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Blackstone watershed group tackles river weeds

In the summer of 2005, the Blackstone River Watershed Association and several volunteers collaborated to manually extract water chestnut weeds from the West River in Uxbridge. Water Chestnuts are a non-native invasive species, which deteriorates the health of rivers and restricts the amount of the recreational opportunities like boating and fishing.

This year, the Blackstone River Watershed Association was awarded a grant from the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and New England Grassroots Environmental Fund for the harvesting of this species. In mid-June of 2006, Lycott Environmental and the Uxbridge Department of Public Works are providing assistance in the mechanical harvesting of the plant. This effort will help control the invasion from continually spreading along the river.

While a majority of the harvesting will be carried out mechanically, remnants of the water chestnut weeds along the shoreline will need to be manually removed. On July 8, from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., the Blackstone River Watershed Association is conducting a workday to clear the water chestnut weeds along the shoreline of the West River. Residents are encouraged to bring gloves, rubber boots, canoe and kayaks to help the effort.

If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, please contact Nicole Wenger at 508-944-5886 or via email at www.thebrwa.org.

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