

Summary of Public Comments, Responses, and Plan Modifications to the Draft 2020 South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Comments and Revisions:

From: [GD](#)

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Fwd: Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2020 11:35:36 AM

I would like to express my concerns regarding the management of aquatic plants in the lakes of South Carolina. For years we have had an all out assault on aquatic vegetation for what? The health of our lakes is deplorable. Citizens of SC have a fish consumption advisory which is wrong, for starters. It has been proven that aquatic vegetation helps to clean water and remove toxins such as mercury. It would make sense that we encourage some aquatic vegetative growth to help clean our water as water is the key to life. We, as South Carolinians, eat and drink from these bodies of water and we are relying on this committee to ensure that we have the healthiest lakes and bodies of water possible.

Furthermore, the FERC permit requires 10% aquatic vegetation, it is my understanding that this committee has tried to interpret that as to include herbaceous vegetation such as cypress and gum trees, not just the grasses in the lake. The 10% should mean only grass to water ratio, not trees to be included in this ratio. I believe there is a distinct difference between grasses and trees here and it is important that the letter of the law is followed. The committee has used both chemical methods and grass carp in the past. Recent studies show the health of the carp already existing in the system is poor. Why is it poor? In my travels around the state, I notice a lack of food for these fish which means they are starving. The solution to this is to not release more fish but to stop releasing fish as they have more than sufficiently done their job. They have done their job. Concerning chemical control of vegetation on the waters in question, I would request that we utilize selective chemicals that target the problems, not broad spectrum chemicals such as di-quat which not only kill the invasive species but also the native desirable species. I think this important for the health of our waters. Please alter your weed elimination program and allow for more good vegetation to grow in the lakes, that will allow for healthier water for the birds, fish, and humans.

In closing I ask that this committee give serious concern and consideration to the waters of this state and their importance and impact to the people of this state.

Sincerely,

GD

From: [ES](#)

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2020 11:40:44 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am of the opinion as a South Carolinian that we need to increase aquatic plant life in our rivers and lakes. Our focus needs to be on water quality and wildlife rather than energy production, boating and other recreational human enjoyment. I say that as a hunter and fisherman. We need to have a healthy balance between meeting human and wildlife needs. The Santee lake system is what concerns me most when comparing the budget for just those lakes (although I do recognize their sizes) to all other bodies of water in SC. It just doesn't

seem right. Something about it isn't adding up and I've talked to numerous folks that tend to agree. I feel like wildlife habitat and specifically wintering habitat for migratory birds should be a priority rather than an afterthought. I would really like to see the amount of aquatic plant life increased with less chemical use. I feel certain there should be a way to accommodate human needs without sacrificing wildlife habitat. The current management plan seems to favor humans to wildlife and that is unacceptable. As the saying goes, "Wildlife would thrive in this world without humans but humans would not even survive this world without wildlife."

Thank you,

Sent from iPhone of:

ES

From: **DS**

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2020 10:13:37 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I would like to express my concerns regarding the management of aquatic plants in the lakes of South Carolina. For years we have had an all out assault on aquatic vegetation but for what? The health of our lakes is deplorable. Everybody of water under this management plan has a fish consumption advisory. It has been proven that aquatic vegetation helps to clean water and remove toxins such as mercury. It would make sense that we encourage some aquatic vegetative growth to help clean our water as water is the key to life. We, as South Carolinians, eat and drink from these bodies of water and we are relying on this committee to ensure that we have the healthiest lakes and bodies of water possible.

Furthermore, the FERC permit requires 10% aquatic vegetation, it is my understanding that this committee has tried to interpret that as to include herbaceous vegetation such as cypress and gum trees. I believe there is a distinct difference and it is important that the letter of the law is followed. The committee has used both chemical methods and grass carp in the past. Recent studies show the health of the carp already existing in the system is poor. Why is it poor? In my travels around the state, I notice a lack of food for these fish which means they are starving. The solution to this is to not release more fish but to stop releasing fish as they have more than sufficiently done their job. They have in essence eaten themselves out of house and home. Concerning chemical control of vegetation on the waters in question, I would request that we utilize selective chemicals that target the problems not broad spectrum chemicals such as di-quat which not only kill the invasive species but also the native desirable species. I think this important for the health of our waters.

