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## CUTTING WINTER WEEDS

# Cold water tactic effective against milfoil in Okanagan Lake

Tracey Prediger - Dec 14, 2022 / 4:00 am



Tracey Prediger

Keeping your favourite swimming areas from becoming overgrown by eurasian milfoil is a year-round occupation for the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

For seven years, David Hoogendorn has been operating the machines that try to keep milfoil under control.

The vessels being used were locally designed and manufactured to do one job — to keep invasive weeds like milfoil from overtaking our lakes.

“In the 70’s they really had huge blooms, now we are just more staying on top of what they have accomplished over the years,” says Hoogendorn.

He explains the blades that are used on the vessels in the wintertime are more like a giant rototiller.

“In the wintertime, we’re removing the root bottoms, the root of the root system and root structure on the substrate of the lake bottom. The roots basically come to the surface, they float and they don’t regenerate. They go ashore and die.”

The cold weather tactic produces the best results in the fight against the weeds.

Hoogendorn says the sometimes green harvesters you see in the summer are smaller and act more like a lawnmower.

“In the summertime we just merely maintain, just to clear up the areas for the public.”

One of the biggest obstacles for weed removal is quite literally obstacles. Hoogendorn admits they’d have more success if the machines had an unobstructed path or at least if they could reach underneath buoys and boats.