

134th Meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council

Attendance:

Council Members: Chris Page, Willie Simmons, Chad Altman, Bill Marshall, Tammy Lognion, Casey Moorner, Adam Leaphart, Matthew Lawson (phone), Sara Carper (phone)

Guests: Julie Holling, Matthew Puckhaber, Brian Lynch, Allan Stack, Ernie Guerry, Judson Riser, Levi Kaczka, Jim Smith, James Brannon, Jr., David B. Pittman

Location: Belfast WMA, 9830 Highway 56 South, Kinards, SC 29355

Call to Order: 10:10 a.m. 2/26/2020

Minutes:

Chairman Chris Page called to order the 134th Meeting of the South Carolina (SC) Aquatic Plant Management Council (Council or APMC). We have Matthew Lawson on the phone calling in from Table Rock State Park. He asked if Ms. Carper was on the line. She was not but sent us an email while we were on the way up here. We responded when we got here and hopefully, she will be able to join us.

Mr. Page said the first item on the agenda is the minutes of the January 22nd meeting, where we discussed a lot of stuff. You have a copy of those in front of you and we sent them to you. Once again, these minutes are more detailed than most minutes you get. These are almost a transcription, but not quite. It has been reduced slightly. Scientists tend to write too much stuff down, so we can go back to it and look at it. He will take the blame for that. He asked the Council to look at those and when you get to a point where you feel comfortable, he will be ready to accept a motion. Mr. Marshall said he took the practice that was suggested to him one time, which is to search for your name. Anywhere there is a discussion around you, see if it seems accurate to what you remember. He found one place where it looks like there was some wording that needed to be added in. He can just hand this to whoever the keeper is. Mr. Page asked Mr. Marshall to hand it to Ms. Holling. Mr. Marshall said that was to complete the wording in what seemed like an incomplete sentence. He underlined the words that he thinks are a problem.

Ms. Carper called in. Mr. Page thanked her for calling in. We were kind of scrambling to get you some information and were not able to get it to you in a timely manner. Ms. Carper said they did not have any vehicles available for her to drive and thanked us for getting back to her. Mr. Page and Ms. Carper joked about the federal money that the agency should have from the disasters over the last few years that could have purchased some vehicles. He thanked her for being here. He said we just called the meeting to order and are working on the minutes. Mr. Page

said we are truly represented today. He told Ms. Carper that Mr. Lawson is on the line from Table Rock and she is down on the coast, so we are represented from the mountains to the sea.

Mr. Marshall made a motion to accept the minutes with the few edits noted. Ms. Lognion seconded the motion. Mr. Page asked if there was any discussion. There was none. He called for a vote to approve the minutes as written, with minor modifications requested by Mr. Marshall. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Page said he skipped this earlier. He asked everyone to introduce themselves and tell who they are representing, including the Council members on the phone. They did so. Ms. Holling asked if everyone had signed the sign-in sheet. A few had not and it was passed to them.

Mr. Page thanked the members of the public for being here. As a matter of fact, during this period, we are going into public comments. The public comments for the plan are different and we are going to discuss those in a minute. If anybody has anything to say, now is your time, if you would like to speak. Mr. Smith wondered if they are going to do any more spraying or do anything else with the eelgrass in Lake Greenwood. Mr. Page said Greenwood County has been working with that. We have not done much work with them last year, because they have their own little program. They ask us for help every now and then. They had sprayed a little bit of val (eelgrass or *Vallisneria*) around some homeowner's spots. Generally, it was not as bad last year as it was a couple years before that. The plans are, from his understanding, to monitor it and identify where it is restricting homeowners. The general rule for *Vallisneria* in Lake Greenwood is to leave it alone, because it is a native plant and is beneficial to fish and wildlife. Unless it is kind of up in your dock, affecting you getting in and out, or in your little swimming area, you are probably not going to get a lot of it treated. Mr. Smith said he would not have a problem with them doing that, because he knows it is good for the fish and he likes to fish, but not around your property and your dock, so your grandkids cannot swim.

Mr. Page said that is in the plan. He thinks he has a copy of Lake Greenwood right here. Lake Greenwood has slender naiad, *Hydrilla*, water primrose, and *Vallisneria* listed. He kind of hates to list that native species as a problematic species, but it is problematic in some places. It has recommendations on here to treat that val in different places. If there are big enough stocks of it in places, he thinks Santee Cooper (S-C) might be willing to pull some more out. He thinks that worked well for them last year. If you do not know, S-C came up with a crew over a holiday weekend and dug up a lot of that val to replant in the S-C system, because they had some open areas away from homeowners where they needed some more vegetation. It was a little bit cheaper to do that than to go buy it and you have a better idea of whether it will survive. He noted that some of that stuff disappeared in areas where it was not sprayed.