In closing I ask that this committee give serious concern and consideration to the waters of this state and their importance and impact to the people of this state.

Sincerely,

DS

From: **PT**

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: SCDNR Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 11:22:17 AM

Hello Chris,

I want to submit my input to oppose stocking grass carp and aquatic vegetation poisons in our lakes.

Grass carp are not selective when it comes to feeding on submerged aquatic vegetation. I understand they "prefer" hydrilla, which seems to be non-existent in Lake Murray, so why continue stocking? The flood of 2015 gave Lake Murray an opportunity to "reset" and allow native SAV an opportunity to flourish and then SCDNR and SCEG / Dominion approved a 10' winter draw down to kill it! That winter kill decimated our now native Valisneria grass beds and the invertebrates and crawfish that wintered there. Two years ago I could fill 5 crawfish traps set in the Val beds, this past Summer I caught 2 crawfish from 5 traps.

We are losing woody shoreline vegetation and our islands are receding into the lake due to large amounts of waste from cormorant roosts as well as higher lake water levels contributing to erosion. We desperately need submerged aquatic vegetation to help filter non-source point pollution that I see pouring into our lakes after every rainfall. SAV will also dampen wave action as well as filter pollutants which I am certain are naturally contributing to the substantial increase in SAV growth, especially here on Lake Murray.

We are poisoning our waterways with chemicals, oils and pollutants. Folks that buy homes on our inland lakes need to understand the impact that they're having on our water quality.

Washing cars, fertilizing lawns, mosquito spray prevention, pesticides, fuel and oil spills, septic and sewer systems leaking and leeching into our lakes ALL

Unfettered development is also sending millions of gallons of surface water containing nonpoint source pollutants into our waterways yet we continue to add more chemicals to poison submerged aquatic vegetation deemed invasive, nuisance or noxious. Good or bad, we need submerged aquatic vegetation in order to filter and clean our waterways or we're going to wind up like Florida with vast areas of algae blooms and fish kills.

I hope that you and your family are doing well and I appreciate all that you do for SC. Please consider making a change to tilt the balance in favor of SAV in our waterways versus a handful of complaints from waterfront "homeowners" who do not "own" our lakes. I would love to see 10% SAV coverage in Lake Murray!

Thank you,

PT

From: JW

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: 2020 aquatic plant management plan

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 10:32:45 AM

Chris-

Please consider allowing native vegetation to return in Santee Cooper. The last report I received on grass carp was that they were unhealthy and poor based on the last survey, showing they were already overstocked based on the vegetation in the lake. I simply don't believe there are a 100+ acres of hydrilla located between Angers and Russellville, although I have seen some elodea. Native vegetation is very important to our lakes as a fishery and for waterfowl habitat, as well as water quality. Please consider NOT restocking anymore grass carp. I feel like a broken record with this, as I say it each year.

Thanks,

JW

From: KC

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: savs

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 7:49:20 AM

I would like to take a moment to express my thoughts on the management of aquatic grasses/submerged vegetation in south Carolinas lakes and reservoirs . Between the over stocking of grass carp and constant spraying of a host of chemicals,we are denuding our public waterways of all beneficial food for waterfowl that used to come to our state in large numbers . And while I recognize weather plays a part in this,still states to our south still winter large numbers of waterfowl . Our state is becoming a “desert” of sorts , with all of our quality sav’s either being eaten by carp , which are undersized and below health standards (which as you well know,means they are running out of food because they are overstocked) or being constantly sprayed by harmful chemicals such as di quat . Exclusion cages have shown that when carp are non existant or numbers kept low,our high quality native sav’s will regenerate . I would ask that our native submerged aquatics be given a chance by cutting back or eliminating carp stockings and spraying .

Thank you

KC

From: PH

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Cc: WG

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 11:32:51 AM

As a lifelong South Carolinian, I want to see our Natural resources flourish in our state for the enjoyment of our citizens. In the management of our lakes, I feel as if the pendulum has swung too far to recreational boating while forgetting about the fish and wildlife that bring people from across the country to experience the unique character of Santee Cooper Country. Here are a list of ideas that I think should be considered.

