a period of 75 days, so the contractor will return to the lake to monitor the concentration and may need to complete additional applications over that 75-day period. The herbicide degrades by sunlight, so it will dissipate over time.

11. How do we know this herbicide is safe?

Sonar is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for use in managing aquatic vegetation. Sonar is determined to have negligible risk for human health and the environment at the concentrations used for this treatment. To learn more, you are encouraged to read this FAQ, which further explains the testing process:

https://www.industrialvm.com/literature/sepro/sonar_risk_guide.pdf

12. Will this harm fish and other wildlife?

Sonar was extensively tested in the USEPA approval process. The herbicide targets a specific biological growing process in plants that is not replicated in fish or other animals. This FAQ about Sonar addresses the uptake in animals:

https://www.industrialvm.com/literature/sepro/sonar_risk_guide.pdf.



Sonar

13. Why is the Village putting chemicals in the lake?

Lakefront property owners and stakeholders have asked the Village to address the issue of weeds in the lake and washing up on shorelines and beaches. Unfortunately, the current practice of weed harvesting and uncoordinated herbicide application will be unlikely to make a significant positive impact. This new approach will be better coordinated and more strategically applied to the most pervasive non-native plants. Since 2015, the Village has been supporting the application of chemicals through the cost-share program. This new approach will be better coordinated, specifically targeted toward invasive plants and at a minimum dosage to have an impact. Moreover, the Village is discouraging property owners from applying any additional chemicals to the lake.

14. Who advised the Village to do this?

The Village contracted with ILM to perform the lake study. ILM's team of ecologists reviewed the current weed management practices and recommended the new approach of the whole lake herbicide.

15. Were any lakefront property owners consulted prior to this decision?

Yes, the Village convened a group of residents who either live on Bangs Lake or represent organizations, associations or businesses with a stake in the long-term health and usability of Bangs Lake. This nine-person group, called the Ad Hoc Bangs Lake Study Review Committee, met with ILM to vet the recommendation and provide a recommendation to the Village's Natural Resources Committee, which is a committee of the Village Board. The group will occasionally meet to discuss other recommendations in the lake study. Meeting agendas are posted on the Village website at least 48 hours prior to the meeting per the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

16. How long will it take to see results?

Results will be seen this spring but the full effect will happen over time. The treatment is expected to take place each year for the next three years and the effectiveness will be monitored throughout. The Village's contract with the applicator includes a performance guarantee for elimination of the weed.

17. Is there anything we should or should not do right before or after treatment?

There are no limits on use of the lake before, during or after application of the herbicide. There is an irrigation restriction recommended for 30 days following application, so the Village

recommends that irrigation directly from the lake not occur until mid-June. Herbicides applied as part of the Village's cost-share program also carried this restriction.

18. How soon can we use the lake after treatment?

There are no swimming or fishing restrictions after Sonar application.

19. How are you going to stop people from doing their own treatment?

The Village cannot prevent property owners from applying additional herbicide to their property; however, the Village will not provide a subsidy to the owner. Moreover, through communications such as this, the Village is discouraging property owners from applying additional herbicide.

20. How long has this herbicide been used?

Fluridone has been used since 1986 in the control of aquatic plants.

21. I would like more information on the safety and testing of this herbicide.

Where can I find more information?

Sonar has been registered and approved by the EPA for aquatic application. The FAQ document linked below explains the testing process and answers many questions about how the herbicide controls plants and how the manufacturer tested the potential impact of this herbicide on animals and humans.



Sonar

https://www.industrialvm.com/literature/sepro/sonar_risk_guide.pdf