Mr. Smith asked who you contact if you have an area that is in your vicinity that needs to be done. Do you need to contact someone to let them know, so they know where to come? Mr. Page said you need to contact Julie Davis at Greenwood County. They are going to be out surveying and looking. He has walked them through a lot of those places. He noted that there are

going to be some places that need to be treated, and there are going to be some places that we think should not be treated. The Greenwood County staff members and the property owners may not always agree. It is that gray area where we sometimes have problems talking to people and having to deal with them. He gets a call from Ms. Davis when the problem gets too big for her, since she has her own plan, or she really needs help monetarily. It is the same thing with S-C. S-C does their own thing on the S-C lakes. We monitor them through the plan. He talks to Ms. Moorer on a regular basis. We kind of know what each other are doing out there and can often answer questions from the public about the other person's work. When you have a group that is mandated to have that type of personnel and coverage to be able to do that work, we kind of let them do their thing, to a degree. It is still in the plan. He spoke to Ms. Davis about 3 months ago, and she was okay for that period of time.

Mr. Pittman said he had spoken to the gentleman next to him from S-C. Mr. Pittman has property in Union County and Bamberg on South Edisto. He asked if the draft 2020 plan brings into play the management of S-C, the potential for it going to a for profit company, and how that would impact this program. Mr. Page said it does not. Mr. Pittman said that is his biggest concern. Mr. Page said that question has been asked at the higher levels in the agency, but we are kind of shut out of that conversation. Ms. Moorer said that in the bid process, it was stipulated that the lakes would be managed at the same level as S-C manages them now. We do not know who would hold that entity accountable for that. Mr. Lynch said the requirements spelled out in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license are not very detailed, therefore the lake management could be different, depending on who the owner is. We accomplish our management through S-C's mission to be the state's leading resource for improving the quality of life for those people of South Carolina. For a private entity, the FERC requirements would be viewed through their mission, which is usually to increase the profit of shareholders. Therefore, there could be two interpretations of one FERC license.

Mr. Pittman said out where he lives in Bamberg County, he is in an electric cooperative, so it affects him in his pocket, possibly. He has some inside information about the entity that looks like it might get it. If it is Next Era, they were owned by FP&L and they got bought out. They are completely different organizations. When he worked for FP&L, back in the '90s, building power plants, they were a good organization. He has concerns about an entity that is not in this state coming in here, especially with everything you read in the paper. He just had an interview with his company at one of the plants down in Cross. We talked about it and they were saying Next Era, but some others are saying they do not know. As a citizen and rate payer, there are questions. He asked how this program is going to be affected. Mr. Page said the journalists need to get some of that information, but they do not seem to want to print a lot of the stuff that goes on. Unless you are kind of in the system somewhere, most people are unaware of the benefits that S-C gives the citizens of SC. Mr. Pittman said where he lives in Bamberg County, it is a place that has been there since 1875, and there are about 30 homes down there. He can absolutely guarantee you that all 30 homeowners do not want S-C sold, period. Mr. Page said he thought it is that way with a lot of different groups. He has them in a house he owns. Mr. Pittman said if it is not broken, do not fix it. Mr. Page said that as far as the plan goes, it would definitely

affect the plan, because someone, somewhere in state government would have to find about \$2 million operating cash, if S-C ceases doing business as the entity that manages those lakes. That is a minimum. Mr. Pittman asked if that was for all programs. Mr. Page said that would be stretching it for all the programs. That is probably just operating costs not including personnel or anything else. Mr. Lynch said the budget for all the environmental resources and water systems programs is about \$11 million a year, which includes monitoring water quality and managing the aquatic vegetation, as well as dams and dikes, property and hydro management. Mr. Page said he hoped your guys up there are telling them that.

Mr. Page asked if there were any other comments. There being none, he moved on to the meat of the plan. He said the draft has been posted, as advertised, for 30 days. The posting closed on Sunday. He compiled all the information and sent it to you just like it came off the email. He did not change any of their spelling or verbiage. He sent it just like he got it. He said he would synopsize it for you and then we can discuss it some. He did a response at the bottom. Thanks to Ms. Holling for cutting out some of the stuff he had written in there. He was kind of acidic and called a spade a spade. He will make this part of the public statement. You can argue with him, discuss with him, and disagree with him all day long, but do not ever say he is lying to you, being dishonest, or doing something for his own benefit. That is simply not true. He will put up with arguments, fussing, dissent, and us being on different pages, but he is not, as this thing says, doing anything fraudulent as far as permit renewal or anything else. He is sure S-C is not either. That is when it gets personal. He does not get personal with this stuff. He is a lot of things, but he is not a liar. He may say bad things to you, but he is not going to tell you a lie.