1. All carp captured have shown as below the standard for health , set as an indices of 1. In other words they are over stocking them and the fish are starving.
2. Carp exclusion cages are showing that highly desired native submerged aquatic vegetation can and will regenerate when carp numbers are kept low.
3. FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation , herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include as such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.
4. Where spraying is required - DI Quat is non selective and moderately to highly toxic to many species from humans to inverts and ducks. Procella is selective and virtually non toxic per the ratings. Push for a switch over, just a far safer chem in general especially as to toxicity.

Thank you,

PH

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Draft Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 9:11:59 PM

To the Aquatic Plant Management Council,

I am the founder of the Carolina Wildlife Syndicate of which currently has 6,700 members and growing.

We offer that you decrease your carp stockings by half and use only selective lesser than moderate toxic rated herbicides only where necessary and only upon non useful invasive species.

Furthermore, we request a copy of your most recent triploid carp health indices research and

findings.

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Respectfully,

DS

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: APMC Draft Plan

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 5:58:06 PM

Take into account that the grass carp are eating juvenile vallisneria plants faster than they can sprout.

How are native plants supposed to grow when non-native, non-selective fish are annually stocked, and prohibit plants from reaching maturity?

Also, Santee Cooper WMA, Hatchery WMA, and Potato Creek Hatchery Waterfowl Area would benefit the most if DNR could just forget how to get to these places for about 7-10 years. I can assure you if that were to happen, they would once again become the top producing Category 2 WMAs in the state.

best regards,

C

From: **MG**

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Submerged Aquatic Vegetation is not all bad

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 5:48:07 PM

I am writing as a lifelong resident of SC, hunter and fisherman who also owns a family pleasure boat. Recent years have seen a noticeable decline in waterfowl and fish stocks in our lakes. The main reason for this decline in my opinion is the ongoing war on aquatic vegetation being waged by DNR and more specifically by this group. All aquatic vegetation is not bad. Submerged Aquatic vegetation is important to fish, waterfowl, and water quality.

Continued stocking of grass carp is causing the bottom of our lakes to look like deserts. Areas that were formerly covered in beneficial SAV are now barren sand or clay with nothing but algae and clams surviving.

Fish and waterfowl need SAV- and they need the SAV your grass carp are feeding on.

Today we are faced with Crested Floating heart, Water Hyacinths, and now even giant salvinia.

These invasive species are thriving because they have no competition from native SAV. Why? Your carp have eaten it all.

Cormorants are thriving, decimating our fish populations, and killing cypress trees. They are thriving because there is no vegetation for young fish to hide in. Try hiding from a predator in the open desert- it is almost impossible.

Waterfowl that used to flock to our lakes by the thousands are staying on private waters where SAV and other foods exist. Just recently a private landowner group near me released too many grass carp in what was once a beautiful clear pond full of fish and waterfowl. It is now a muddy, barren dead pond, much like Lakes Marion and Moultrie.

I understand pleasure boaters not wanting SAV all over the lakes, but to completely strip our lakes of all but trees and non carp attractive invasives is just plain wrong. It is my understanding there is to be at least 10% of the lake area in SAV, but other than the above listed invasives, I challenge anyone to find any SAV growing where grass carp can reach. Trees and sawgrass are not SAV.

A specific example would be the Hatchery WMA on Lake Moultrie, which in the past was a wonderful spawning ground for many species of fish, on which grew acres and acres of vegetation where

waterfowl thrived. Today it is an empty, muddy stump field, with nothing of value to any desirable species. Nobody water skis, or jet skis in areas like this, why must they be barren and lifeless? In my opinion, there should be a balance between quality SAV habitat for fish and waterfowl and a totally vegetation free ski area. Lakes Marion and Moultrie, upper Lake Murray, and other areas currently being ravaged by grass carp should be allowed to have native and beneficial SAV. With current Carp stocking levels, there is no way for any desirable SAV to grow, much less thrive. Since previous letters written in opposition to published plans have not appeared in your reports, it will be interesting to see if once again only letters/comments which agree with or encourage the decimation of our SAV are shown.

