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Subject: 2023 Massapoag Fanwort Harvesting Project

New England Aquatic Services performed Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting at Lake Massapoag beginning on September 25, 2023. Over the course of 5 days, ending on September 29, 2 crews utilizing 2 separate boats performed a total of 56 hours of work, or the equivalent of 8 days. The work was focused in the South Cove as this was the most heavily infested area. Over the course of the project 351 bags of Fanwort were removed, equivalent to approximately 5,265 gallons. Note that the bags used during this season are 1 third larger than used in previous years.

The work conducted is represented on the image at the end of this report. The yellow arrows show the direction of work that both boats began and work from north-northwest to south-southeast. Additionally there are Areas A & B which were locations where fanwort was removed to push it back away from the beaches. The red line shows approximately where the edge of the main Fanwort growth stops.

The overall observation is that the entire South Cove's infestation has continued to spread. While a significant amount of area was harvested the budgeted 8 days was not enough to make forward progress in population reduction. In our experience working with Fanwort specifically, we have found that there is a tipping point after which we can begin reducing the infestation year over year. This really requires addressing most of an area so that, while there will be regrowth, it will be less dense regrowth the following season. However if we do not address enough area, then we cannot get ahead of the problem. My recommendation would be to increase the project scope to at least 16 days of harvesting for the 2024 season, but feel we would be much more effective at 24 days.