Mr. Page said there were basically three areas of comments. "The triploid carp in the Santee Cooper System are overstocked, not healthy, and starving unless they have an index of 1." That came from some early discussions with the studies that were done, where he thinks, behind the scenes, they were told or actually created it in their own way, that the index of one was a perfect fish and anything less than one was not healthy. He reminded everyone that was back when we had 40,000 acres of *Hydrilla*. These fish were going to a buffet. These fish were fat and sassy. He thinks somewhere in the process, Mr. Kaczka is going to write a paper that is going to say what the actual levels are going to be considered to be healthy fish. Mr. Kaczka noted that if anyone is ever speaking to someone that has concerns, that condition factor is known as relative condition. Focus on relative. The relative in that factor is relating to the fish that were in there during the time Mr. Page is talking about. Pretty much any fish that you get anywhere, relative to those fish back then, are going to appear to be a little bit in worse condition. As Mr. Page said, that does not mean they are, by any means, in poor condition just because they are below one.

Mr. Pittman asked if anyone could speak, minimally, to the science that comes up with the number, if it considers the water quality, and if so, what the parameters might be for the water quality. Mr. Kaczka said condition factor does not take into account water quality. It essentially takes the length and weight of a fish and formulates it based on that, with some conversions. You can speculate. Mr. Pittman asked if you could extrapolate based on that and

water quality issues and kind of merge the two. Mr. Kaczka said he would not go that far. That metric, the final number, does not take into account water quality. Like he said, you could use that number, speculate, and bring other data in, but that metric alone does not take into account water quality. That would be inappropriate to take that number on its own and speculate something like that. Mr. Page said we have used that number with the other data from environmental factors that show what kind of water system we have as far as water quality, mostly whether or not it was turbid or not, relative to sunlight and some of the vegetation that was growing. We have looked at some of that, including high water and low water. Basically, you have this data from another set, and you have your graph laid out on a timeline and you try to gather nuances from what they look like matching up against each other in the same time frame. There has never been a study done that compared all that together.

Mr. Page said the second thing that went through here was one of the misconceptions: “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.” This is where we were called frauds. His response was that FERC only requires a management plan for the lakes. It does not require any percentage out there. He asked for confirmation of that from S-C. Ms. Moorer said they require other things, such as navigation, recreation, and access, but not vegetation. That 10% comes from the memorandum of agreement (MOA) between S-C and the SC Department of Natural Resources (DNR), that we have recently revised to include cypress, tupelo, and other tree species in an effort to protect that habitat on Upper Marion. When you talk about the sale of S-C, that could come to fruition. Protecting that resource for the people of SC was why we included that in there, because that MOA is referenced in the plan and that plan is referenced in our FERC license. They are drawing a line that is more zig-zagged than a direct line. In our FERC license, it does not say 10% vegetation. The MOA between S-C and DNR does say that right now and we asked to increase to 15% and include the cypress and tupelo species. Mr. Page said a MOA is a suggestion. Ms. Moorer said it sets goals for us. Mr. Page said it is not a contract or a mandate. We try to do it. He put in the definition of herbaceous for these people: “A non-woody plant that has softer stems, branches, and twigs; it is like an herb.” It was the simplest definition he could come up with. He was surprised Ms. Holling left the following in since it was one of his cuts. “Most submersed aquatic plants are herbaceous, and Cypress and Gums are not herbaceous but are definitely aquatic.”

Mr. Page said this next comment made a little sense, but the way they worded it was not good. “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.” Someone has been listening to some of the stuff we have been saying, which is good. “Push for a switch over, just a far safer chem in general especially as to toxicity.” In a general rule, yes, but that whole comment is bad because aquatic herbicides are some of the cleanest herbicides out there. There are no restricted aquatic herbicides. If you own a farm or a landscape business, you must have a license to buy certain restricted herbicides you are going to spray, and they will kill you. They will kill you in the dew, after a heavy dew when you have

treated the day before, if you get too much on you. He sees the chemist and Ms. Lognion nodding. There are no herbicides like that in the aquatic arsenal. There are some that will burn you a little bit and cause some damage, but generally, they are less toxic than anything you can buy off the shelf in Lowe's. He hates to say it that way.