JG

From: NH

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management Plan Comments

Date: Friday, January 31, 2020 9:58:35 AM

1. All carp captured have shown as below the standard for health , set as an indices of 1. In other words they are over stocking them and the fish are starving.
2. Carp exclusion cages are showing that highly desired native submerged aquatic vegetation can and will regenerate when carp numbers are kept low.
3. FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation , herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include as such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.
4. Where spraying is required - DI Quat is non selective and moderately to highly toxic to many species from humans to inverts and ducks. Procella is selective and virtually non toxic per the ratings. Push for a switch over, just a far safer chem in general especially as to toxicity.

NH

From: TB

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Carp hurt our wildlife

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:34:29 AM

As a voting and tax paying citizen, a recreational boater, a fisherman and a waterfowl enthusiast of which utilizes the Santee Cooper Lake System, do hereby strongly request that the SCDNR stop the stockings of non-native grass carp. These carp consume SAV in shallow areas that are not utilized by pleasure boaters. However, these areas are vital to our fish and waterfowl species. these carp have degraded the habitat for our Wildlife species. Stop stocking the nonnative grass carp!

From: TB

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Stop stocking the carp

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:33:23 AM

As a voting and tax paying citizen, a recreational boater, a fisherman and a waterfowl enthusiast of which utilizes the Santee Cooper Lake System, do hereby strongly request that the SCDNR stop the stockings of non-native grass carp. These carp consume SAV in shallow areas that are not utilized by pleasure boaters. However, these areas are vital to our fish and waterfowl species. these carp have degraded the habitat for our Wildlife species. Stop stocking the nonnative grass carp!

From: TB

To: Aquatic Nuisance Species Program

Subject: Stop the carp

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:29:31 AM

As a voting and tax paying citizen, a recreational boater, a fisherman and a waterfowl enthusiast of which utilizes the Santee Cooper Lake System, do hereby strongly request that the SCDNR stop the stockings of non-native grass carp. These carp consume SAV in shallow areas that are not utilized by pleasure boaters. However, these areas are vital to our fish and waterfowl species. these carp have degraded the habitat for our Wildlife species. Stop stocking the non-native grass carp!

Sincerely, **TB**

From: CD

To: Aquatic Nuisance Species Program

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 9:44:53 PM

To whom it may concern,

As a concerned sportsman residing in Berkeley County, SC, I would like to address some of my concerns as they pertain to the Aquatic Plant Management Plan. My concerns of these issues mostly pertain to my local bodies of water: Lake Moultrie and Lake Marion. Over the course of the past two decades we have seen a drastic change developing on the two lakes concerning loss of habitat. Many areas on these

two lakes used to hold large numbers of fish and waterfowl have now diminished into vast underwater deserts of sand flats void of any aquatic vegetation and consequently wildlife. While these areas may be enjoyable to some, most are not. I have seen the emerging efforts this past year to try and revitalize certain areas with test plots for eelgrass. While I appreciate the effort and acknowledge the direction it is hopefully headed, I do believe we can do more and should do more. Ramp up these studies, programs, and introduce more non invasive aquatic vegetation back into our lakes. By continuing to add instead of take away from our environment we will see wonderful results in the way of cleaner water and provide habitat for both fish and waterfowl. I think there should be a better balance of vegetated areas and non vegetated areas. High traffic areas could continue to be treated for invasive plants and kept a little less "native" if you will, while backwater areas should be returned to the thriving wetlands they once were. This would benefit all sportsman of South Carolina and still allow plenty of area for the "pleasure" boaters.

I firmly believe that the stocking of carp into the lakes of South Carolina should be discontinued or at least scaled down. These fish appear to be way over populated as it is and lack many areas to even consume the "invasive" aquatic vegetation. It would also appear that the hydrilla is completely under control, so why continue to allow the stocking of these fish? The effect these fish are having on aquatic environments is devastating.

My last concern would be to limit the amount of harsh chemicals used in controlling aquatic vegetation on the lakes. This can effect numerous amounts of wildlife and isn't completely necessary. There are many alternatives to these harsh chemicals and I believe should be researched further.

I understand fully that Lake Moultrie and Lake Marion were created for the sole purpose of generating power via hydroelectric turbines. These units provide a low cost and reliable form of power, however aquatic vegetation hasn't rendered them useless in the past. I believe most would agree that the lakes have become far more than power generators to the residents and wildlife of South Carolina.

