



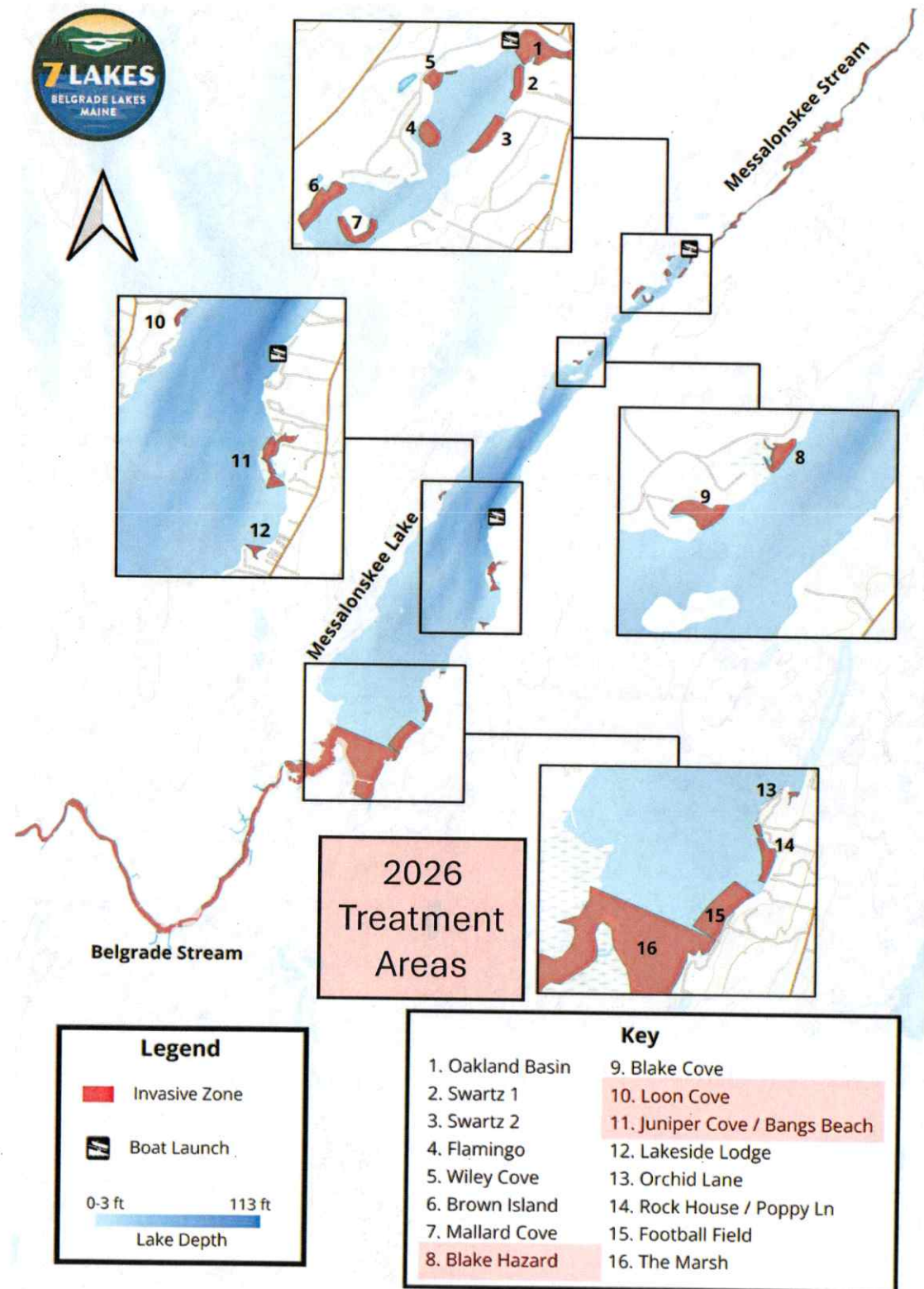
Milfoil in Messalonskee Marsh 2026

## One of the Worst Infestations in the State

Over the past three decades, water quality and native plant and animal diversity in Belgrade Stream have declined due to the spread of variable-leaf milfoil, a highly invasive aquatic species. Today, milfoil blankets the stream from Wings Mills Dam to the marsh along Route 27 at Messalonskee Lake. From there, it has spread to more than 15 areas within the lake and continues downstream into Messalonskee Stream and the Kennebec River.

