



March 30, 2021

Stephen Parretti
Leicester Conservation Commission
3 Washburn Square
Leicester, Massachusetts 01524

**Re: Cedar Meadow Lake Aquatic Plant Management Program
Leicester, Massachusetts
DEP File No. 197-0579
ESS Project No. C609-003**

Dear Mr. Parretti,

On behalf of the Cedar Meadow Lake Watershed District (the applicant), ESS Group, Inc. (ESS) respectfully submits this request to extend the Order of Conditions for the Cedar Meadow Lake Aquatic Plant Management Program (DEP File No. 197-0579). The Order of Conditions for the project was originally issued by the Leicester Conservation Commission on March 24, 2015 and extended in August 2018. The extension was due to expire on March 11, 2021. However, Section 17(iii) of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020 provides that “a permit in effect or existence as of March 10, 2020, including any deadlines or conditions of the permit, shall not lapse or otherwise expire and the expiration date of the permit...shall toll during the state of emergency” as initiated by Governor Baker’s declaration of a state of emergency on said date. For further information see MassDEP’s COVID-19 Wetlands FAQs for Conservation Commissions and Applicants at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massdep-covid-19-wetlands-faqs-for-conservation-commissions-and-applicants/download>.

The applicant is seeking a **three-year extension** of the Order of Conditions for this project so that they may continue managing nuisance aquatic invasive species within Cedar Meadow Lake. Management of aquatic invasive species in the lake has been successful in reducing the overall extent of these species in the waterbody; however on-going monitoring and management of these plants may be needed in the future to avoid re-establishment into areas where they have been successfully controlled and combat pioneer infestations of new species.

Treatment of aquatic invasive species in Cedar Meadow Lake using approved herbicide products was conducted during the 2015 growing season. The 2015 treatment was highly successful in controlling growths of nuisance aquatic invasive plants and subsequent treatments have not been necessary to date. Though invasive plants were observed sporadically throughout the lake during the most recent aquatic plant survey conducted in August 2020, the overall extent of aquatic plants in Cedar Meadow Lake remains low to moderate. However, the 2020 survey did document the presence of two species of aquatic invasive plant, brittle naiad (*Najas minor*) and water chestnut (*Trapa natans*), which had not been previously recorded in the lake. All observed water chestnut plants were hand harvested by survey personnel, but continued monitoring and removal of this very aggressive species will be necessary to ensure that it does not become established in Cedar Meadow Lake. The existing Order of Conditions allows for hand harvesting, which is currently anticipated to be sufficient for control of water chestnut as long as it is persistently implemented each year. Additionally, though treatment of algae at Cedar Meadow Lake has not been necessary to date,





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algae blooms remain a concern and the applicant desires to retain the option to treat in a timely fashion should future blooms arise (cyanobacteria blooms were documented in May 2018 and July 2020).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (781) 419-7716 or achase@essgroup.com.

Sincerely,

ESS GROUP, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna L. Chase".

Anna L. Chase
Project Scientist

C: Tommy Lee, Cedar Meadow Lake Watershed District

