

Controlling Milfoil and Other Invasive Species: How Are We Going To Pay For It?

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Objectives of the Survey

- To estimate how much was spent to control variable milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*) infestations in New Hampshire water bodies in 2009, 2010, and 2011



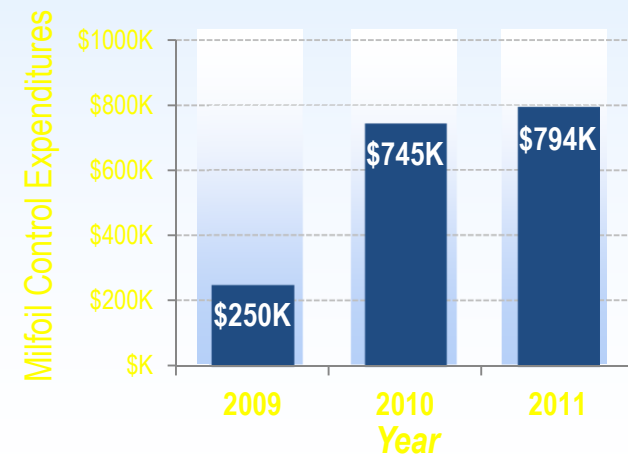
- To identify the sources and amounts of funding for these control activities
- To identify successes and failures in fundraising efforts to support milfoil control activities

Survey Mechanics



Funding Survey Results

- NH DES provided list of milfoil-infested water bodies
- Surveys conducted April–May 2010 and updated April–May 2011
- Data for 2011 is still coming in ...



Survey Interview Questions

1. During [2009 / 2010 /2011], did you raise any money to address milfoil in your lake?
2. If so, how was this money raised?
 - A special assessment to members?
 - An allocation of annual dues paid by members?
 - A donation by private members or businesses?
 - Funds from municipal or state governments?
 - Some other fundraising techniques?
3. How much money was spent by your lake association to combat milfoil in [2009/ 2010 /2011]?
4. What type of milfoil control program took place?



Response Statistics

Lakes:

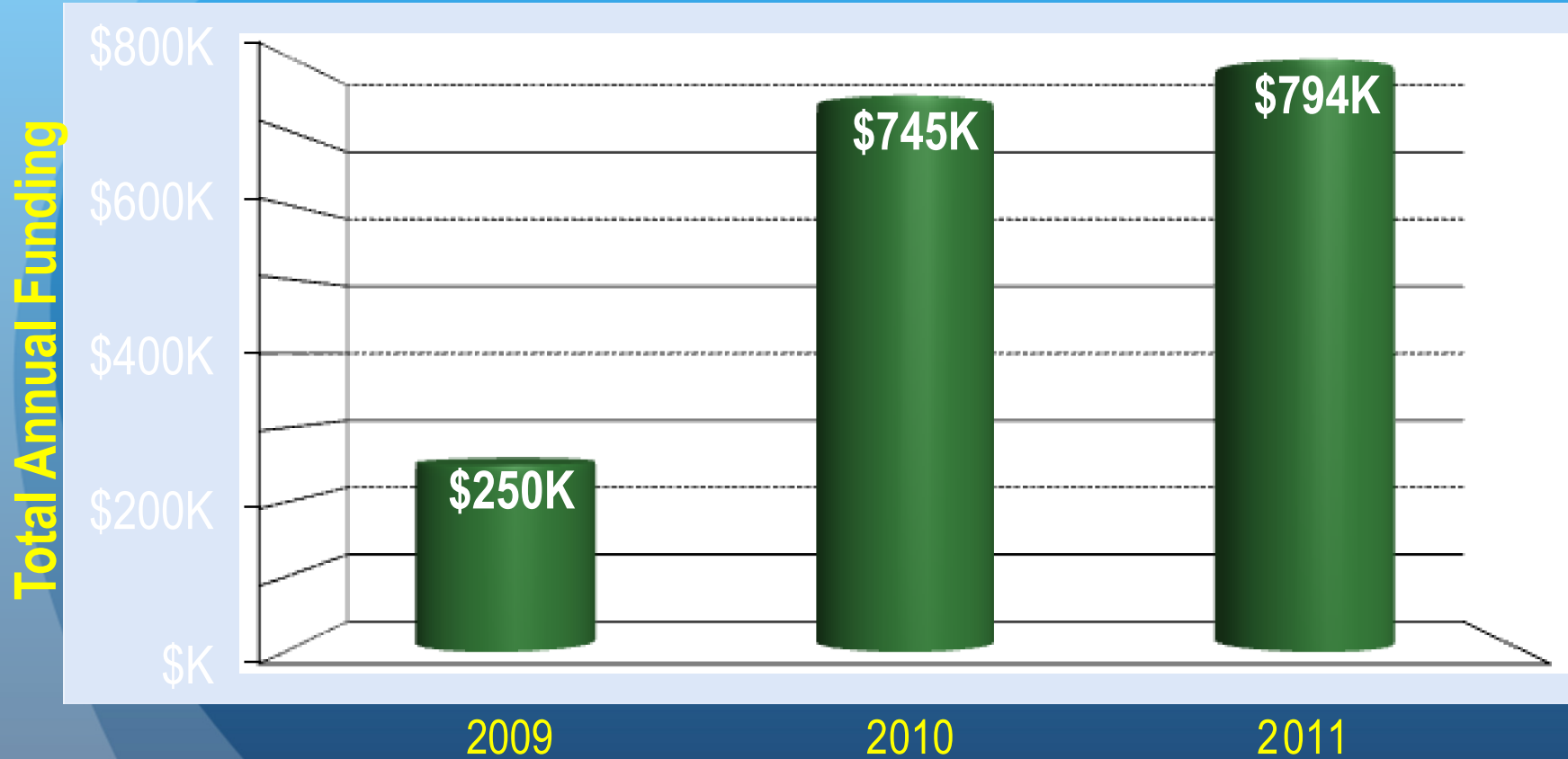
- Last year, compiled data on 49 of 63 lakes (78%) about 2009/2010 funding and expenditures
- This year to date, have compiled data on 43 of 63 lakes (68%) about 2011 funding and expenditures - more data expected soon

