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Did you know mechanical harvesting of aquatic plants also removes phosphorus?

Aquatic plants provide several ecosystem services such as habitat, food, cover and shading, temperature moderation, and nutrient uptake and sequestration. For this reason, a strategic aquatic plant harvesting plan on Kohlman Lake in Minnesota used mechanical harvesting conservatively. The plant mass removed from the lake was about 14% of the peak mass that would be present without harvesting.



The effect was that harvesting removed 24% of the total phosphorus (TP) captured by aquatic plants and this accounted for 4% of the TP load derived from external sources. Data from this study suggest that harvesting certainly presents cost-effective opportunities for TP removal, and has the potential to factor into dynamic and creative watershed management approaches. Reprinted with permission from NALMS. The original article published in *Lakeline*, Volume 40, No. 4 Winter 2020.

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