Ms. Moorer said she can agree with that comment. With our program, we are the same way when it comes to contact herbicides and selective herbicides. Those are all tools that we can use. There are certain times of the year when contacts are the only thing that are going to be effective to use, when the plants are not taking up and pulling in the chemical. You are basically just having that contact burn to damage the plant. In our program, we do try to avoid herbicides that are in the same light of diquat in the fall. We do use ProcellaCOR a good bit. They have obviously listened to some of the meetings where we have talked about ProcellaCOR. Unfortunately, ProcellaCOR is not active on giant salvinia, so that is not something we can use. Diquat is active on *Salvinia*. As far as the S-C system, diquat is in our toolbox for managing *Salvinia*. It is not the only tool in the toolbox, but it is one of them. She would not want that to be pulled from us. When we do treat with diquat, it is a foliar application, so you are covering a mat of *Salvinia*. Most of that is going on the plants, not into the water column, so it is not impacting the plants below it, if there is even anything growing under it.

Ms. Moorer said that was another comment in here we were talking about on the way up. Just the pure biology of invasives is that they are going to out-compete the natives. If you have a mat of *Salvinia*, it is highly unlikely that you are going to have much submersed vegetation under it. That would be her response for the diquat. Mr. Page said according to some of the comments, we would not have *Salvinia molesta* if we had let *Hydrilla* grow or crested floating heart grow. That may be true, because we would have had 50-60,000 acres of *Hydrilla* out there and no one would have been able to get in and out of the lake to spread anything.

Ms. Lognion thinks that if you look at pesticide use in general, first of all, you have to look at what the target is and then do the research to see what is going to effectively take that particular species out. If you are looking at this very wisely and doing your homework and your research, you will say there is a place for both, like Ms. Moorer was talking about, especially when you look at the target and make sure it is going straight to the target. The commenters do not understand that. They think we are out there blasting it everywhere. Mr. Page said we do not do that. He said Ms. Moorer is right. We have been lucky in the past 10-12 years to get more herbicides that are more selective than others. We love those selective herbicides, because we can go in and punch out some bad guys and keep some good guys in there. Ms. Lognion said you may want to throw that "selective" word in your response. Mr. Page said he could do that. He just kind of threw these together and handed it to Ms. Holling to comb through. She rewrote one of them because he had some bad stuff in there.

Mr. Page said the next other main statement that came out of many of these comments was: "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.” He told them about the mortality rate of the system and the 10,000 we are stocking is less than the ones that were dying every year, so that number continues to go down in that system. As a matter of fact, the only two systems that are static or close to static are Lake Murray and Lake Greenwood. *Hydrilla* is still in all those systems. It has been treated in Greenwood and it was treated in Murray last year. You have treated in the S-C system last year. According to your data from your survey, you had a couple hundred acres of *Hydrilla* that was identifiable, 200+. That is what it gets to. He talked in there about what we are trying to do is try to slow that curve down so that curve gets to a point where we can manage it better. And we are truly managing *Hydrilla*. He has always said you cannot manage *Hydrilla*, but that is what we are trying to do. Get it down there, so we do not have to have those knee-jerk reactions of 100-200,000 fish. He is going to say it again, and people do not like it when he says it. When you stock 200,000 fish in a system for control, as soon as you have control, it is bad for the system. You have too many fish. Mr. McCord is not here to dispute me. Ms. Moorer said she thinks he would agree with that. She agrees with Mr. Page. When we had to stock that many, it was because we stopped stocking for years. We got behind. When the *Hydrilla* took off, we did not have enough fish in the system or the age classes in the system anymore.

Ms. Moorer echoed Mr. Page’s comment, we are stocking 10,000 fish. They are asking for half that. She thinks they are just focusing on that 10,000 number and not truly what the population is doing. The population is still declining. We are looking for that point where we get that control level or manage it where we are not having an impact on our native vegetation. We are doing that consistently and slowly, so we do not have to make those knee-jerk decisions. Mr. Pittman asked if we were doing multi-point stockings. Mr. Page said we are, but from some telemetry studies done on the carp, it does not matter where you put them. They spread out fast and find their food. Ms. Moorer said they do our best to stock grass carp where we have the most acreage of *Hydrilla*, usually at the closest landing.

Mr. Pittman said he used to fish by Low Falls Landing, back in the day. In the ‘80s, it was awful, and he has not been back since. It is one of the reasons he quit going. He hoped it is better than it was. He knows the department does a lot better job of controlling what was there. Mr. Page asked Ms. Moorer how Low Falls Landing looks now. Ms. Moorer said it looks amazing. We have done a good job, she thinks. Giant salvinia is a concern now, which is our newest invasive. She would encourage you, if you go down there to fish, that you check your trailer and not transplant it anywhere else. Mr. Pittman said he tries to be a good fisherman. Ms. Moorer said it is easy to do. That is a floating plant and it can survive between the boat hull and the bunk boards for a couple days to a couple weeks, dewatered until you launch somewhere else. We got *Salvinia* two years ago, in the summer of 2017. Mr. Pittman said asked if it is transferable if it dries out. Ms. Moorer said if it total dewatered and is totally dehydrated, she would not say 100% that it could not survive. She would not try it. You are probably better off if you do that, like if you are overwintering a boat. It does reproduce through spores and she does not know about spore viability.

