

The area of Annabessacook Lake (Monmouth, Maine) closed to bait dealers using seines is expanded for 2017. Use of bait traps is not affected by this closure.

The invasive aquatic plant variable leaf water milfoil (VLM, *Myriophyllum heterophyllum*) was confirmed in Annabessacook Lake in September 2014. Several native species of milfoil also grow in Annabessacook.

Plant surveys conducted by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection indicated VLM was initially located in the relatively shallow water just east of the channel leading from the Waugan Road boat ramp. Surveys and removal efforts in 2016 indicated the infestation expanded from that area. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is therefore expanding the closed portion of Annabessacook Lake to bait dealers using seines (excluding use of bait/minnow traps). This restriction reduces the likelihood of spreading this invasive aquatic plant within Annabessacook Lake and to other waters.

The closed area, depicted in the cross-hatched area on the attached image, extends from the Waugan Road boat access, to the point located about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile east, then extending north through Big Island to the southern end of the Narrows (see attached map). The majority of the surface area of Annabessacook Lake currently remains open to bait dealers using seines.

This infestation will continue to be closely monitored, but is expected to expand in distribution, resulting in a further expansion of the closure area in the future.

Please contact Francis Brautigam, Fisheries Division Director (287-5263) with questions.