

The 17th Maine Milfoil Summit was held this Feb 26th in Lewiston with many lake associations in attendance. The first part of the summit reviewed the Maine boat registration funds and the breakdown of those revenues. Last year the Boat Registration Sticker income was 1.1 million dollars with 80% of those funds going to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and 20% going to Maine Inland Wildlife and Fisheries (IW&F). Of the roughly \$880,000 the DEP received, over \$202,000 went towards Maines Courtesy Boat Inspectors (CBI) and \$283,000 towards the removal of invasive aquatic plants. Last year TLEA was awarded \$15,000 by the Maine DEP to help pay for our program which had expenses of \$33,000.

The DEP does carry some over funds from the previous year but the DEP expects that for this year there will be a reduction in what is allocated to plant removal programs of about \$250,000.

The majority of the summit meeting had to do with Maine State and Federal OSHA getting involved with the public and private operations of invasive plant removal. This new presence in the state's plant removal programs by these government agencies is intended to ensure the safety and health of the divers. The details of OSHA's mandates for our milfoil removal program are discussed in more detail in the TLEA's Milfoil Removal article.

Some news on the alarming side was last year there was a new Invasive Plant discovered in a Maine lake called the European Naiad. There are many invasive plants that have been found in Maine aquarium stores and people have emptied their fish tanks into lakes causing new infestations. *Never* dump the contents of a fish tank into a river or lake, no matter how fond you were of its contents.