Mr. Pittman said he does a lot of fishing in Florida, mainly saltwater, but all their public landings have wash stations. Ms. Moorer said a lot of other states have that. Mr. Pittman said that would help environmentally conscious fishermen to be better stewards. Mr. Page said Mr. Simmons looked like that was going to be him. We really do not own as many ramps as you think we own. Most of those ramps are owned and built by DNR, and then turned over to the local entity or the county. We own a few. Mr. Simmons said it was because we talked about it at our last meeting. Mr. Page said the discussion last meeting was about federal money to do that. The western states have that happening now and money to man them. Staff sits there, waits for people to do something wrong, and then gets them. That came through the Western Governors Association putting pressure on the federal government. Their representatives in that group work to get funding that is available through the Corps of Engineers (CORPS).

Mr. Pittman spoke briefly about a cross-country trip he made last year and the limited availability of public fishing out west because most of the water is privately owned. He was thankful we have plenty of water and plenty of places to fish. Mr. Page said we have already started having some water battles between the states, North Carolina (NC), Georgia (GA), and us. We are already in some major discussions. We have had some major discussions with NC. He thinks we almost got to the point where the state almost filed a suit against NC, because they were not giving us any water. They were cutting it off at the border. Mr. Smith said another part of it is if you fish Lake Wylie. You must have a NC and a SC license unless you can stay out of NC. Mr. Page said you must know where you are.

Mr. Page told Ms. Moorer that he probably needs to put some information in there about the total acreage of good vegetation that you have listed in that last report. He just did not put it in there because he did not go back into the minutes and glean it out. Ms. Moorer stated she would like to include that. She would also like to include the acreage that we had that was non-native species. It was around 200 out of almost 2,000 acres that we treated. A lot of these comments are focusing on the S-C system and what they believe is an assault on our vegetation. Mr. Simmons agreed and noted they seem to also make the indication that we are not concerned about native species. He was not too crazy about that, because we are. Ms. Moorer agreed. We just did the whole val project. That is part of our goal. That is what we want to do.

Mr. Page stated he was not going to defend them. He hates to defend people. But in their response, they are pointing at Lake Greenwood, because we are treating *Vallisneria* for homeowners. You do not have *Vallisneria* problems down in some other lakes where it is problematic enough to treat. You have other native species you are treating. Ms. Moorer stated we treat native species around homeowners' property. Mr. Page noted they are keying on every little thing in isolated incidents. Ms. Moorer stated a lot of the comments are coming out a waterfowl group. The areas where we do treat native vegetation are densely populated. We are talking about Wyboo Creek and Caw Caw Creek, where the majority (95%) of those native species are treated around docks for access for homeowners or commercial lease holders. She would like to have that in the response to those comments. We are not out treating native vegetation in most areas. These waterfowl hunters would not be able to hunt in those areas. We

are talking about areas right up against people's houses and docks. Mr. Page asked Ms. Moorer to send it to him what she wants added. The response is not his response, but the Council's response. If anyone has something they would like to add, send it to him. He might edit it slightly for space.

Mr. Page read the last comment: "It has been proven that aquatic vegetation helps to clean water and remove toxins such as mercury. by saying it's been proven aquatic vegetation helps to clean water and remove toxins such as mercury." He could not think of a better way to answer this than: "Aquatic vegetation has been shown to remove some types of pollution, but I've never seen research that says it removes mercury." He asked Mr. Altman if he had heard of any. Mr. Altman noted he thought that was a good response. He said there are comments saying our consumption advisories are wrong. He is going to contact these two individuals and see if they want more information. Mr. Page told Mr. Altman if he would like to put that information in the response, just send it to him. Ms. Moorer said she thought they were trying to draw a line between herbicide use and mercury consumption. Mercury bioaccumulates and is not destroyed. What is in a system stays there.

Mr. Page stated there is a playbook that has been established in Florida and they are following some of playbook. That playbook was established in Florida by people trying to eliminate herbicide use or eliminate the killing of species of nonnative origin in the state of Florida for better water quality. They have used that playbook repeatedly. They are using parts of it and selectively pulling parts of it. They do not use enough of it for it to be obvious where it is coming from. If you have kept up with it, like some of us have, you will see it.