Given the scale of and density of the infestation, manual approaches such as barriers and hand-pulling alone are unlikely to produce measurable improvements and would require an unsustainable level of effort.



**The wheels are now in motion for a multi-year treatment effort.**



Messalonskee Lake  
and  
Belgrade Stream

Need  
**YOUR**  
Help!

Learn about upcoming  
treatment plans to  
combat invasive milfoil

[7lakesalliance.org](http://7lakesalliance.org)

## Why Herbicide, why now?

Variable-leaf milfoil has spread throughout Belgrade Stream since the 1990's and into Messalonskee Lake, where at least 15 areas are now established with milfoil. Dense growth has reduced water quality and native plant diversity. Manual methods like hand-pulling and barriers remain important but are no longer sufficient at this scale. Recent advances in selective, low-dose herbicides- and updated permitting- now make it possible to significantly reduce the infestation.

**Beginning in 2026, Maine DEP and 7 Lakes Alliance will implement a multi-year treatment effort. Friends of Messalonskee and Belgrade Stream fully support this effort.**

## What is ProcellaCOR?

ProcellaCOR is a targeted aquatic herbicide that affects invasive plants like milfoil while minimizing impacts to most native plant species. Prior to being approved for in-lake use by the U.S. EPA in 2028, it has been used for decades to control weeds in rice paddies grown for human consumption. It works at very low concentrations and is rapidly absorbed by targeting plants. It has been used successfully in several Maine lakes, including Great Meadow Stream (Great Pond), **where milfoil was reduced by over 97%, 3-years post-treatment!**

## How does the treatment work?

The application process may take anywhere from a few hours to several days, depending on the size of the treatment area. The herbicide is rapidly absorbed by targeted plants such as variable-leaf milfoil and breaks down quickly in water. Treated milfoil typically begins to decay within three weeks, with complete dieback- including roots- occurring within approximately six weeks. Some native plants may be temporarily affected.

**The goal of these treatments is to reduce milfoil growth to a level that can be managed sustainably over time.**

Some regrowth is expected. As years pass, more significant regrowth may occur post treatment. Regrowth is typically at much lower levels, for example prior to treatment in 2022, 7 Lakes Alliance removed up to 50,000 gallons of milfoil from Great Meadow Stream. Since treatment, the largest annual removal has been just 30 gallons.

## What can you do?

Stay informed by subscribing to emails newsletters and visit our websites.

- Attend public meetings
- Donate



7lakesalliance.org



friendsofmessalonskee.com

## Is the herbicide safe?

**Drinking Water:** No restrictions when used as directed. DEP does not recommend drinking untreated lake water at anytime.

**Fish & Wildlife:** Testing shows ProcellaCOR is non-toxic to fish, birds, and aquatic life when used at permitted levels.

**Swimming, Fishing, & Pets:** Allowed after treatment. Some temporary irrigation restrictions within 1,000 ft of treatment sites will be notified by DEP.

**Loons:** No expected risk under normal use. Treatments will avoid nesting periods, and staff will be present to minimize disturbance.

**PFAS:** ProcellaCOR does not contain PFAS.

## What do I need to know?

Beginning in 2026, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will conduct targeted herbicide treatments to manage invasive variable-leaf milfoil in select areas of Messalonskee Lake and Belgrade Stream.

## How will this affect my property?

Property owners near treatment areas should see fewer floating fragments and rooted milfoil. In some cases, nutrients released during die-off may cause a short-term increase in algae. If your property is within 1,000 feet of a treatment site, avoid using lake water for irrigation for 24 hours.

## Will manual removal continue?

Yes. 7 Lakes Alliance will continue using hand-pulling and benthic barriers in key areas previously maintained by Friends of Messalonskee. Manual removal will also be used within treated areas to manage any regrowth following herbicide applications and help sustain long-term control.

## DEP is the sole agency responsible for:

- Approving aquatic herbicide treatments.
- Hiring licensed contractors.
- Monitoring before, during, and after treatment.
- 7 Lakes Alliance will conduct additional monitoring beyond DEP requirements.

7 Lakes Alliance and Friends of Messalonskee fully support this effort and are available to answer any questions you may have.