In closing I would just like to reiterate how wonderful it would be to restore these two bodies of water into a diverse environment, friendly to both wildlife and people. I'm hopeful that in the near future we can accomplish this by working together and taking steps in the right direction.

Sincerely,
CD

From: JD

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Aquatic Nuisance Species Comments

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 1:05:36 PM

I am writing to voice my opinion on the removal of aquatic species in our lakes, especially in the upstate, and how I feel it is having negative effects. Those effects include diminishing what could be great migratory waterfowl habitat, introducing harsh chemicals into our water supply, and negative effects on all animal and fish species that benefit from aquatic vegetation. The eradication of these non-native aquatic plants is killing all of the natural vegetation in our lakes. Aquatic vegetation serves as food for migrating waterfowl, especially diving ducks, and serves as shelter for many fish species.

Since I am new to the state, I cannot speak much to the history of the removal and how things once were. However, I've spoken to many lifetime residents who strongly feel the influence to remove all this vegetation is much more sourced from lakeside home owners and pleasure boaters than from science. Both groups want to see the lakes "clean" but in all reality spraying these chemicals to kill naturally growing vegetation is anything but clean. It's disgusting and cannot be having positive effects on our overall environment.

Instead of letting lakeside HOA's pressure you into doing this, please listen to the hunters and anglers who want this stopped. Please consider science over pressure. Our money through licenses, ammo, guns, fishing gear, etc. provides a lot more for conservation efforts and your salary than someone with a nice pontoon boat does. We should have more of a voice and we are united in feeling the way we do about aquatic vegetation.

1] Stop stocking grass carp. Desired native submerged vegetation will regenerate if carp numbers are kept to a minimum. The carp have destroyed all the native vegetation already, no need to stock more. Captured carp have shown to be in poor health, due to starving. They've already decimated all the vegetation and have nothing to eat. There is simply no reason to continue stocking them.

2] Spraying, in my opinion, is reckless and I would rather see mechanical harvesting to remove ONLY non-native vegetation. However, if spraying is going to continue, I would like to see serious consideration of a less toxic chemical such as Procella. That is also a selective herbicide that will not wipe out everything it encounters. Please move towards a less toxic, hopefully non-toxic chemical that will not be harmful to fish, humans, and inverts and will also only target actual invasive species of vegetation.

3] FERC permits require 10% aquatic vegetation retained. Herbaceous is not aquatic so including cypress and gum trees should not be happening. We would like to see the percentage increased to promote habitat for wildlife vs appeasing pleasure boaters.

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Regards,
JD

From: JW

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: 2020 aquatic management plan

Date: Monday, January 27, 2020 3:31:04 PM

Hello- After reading the 2020 draft for LAKE MARION AND MOULTRIE, I have a few comments. Please consider:

1. Please NO CARP. All carp captured have shown as below the standard for health , set as an indices of 1. In other words they are over stocking them and the fish are starving.
2. Carp exclusion cages are showing that highly desired native submerged aquatic vegetation can and will regenerate when carp numbers are kept low.
3. FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation , herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include as such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.
4. Where spraying is required - DI Quat is non selective and moderately to highly toxic to many species from humans to inverts and ducks. Procella is selective and virtually non toxic per the ratings. Please consider Procella when spraying.

JW

From: [AD](#)

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: 2019-2020 Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 11:36:52 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am an avid outdoorsman and spend a large amount of time on the upstate lakes and rivers. I enjoy everything from pleasure boating in the summer on Lake Greenwood to running the rivers from the Enoree, Saluda and even the Santee rivers. I am sending this email as I am opposed to some of the items in the management plan and I think somethings need to change to save our wildlife and fisheries ecosystem. Every lake, river or stream is affected by the treatment of the aquatic plants and I have noticed several native species listed on the management plan. I strongly oppose the spraying or killing of any native vegetation. I also strongly oppose the eradication of hydrilla and would like to see a more management strategy to hydrilla than an eradication of the invasive plant. I fear that complete and total eradication has led to an aggressive approach and has killed large amounts of vegetation and leads to lower water quality and as most of the native SAVs are filters. I feel this strong hate for hydrilla has led to almost the complete eradication of native species in some areas. I applaud the late efforts to use common sense regulation and bring back some science to the treatment but I urge the council to "manage" invasive species and not eradicate.