Florida has debunked it already, twice. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Service suspended spraying while they went around and had public hearings to discuss the information. At the end of the public hearings, they said we are through talking to you. We have no proof that there is anything going on out here, other than what we are doing is keeping vegetation knocked back. Florida started their spraying up again.

Mr. Page wanted the Council to know what is happening in other states. This year, the groups took a different tactic. They are blaming all the algae problems, the bad algae problems, on herbicide applicators. They said the applicators are killing everything in there that is going to suck up the nutrients. They are not blaming the Army Corps of Engineers, which changed the whole flow of the systems down there. They are not focusing on the fact the areas are being developed so fast it is basically a line of nutrients going directly to the lakes. There are a lot of issues down there, but that is not one of them. That is the new tactic now for trying to eliminate herbicide applications. In parts of Florida, they really do just managed *Hydrilla*. They go out and they maintain a percentage on their lakes. If someone wants to give us Florida's budget or S-C and Florida's budget, we will more than happy to go out there and managed *Hydrilla*, but it will take a \$10-20 million budget to manage it. He asked Ms. Moorer if she thought that dollar amount was adequate to manage *Hydrilla* for SC. Ms. Moorer stated it would, if you are doing it by chemicals. Mr. Page said it would be difficult to keep a specific number of acres alive out

there, and it really would not benefit the system. Ms. Moorer said it would be a detriment to the system. If you used something other than herbicide, it would be very expensive.

Mr. Page stated those were the main comments. There were two comments from Lake Wylie. They were talking about things that were going on in North Carolina. Lake Wylie is a strange lake, because it is not only in two states, but it is managed by a quasi-private entity (Lake Wylie Marine Commission). It is a lake management group that has jurisdictional authority over Lake Wylie, but he does not think it has anyone on the board with any technical expertise. He stated there are a couple of lakes in the state like that and this is one of them. He understands their problem, but he cannot do anything about alligatorweed that grows in NC and floats down to SC. That is specifically what the commenters were talking about. The guy from Tega Cay was worried about it causing problems not just in Lake Wylie, but down into the Catawba River.

Mr. Page noted there were only 20 people that commented on the 2020 plan. There were two people from the Goat Island Boat Club who commented, Mr. & Mrs. Gleaton. They are in favor in all the things being done at S-C. Out of the 20 people who commented, 2 of them were positive, 2 were from Lake Wylie, and the rest were generally from S-C, but they talked about other lakes too. Of those 16 other people, 3 or 4 people sent the same comments from multiple email addresses. He sent the Council all of them, so you can see what he got. This was mild. We have had 100s of comments before. We have had people with petitions. We had some years with 10-12 comments, and one year we had 2-3 comments. We reposted the plan for another 30 days that year, which is when we got the comments. We were worried no one saw it. After years of officiating football, he figured the fewer people that are yelling and screaming at him, the better job he was doing, hopefully. He asked the Council if there was anything else they saw that they wanted to discuss.

Mr. Marshall had a question relating to grass carp. When he was reading those comments, they meander in terms of geography. You do not know where they are. You assume a lot of them are focusing on S-C, but then they jump to Lake Murray. On the grass carp question of poorer or starving fish, can that point be considered reasonable in Lake Murray? He was just wondering if there is any reasonableness to that in any place. Mr. Page said we have done no study in Lake Murray. You would think Lake Murray, being, for 50 years, devoid of vegetation until *Hydrilla* came. He corrected himself. *Egeria* came, then *Elodea* came, and then *Hydrilla*. If they were going to starve somewhere, that would be the place. Anecdotally, we still see a bunch in Lake Murray floating around and they are pretty healthy fish, but we have not done a study up there. Mr. Marshall stated he was just curious if we had any data to show that might be the case in one location but not in others. Ms. Moorer noted that the data they are referring to is from the S-C system. That is the only place she knows that Mr. Kaczka or Region 4 has done any testing for fish condition. Mr. Kaczka said he did not know if any other regions had that type of grass carp data. Mr. Page asked Mr. Marshall if he would like to see the data from Lake Murray or Lake Greenwood. Mr. Marshall said no, it is alright. We were talking about giving a good, thorough response to the comments. He would encourage that, just to try to clarify things. Mr. Kaczka said, if it would help, he could try to write something up to help explain that metric. He

could rework those numbers based on our current grass carp and all of them would be at 1. Mr. Marshall noted with all the issues that are being brought up in these comments, we need to try to address them as thoroughly as we can and get the facts out there.