Rivers:

- 10 of 11 milfoil-infested rivers are not monitored or managed by local towns or groups
- Piscataquog River milfoil is being addressed by a mix of Town (Goffstown) and lake association funding
- DES divers have hand-pulled milfoil in Nashua River



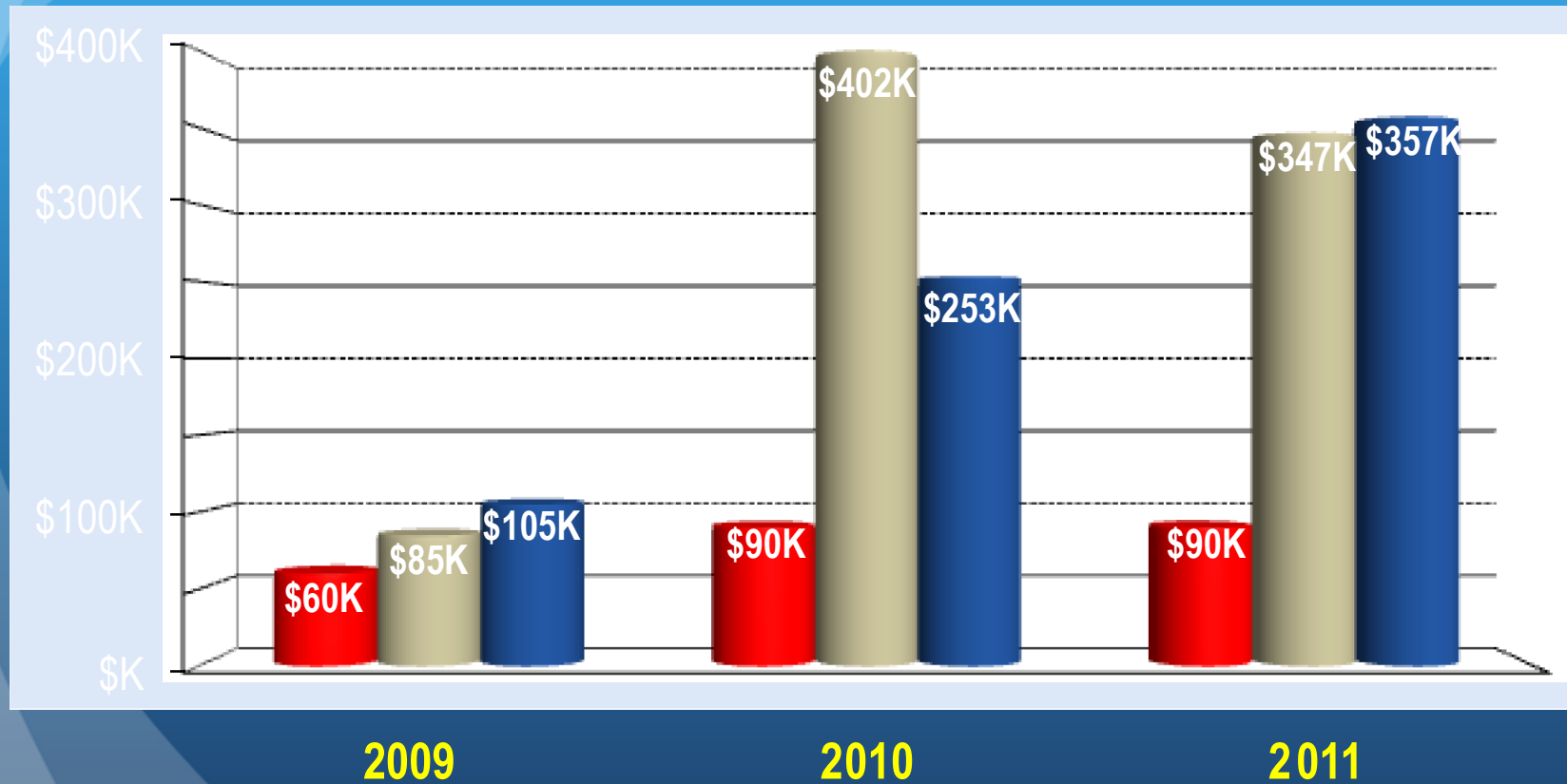
Results: Total Expenditures



Results: Funding By Source

■ State ■ Municipal ■ Private

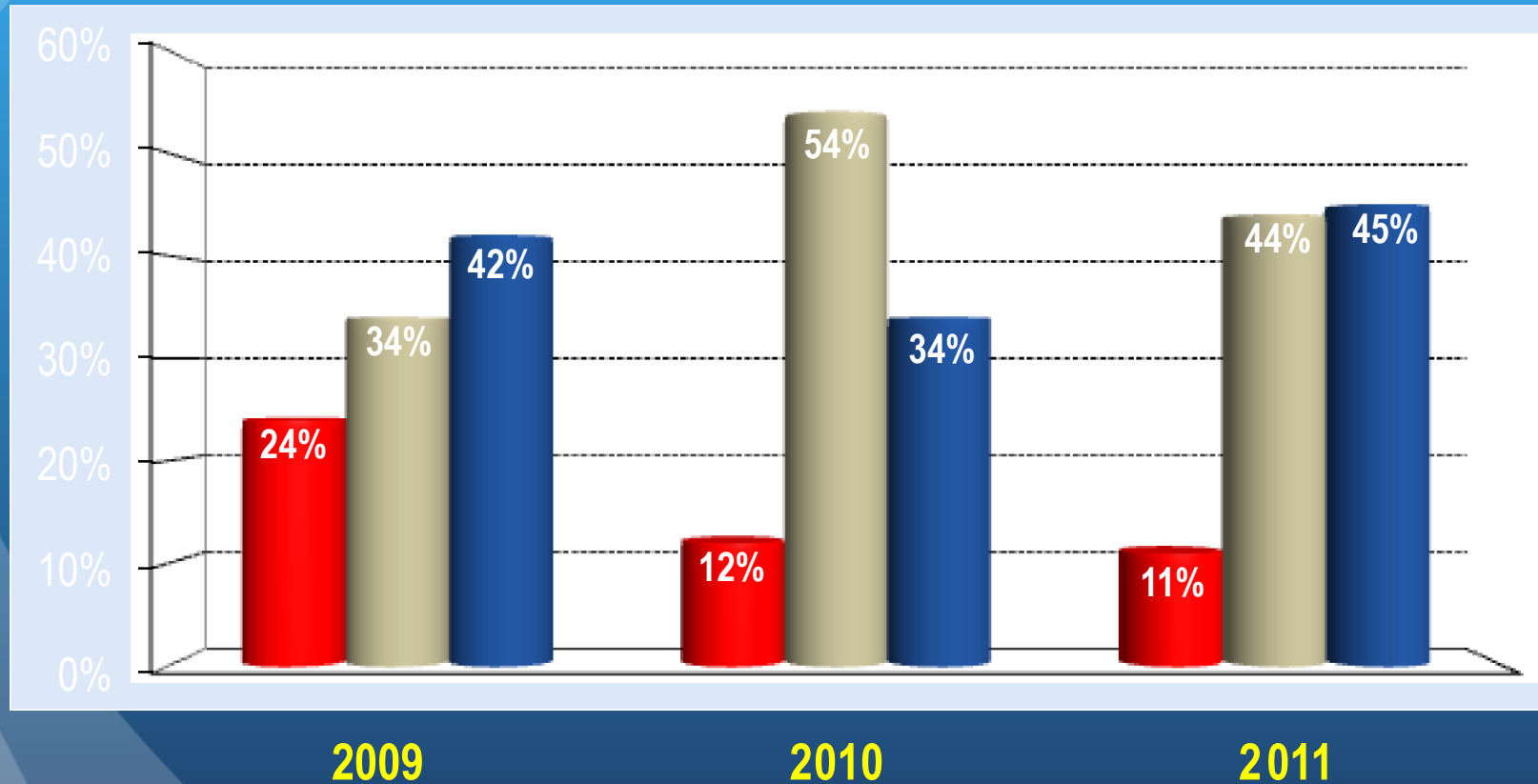
Annual Funding By Source



Results: Funding By Percentage

■ State ■ Municipal ■ Private

Annual Funding By Source



Analysis: State Funding

- NHDES Exotic Species Program funded by \$7.50 from each NH boat registration fee; allocated by statute:
 - \$4.00 for prevention and research
 - \$3.00 for administration, education, supplies, and **control**
 - \$0.50 for the Clean Lakes Program
- From 2009 to 2011, NHDES funding for control activities:
 - Increased 50% in dollars
 - Helped fund 13 control projects in 2009, 16 projects in 2010, and 31 projects in 2011
 - Dropped from 24% to 11% of total funding for milfoil control
- NHDES has 1 DASH unit and 2 divers available for part-time performance of milfoil control activities



Analysis: Municipal Funding

- Some town funding is secured by specific warrant articles that must be approved by voters each year
- Some towns fund milfoil control activities through general appropriations to Conservation Commissions
- Towns with moderately advanced milfoil control programs will often establish budget line items to fund activities each year