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AD

From: [AD](#)

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Management Plan

Date: Monday, January 27, 2020 2:03:22 PM

1. All carp captured have shown as below the standard for health , set as an indices of 1. In other words they are over stocking them and the fish are starving.
2. Carp exclusion cages are showing that highly desired native submerged aquatic vegetation can and will regenerate when carp numbers are kept low.

3. FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation , herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include as such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.
4. Where spraying is required - DI Quat is non selective and moderately to highly toxic to many species from humans to inverts and ducks. Procella is selective and virtually non toxic per the ratings. Push for a switch over, just a far safer chem in general especially as to toxicity. I would also like to add that many areas have less and less native vegetation and no existing stands of hydrilla. Yet grass carp are stocked each year and the health of the carp population is down below a 1Places like Lake Greenwood which is basically void of native vegetation finally had some coming back with VAL and yet it was treated. This should not be the case. Our lakes and rivers need vegetation for the health of the ecosystem as well as for better water quality. Let natives thrive and be more selective when treating.

From: AD

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Management Plan

Date: Monday, January 27, 2020 2:02:23 PM

1. All carp captured have shown as below the standard for health , set as an indices of 1. In other words they are over stocking them and the fish are starving.
2. Carp exclusion cages are showing that highly desired native submerged aquatic vegetation can and will regenerate when carp numbers are kept low.
3. FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation , herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include as such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.
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I would also like to add that many areas have less and less native vegetation and no existing stands of hydrilla. Yet grass carp are stocked each year and the health of the carp population is down below a 1Places like Lake Greenwood which is basically void of native vegetation finally had some coming back with VAL and yet it was treated. This should not be the case. Our lakes and rivers need vegetation for the health of the ecosystem as well as for better water quality. Let natives thrive and be more selective when treating.

--

AD

From: KC

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Comment on 2020 Aquatic Plant Management Plan: Alligatorweed in Lake Wylie

Date: Saturday, January 25, 2020 1:42:03 PM

Hello,

My name is Ken Clayton, and I live on Lake Wylie on the North Carolina side. We do have a problem with Alligatorweed in Lake Wylie. I would ask that you put this on your list for Lake Wylie. As you know it is a very prolific species, and left unabated, will only increase in severity. I first noticed it the last of June, 2019. While crossing the Buster Boy bridge (Hwy 49) across Lake Wylie I saw what appeared to be small island where there had been no island previously. This turned out to be a

rather large clump of Alligatorweed floating down the river. Three days later a clump of Alligatorweed appeared at my dock. I am including a picture.

I believe that the local source of this infestation is what is known as the South Folk River, which enters Lake Wylie approximately 1 mile north of the Buster Boy Bridge. Certainly this is in North Carolina, and is having a negative effect to downstream South Carolina waters. It makes sense to me that South Carolina, along with taking steps to control the existing infestation of Alligatorweed in Lake Wylie South Carolina Waters, should contact the North Carolina Aquatic weed Control Program and Duke Energy regarding Alligator Weed in Lake Wylie. As you seem to already know, they currently have a program for Hydrilla (Grass Carp) in Lake Wylie, but nothing for Alligatorweed. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, if you know of a contact in the North Carolina Organization that I could contact I would greatly appreciate that information.

KC

From: GR

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: SCDNR Invasive Aquatic Species program

Date: Saturday, January 25, 2020 10:58:12 AM

Dear Mr. Page,

I am Gerald Rumierz and I live in Tega Cay, SC on lake Wylie. I have been recreating on the lake since coming to the Carolinas in 1974. I currently volunteer with the Catawba Riverkeepers foundation where I assist in maintaining the boats and participate in water quality activities. I am on the lake at least once per week throughout the year. I read the draft of your 2020 Aquatic Plant Management Plan and my overall impression is that you are focused mainly on the waterways way south of NC/SC state line. I would like to have the plan address more aggressively address Lake Wylie and the other lakes along the NC/SC boarder. Lake Wylie is specifically at risk as any NC program results or lack of results immediately impacts the SC area of the lake. I would welcome any information about collaboration between NC and SC on shared water systems.