Mr. Page said we have no deadline to provide responses to those comments when we publish the final draft. If we decide today that we are going to approve the draft for being the plan, we will just publish this document like it is. The comments and responses kind of come along in the editorial part after the plan has been approved. There is no real deadline for that, although we agree that it is a pretty good concept. Ms. Moorner stated she agreed with Mr. Marshall and we should put something together. The gentleman that requested the grass carp data is David Strickland, and most of these other comments are from the group he founded, Carolina Wildlife Syndicate. That is where the idea of that grass carp under 1 are in poorer health came from. David Strickland requested the data. If Mr. Kaczka puts something together, we can get it to him. She would appreciate it if Mr. Kaczka included S-C in that conversation, so we know what you are sending them. We understand it, but we want to make sure we are on the same page with what we send out. Mr. Kaczka reassured Ms. Moorner that he would not send out anything without running it by her group.

Ms. Holling asked Mr. Kaczka if he knew if any of the other fisheries biologist are collecting carp either intentionally or incidentally. Mr. Kaczka responded by saying not that he knew of. He did not think that there is the same need or the desire for this data in other parts of the state. Ms. Holling stated she knows, and she was wondering if there was incidental catch that they might be getting information from them. Mr. Kaczka stated no, just because our regional work does not include grass carp because they are not a game fish. If they are getting carp incidentally, say a gill net, it would be very low numbers and they may or may not get length and weight data off those fish. If they did, he would almost guarantee there would not be enough of that data for it to be meaningful.

Mr. Simmons asked Mr. Kaczka if there are any other states collecting data like this that they could possibly pull the information from. Mr. Kaczka stated he could not say for sure, but he could imagine that if he dug around, he could find something and make a comparison. As far as writing something up to run by everyone here and then send out to the public or the Carolina Wildlife Syndicate, he thinks he can find something for comparison's sake. He did not know off the top of his head. Mr. Simmons stated he did not think that was necessary, because they seem to be quoting a number that came out of this Council to begin with. This information has already been presented to them. He agreed that we need to be thorough. Just remember and keep in mind that he would not expect any change in their opinions from that. At the same time, we need to be correct in the science and the information we give them, because whatever you put out there, you will see again.

Mr. Kaczka noted he was new to the table, but thinks the biggest issue is a lack of understanding of that metric. Ms. Moorner noted she already explained that. Mr. Kaczka said maybe they do not want to hear it, but maybe they will. He thinks that is what needs to be

stressed more than the number itself. Mr. Simmons agreed with Mr. Kaczka. Ms. Moorer said they need to know where it came from and what “one” means. Mr. Kaczka said yes. Mr. Page said that is a cherry-picked number. That is a number they saw somewhere. Ms. Moorer stated she was not sure where they got that number from. She asked Mr. Page if he sent them that data. Mr. Page noted it was Scott Lamprecht’s data that had been shared with someone. Ms. Moorer noted she had seen this exact comment, because they have posted this on their forum online. She follows that page just so she is in the know. She did not comment, but she expected the 10% FERC license thing, because they stated that on their page, although it is not true. Mr. Page stated he does the same thing. Next thing he knew, the emails started popping up and he knew what they were going to say. There is one person who writes this, and it gets copied. Mr. Marshall said if Mr. Page could make our response very accessible. When the public goes to these websites or Facebook pages and see all these comments, we want to have a place where the facts are being laid out in response to those comments. They are being laid out in a reasonable manner with facts and he thinks that source should be with our plan. He encouraged Mr. Page to keep going with patiently responding with facts, the best he can. Mr. Page stated his patience is about gone. He asked if anyone in the room or on the telephone had anything to add. Both Mr. Lawson and Ms. Carper stated they had nothing to add.

Mr. Page asked the Council if there were any other modifications we should make on the plan, other than providing some more details in the response to the public comments. Mr. Simmons asked if comments should be sent to Mr. Page. Mr. Page responded yes. If you want to write them and get them to me, we will merge them into a comprehensible thing. He keeps saying we. He means Ms. Holling will do that. Ms. Moorer stated we will send the responses by the end of next week. Mr. Page noted there is no rush, so if you get them to him in a couple weeks, that will be good. He will not post that plan, even if it is approved, until later. We really are not going to do anything soon. He did not know about the S-C group. Ms. Moorer stated S-C is about to start treating *Salvinia*. Mr. Page said we will not be doing anything until April 1st, because that is when the new contract comes into place. There was some discussion by Mr. Page and Ms. Moorer about the changes to herbicide and labor costs. Ms. Moorer noted that S-C is trying to get some weevils from Louisiana. Hopefully, that will give us a little bit of relief.