- Towns with more advanced milfoil control programs establish Milfoil Trust Funds and Milfoil Committees to manage and fund milfoil control activities with Board of Selectmen approval
- Municipal funding has increased 4-fold+ and ranged between 34% and 54% of total funding during 2009-2011



Analysis: Private Funding

- Dues paid by members of lake and home owners associations
- Special assessments to association members for milfoil control costs
- Partnerships with lake marinas, camps, and other businesses to solicit funds
- A wide variety of private fundraising techniques including yard sales, bake sales, “dive parties”, direct mail and door-to-door solicitation campaigns, charitable gaming nights, kayak raffles, soliciting matching contributions from residents’ employers, etc.
- Private funding has increased 3-fold and averaged 40% of total funding during 2009-2011



Results: Other Trends

- Lakes with strong local associations have greater success in fund raising both privately and from municipalities - Lake Wentworth Assoc. and Lake Wentworth Foundation raised >\$200,000 in 2011 using modern marketing and fundraising techniques
- 48% of milfoil infestations (30 of 63 lakes) are not being controlled due to a lack of organized groups or fundraising activities (corroborated by DES records showing 27% of infested lakes have no local efforts or only DES efforts)
- 91% of milfoil-infested rivers lack any organized local approach to controlling infestations, other than limited efforts by DES divers



Prospects for State Funding



- In 2010, members of the EAWS Committee proposed legislation to add \$10 to boat registration fees that would be dedicated to milfoil control grants



- The bill was “dead on arrival” with current philosophy that “tax” and “fee” are unacceptable 3-letter words



- Yet, the State owns NH lakes and rivers and the land underneath them ... but asks towns and residents to pay to remove invasive weeds from State waters



- And, a UNH / Antioch study showed that a decline in water clarity (e.g., from choking invasive weed growth) would cause tourism-related losses of \$51 million in sales, \$18 million in tax revenue, and 800 jobs

What Can We Do?

- Dialogue with experts from other States to learn how they are funding efforts to control invasive weeds
- Compile fundraising and legal tips and techniques to assist towns and lake associations on how to energize and optimize invasive weed control activities and fundraising
- Increase awareness of this issue and recruit / solicit funding from new stakeholders that benefit from high-quality, weed-free lakes and rivers in New Hampshire
- Raise public awareness and generate voter support to encourage state legislators to pass bills that provide stable, long-term funding to manage invasive species in State-owned water bodies



Credits

- This study was commissioned and managed by the Ossipee Lake Alliance
- Our thanks to Bianco Professional Association for designing and conducting the survey
- Questions? Comments?
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