Specifically I am interested in more information on the infestation of Alligator weed in Lake Wylie. In 2019 we experienced two flooding events which broke loose large amounts of the weed from NC and deposited it all along SC. I had many associates call me for guidance on how to handle a large section of the material lodged at their docks or on their waterfront. You describe recommendations on how to control it but removal is also a big issue and some guidance on this subject would be appreciated.

Thank you,

GR

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Support for the 2020 Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 12:04:05 PM

I am writing to express my full support for the implementation of the 2020 Aquatic Plant Management Plan as proposed. I am a resident of Clarendon County that lives on and enjoys the recreational activities provided by the Santee Lakes.

Thank you for your consideration.

EG

From: DG

To: [Aquatic Nuisance Species Program](#)

Subject: Aquatic Plant Management

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2020 10:21:03 AM

As a home owner on Lake Marion I would like to express my support for the 2020 plan to control aquatic nuisance and invasive plants. I remember well when hydrilla took over Lake Marion and I don't ever want to see that happen again. From what I understand Giant Salvinia and Crested Floating Heart have the same potential. I fully support your 2020 Plan.

DG

Response:

There are several misconceptions that are included in most comments.

1) The triploid carp in the Santee Cooper System are overstocked, not healthy, and starving unless they have an index of 1.

This is simply not true. The index of 1 was created about 6-7 years after the initial stockings, when there was a buffet of 40,000 acres of Hydrilla, which skews the index higher than it probably should be. Studies are currently being done to determine the accuracy of this index. We are trying to keep several age classes of carp in the system to control the current acreage of Hydrilla and ensure it does not get back to a point where large stockings are required to get it back under control. It is this kind of large control stockings that cause the worst damage to the native plant populations.

2) FERC permits require 10 % in aquatic vegetation, herbaceous is NOT aquatic and therefore Cypress and Gum trees should not be included in the 10%. To include such is fraudulent as to permit renewal and requirements.

FERC only requires a management plan for the lakes. The only place that 10% vegetation coverage exists is in a MOU between SCDNR and Santee Cooper. That MOU is currently being modified to include 15% coverage. HERBACOUS: A non-woody plant that has softer stems, branches, and twigs; it is like an herb. Most submersed aquatic plants are herbaceous, and Cypress and Gums are not herbaceous but are definitely aquatic.

3) Where spraying is required - DI Quat is non selective and moderately to highly toxic to many species from humans to inverts and ducks. Procella is selective and virtually non toxic per the ratings. Push for a switch over, just a far safer chem in general especially as to toxicity.

This comment, although poorly worded, is founded in good common sense. Aquatic herbicides are safer, and far less toxic than their terrestrial cousins. There are no aquatic herbicides which are classified as restricted use. When used properly, they are safe and effective. The newer formulations of herbicides introduced to the market in the last 10 years are even more environmentally friendly than some of the older products. The product ProcellaCOR SC is specific to Crested floating heart and Hydrilla and can be utilized to specifically control those invasives without effecting natives like Vallisneria or pondweeds

4) I would also like to add that many areas have less and less native vegetation and no existing stands of hydrilla. Yet grass carp are stocked each year and the health of the carp population is Down.

The 10,000 triploid grass carp being stocked into the Santee Cooper Lakes are below the mortality rate in that system. The overall number of grass carp is less than the year before. The whole process was to slow the loss of carp while having yearly age class fish to take their place and keep a

population that was diverse in age and to reduce those numbers. This decision was more favorable than introducing hundreds of thousands of triploid carp into that system periodically as a reaction to increasing numbers of hydrilla. The goal is for multiple age classes to be in the systems with an overall coverage of 1 triploid carp for every 5-6 surface acres. Hydrilla has been treated with herbicides in Lake Marion, Lake Moultrie, Lake Greenwood, and Lake Murray in 2018 and 2019. See statement 1 concerning the health of the triploid grass carp.

5) It has been proven that aquatic vegetation helps to clean water and remove toxins such as mercury.

Aquatic vegetation has been shown to remove some types of pollution, but I've never seen research that says it removes mercury. There is documentation that shows wetland plants are some of the most integral components in absorbing and reducing certain toxins. That is the major reasoning behind including said components in the MOU between Santee Cooper and SCDNR.