

Lemon Fair Insect Control District 2019 Annual Letter

The Lemon Fair Insect Control District (“LFICD”) provides mosquito larval survey and treatment services in the Lemon Fair River valley for Bridport, Cornwall and Weybridge. Larvicide treatment is provided by hand or aerially following an analysis of conditions and in consultation with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture (“VAA”) which provides funding for our field analysis and treatment. We do not conduct adult mosquito treatment but instead attempt to destroy larvae before they become adults. Additional information (including monthly meeting minutes) is available on our website (<http://www.lficd.org/>)

VAA Funding Changes

Until June 30, 2018 the VAA had a flexible funding policy which permitted reimbursement levels above the annual budget of \$140,000 for both the LFICD and the Brandon, Leicester, Salisbury, Goshen and Pittsford (“BLSG”) mosquito districts. This policy relied on carrying over unused allocations from previous years. For example, we received \$114,000 from the VAA between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018 which was more than our 50% (\$70,000) share of the VAA annual budget. As of July 1, 2018, there are no further unused allocations from previous years. Consequently, the VAA will no longer reimburse the LFICD and the BLSG more than \$70,000 each.

During last year’s funding discussions, the VAA was considering changing the reimbursement methodology from a 50% split to one with a “base” amount (TBD) plus an allocation determined by treatable acres. BLSG and LFICD have 7,000 and 1,600 treatable acres respectively. This change (presently tabled) would likely result in a further reduction in the amounts available for LFICD reimbursement. We are also at risk if additional mosquito control districts are formed and the VAA annual budget is not increased from the present \$140,000.

Merger Discussions with the BLSG

The VAA has encouraged us to merge with the BLSG given the VAA’s limited resources and the potential for savings with a merged district. An example of a merger savings would be the per acre aerial treatment cost which declines significantly with the size of the treatment. One problem is that the LFICD and BLSG rarely need treatment on the same day. An additional consideration is that the BLSG provides both adult and larvicide treatment. It is unlikely that the LFICD towns need or want adulticide treatment. The BLSG has indicated that they are not interested in merging unless our three towns are willing to sign up for both larviciding and adulticiding. While we will work with the BLSG whenever possible, a merger is not likely in the near term given the issue noted above.

2018 Field Report from Craig Zondag, Field Coordinator

“The 2018 mosquito season was relatively quiet. The annual spring flood produced a minimal number of hatches. Isolated pockets of larval activity warranted four hand treatments (three in the Lemon Fair flood plain and one in a Clay Plain Forest). Total treated acreage was

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approximately 4.5 acres. Post treatment surveys demonstrated treatment effectiveness. Rain events throughout the season never yielded more than a half inch per event. This rain either was soaked up or rapidly taken up by vegetation. Soils did not saturate long enough for pools to form for successive mosquito hatches to take place.

A seasonal mosquito hatch and emergence took place June 13 through the 23rd. The species is a cattail habitat species and represented nearly 50% of 17,000 mosquitoes that were trapped in the light traps (2017 light traps yielded 32,000 mosquitoes.) This cattail species is known as *Coquillettidia perturbans*. It's hard to know when this species will emerge since larvae are very difficult to collect to determine logical thresholds for treatment. It's a species that warrants our attention because it's a nuisance species and it is a potential vector for West Nile Virus. We are looking at treatment models from other mosquito control districts from Minnesota to Connecticut as to how to be most effective in suppression of this species.

We tested the efficacy of the FOUR STAR 45 Day Briquettes in one of the Bridport Clay Plain forests. The application of this product requires post treatment surveys up to 45 days. We found the product to be slow acting, but 70%-80% effective in preventing mosquitoes from developing into adults. This product is easy to use and a good alternative to hand treatments with Bti granules.

We continued our outreach and educational program with our July 21 open house, mosquito complaint hotline, educational posters, news articles and our web site. The web site contains larval data which triggers our treatment program. It also contains adult mosquito trapping counts which helps us assess treatment effectiveness and spot any potential problem areas. Both sets of data are by date, species and location. Feel free to consult the website to track mosquito activity at various locations in the Lemon Fair Valley."

2019

Challenges for 2019 include living with our reduced VAA reimbursement availability and finding a way to economically treat acreage which is less than our aerial larviciding service's 1,000-acre minimum but greater than 5 to 10 acres we can treat by hand. The BLSG has indicated that they would work with us to treat larger areas using their amphibious vehicle.

Board and Staff

Bridport board members: Dinah Bain (Treasurer), Chuck Burkins (Vice Chair), Alissa Shethar.
Cornwall board members: Chris Chapline (Secretary), David Dodge (Chair), Wendy Lynch.
Weybridge board members: Melissa Lourie and Gary Rodes.

Our 2018 field personnel were Craig Zondag (Coordinator), Meg Madden (Asst Coordinator), Dan Sullivan (Field Tech), and Dave Stankosky (Lab Tech). We thank all of them for their hard work.