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### **PROBLEMATIC WATER WEED CLOGS RIVERSIDE PARK'S LAGOON**

**June 6, 2017** - Currently, the Lagoon in Riverside Park is experiencing a water weed that is clogging up the recreational use of the Lagoon, as the City of Beloit patiently waits to obtain a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources before they can remedy the problem.

**EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL**, is a leafy water plant that is commonly found in shallow water basins, reservoirs, lakes, and ponds in over 30 states, including over 400 lakes in Wisconsin. In nutrient-rich lakes it can form thick underwater stands of tangled stems and vast mats of vegetation at the water's surface. In shallow areas the plant can interfere with water recreation such as boating, fishing, and swimming. The plant's floating canopy can also crowd out important native water plant life. **EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL** is considered an invasive species and is believed to have been accidentally introduced from Eurasia in the 1940's. It's unknown how it was introduced, but two theories exist as to how it may have entered North America: 1.) it escaped from an aquarium, or 2.) it was brought in when it may have been attached to commercial or private boats.

Stems of **EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL** are long, slender, branching, hairless, and become leafless toward the base. Stems grow to the water surface, usually extending 3 to 10 feet, but may grow as much as 33 feet in length and frequently form dense mats on the surface, as it currently appears within the Riverside Lagoon. Due to the abundance of this water plant, it may create a challenge when renting one of the paddle boats from the Lagoon Concessions. Basically considered a mere nuisance for recreational water activities, Eurasian Watermilfoil is considered non-harmful in any fashion, and may actually serve as good spawning areas for many variety of fish. However, the City of Beloit is actively seeking a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in order to properly treat the water to reduce and/or eliminate this invasive plant and restore the recreational activities in the Lagoon. Meanwhile, we are simply hoping the public remains patient and continue to enjoy many of the other amenities within Riverside Park.

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