

Controlled Methods Test (CMT) – Weekly Update: August 4, 2022

This is your weekly update regarding the Controlled Methods Test (CMT) sent to you from the TKPOA Owner Communication Working Group (comprised of volunteer Homeowners). We are committed to providing our fellow TKPOA Homeowners with these weekly updates, until the time that the turbidity curtains are removed.

KEY POINTS:

- **Triclopyr nightmare takes a turn for the worse. The trend over the last two weeks makes a Labor Day reopening a stretch without a change in permit conditions or degradation rates.**
- **Weeds are at nuisance levels in many areas, but this is NOT a reflection of test efficacy.**
- **Delay in curtain removal puts “combo” site treatments (Sites #10-15) at risk (map attached).**

WQ Town Hall Forum: Thanks to the 50+ homeowners who attended the Water Quality Town Hall Forum last Thursday. We had a thorough review of the factors that have led to our Triclopyr “nightmare”, and a lively discussion on water quality futures. It is clear that members want to see a long-range plan, the role the circulation system will play, and what this might cost. This will be the focus for the next WQ Town Hall Forum. Date to be decided in the future.

Weeds – The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly:

“The Ugly”: Our lagoons are generally in bad shape, with weeds at or near the surface in many areas. There are also numerous fragments due to boat traffic (both recreational craft outside the curtains, and work boats inside the treatment areas). This is **NOT** a reflection on the test. We are at least one month behind on harvesting and fragment collection this summer. This impacts all areas outside the curtains, as well as in the control sites and the large areas between treatment locations. The TKPOA Board has approved changes to our pay and benefits ladder, and our new WQ Manager, Kristine Lebo, is starting to get some traction rebuilding the harvesting team. Harvesting schedules will be updated and published weekly and are available on <https://tkpoa.com/>.

“The Bad”: The triclopyr nightmare has taken a turn for the worse. Degradation rates have fallen off in the last 14 days, to a level that would push reopening beyond the Labor Day weekend, if they persist. The project team continues to develop and pursue all options to work around the permit conditions (see below). The long delay in curtain removal could end up severely impacting the treatment of the “combo” sites (where herbicides are applied along the shoreline out to the dock line and UV-C is used to treat the fairways). Current weed density and high turbidity levels make UV-C treatment much less effective, and we are still weeks from being able to begin. These treatments would ideally have been made either before herbicide application or about two weeks after. Equipment readiness precluded these options this year.

“The Good”: The treatments – both herbicides and UV-C – do appear to work as expected. It is challenging for the casual observer to see this, as the treatment areas are very small in the context of the 170 acres of lagoon. Endothall produces the most visible impact, knocking back all three target species. Endothall was only used at 40% of maximum dose in five acres represented

by Sites #1-2-3, as well as along the shorelines of Sites 10, 11 and 15. The UV-C treatment in Sites 22, 23 and 24 also produced visible results in the navigation channels, but the UV-C boat cannot treat the shoreline or around docks. As triclopyr is specific to Eurasian Watermilfoil, homeowners are probably observing weeds in Sites #5, 8 and 9 as Coontail, Curlyleaf Pondweed and some of the natives. Yet, the triclopyr treatments are expected to add value to the test, as this herbicide is systemic and might prove to be a more long-lasting solution in areas with significant Milfoil infestation. The first “official” progress report will be published by the technical team by 8/31.

Also in the “good news” department, note that there will be neither boating restrictions nor closures in years 2 and 3 of the CMT!

Triclopyr “RL”: As noted above, the project team continues to work on a number of options to address the triclopyr degradation. While it might be too late to save this summer, we must find a path to a shorter “closure window” for triclopyr or it can’t be considered as a future tool. Former WQC Chair and CMT architect, Andy Kopania, has taken a hard look at the lab results, and might have a scientifically sound argument for changing the “RL” (reporting limit) that gates curtain removal. In a nutshell, labs typically establish detection limits by testing the target chemical in pure, deionized water. The rub here is that the samples the lab is processing (on a near daily basis) are made up of turbid, sediment-laden lagoon water, making measurement less reliable. It will take some time to do the research and work through the agencies, but this looks like a promising argument to revisit the “RL”. It’s also a plausible explanation for the curious results we are observing now that virtually all sites are at very low levels of triclopyr, 1-5ppb.

For additional information and updates, please refer to the TKPOA Water Quality website at www.keysweedsmanagement.org or follow us on Instagram at @tahoekeyspoa_wq. You can also contact the TKPOA Association Office, at 530-542-6444, Monday – Friday from 8:30AM – 4:30PM, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00AM – 2:00PM.

If you have questions, contact the TKPOA Water Quality Department directly by calling 530-542-6444, ext. 275 Monday – Friday from 8:30AM – 4:30PM or by email at waterquality@tahoekeyspoa.org