Mr. Page stated he knows we are past this stage, but next year he is going to put buoys in the plan. Ms. Moorer noted S-C might consider them in some of the nursery areas we surveyed last week. Mr. Page said it will serve a two-fold purpose. In addition to controlling plant movement, it will also hold herbicide in, to some degree along the surface when you put in Sonar. Saturation from it will go out some, but you will still get that part that is hovering right around the root zone. It will not go anywhere unless you use ProcellaCOR, which will drop down. We must talk about that after we are through. Mr. Simmons agreed. Mr. Page asked the Council if there were any other modifications to the plan. There was no discussion after that. Mr. Page asked the Council if he has a motion to accept the plan as written. Ms. Moorer made a motion to accept the 2020 SC APMC Draft Plan as written. Mr. Simmons seconded the motion. Mr. Page asked if there was any discussion. There was no discussion, so Mr. Page called for a vote. The vote passed unanimously, and the plan was approved. Mr. Page stated the only

modifications to the plan after this point would be the additions to the responses to the public comments. Mr. Page stated he could now get rid of all the red ink and change it to black.

Mr. Page asked if there were any other business for the Council. This is one of our shorter meetings. It normally is because we have discussed this stuff to death. He knows he gets long winded. Sometimes he tries to stretch the meeting out, so you do not drive an hour to sit at a meeting for 25 minutes. He asked the Council if anybody have a problem with locations. He likes to go all over the place and see different places and things. He thanked everyone for coming and making a special trip up here. He noted that when we are doing business as a Council, according to the bylaws, we must have six members physically present. Call ins do not count for that. They count for a recorded vote, but not physically present. If we do not have six members present, we cannot do business. We cannot do anything. At that stage, we must have a 2/3 vote of members present to approve the plan. If we do not get a 2/3 vote, we defer to plan to the agency (DNR). DNR makes the decision, which means it becomes the decision of the director, the deputy director, and Mr. Page. We do not want to put that decision in their hands, because they do not know everything that is going on. Ms. Lognion told the Council that we need to be here if possible and we can always send somebody to represent us. Mr. Page stated you can always send a proxy, and that proxy counts as a body towards council membership being here. That is the standard Robert's Rules of Order. He does try to conduct the meetings by Robert's Rules, but he is a little freer with that. He does not restrict comments and questions. If we were going on and on, we had 20 people here, and everybody wanted to ask questions outside of the period of when we were trying to conduct their business, it would not work. With smaller groups, he lets people go. He has let some people go too long in the past. He probably needs to get a gavel.

Ms. Moorer told Mr. Page and the rest of the Council, if you are looking for meeting locations, S-C's Lake Marion Regional Water Systems is right off I-95 in Santee and has been offered to us. They have a nice conference area there and we can open it to the public. They have their water agency meetings there. Being off I-95 is sometimes helpful for folks. Mr. Page stated we have more options, too. We have talked to the PRT people and they have got some places around. They have been helpful in the past. As a matter fact, one of the best places we ever went was Paris Mountain, he believes.

Mr. Page reminded the Council about the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Society (SCAPMS) meeting in October. Many of us in the room are members. He discussed the cost and provided some details about the conference. He would like the Council's fall meeting to coincide with the conference. We are supposed to meet at least three times a year, sometimes four. We have had field trips. Every field trip we ever had, he thinks, has been thanks to Santee Cooper. They have loaded up the airboats and carried us all over the S-C lakes. It is a good place to go. If we do anything in the future, we will have to rely on S-C's airboats, because we do not have enough air boats and stuff to get people around. One would only get four or five people around.

Mr. Page said the conference being in the very first part of October is a good time. He asked for the dates. Ms. Moorer stated SCAPMS will be September 30th through October 2nd. Mr. Page talked about how the conference allows licensed applicators earn general credits and aquatic credits. He hoped the Council members' agencies would pay for them to go. Mr. Altman asked if the information was on the website. Ms. Moorer stated it shows everything on SCAMPS website. Registration is not open, but all of the information and dates are there. She informed the Council members that if their agencies have travel restrictions, we can take that up to the board and ask for a waiver of your registration fee. She discussed some of the things the registration fee covers. Mr. Page talked some about the social aspects for the conference. Ms. Moorer stated those are ways to help people network with other people in the industry. Mr. Page spoke about the variety of speakers at the conference as well as the vendors who are there to sell pond supplies, fountains, and services. Ms. Moorer informed the Council if you do register for the meeting, you also become a member, so you will get newsletters, email, and other things like that.

Mr. Page asked the Council if there was anything else. There was no discussion. Mr. Simmons made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Lognion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Page noted that he is going to hang around with Mr. Simmons and the S-C staff to discuss the *Salvinia* problem. If anyone would like to stay, they are welcome. Mr. Page thanked everyone for coming and the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.