

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/doclake/choke.htm>



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## **Vegetation is starting to choke the lake in front of my camp. What should be considered?**

Vegetation choking the shorefront is a complex question. There are areas of waterbodies where vegetation is going to thrive naturally (e.g., shallow, calm cove type situations). It matters whether vegetation is typical to Maine's lakes or is a species considered invasive. If the species are natural, and the homeowner would like to clear a path for recreational purposes, he or she would need to apply for a [NRPA permit](#). If there is a question as to whether the species may be [invasive](#), contact the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program [VLMP](#) at 225-2070, explain the phenomenon, and perhaps submit a sample of the plant for identification. If the species is determined invasive, Scott Williams will contact Roy Bouchard at DEP.

**Related page:** [How to report invasive plants.](#)

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## **06-096 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

### **Chapter 305: PERMIT BY RULE**

**1. Introduction.** A "permit by rule" or "PBR", when approved by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), is an approval for an activity that requires a permit under the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA). Only those activities described in this chapter may proceed under the PBR process. A PBR activity will not significantly affect the environment if carried out in accordance with this chapter, and generally has less of an impact on the environment than an activity requiring an individual permit. A PBR satisfies the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) permit requirement and Water Quality Certification requirement.

“**Chapter 6. Movement of rocks or vegetation**” deals with the removal of unwanted vegetation.

For more information on the Department of Environmental Protection's Chapter 305: Permit By Rule please visit:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/rules/NRPA/2006/305.pdf>

For a direct link to the PBR Form please visit:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docstand/nrpa/pbrform.doc>

## VALUE OF AQUATIC PLANTS

**Aquatic plants are a natural part of most lake communities** and provide many benefits to fish, wildlife, and people. In lakes, life depends--directly or indirectly--on water plants. They are the primary producers in the aquatic food chain, converting the basic chemical nutrients in the water and soil into plant matter, which becomes food for all other life.

### **Aquatic plants serve many important functions:**

#### **Provide fish food**

More food for fish is produced in areas of aquatic vegetation than in areas where there are no plants. Insect larvae, snails, and freshwater shrimp thrive in plant beds.

#### **Offer fish shelter**

Plants provide shelter for young fish. Bass, sunfish, and yellow perch usually nest in areas where vegetation is growing. Northern pike use aquatic plants, too, by spawning in marshy and flooded areas in early spring.

#### **Improve water clarity and quality**

Certain water plants, like bulrushes, can absorb and break down polluting chemicals. Nutrients used by aquatic plants for growth are not available to algae. This reduces algae abundance improving water clarity. Aquatic plants also maintain water clarity by preventing the re-suspension of bottom sediments. Algae, which thrive on dissolved nutrients, can become a nuisance when too many submerged water plants are destroyed.

#### **Protect shorelines and lake bottoms**

Aquatic plants, especially rushes and cattails, dampen the force of waves and help prevent shoreline erosion. Submerged aquatic plants also weaken wave action and help stabilize bottom sediment.

#### **Provide food and shelter for waterfowl**

Many submerged plants produce seeds and tubers (roots), which are eaten by waterfowl. Bulrushes, sago pondweed, wild celery, and wild rice are especially important duck foods. Submerged plants also provide habitat to many insect species and other invertebrates that are, in turn, important foods for brooding hens and migrating waterfowl.

#### **Improve aesthetics**

The visual appeal of a lakeshore often includes aquatic plants, which are a natural, critical part of a lake community. Plants such as water lilies, arrowhead, and pickerelweed have flowers or leaves that many people enjoy.

#### **Provide economic value**

As a natural component of lakes, aquatic plants support the economic value of all lake activities. Maine has a huge tourism industry centered on lakes and the recreation they support.

*Information on this page was taken from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website:  
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/shorelandmgmt/apg/value.html>*